

SAVED BY RED CROSS PARCELS

A RETURNED PRISONER FROM GERMAN TELLS STORY.

John P. Lester, of Misbehaving, Was First Yank Captured by The Germans.

LONDON, Jan. 25.—Here is the story of the first American soldier to be taken prisoner by the Germans in the war, as he told it today, sitting in a comfy armchair in the American Red Cross headquarters on Grosvenor Gardens.

His name is John P. Lester, of Tipton, Miss. He was a platoon-messenger in the 10th U. S. Infantry. He was captured the morning of Nov. 2, 1917, in company with 10 other platoon-messengers—all that was left of a platoon of 100 men, sent into a front line trench in the Toul sector the night before to relieve a platoon of tired poilus.

Here is the story:

"A German aviator spotted us soon after daylight, and began circling over us, snarling back to his artillery. We let no at him with our rifles, but couldn't hit him. Next we knew the Germans put down a box barrage on all sides of us, completely cutting our salient off from the rest of the system, and 300 field-grays came over the top.

"We blazed away at 'em until our ammunition was gone. Five of us were killed and all but two wounded. I was hit three times in the leg. And then they were upon us.

"A German corporal and four men jumped down into the trench beside me and told me to get a move on. I believe I was the first to be taken. They marched us across No Man's Land and into one of their own front ditches.

"I never will forget the trip through that trench. We had not gone far before our feet began striking against bodies of German soldiers, lying there twisted up on the floor of the trench. As we reached a more active salient, the number of corpses increased. I remember how our shoes slipped over the heads of the dead Germans, how their bodies yielded slightly under the pressure of our weight, how the skin of their faces was bruised as we tramped over them.

"The first time our party halted, I leaped against the wall of the trench, gasped and exhausted. My leg had begun to throb terribly.

"But I was brought to my senses in minute or two by a fist-blow on the face. In front of me stood two German officers. The other one struck me on the back of the neck, shouting in German (I understood German). 'You will get a good deal worse than this if you can't stand attention and salute when an officer passes.'

"We were then quizzed in a dug-out behind the front line trench—each separately, of course. The odd part of it was that although we had no previous understanding we had all happened to give exactly the same answers—as we found out later in comparing notes.

"Later I myself was present at 300 other quizzings of prisoners. (The Germans used me as an interpreter.) The Germans always asked just three questions—I hardly remember a single variation. First, how many Americans are there in France? Second, is there any American artillery? Third, tell what you know about the conveying of troops.

"That day we all answered that there were three million Americans in France, but no American artillery so far as we knew. Most of us said the troops were in convoys of from 20 to 40 ships. I told them I had come over on the Mauretania, unescorted.

"Then they forced us to march 20 kilometers to a village which I think was Kamecke. It was pretty tough, I can tell you. You see, all but two of us were wounded, and some of the fellows had all they could do to hobble along. All the attention we had received was a little hot oil in that dugout.

"I was in a hospital at Kamecke a month. They fed us on bread and watery soup.

"After I had been to mend they removed me to the German prison camp. Then I was taken to Darmstadt, and finally to Tübingen, where I stayed until the armistice.

"The first thing they did was to take off our shoes and give us wooden slippers. The next was to tell us:

to get to work.

"Still all we had to eat was a little black bread and watery soup. After four months of hard manual labor we were so weak we could not walk.

"One day a German general visited the camp, accompanied by a man who said he was an American newspaper man. We refused to believe him at first, thinking it was another German trick to put us off our guard. He was continually asking us if we had any message to send the home folks.

"Finally one of our crowd called out, 'If you tell the folks anything, tell them we never expect to see this again. Before long we shall all be over there in that graveyard near the camp, where 20,000 Russian are already buried.'

"The Germans are slowly starving us to death."

"Well, the general got pretty red in the face and said it was all a lie. 'But the next week, a bunch of American Red Cross packages showed up, each with twenty-two pounds of food. After that, they appeared regularly, and we grew fat and strong. We never ate another bite of German food. We turned our German rations over to the Russians in the camp with us, while we had the line of our lives eating good old American food.

"When the revolution broke, the revolutionary troops disarmed our guards and told us to 'were free.'

Lester took another bite of his bar of American milk chocolate, took another delighted look at the pretty American Red Cross worker from San Francisco in the chair opposite him, and continued:

"No, I don't know a thing about internal conditions in Germany. The people may be starving or wallowing in plenty for all I know. They never let us outside the prison fence except when they took us to the train after the armistice. And as the railroad seemed to run through a desolate, uninhabited part of the country, we didn't get a chance to get a line on things then.

"We came through Holland to England.

"Say, but isn't this chocolate great?"

Installation of Officers of O. P. Morton G. A. R. and W. R. C. Held

The G. A. R. and W. R. C. held their annual installation of officers at their last regular meeting. Dinner was served at noon by the W. R. C. and was much enjoyed by all present.

The G. A. R. then installed the following officers: Commander, I. W. Faulk; Sr. Vice-Commander, T. C. Riddle; Jr. Vice-Commander, Wm. Thompson; Chaplain, C. H. Gore; Adjutant, J. W. Oliver; Quartermaster, Isaac Seigler; Officer of the Guard, Jerome Innes; Comrade Corps, held at installing officer and Comrade Honor as officer of the day. A short program was then rendered.

"The Star Spangled Banner" by all; piano solo, Mary Frawley; recitation, little Miss Marjann Nelson; piano solo, Bessie McAllister; short talks by comrades Faulk, Oliver and Innes on America.

The W. R. C. then installed the following officers: President, Jessie P. Nelson; Sr. Vice-President, Susan Williamson; Jr. Vice-President, Sarah Evans; Chaplain, Laura Darby; Secretary, Annie Roesech; Treasurer, May Wade; Conductor, Rose Wright; Guard, Ella Stone; Patriotic Instructor, Grace McAllister; Press Correspondent, Myrtle Evans; Musicians, Ethel Smith; Asst. Conductor, Susan Burnett; Asst. Guard, Mary Simons; Color Bearer No. 1, Bertha Moreland; Color Bearer No. 2, Elmore Carr; Color Bearer No. 3, Edith Lindsay; Color Bearer No. 4, Mabel Jones; Mrs. Clara T. Lyle, Past Department President and Past president of O. P. Morton Corps No. 27, was the installing officer and Rose Wright was the installing conductor. Delegates to department convention, Mrs. Susan Williamson, Mrs. Eleanor Carr, Mrs. Bertha

Moreland; alternates, Bertha Johnson, Sarah Elam, Ella Stone.

The K. of P. hall was beautifully decorated in the national colors, the officers taking the oath of office under a large flag suspended over the altar. On behalf of Oliver P. Morton Post and Woman's Relief corps, Comrade Faulk presented Mrs. Lyle with a beautiful engraved silver pen; Mrs. Lyle, on behalf of Oliver P. Morton W. R. C. presented Mrs. Jessie Nelson with a beautiful silver letter case. Ceremonies then closed in due form.

Encouraging the preparation of salmon by new hat-heres and enlargement of old ones is one way the Oregon legislature can go about building up one of Oregon's greatest industries and natural resources of benefit to all the people.

Observer advertising copy. Observer ads are widely read.

News of the Churches

St. Peter's Episcopal Church. St. Peter's Episcopal Sunday school will open Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock. All officers, teachers and members who are able to attend are requested to be present.

By Order of Superior Student.

First Methodist Church. Services at the First Methodist church on Sunday as follows: Sunday school at 9:45 a. m. We expect you to be there, ready for intense services. Preaching at 11 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. Morning subject, "The Christ That Is to Be." Evening subject, "How to Win." This is the first of a series of six sermons. You can't afford to miss it. Epworth league at 6:30 p. m. Come and worship with us. N. SHEPPARD HAWK, Pastor.

Christian Science Society. Sunday morning service at 11 a. m. Subject, "Truth." Sunday school at 10 o'clock. Wednesday evening service at 8 o'clock.

The reading room is open to the public Monday, Wednesday and Saturday from 2 to 5 p. m. All are cordially invited to attend our services. Corner First and Washington.

M. E. Church South. Sunday School 9:45 a. m. Preaching 11 a. m. Subject, God's Omnipotence and Control. 7:30 p. m. subject, Man's Co-operation. Epworth League, 6:50 p. m. W. B. SMITH, Pastor.

PRIZE BEEF NOW HOBNOBS WITH BANKERS

This is a literal "bull in a china shop." It is "Prince Hoover," grand champion steer of the National Beef Show, on a little calling tour. Prince Hoover is here seen visiting in the office of President Cyrus P. Brown of the First National Bank in St. Paul, Minn. Prince Hoover was purchased by this institution and donated to a war fund committee as a money-getter.



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SING A LONG IF "FIA" In his efforts to drill school children to emergencies regarding influenza, Dr. Woodward of Boston's public schools will cause to be published widely the following verse, containing a moral no less forcible for adults than for children.

Mary had a little cold That started in her head, And everywhere that Mary went That cold was sure to spread.

It followed her to school in the day (There wasn't any rule); It made the children cough and sneeze To have that cold in school.

The teacher tried to drive it out; She tried to yell, but—kerchoo! It didn't go a bit of good, For teachers caught it too.

HOT WEATHER DON'TS

Don't encroach on your neighbor's sidewalk when shoveling snow.

Don't let the children go to bed with cold feet—or your wife, either.

Don't put your skates on the register to thaw out. It's a very untidy habit.

Don't handicap your poor horse in his fly lighting by putting a heavy blanket on him.

Don't impose on the conductor by requiring 95 cents change when the weather is below zero.

Don't return your neighbor's snow shovel too hastily. There may be another heavy fall in a month or so.

Don't abandon your automobile in a deep drift. The humane society is watching for just such opportunities as this.

HAIR WORK. Ladies' modern hair work done, new switches made to order. Combs made to order. 1427 Washington St. 1-13-2-13

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MUSKRAT WINTER	3.00 to 2.50	2.25 to 1.75	1.00 to 1.30	1.00 to .80	1.00 to .75	.50 to .40
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