

# The Citizen Veteran

BY HARRY B. CRITCHLOW.

OUR American doughboys were gathered around a couple of candles in a dingy old French billet in the early part of September, 1918. They were busily engaged waiting letters to the back home. Suddenly one of the men—a private—ceased his writing. A puzzled expression overspread his countenance, his right hand dropped a pencil and moved to the middle of his back where the fingers started to twitch.

"I've a hunch that I have a friend," he remarked. "Yes, I know I have. I can feel him walk."

There was no longer silence in the billet. Three companions arose on one accord.

"Get out of here," they ordered in unison. "do you think we want cooties?"

"Holy mackerel, be reasonable, you fellows," protested the infected one. "Let's have a look at him."

He pulled his shirt over his head and turned the garment inside out. There in the flickering blaze of the candlelight could be seen, not one cootie but a dozen of them. The three men gathered around the investigator and gazed for the first time at the little pests that during the long months of the war annoyed the millions of men who were engaged at arms.

"You are as full of cooties as a wet dog," declared one of the men. "Get out of here. Do you think we want you around giving us these things?"

"We've been together for the last two months, both night and day," said the buck who "had 'em." "I'll just say you a set of a million of vin blanc that you can have them."

"You are on," each declared, and they peeled their shirts.

"Good Lord! What do you think of that?" cried up after he had "read" his shirt. "You win." Each man found that he was a nesting place for a large family of cooties.

"Well, no one can say that we are not soldiers, after this," bragged the first discoverer. "A man's no soldier, so they tell me, until he's had the cooties. We've all got 'em."

It is safe to say that almost every man of the millions who saw service at the front, at some time or another, had the cooties. These little pests were as much a part of the war as mud, corned beef, beans, hardtack and inspections. The first man out of a company who became infested was for a time ostracized, but he soon came back in the good graces of his friends once more when it was discovered that all were in his condition.

When once a colony of cooties had stalked a claim in the underbrush of a soldier, the problem of removing them was a hard one. Every man had to be changed for new blankets had to be steamed and a bath was in order.

But at the front these things were passed up. Despite the fact that the sanitary departments of the army drilled the necessity for baths and cleanliness into the soldiers, it was impossible for the rules to be observed. At the front many times it was a difficult matter to obtain enough water to drink. The idea of a bath was restful to the mind, but its accomplishment was a matter for the future.

Cooties will not live on a clean man, but they take great delight in making life a hell for the dirty ones. They made no distinction as regards rank. They found as much pleasure in "moving in" on a colonel as they did on a "buck" private.

"I was feeling pretty tough regarding my lot the first time I ever had 'em," a veteran once declared. "I had been sent to a clean white house, quarters with an order one day and was standing at attention behind a colonel who was in a clean white house. All of a sudden the colonel moved one hand to the back of his neck and started scratching. I bent over him and observed a cootie just above his collar. I felt better after that."

Back in the "rest areas" and in the ports of embarkation were "houseing" stations, where each man was treated. Orders were that no cooties would be permitted to enter this country with the troops.

In the big camps were great bath-houses. Men were lined up in companies and men in these bath-houses. There they removed every garment and their identification tags. Clothing was washed in hot water and placed in a big heating room.

The men marched into the shower, where soap was plentiful. Each bathed to his heart's content and the cooties departed. Clean and fresh clothing awaited them after they had been through the bath.

Shirt "reading" parties occupied the dragging hours on many a night back of the front. In the candlelight of old billets the men would gather with their shirts inside out. They would locate the little pests, pick them off, one at a time, and drop them into the melted wax of the candle.

There are many "fashion plates" walking the streets of the cities today under the admiring gaze of the women, who in 1917-18-19 were the cootie "kings" of their regiment.

Dr. Archie Van Cleave, Legionnaire, as he appeared before going overseas.



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picture to Bill and he carried it in his pocket.

When Bill found that his money was gone he went down to the village cafe and seated himself at one of the tables. He took his signet ring and placed it on the third finger of his left hand, with the narrow band on the outside. This gave him the appearance of being married.

From his pocket he removed the picture of the girl and the baby. Long and intently he gazed at it. Then he buried his face in his arms, being careful to leave the picture exposed on the table in front of him. Directly the old French lady who ran the cafe would notice him. She would see that he was in trouble, and would walk back to him. Her eyes would fall upon the picture of the beautiful girl and the baby.

Bill would raise his head from his arms, look long and lovingly at the picture and the tears would almost blind him. Then in the best mixture of French and English he could produce and with signs and gestures he would tell his story. He was a married man when he left the United States. Three months after he had arrived in France the influenza had attacked both his wife and baby and both died.

By that time the old French cafe keeper would be crying and wiping his eyes with his soiled apron. She would tell him that she would take care of him and his picture.

When Oliver B. Huston, prominent member of the legion, decided to run for the state legislature he was confronted with the problem of choosing a suitable picture to go on his campaign cards. Looking through his collection he found one in army uniform that fitted his fancy so far as facial expressions were concerned. He said he did not want to have his picture show the uniform, but he liked the head.

Upon a friend's advice he consulted a photographer. This individual, being more of an artist, with the aid of a little paint converted Oliver's uniform into a white collar and black coat and the result is on the campaign cards.

George T. Colton, late of the navy, is the proud father of a baby girl, the result of a "baby girl" who arrived last week. "Two years ago a young girl arrived in the Colton family," said George. "Now we have a girl. She will be known to the world as Jean."

Many of those who have ever come in contact with the British soldier will recall the famous song of the "Tommy" which is as follows:

Up to your waist in water,  
Doing the kind of language  
That makes the sergeant frown,  
Who wouldn't join the army?  
That's what we all inquire,  
Oh, it's a lovely life,  
Oh, it's a lovely life,  
But, pity the poor civilian,  
Sitting alone by his fire.

Chorus:  
Oh, oh, oh, it's a lovely war,  
Who wouldn't be a soldier boy,  
It's a shame to take the pay,  
As soon as reveille has blown,  
You're out to get your share,  
But you never get up until the war.  
Brings breakfast to your bed.

Chorus:  
What do we wait with axes and hammers,  
When we've got plums and apples?  
Jan!  
Form fours! Right turn!  
How do we spend the money we earn?

Chorus:  
When does a soldier grumble?  
When does he make a fuss?  
No one in the world can do it,  
In all the world there's no one.

Chorus:  
Oh, it's a cushy life, boys,  
Really we love it so,  
And he really refused to go.

Chorus:  
Come in the cock-horse door, boys,  
Suff it the lovely stew,  
Who was it said the sergeant  
Got better grub than you?

Chorus:  
Any complaints this morning?  
What's the matter with lumps of onion  
floating around in your tea?

Chorus:  
"Fighting the war" around the luncheon table or in the home is not a custom limited to the men veterans of the world war; the women are getting just as much enjoyment out of it. Recently the American Women's Overseas League was formed in Portland. Its membership is composed of those who served across the Atlantic during the world war. Nurses, Red Cross women workers, Y. M. C. A. girls, and in fact all women who did service in France are entitled to membership. The organization was originally started by veterans of the world war, but others have entered the fold. Meetings are being held regularly, and at these the women sit around and pass the time by the recollection of the incidents that transpired during that time when they were in the midst of their great experience.

Scout Young Camp of the Spanish-American War Veterans is fathering a movement to bring four obsolete cannons from the Presidio at San Francisco so that they may be placed in the veterans' plot at Mt. Scott cemetery. A committee composed of James McCarren, L. E. Beach and James Walsh has been appointed to meet with other veteran organizations regarding the matter. The guns

have been promised if the money to transport them is furnished. Scout Young camp has agreed to furnish its share.

Commander Sawyer has appointed L. A. Bowman, Harry Hayes and H. U. Welch as a Memorial day committee. Grant Getchell, Elmer Lundberg and Lew Walker, have been appointed to take up with national officers the treatment of Spanish-American war veterans who apply for pensions.

McMinnville legionnaires will do battle in The Dalles this year for the convention in 1923. This was announced a few days ago by Glen S. Macy, adjutant of the McMinnville post. Already the American Legion men in that city are preparing to campaign for the convention.

Members of La Societe des 40 Hommes et 3 Chevaux will be taken into the state convention of the American Legion in their city in July. They contemplate taking the candidates across the Columbia river to the sand dunes on the Washington shore and there give them some inside information relative to the inner secrets of the fun order of the Legion.

A convention of the American Legion posts of central Oregon will be held in Madras May 13, and a large number of members will be taken into the organization. All of the posts of the district will be represented at the gathering. Acting Adjutant Nelson, has announced that he will attend.

The second of a series of dances was held under the auspices of Alfred E. Babcock post of the American Legion in Albany Friday night and Saturday. The post is planning a recent meeting named a committee to take charge of the community house.

Frank C. Stellmacher, veteran of the Spanish-American war and the world war, has been made vice-commander of the American Legion post of Albany to succeed Robert L. Stewart, who has resigned and moved to Albany.

Members of the American Legion in Hood River are making preparations for the one night of the American Legion on July 16. The city will declare a public holiday, according to Kent Shoenmaker, head of the climbing and an enormous amount of money put into circulation, while the public at large would be affected financially very little if congress passed a just taxation act.

Where organized labor stands regarding the payment of a bonus has been expressed by Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, in an address before the Connecticut state federation at New Haven. President Gompers strongly favors the American Legion's adjusted compensation measure, and said:

"The American Federation of Labor believes that the men who risked their lives, gave up their jobs and are now out of work should be compensated. Business would be revived and an enormous amount of money put into circulation, while the public at large would be affected financially very little if congress passed a just taxation act."

Enclosed gardens are finding great favor among eastern landscape architects. Walls, hedges, lattice—anything that will give the owner privacy is employed by many designers in work now being done. The old-time open lawn about the house seems to be less popular than the well-shut-in garden where the housewife may work among her favorite flowers and plants, and where the house may garden away from the public gaze.

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gion have been invited to attend and the crowd promises to be even larger than that which made the successful climb last year.

"Cooties" are numerous on board the liner Levathan, which has been taken to Newport News to undergo extensive repairs that will cost about \$3,000,000. An inspection of the ship disclosed the presence of many bugs on board.

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The ship will be given a vigorous delousing before mechanics start repair work. The delousing process alone, it is said, will cost several thousand dollars. In addition to tons of disinfectant that will be used to make the vessel sanitary, it is proposed to pour live steam into every crack and crevice of the Levathan to kill bugs and get rid of vermin.

"Keel ze robbar!" will be a brand new French battle cry this summer, for Paris reports that the French capital is to be treated to league baseball, a la Americaine, box scores and all.

Four teams, two made up of Yankee war veterans and two selected from French athletic clubs, will make up the league which the American Legion in Paris is forming. The legionnaires also will instruct in the proper throwing of pop bottles.

Games will be played at the starting grounds in the Bois de Boulogne.

Even the movie stars know how it feels, the American Legion of Minneapolis, Minn., reports. J. Warren Kerrigan of Hollywood, the writer of the state bonus bill of Minnesota, asking that his \$285 war compensation be "hurried up and paid." Kerrigan enlisted as a private in the 101st Central Postal Directory and was discharged a second lieutenant.

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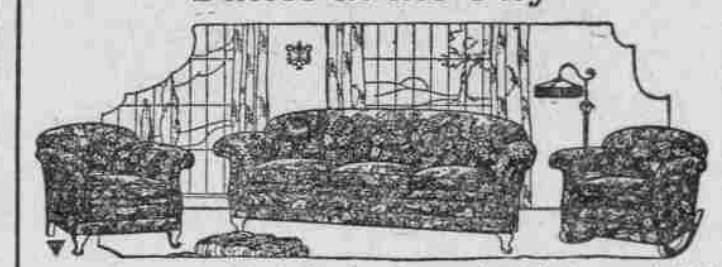
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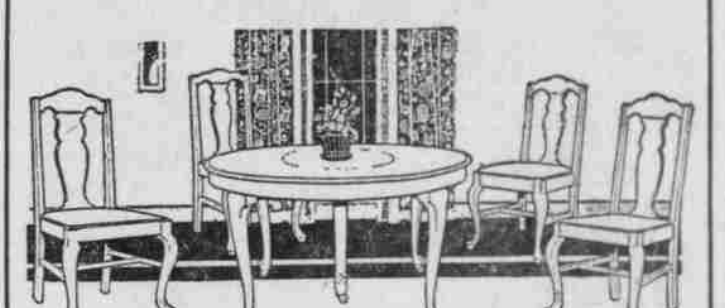
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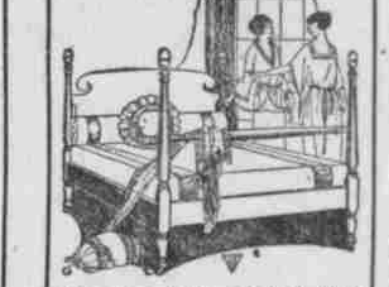
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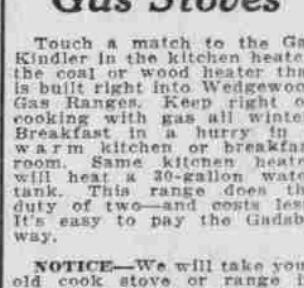
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