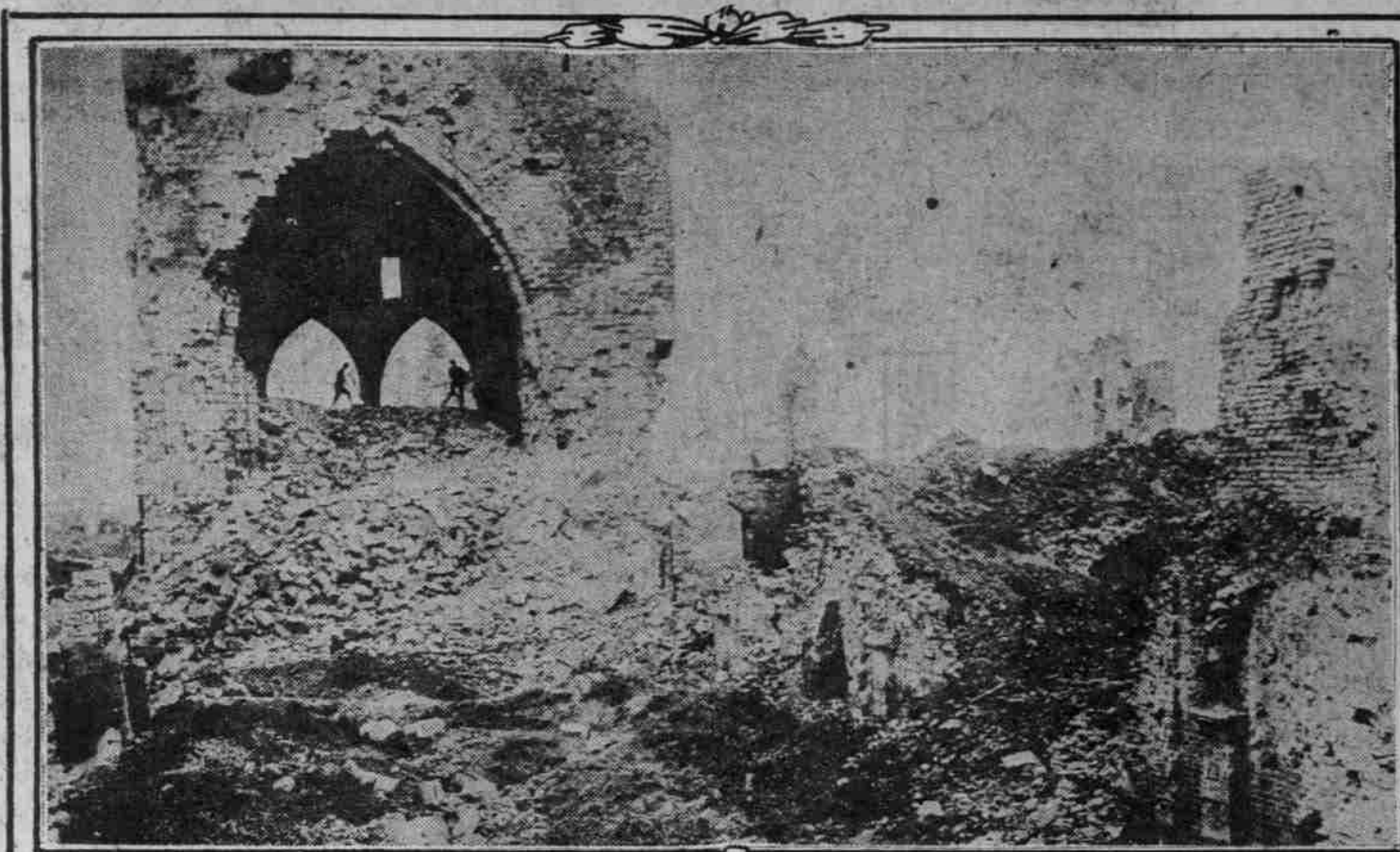


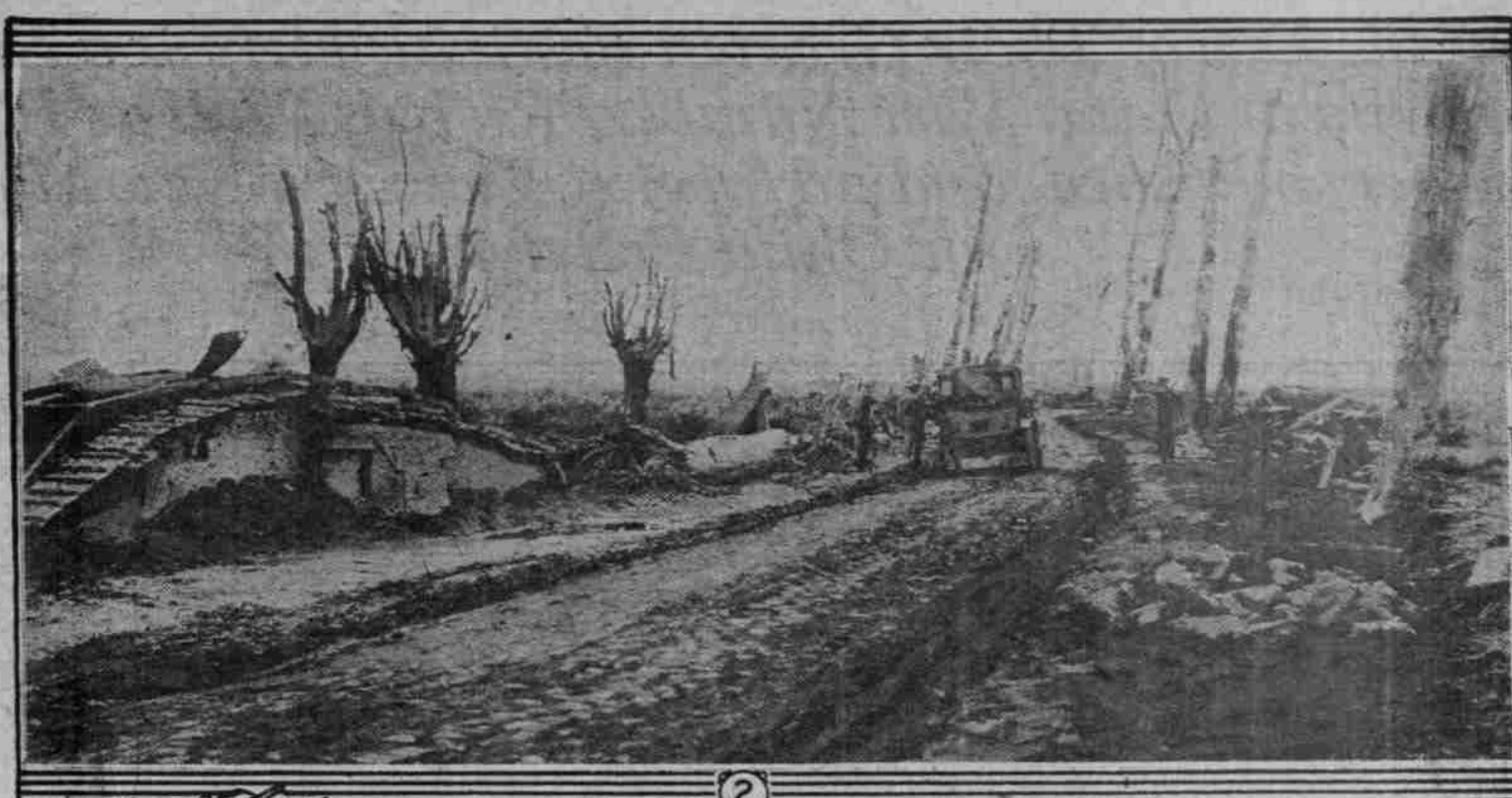


MEMORIES HOLD STATE'S SERVICE SONS FIRMLY PATRIOTIC

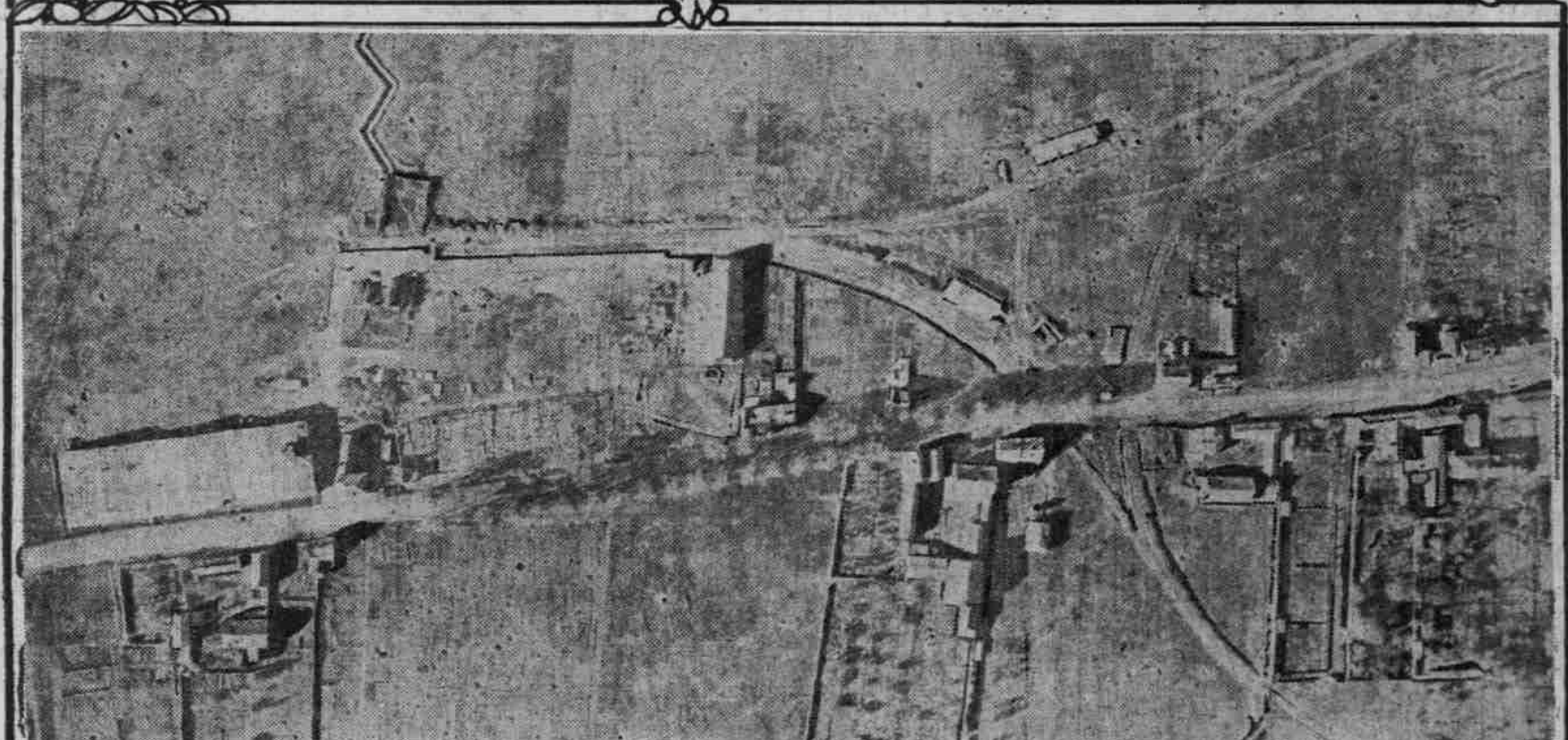
Home Again, Allied Soldiers Contrast Lot of Today With That of Year Ago Among Scenes of Devastation and Ruin.



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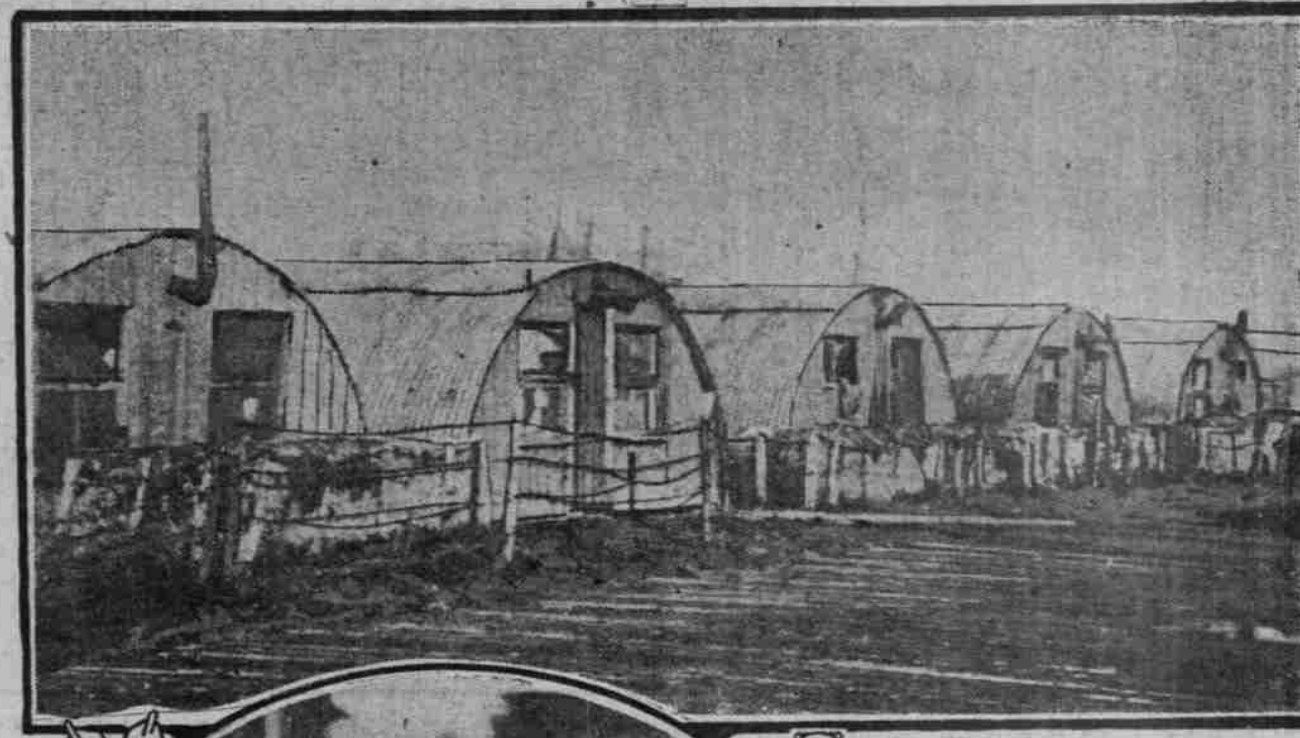
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BY DE WITT HARRY.
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A YEAR ago. Hardly able yet to believe that their work was accomplished, the men of the allied armies lay in their camps and anticipated the time when they could get to their homes. It was the hardest period of the war, that time of waiting and longing, when home was almost within their reach, but so distant. The satisfaction of a bad job well done failed to recompense them for their period of enforced waiting, they chafed and strained at the maddening restraint. Habits of 51 months of fighting could not be forgotten in a short month of theoretical peace.

Billeted in areas foreign to their nature, associating with peoples who, while sympathetic, were not of their race or in accord with their innermost thoughts and longings, the big men overseas were so homesick that many feared that they would perish of loneliness. Nothing could please them. Sheer ache for home and what it meant, for a mere sight of their loved ones, for a glimpse of familiar scenes, became an obsession with many.

Portland's sons were scattered all over the map of Europe and Asia, and in common with the other boys, were very ill with that anticipation of home delights. Quite naturally, and unreasonably, they wanted to be home for the holiday season. Many of these strong men were, as most men are beneath their surface veneer of devil-may-care adventure, boys in their wish for home and what it meant.

In France, among the ruins of the ravished and battered country, there was little to avail in stimulating holiday cheer. The civilian populace, if they had homes, had scant material with which to properly observe a period usually set aside for celebrating "peace on earth, good will toward men." However, misery loves company, and the Oregon boys there were ever more wretched than were the civilians, for, while they had not actually suffered the privations and been prey to the despair so general in that sad country, they had so much to remember of their happy land and the contentment that they enjoyed while home, that they could hardly bear being so far away, especially at this time, when all united in holding high holiday.

A year has passed since then, and it should be of interest to recall some of the things that happened when the great time of privation was on, and to make contrasts. Most of the boys who were "over there" have returned, and the average have been home six months and have had an opportunity to get set once more. In their experience there are doubtless many incidents that would be much better forgotten. But wouldn't it be a mighty good thing to inspect the thoughts of a year ago, recall now what the conditions were then, and gather some

1—Ruins of the cloth hall at Ypres. 2—Ypres-Poelcapelle road near Passchendaele, near where 31st division spent holiday season. 3—War airplane photograph of Valenciennes, where half of Canadian corps spent Christmas. 4—Prince of Wales visiting Canadians and attending holiday mass at Denain. 5—Sample camp of Nissen huts as occupied by Americans last year. 6—Headquarters non-commissioned officers, 12th battalion, Canadian engineers, with their Yuletide hostess, at Vieux Sart Wavre, near Brussels. 7—Last year's turkey was mainly conspicuous by his absence. This year the boys are home.

realization of how fortunate is Oregon and what a great country it was for which her sons made their fight? France, Belgium, Italy, yet lie in ruins. Years will ensue before they are once again in their original state. If this happy condition is ever again reached. Their populace is reduced, and those who remain, as the overseas men well know, can hardly make shift to properly handle the necessary work. Financially the countries are on the verge of national disaster. Unrest bulks large in America, but it is accentuated in Europe, and the last chapter is a difficult one to foretell. Visualize once again the ruined cities and towns. Think back on the many pitiful scenes that were legion last year at this time. The discomfort of the camps, the mud, the food, but above all, the feeling of isolation and utter wretchedness. What home meant then, and how remote the chance seemed to ever get there! How relieved the average man was that he did not have to go out in the line again, especially if he had been through several years of carnage. What dreams of home were had, what longings, what resolutions for the

future made, and what plans originated for governing their life success! During the summer and fall of the last year of the war the American army in France got an opportunity of getting into action, and they showed conclusively of what manner of metal they were made. However, they, in common with the other troops who had been in the game for a longer time, speedily came to realize that there was nothing to be gained by carnage and destruction, and they longed for the decisive ending of the war. When the tidings came that all was over, they speedily found, to their sorrow, that they could not get on the next boat and be home in time for Christmas, with the result that they ate their hearts out in an agony of wretchedness.

This is the first Christmas home from the war for the majority of the boys who saw service at the front. They cannot but help contrasting their happy fate of this year with that of a short year ago. Then war was so close that few really knew as yet whether it was finished. Now war and thoughts of war are remote, but the lessons of far-away France and of the sad scenes seen there must

always remain. The bravery of the people, their makeshifts in putting up a cheerful front, and their glory in the victory, made even the Yuletide season of 1918 a happy one.

Home again—to most it really begins to seem now as if it were true. Many of the boys have managed to become adjusted once more to their accustomed civilian pursuits, and they can enter into the holiday spirit with abandon, carefree as in the past. How remote seems a year ago, and how few of the boys would care to spend another similar period under the same circumstances. In respect to civil adjustment America was much more fortunate than countries that had men in the field for longer periods.

Seeing Europe through the sights of a rifle has its disadvantages, and not the least of these is the wait after the show is all over for permission to go home. What did it really matter if a fellow received a pass for the holiday season? he would be out of his element and there was nothing fitting to do. True, the welfare workers did their level best to smooth the way, but they could hardly furnish the proper atmosphere of snug home and the faces that were so

badly missed. Many of the messes had their holiday feasts approximately as in peace times, all the accustomed essentials coming across the sea from well-wishing friends. The elaborateness of these spreads depended mainly on accessibility and the cleverness of the men in charge of the rations, being only some five weeks away from actual battle at this date a year ago, that they almost believed themselves yet under fire. They had been sent to this area after they completed their advance, in conjunction with the Belgian army, so

near Brussels. They were stationed right on the Belgian-French frontier and were in an area of ruin and devastation which had been the scene of most of the heaviest fighting between the British and Belgian armies and the Germans.

The contrast between the areas where they now found themselves, and the country from which they came when the apex of their advance had been reached, was a revelation. Everywhere here was ruin, and the territory which they had penetrated, behind the German lines, was practically in the same shape as a peaceful countryside. But the civilian population, everywhere, bore the impress of much suffering and did not have the necessary supplies on hand to properly nourish themselves, much less have a holiday feast.

Here came in handy the resources of the home gift boxes and of the organizations that were in the field to furnish the boys with cheer. For of all things the American soldier was not greedy. He wanted his rightful share of reasonable goodies, but he did not want to hog the whole thing, and took more pleasure in passing out the major portion of the dainties that he received to the starving and un-nourished populace than he did in eating them himself.

In contrast with the surroundings in Belgium and northern France, where they saw the brunt of war conditions, was the garrison area of the troops in the army of occupation in Germany, of which possibly the Oregon batteries had the most advanced position at Hoare and Grenhuise in the Coblenz bridgehead area. These men were stationed in the heart of the Rhineland in a country truly foreign and hostile, and they were forced to be on the alert even while trying to enjoy their Christmas cheer.

Different from the conditions in the invaded country were those in Germany this Christmas. While the people did not have much of the delicacies usually regarded as essentially holidaylike, they possessed ample food of a substantial nature, and were even better fed, in many instances, than the men of the occupying forces.

Fats, sweets, and some more desirable dishes were scarce, but in the main the Hun at home had all that he wanted and kept his belly filled. Especially was this the case insofar as drink was concerned, and at no time did it seem that Germany went without her tipple.

Christmas has always meant a great deal to this people, and they went about celebrating the season given up to good will with, so far as externals would indicate, a clear conscience. Dancing and merriment ruled the times for the civilians, and the soldiers marked time and set themselves with gritted teeth to do a task that hurt more than actual danger.

(Continued on Page 7.)