

WHERE FRENCHMEN ARE FIGHTING TO REGAIN LOST PROVINCE OF LORRAINE

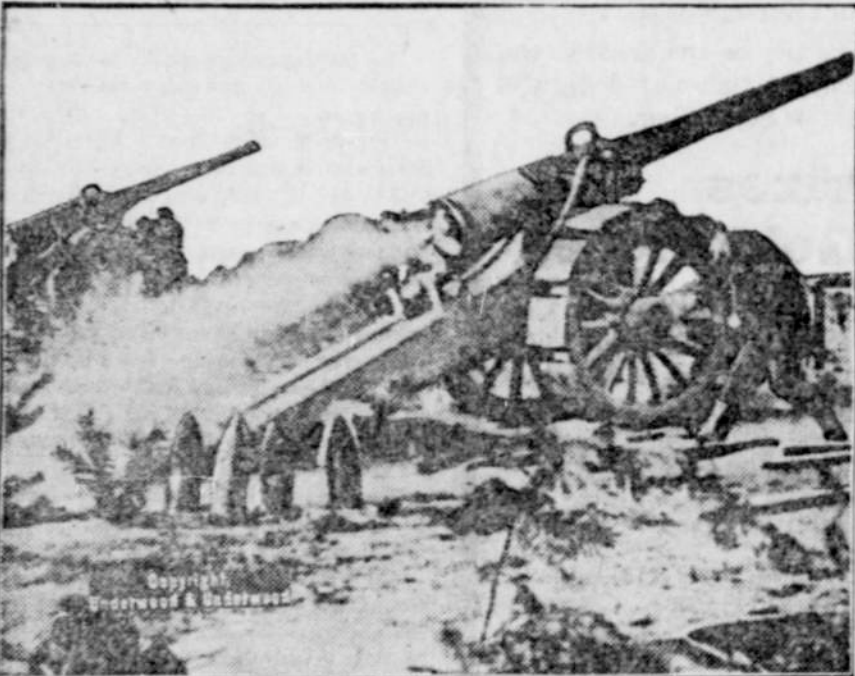
Edward B. Clark Describes a Visit to the French Trenches Near Nancy—Noise of the Batteries Is Terrific—Men Live Underground Day in and Day Out, Yet Keep Their Spirits Above Ground—Sees War and Peace Side by Side.

By EDWARD B. CLARK.
(Staff Correspondent of the Western Newspaper Union.)

At Lorraine's battle front, Nancy, in French Lorraine, is the city at which I left the train to make my way under military guidance to the battle front. This town of France is only a few miles distant from where the troops of the republic and the troops of the empire are at grips along one of the most hotly contested fronts in this world war.

It is the ambition of the French army to take German Lorraine and to hold it for all time. German took this province away from France in 1870, and France wants to take it back. It is probable that the French soldiers here have an added spirit for the fighting because fair Lorraine, their one-time possession, is the prize at stake.

It was not my thought that I should see any of the real battling until I reached the actual front, but strangely enough perhaps I saw fighting of a kind which 15 years ago could not have been witnessed, and I saw it from a hotel window in the big city of Nancy. The windows of my room



Big French Guns in Action.

faced east. I was at the top of the hotel. The view before me was unbroken to the hills eastward under whose shadow the German troops are lying. Seated by the window just before sunset I heard in quick succession the reports of a fusillade. I looked out and in the air at a distance of perhaps a mile a German taube was wheeling and dodging in the midst of showers of shrapnel. There were 29 shells fired in less than as many seconds—at least so it seemed. The projectiles burst about the flying machine seemingly only a few yards away from it and yet so far as I could discover it withstood the hail unharmed.

Watches a Cloud Battle.
As each shell burst a wreath of light smoke formed, perfect in contour, and as slightly as all things are which follow the curved lines of beauty. There was not a breath of air stirring, and the clouds of smoke touched by the setting sun were like halos. There were 29 shells fired, and each gave forth its wreath of smoke, and the last one had burst before the smoke crown gave the least sign of disintegration. It was a war sight, but it was appealing.

The German taube finally turned and planned down behind the hill and was lost to my sight. I knew that it went well within the German lines, but whether its crew of two men escaped injury or not, I do not know. The French were content perhaps that their battery had driven the enemy back into his own lines and had prevented the dropping of bombs into the streets of Nancy, or perhaps the taking of observations which might have been of assistance to the foe.

It was the next day after this cloud battle scene that I went to the front. It is not far from Nancy to the firing line, and long before you come to the place where the shells are fired you get to the place where the shells drop. It could not have been more than four miles out of town before the pounding of the guns hit my ears and hit them in a most unpleasant way. When the tenderfoot goes forth to war the tenderness of his feet is likely to find companionship with the tenderness of his heart. In other words, the heart sinks into the boots where the feet are.

Noise Is Terrific.

The trouble with the infernal shelling as far as it affects the man who is going forth to see it, is that you

never know where one of the things is going to drop. The noise is terrific, and while all the batteries along the front may be firing at something miles away, the hearer and the onlooker does not know this necessarily, but if he suspects it and thinks that danger is remote he has full realization that a variation of an inch or two to the right or to the left of the muzzle of one of the big guns will change the direction of the fire so that the next projectile may land in his lap.

We reached the firing line. Now, if people have any idea that on the modern battlefield, except on the occasions of charges and countercharges, there are thousands upon thousands of men in view, the idea may as well be foregone. There are two big armies in the field here, and yet you don't see them, so to speak, individually. The soldiers of France and Germany here are either covered by the dense woods or else they are underground like so many thousands of rabbits in their burrows.

The cannonading is terrific and yet it is difficult unless you happen to be at the exact point where the shells fall, to tell what all the row is about. In this section of the country the French biplanes and the German taubes make their high and lofty excursions for the purpose of detecting some point in the enemy's line which it is considered the part of war wisdom to bombard. It may be a blockhouse hidden in the woods but commanding some pathway through the trees, which has been discovered by the sky pilot. When such is the case the artillery will open as accurately as possible upon the spot des-

trough you see to your front. We went out of the field trenches and made our way back into the wood. My army officer companion asked me how much I knew about woodcraft. Because of a life given over to a considerable extent to natural history pursuits which had carried me into the wilderness on many occasions, I said that I thought I knew a little something of the forest and of "signs and seasons." Then the officer asked me to let him know if I discovered anything that looked unusual as we walked through the lights and shades of the birch forest.

I put all my senses to work and tried to detect some symptom that everything was not just as it should be in an ordinary wood. I sensed nothing out of the ordinary, and was just about to say so when my knee struck something hard and I looked down. I was staring straight into the muzzle of a huge naval gun emplaced at an angle of about thirty degrees.

A Well-Concealed Gun.

This gun was in an "underground house." For a distance of at least two feet back of the muzzle the gun was shrouded with a green growth which completely concealed it. The house had a roof, but green things were growing upon it and there was absolutely nothing to tell that under the cover was a gun pit. We entered the house by means of some concealed steps and there we found a detachment of men ready to make the gun speak when a returning air scout should give the gunners directions as to just where to let a shell drop.

It was while I was in this gun pit that rapid firing was heard at the extreme edge of the wood. The cannonading was from a French battery engaged in driving off a German aeroplane which unquestionably was seeking to locate this big gun which had caused trouble in the German lines, but whose position the enemy had been unable exactly to determine.

The next day from a rock rising almost sheer to a height of nearly seven hundred feet I looked through the clear air toward Metz, the capital of German Lorraine, which with its circling fortresses is the prize most coveted by the French. The artillery of the republic emplaced on a ridge to the right and a little in advance of this position has succeeded in reaching with its shells one of the most formidable forts standing guard over Metz. When the French break down, if they can break down, the defenses of Metz, an army will spring from the ground and advance toward the German goal of its ambition. Metz, however, while really only a few miles away, is a long way off, because between the outermost French lines and the city of desire lies a German army, and right here on this line within the next few days or weeks, or perhaps even months, there is sure to come fighting of a quality so fierce as to put all other fighting along this 500-mile line into the class with things tame.

Views the Battlefield.

From where I stood there is a bird's-eye view of a great battlefield. We made an early start in order to be able to climb this needle-like rock before the sun was high. This hill is called Mousson, and on its crown there is a chapel built in the eleventh century and which affords a fair and commanding mark for the enemy's artillery. The Germans for some reason or other have left this pinnacle alone for the main part. On occasions they send shells over it, and today was one of the occasions. A shell passed over my head while I was climbing the rock. I heard its whizzing distinctly, and instinctively I crouched, much to the amusement of the French army officer who stood at my side. "The thing you hear," he said, "never hits you. It's half a mile past you before you hear the sound."

In climbing the hill of Mousson there are many places where one is out from under cover. Walking up the hill was difficult, but running was more than difficult, and yet I had to run between the covered points. On this hill we were within range, not only of shell fire but of small rifle fire, and the journey up and down had its unpleasant moments.

When half-way down this Rock of Mousson the cannonading grew louder. The truth was that a new battery had opened, one much nearer to us than the guns which had been thundering before. We looked down from the hillside to the village of Pont-a-Mousson which lay nestling at our feet. Into the village the shells were pounding. All that we could see was clouds of dust and smoke mingled as we knew with mortar, stone fragments, and the ground powder of plaster.

Short Breathing Space.

We reached the foot of the hill, entered a military automobile, and were whirled into Pont-a-Mousson. The cannonading had ceased and the villagers, men, women and children, again going about the streets. No one knew, however, when the fusillade would begin again. It did begin again, not long after we left the town, and 20 people met their death inside of an hour from the time the first gun spoke.

Pont-a-Mousson is not far from Metz. The same river supplies water to both cities. One is in France and the other is in Germany. The French say that before the snow flies again both cities will be in France, and that both will belong to France for all time. I do not know whether this will prove true or not, but I do know that all along this line the French are fighting with a doubly strengthened heart, and perhaps with a doubly strengthened ferocity. They want Lorraine, and Lorraine they are going to get if valor can win it.

HIS LOVE STORY

By MARIE VAN VORST
ILLUSTRATIONS BY RAY WALTERS

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SYNOPSIS.

—15—
Le Comte de Sabron, captain of French cavalry, takes to his quarters to raise his hand a motherless Irish terrier pup, and names it Pitchoune. He dines with the Marquise d'Eschignac and meets Miss Julia Redmond, American heiress. He is ordered to Algiers but is not allowed to take servants or dogs. Miss Redmond takes care of Pitchoune, who, longing for his master, runs away from her. The Marquise plans to marry Julia to the Duc de Tremont. Pitchoune follows Sabron to Algiers, dog and master meet, and Sabron gets permission to keep his dog with him. The Duc de Tremont finds the American heiress capricious. Sabron, wounded in an engagement, falls into the dry bed of a river and is watched over by Pitchoune. After a horrible night and day Pitchoune leaves him. Tremont takes Julia and the Marquise to Algiers in his yacht but has doubts about Julia's Red Cross mission. After long search Julia gets trace of Sabron's whereabouts. Julia for the moment turns matchmaker in behalf of Tremont. Hammet Abou tells the Marquise where he thinks Sabron may be found. Tremont decides to go with Hammet Abou to find Sabron. Pitchoune finds a village, twelve hours journey away, and somehow makes Fatou Anni understand his master's desperate plight. Sabron is rescued by the village men but grows weaker without proper care.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Two Love Stories.

If it had not been for her absorbing thought of Sabron, Julia would have reveled in the desert and the new experiences. As it was, its charm and magic and the fact that he traveled over it helped her to endure the interval.

In the deep impenetrable silence she seemed to hear her future speak to her. She believed that it would either be a wonderfully happy one, or a hopelessly wretched life.

"Julia, I cannot ride any farther!" exclaimed the comtesse.

She was an excellent horsewoman and had ridden all her life, but her riding of late had consisted of a canter in the Bois de Boulogne at noon, and it was sometimes hard to follow Julia's tireless gallops toward an ever-disappearing goal.

"Forgive me," said Miss Redmond, and brought her horse up to her friend's side.

It was the cool of the day, of the fourteenth day since Tremont had left Algiers and the seventh day of Julia's excursion. A fresh wind blew from the west, lifting their veils from their helmets and bringing the fragrance of the mimosa into whose scanty forest they had ridden. The sky paled toward sunset, and the evening star, second in glory only to the moon, hung over the west.

Although both women knew perfectly well the reason for this excursion and its importance, not one word had been spoken between them of Sabron and Tremont other than a natural interest and anxiety.

They might have been two hospital nurses awaiting their patients. They halted their horses, looking over toward the western horizon and its mystery. "The star shines over their caravan," mused Madame de la Maine (Julia had not thought Therese poetical), "as though to lead them home."

Madame de la Maine turned her face and Julia saw tears in her eyes. The Frenchwoman's control was usually perfect, she treated most things with mocking gaiety. The bright softness of her eyes touched Julia.

"Therese!" exclaimed the American girl. "It is only fourteen days!"

Madame de la Maine laughed. There was a break in her voice. "Only fourteen days," she repeated, "and any one of those days may mean death!"

She threw back her head, touched her stallion, and flew away like light, and it was Julia who first drew rein.

"Therese! Therese! We cannot go any farther!"

"Lady!" said Azrael. He drew his big black horse up beside them. "We must go back to the tents."

Madame de la Maine pointed with her whip toward the horizon. "It is cruel! It ever recedes!"

"Tell me, Julia, of Monsieur de Sabron," asked Madame de la Maine abruptly.

"There is nothing to tell, Therese." "You don't trust me?" "Do you think that, really?"

In the tent where Azrael served them their meal, under the ceiling of Turkish red with its Arabic characters in clear white, Julia and Madame de la Maine sat while their coffee was served them by a Syrian servant.

"A girl does not come into the Sahara and watch like a sentinel, does not suffer as you have suffered, ma chere, without there being something to tell."

"It is true," said Miss Redmond, "and would you be with me, Therese, if I did not trust you? And what do you want me to tell?" she added naively.

The comtesse laughed. "Vous etes charmante, Julia!" "I met Monsieur de Sabron," said Julia slowly, "not many months ago in Tarascon. I saw him several times, and then he went away."

"And 't's all!" urged Madame de la Maine.

"That's all," said Miss Redmond. She drank her coffee.

"You tell a love story very badly, ma chere."

"Is it a love story?" "Have you come to Africa for charity? Voyons!"

Julia was silent. A great reserve seemed to seize her heart, to stifle her as the poverty of her love story struck her. She sat turning her coffee-spoon between her fingers, her eyes downcast. She had ver little to tell. She might never have any more to tell. Yet this was her love story. But the presence of Sabron was so real, and she saw his eyes clearly looking upon her as she had seen them often; heard the sound of his voice that meant but one thing—and the words of his letter came back to her. She remembered her letter to him, rescued from the field where he had fallen. She raised her eyes to the Comtesse de la Maine, and there was an appeal in them.

The Frenchwoman leaned over and kissed Julia. She asked nothing more. She had not learned her lessons in discretion to no purpose.

At night they sat out in the moonlight, white as day, and the radiance over the sands was like the snowflowers. Wrapped in their warm coverings, Julia and Therese de la Maine lay on the rugs before the door of their tent, and above their heads shone the stars so low that it seemed as though their hands could snatch them from the sky. At a little distance their servants sat around the dying fire, and there came to them the plaintive song of Azrael, as he led their singing.

And who can give again the love of yesterday? Can a whirlwind replace the sand after it is scattered? What can heal the heart that Allah has smitten? Can the mirage form again when there are no eyes to see?

"I was married," said Madame de la Maine, "when I was sixteen."

Julia drew a little nearer and smiled to herself in the shadow.

This would be a real love story.

"I had just come out of the convent. We lived in an old chateau, older than the history of your country, ma chere, and I had no dot. Robert de Tremont and I used to play together in the allees of the park, on the terrace. When his mother brought him over when she called on my grandmother, he teased me horribly because the weeds grew between the

stones of our terrace. He was very rude.

"Throughout our childhood, until I was sixteen, we teased each other and fought and quarreled."

"This is not a love-affair, Therese," said Miss Redmond.

"There are all kinds, ma chere, as there are all temperaments," said Madame de la Maine. "At Assumption—that is our great feast, Julia—the Feast of Mary—it comes in August—at Assumption, Monsieur de la Maine came to talk with my grandmother. He was forty years old, and bald—Bob and I made fun of his hair, like the children in the Holy Bible."

Julia put out her hand and took the hand of Madame de la Maine gently. She was getting so far from a love affair.

"I married Monsieur de la Maine in six weeks," said Therese.

"Oh," breathed Miss Redmond, "horrible!"

Madame de la Maine pressed Julia's hand.

"When it was decided between my grandmother and the comte, I escaped a night, after they thought I had gone

to bed, and I went down to the lower terrace where the weeds grew in plenty, and told Robert. Somehow, I did not expect him to make fun, although we always joked about everything until this night. It was after nine o'clock."

The comtesse swept one hand toward the desert. "A moon like this—only not like this—ma chere. There was never but that moon to me for many years."

"I thought at first that Bob would kill me—he grew so white and terrible. He seemed suddenly to have aged ten years. I will never forget his cry as it rang out in the night. 'You will marry that old man when we love each other?' I had never known it until then."

"We were only children, but he grew suddenly old. I knew it then," said Madame de la Maine intensely, "I knew it then."

She waited for a long time. Over the face of the desert there seemed to be nothing but one veil of light. The silence grew so intense, so deep; the Arabs had stopped singing, but the heart fairly echoed, and Julia grew meditative—before her eyes the caravan she waited for seemed to come out of the moonlit mist, rocking, rocking—the camels and the huddled figures of the riders, their shadows cast upon the sand.

And now Tremont would be forever changed in her mind. A man who had suffered from his youth, a warm-hearted boy, defrauded of his early love. It seemed to her that he was a charming figure to lead Sabron.

"Therese," she murmured, "won't you tell me?"

"They thought I had gone to bed," said the Comtesse de la Maine, "and I went back to my room by a little staircase, seldom used, and I found myself alone, and I knew what life was and what it meant to be poor."

"But," interrupted Julia, horrified, "girls are not sold in the twentieth century."

"They are sometimes in France, my dear. Robert was only seventeen. His father laughed at him, threatened to send him to South America. We were victims."

"It was the harvest moon," continued Madame de la Maine gently, "and it shone on us every night until my wedding day. Then the duke kept his threat and sent Robert out of France. He continued his studies in England and went into the army of Africa."

There was a silence again.

"I did not see him until last year," said Madame de la Maine, "after my husband died."

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Meeting.

Under the sun, under the starry nights Tremont, with his burden, journeyed toward the north. The halts were distasteful to him, and although he was forced to rest he would rather have been cursed with sleeplessness and have journeyed on and on. He rode his camel like a Bedouin; he grew brown like the Bedouins and under the hot breezes, swaying on his desert ship, he sank into dreamy, moody and melancholy reveries, like the wandering men of the Sahara, and felt himself part of the desolation, as they were.

"What will be, will be!" Hammet Abou said to him a hundred times, and Tremont wondered: "Will Charles live to see Algiers?"

Sabron journeyed in a litter carried between six mules, and they traveled slowly, slowly. Tremont rode by the sick man's side day after day. Not once did the soldier for any length of time regain his reason. He would pass from coma to delirium, and many times Tremont thought he had ceased to breathe. Slender, emaciated under his covers, Sabron lay like the image of a soldier in wax—a wounded man carried as a votive offering to the altars of desert warfare.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Things That Have Been Condemned. If we banished from our tables all the commodities which—like potatoes—have been condemned in print, our diet would be decidedly monotonous. "Food faddists are most aggressive persons," Henry Labouchere once complained. "In my time I have known them preach that we should give up meat, tobacco, alcohol, soup, starch (including bread and potatoes), salt, tomatoes, bananas, strawberries and bath buns. I have also witnessed movements for giving up boots, waistcoats, hats, overcoats, carpets, feather beds, spring mattresses, cold baths, linen clothes, woolen clothes, sleeping more than six hours, sleeping less than nine hours and lighting fires at the bottom."

Some Lost Motion.

A Philadelphia mathematician has figured it out that the telephone companies lose 125 hours' work every day through the use of the word "please" by all operators and patrons. Another has discovered that the froth on the beer pays the freight. But as yet no one has estimated the total horse power wasted in swallowing cigarette smoke and forcing it through the nose instead of blowing it from the mouth. —Newark News.

Scandinavian Housekeeping.

In Scandinavia the peasant women who worked all day in the fields, have had their freeless methods of cooking for a long time. While breakfast was cooking, the pot containing the stew for dinner was brought to a boil then placed inside a second pot, and the whole snugly ensconced between the feather beds, still warm from the night's occupancy. Some of these women had a loosened hearthstone and a hole beneath.



At Night They Sat Out in the Moonlight.