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"Over the Top"

By An American Soldier
Who Went

ARTHUR GUY EMPY
Machine Gunner Serving in France

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SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I—Fired by the news of the machine of the Lusitania, by a German submarine, Arthur Guy Empey, an American, leaves his office in Jersey City and goes to England where he enlists in the British army.

CHAPTER II—After a period of training, Empey volunteers for immediate service and soon finds himself in rest billets "somewhere in France," where he first makes the acquaintance of the ever-present "sooties."

CHAPTER III—Empey attends his first church services at the front while a German Fokker circles over the congregation.

CHAPTER IV—Empey's command goes into the front-line trenches and is under fire for the first time.

CHAPTER V—Empey learns to adopt the motto of the British Tommy, "If you're going to get it, you'll get it, so never worry."

CHAPTER VI—Back in rest billets, Empey gets his first experience as a horse jockey.

CHAPTER VII—Empey learns how the British soldiers are fed.

CHAPTER VIII—Back in the front-line trench, Empey sees his first friend of the trenches "go West."

CHAPTER IX—Empey makes his first visit to a dugout in "Suicide Ditch."

CHAPTER X—Empey learns what constitutes a "day's work" in the front-line trench.

CHAPTER XI—Empey goes "over the top" for the first time in a charge on the German trenches and is wounded by a bayonet thrust.

CHAPTER XII—Empey joins the "suicide club" as the bombing squad is called.

CHAPTER XIII—Each Tommy gets an official bath.

CHAPTER XIV—Empey helps dig an advanced trench under German fire.

CHAPTER XV—On "listening post" in No Man's Land.

CHAPTER XVI—Two privates "put one over" on Old Pepper, their regimental commandant.

CHAPTER XVII—Empey has narrow escape while on patrol duty in No Man's Land.

CHAPTER XVIII—Back in rest billets Empey writes and stages a farce comedy.

CHAPTER XIX—Soldiers have many ways to amuse themselves while "on their own."

CHAPTER XX—Empey volunteers for machine gun work and goes back into the front-line trenches.

CHAPTER XXI—Empey again goes "over the top" in a charge which cost his company 17 killed and 21 wounded.

CHAPTER XXII—Trick with a machine gun silences one bothersome Fritz.

CHAPTER XXIII—German attack, preceded by gas waves, is repulsed.

CHAPTER XXIV—Empey is forced to take part in an execution as a member of the firing squad.

man he pressed the cold muzzle to the soldier's head and replied:

"Yes, it is Lloyd, the coward of Company D, but so help me God, if you don't tell me how to load that gun I'll put a bullet through your brain!"

A sunny smile came over the countenance of the dying man and he said in a faint whisper:

"Good-old boy! I knew you wouldn't disgrace our company—"

Lloyd interposed: "For God's sake, if you want to save that company you are so proud of, tell me how to load that d—d gun!"

As if reciting a lesson in school, the soldier replied in a weak, stinging voice: "Insert the end of belt in feed block, with left hand pull belt left front. Pull crank handle back on left, let go, and repeat motion. Gun is now loaded. To fire, raise automatic safety latch, and press thumbpiece. Gun is now firing. If gun stops, ascertain position of crank handle—"

But Lloyd waited for no more. With wild joy at his heart, he took a belt from one of the ammunition boxes lying beside the gun, and followed the dying man's instructions. Then he pressed the thumbpiece and a burst of fire rewarded his efforts. The gun was working.

Trailing it on the Germans he shouted for joy as their front rank went down.

Traversing the gun back and forth along the mass of Germans, he saw them break and run back to the cover of their trench, leaving their dead and wounded behind. He had saved his company, he, Lloyd, the coward, had "done his bit." Releasing the thumbpiece, he looked at the watch on his wrist. He was still alive at "3:38."

"Ping!"—a bullet sang through the air, and Lloyd fell forward across the gun. A thin trickle of blood ran down his face from a little, black round hole in his forehead.

"The sentence of the court had been 'duly carried out.'"

The captain slowly raised the limp form drooping over the gun and, wiping the blood from the white face, recognized it as Lloyd, the coward of D company. Reverently covering the face with his handkerchief he turned to his "noncoms" and, in a voice husky with emotions, addressed them:

"Boys, it's Lloyd, the deserter. He has redeemed himself, died the death of a hero—died that his mates might live."

That afternoon a solemn procession wended its way toward the cemetery. In the front a stretcher was carried by two sergeants. Across the stretcher the Union Jack was carefully spread. Behind the stretcher came a captain and forty-three men, all that were left of D company.

Arriving at the cemetery, they halted in front of an open grave. All about them wooden crosses were broken and trampled into the ground.

A grizzled old sergeant, noting this destruction, muttered under his breath: "Curse the cowardly blighter who wrecked those crosses! If I could only get those two hands around his neck his trip West would be short."

The corpse on the stretcher seemed to move, or it might have been the wind blowing the folds of the Union Jack.

CHAPTER XXV.

Preparing for the Big Push. Rejoining Atwell after the execution I had a hard time trying to keep my secret from him. I think I must have lost at least ten pounds worrying over the affair.

Beginning at seven in the evening it was our duty to patrol all communication and front-line trenches, making note of unusual occurrences, and arresting anyone who should, to us, appear to be acting in a suspicious manner. We slept during the day.

Behind the lines there was great activity, supplies and ammunition pouring in, and long columns of troops constantly passing. We were preparing for the big offensive, the forerunner of the battle of the Somme or "Big Push."

The never-ending stream of men, supplies, ammunition and guns pouring into the front lines made a mighty spectacle, one that cannot be de-

scribed. It has to be witnessed with your own eyes to appreciate its vastness.

At our part of the line the influx of supplies never ended. It looked like a huge snake slowly crawling forward, never a hitch or break, a wonderful tribute to the system and efficiency of Great Britain's "contentible little army" of five millions of men.

Huge fifteen-inch guns snaked along, foot by foot, by powerful steam tractors. Then a long line of "four point five" batteries, each gun drawn by six horses, then a couple of "nine point two" howitzers pulled by immense caterpillar engines.

When one of these caterpillars would pass me with its mighty monster in tow, a flush of pride would mount to my face, because I could plainly read on the name plate, "Made in U. S. A.," and I would remember that if I wore a name plate it would also read, "From the U. S. A." Then I would stop to think how thin and straggly that mighty stream would be if all the "Made in U. S. A." parts of it were withdrawn.

Then would come hundreds of limbers and "G. S." wagons drawn by sleek, well-fed mules, ridden by sleek, well-fed men, ever smiling, although grimy with sweat and covered with the fine, white dust of the marvelously well-made French roads.

What a discouraging report the German army must have taken back to their division commanders, and this stream is slowly but surely getting bigger and bigger every day, and the pace is always the same. No slower, no faster, but ever onward, ever forward.

Three weeks before the big push of July 1—the battle of the Somme has been called—started, exact duplicates of the German trenches were dug about thirty miles behind our lines. The layout of the trenches was taken from airplane photographs submitted by the Royal flying corps. The trenches were correct to the foot; they showed dugouts, saps, barbed wire defenses and danger spots.

Battalions that were to go over in the first waves were sent back for three days to study these trenches, engage in practice attacks and have night maneuvers. Each man was required to make a map of the trenches and familiarize himself with the names and location of the parts his battalion was to attack.

In the American army noncommissioned officers are put through a course of map making or road sketching, and during my six years' service in the United States cavalry I had plenty of practice in this work, therefore mapping these trenches was a comparatively easy task for me. Each man had to submit his map to the company commander to be passed upon, and I was lucky enough to have mine selected as being sufficiently authentic to use in the attack.

No photographs or maps are allowed to leave France, but in this case it appeared to me as a valuable souvenir of the great war and I managed to smuggle it through. At this time it carries no military importance in the British lines, I am happy to say, have since been advanced beyond this point, so in having it in my possession I am not breaking any regulation or cautions of the British army.

The whole attack was rehearsed and rehearsed until we heartily cursed the one who had conceived the idea. The trenches were named according to a system which made it very simple for Tommy to find, even in the dark, any point in the German lines.

These imitation trenches, or trench models, were well guarded from observation by numerous allied planes which constantly circled above them. No German airplane could approach within observation distance. A restricted area was maintained and no civilian was allowed within three miles, so we felt sure that we had a great surprise in store for Fritz.

When we took over the front line we received an awful shock. The Germans displayed signboards over the top of their trench showing the names that we had called their trenches. The signs read "Fair," "Fate," "Fate," and "Fancy," and so on, according to the code names on our map. Then to rub it in, they hoisted some more signs which read, "Come on, we are ready, stupid English."

It is still a mystery to me how they obtained this knowledge. There had been no raids or prisoners taken, so it must have been the work of spies in our own lines.

Three or four days before the big push we tried to shatter Fritz's nerves by feint attacks, and partially succeeded as the official reports of July 1 show.

Although we were constantly bombarding their lines day and night, still we fooled the Germans several times. This was accomplished by throwing an intense barrage into his lines—then using smoke shells we would put a curtain of white smoke across No Man's Land, completely obstructing his view of our trenches, and would raise our curtain of fire as if in an actual attack. All down our trenches the men would shout and cheer, and Fritz would turn loose with machine-gun, rifle, and shrapnel fire, thinking we were coming over.

After three or four of these dummy attacks his nerves must have been near the breaking point.

On June 24, 1918, at 9:40 in the morning our guns opened up, and hell was let loose. The din was terrific, a constant boom-boom-boom in your ear.

At night the sky was a red glare. Our bombardment had lasted about two hours when Fritz started replying. Although we were sending over ten shells to his one, our casualties were heavy. There was a constant stream of stretchers coming out of the communication trenches and burial parties were a common sight.

In the dugouts the noise of the guns almost hurt. You had the same sensation as when riding on the subway you enter the tube under the river going to Brooklyn—a sort of pressure on the

var drums, and the ground constantly trembling.

The roads behind the trenches were very dangerous because Boche shrapnel was constantly bursting over them. We avoided these dangerous spots by crossing through open fields.

The destruction in the German lines was awful and I really felt sorry for them because I realized how they must be clicking it.

From our front-line trench, every now and again, we could hear sharp whistle blasts in the German trenches. These blasts were the signals for stretcher bearers, and meant the wounding or killing of some German in the service of his fatherland.

Atwell and I had a tough time of it, patrolling the different trenches at night, but after awhile got used to it.

My old outfit, the machine gun company, was stationed in huge elephant dugouts about four hundred yards behind the front-line trench—they were in reserve. Occasionally I would stop in their dugout and have a confab with my former mates. Although we tried to be jolly, still, there was a lurking feeling of impending disaster. Each man was wondering, if, after the slogan, "Over the top with the best of luck," had been sounded, would he still be alive or would he be lying "somewhere in France." In an old dilapidated house, the walls of which were scarred with machine-gun bullets, No. 3 section of the machine gun company had their quarters. The company's cooks prepared the meals in this billet. On the fifth evening of the bombardment a German eight-inch shell registered a direct hit on the billet and wiped out ten men who were asleep in the supposedly bomb-proof cellar. They were buried the next day and I attended the funeral.

AGAINST PROFITTEERING

St. Louis Women at Work To Keep Food Prices Normal.

ST. LOUIS, June 1.—St. Louis women are working to keep food prices normal. According to a recent report made to the Committee on Public Information, Division of Women's War Work, by Mrs. George Gellhorn, chairman of the Women's Central Committee on Food Conservation, concerted effort is made to prevent profiteering.

"First, we are organizing by wards and precincts," wrote Mrs. Gellhorn. "Second, by mothers' circles, parent-teacher associations, clubs, and other women's organizations. Third, by ladies' church societies and through churches and schools.

"The price investigations will have

the assistance eventually of between 2,000 and 3,000 women, one living in every few blocks. This is done so that all the grocery stores may be reached early and often and that any information sent out by the United States Food Administration may reach the consumers who never see a paper.

"The aim of the committee of 5 of the 50 women assigned to each district is to have every grocery store visited once a month, one-fourth of each district being covered once a month. They assemble a circle of women, who are given commodity sheets upon which a fair food price for St. Louis is quoted by the United States Food Administration. With these sheets they visit the grocery stores and obtain the prices charged by each. Complete records are kept, and thus violators of the law are discovered and reported to the Food Administration's committee in St. Louis. Secret Service men are detailed on the cases and each offender is dealt with as his case merits."

NEW SCHEDULE BEGINS

Too Soon to Announce How the Service Will Be Liked.

The new train schedule went into effect yesterday and the local between La Grande and Baker made the trip on schedule time. This part of the change is quite agreeable to the public. West bound trains were late today and the full force of the change has not yet been felt.

ELEVEN BOYS WANTED.

(Continued from page one)

government expense, fitting them to serve in army positions," says the War Department order, "requiring knowledge of auto mechanics, general mechanics, blacksmithing, sheet metal working, plumbing, carpentry and radio operating incident to many kinds of military service, both at the front and behind the lines.

"The men taking this course will receive thorough instructions which will be of great personal value in working their way ahead, both in the army and in civil life.

"This is an exceptional opportunity for energetic, ambitious men. Qualified registrants should present themselves to their local boards for voluntary induction. When volunteers present themselves, local boards will induct qualified men until their allotment has been filled.

"The voluntary period will continue until June 7. After June 7, no more volunteers will be accepted."

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YOU MUST NOT MISS IT.

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Mr. Grain Farmer:

Are you prepared to handle your grain in bulk? Do not wait until Spring and Summer when you are buried with work and worried with labor shortage, but build your granaries now.

You can buy the lumber and roofing paper for a first-class 1000 bushel portable granary for \$54.58 and it will last for years. Sacks for the same amount of grain will cost you \$125.00 and this would be a dead loss against this year's crop.

A granary of this size can be moved anywhere and can be filled directly from the threshing, doing away with high priced labor handling and sewing sacks.

The boys in the trenches need the sacks for sand bags for the protection of their very lives and perhaps your boy is among them.

Spend your money in your own valley by buying lumber manufactured at home. When you buy sacks part of the money goes to India.

BUILD YOUR GRANARIES NOW

Be prepared by building them before the farming season opens up. Be sure to get good lumber, well seasoned, as low grade lumber will give you trouble in a few seasons. Don't use green lumber.

Save money—keep what you spend at home—prevent loss and damage from exposure to weather—leave the sacks for our boys in the trenches; help win the war by building granaries now.

Portable granaries of this type are universally used in other sections. One trip with a good team will haul the material for one granary. For particulars as well as prices on Union County lumber for all farm purposes, see

The George Palmer Lumber Co.

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Qualified registrants are urged to present themselves to the local board for voluntary induction. If the required eleven for Union county have not responded by the 7th of June the local board will complete the allotment by selection in sequence of order numbers from class one.

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"Chamberlain's Tablets are a wonder. I never sold anything that best them," writes F. B. Tressey, Richmond, Ky. When troubled with indigestion or constipation give them a trial.

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