

The Citizen Veteran

BY HARRY B. CRITCHLOW.

MEMORIES of the days in France will ever linger with the millions of men who saw service there. For those who went through the hell at the front, the recollection of hardships and sufferings will never fade. One cannot wipe away or destroy the vision of one's buddy going down to his death in an advance on the enemy. Long hikes under the shells, days of hunger, cold and thirst; these will always haunt. But there is a light in the old French boxcars labeled "40 hommes et 8 chevaux," as they come back in memory, will never cease to bring smiles to the man who has been through the ordeal.

An outfit of Americans had landed in Le Havre, had spent two days in the "rest camp" on the hill back of the city, and now were ready to move to their training area. They marched down through the city to the old freight yards, where long trains of boxcars were on sidings. A French boxcar is about one-third the size of one of our standard American freight cars, and when its cargo of 40 men, or eight horses, is crowded in, comfort ceases to be.

"Where are we going to ride?" inquired a doughboy. "I don't see any passenger cars here."

"You'll ride right in there—about 40 of you," replied a veteran of the railway service who had been in France long enough to know an understood. "And take it from me, you'll have some ride."

"The long line of men, with one set of eyes, gazed at the boxcar. "Democracy, where are you?" inquired one man who possessed a streak of humor. "All men will be equal but free in one of those cracker boxes."

Loading time came. Officers counted off detachments of 40 men, and each of these detachments was assigned to a car. With full equipment on their backs, the men filed and crowded in. When all were inside there was scarcely room to stare and sit down or rest on the floor was simply out of the question.

"How long are we going to be imprisoned in a place like this?" was the query.

"Can't tell, but we have rations for two days," replied a sergeant.

These rations had been piled up in the middle of the car and took up room enough for at least one horse, had the transportation authorities seen fit to place the animal there.

The matter of disposal of packs soon became a problem. If they were deposited on the floor there was no place for the men to stand. If they were hung on the walls of the car from nails, there was a splendid chance for one to swing free and crack some future annihilator of the Boche on the head. Some took place with their heads and others placed their packs on the floor and tried to sit on them.

All of the men could not sit down at once, so they took turns. When the train finally left the Le Havre depot it was soon found that there were no brakes on the boxcars. There were humpers between each car and when the train slowed up these cracked together, as did the heads of the occupants of the cars.

It has been said that the true dispositions of men are discovered under trying circumstances. The man who could reverse his sense of humor in a French boxcar, with its cargo of 40 hardened humans, was indeed a gem, but there were many others who were not.

Legs grew tired after the train had rolled over miles of narrow track. Eyes grew tired. Men desired to repose on the floor, but the car had been so full that one man stretched out on a floor and attempted to catch a little "shut eye" on the train would jurch and hob-nail shoes would doleful find a location on his neck. Then followed a stream of profanity and declamations against war in general.

When the supper hour came the men partook of gold canned beans, corned "wiltie" and other army rations from the virgin cans and dumped the remains on the floor of the train. Coffee was out of the question.

When the shades of night gathered and the only light to be seen filtered out of the windows of the homes of peasants along the railroad, the men desired to sleep. Attempts were made to stretch out on the floor, but these were not successful.

Fatigue became so great after a time that the men could no longer stand. They fell from their swaying positions on the floor and piled up the best they could. Heads were resting on hob-nailed shoes. Shoes were on men's faces; packs suspended from the walls would break free on occasions and fall into the mass of agonized humanity below. There might be a groan or a curse, or what mattered a small affair like a 60-pound pack?

Hours of troubled slumber and then the morn. Men arose and tried to stretch, but their bodies, cramped all night, were almost paralyzed. Coal dust from the belching engines had mingled with flying dust from the right-of-way around itself into the men's faces. Scratches and welts showing the signs of contact with heavy shoes and falling packs were on their heads. The train stopped and they dragged their weary, bruised and agonized bodies from the cars. Misery is a mild term when attempting to describe their feelings. The man who would complain at a night in jail should try one night in a French box car, a companion to 39 other men.

All day the men rode in those cars. Then another night and morning came. A railroad in the Meuse-Haute Marne was reached and orders were given to "pile out." The men complied with orders as best they could. By that time they were so far gone on the road to exhaustion that they did not even feel like making complaint.

A long five-kilometer hike awaited them. Trudging along that road they could not even think of the folks at home. Their minds were blank.

Rides in those box cars came often. The officers, they care the more hardened the men became. They knew how to care for themselves under the circumstances, found with the four walls of "40 Hommes et 8 Chevaux." In many cases packs were unrolled, blankets extracted and placed in a thick carpet on the floor. Shoes were removed and the men were able to climb in and find repose. But there never was a French box-car ride that could be called comfortable.

The only box-car ride that ever can be recalled with pleasure is the last ride. And that last ride was the one which in the morning the big steamers were waiting to take cargoes of fighters back to the homeland.

The little cafe on the hill had been closed for the night. The military police had driven the last stragglers from the institution, and these stragglers with a good supply in their possession outside, found a resting place under a water tank. There were four of them and they were all non-commissioned officers.

"This is no place for us" declared one as some water splashed down his neck. "Let's move."

They opened a gate and walked into a Frenchman's oat field. Through an acre of oats they plowed with their heavy shoes, leaving a trail of

new legion flag pole in Scappoose, held a week ago. A flag was presented to the post by J. D. Watts, mayor of the town. A. R. Dorris, post commander, responded to the presentation speech. The Scappoose post is one of the youngest in the state and was organized through the efforts of Mr. Dorris.

Marvin Arfeld, well known in Portland, and former member of the 363 ambulance company, was the type of a soldier who believed in traveling as light as possible. Blankets were not a necessity to Marvin; he could always crawl under a comrade and feel comfortable. A messkit was heavy to carry on a long hike and what was the use of it when a tin can and a spoon shaped from wood would do as well. Marvin threw them all away. The one thing he hung onto was his gas mask.

The outfit had been moved in the woods of Parole just before the Argonne drive. Marvin had found lodgings under the blankets of the ever cheerful Tracey. Prior to the move, the two had retired for the night, when a gas alarm sounded. Both men awoke and reached for a gas mask. They grasped one mask at the same time. It was then that Marvin remembered that he had lost his mask during the day. He let go of the mask which was in his hand.

"I lost my mask today," he told Tracey. "This one is yours. Put it on."

"Nothing doing, Marvin," returned Tracey, attempting to talk without breathing. "You take this mask. You had a hold of it as soon as I did."

"No," replied Marvin. "It's yours, Tracey. I'll just sit here and die, if the gas comes."

"So will I," returned Tracey, and the two men let the mask remain between them, neither to talk without breathing. They waited and waited for the gas and what they thought would be sure death. It did not come. The alarm was a false one.

Why is it that the men who saw service at the front during the world war, attempt to do the same as they did before the war? This is a question that is frequently asked, and its answer can only be given by one who has been through the game at the front.

John Jones (we will call him such) before the war was continually seeking thrills. He would get up in the middle of the night to go to a fire. He read the stories or murders in the papers without skipping a line or giving a thought to the evoked books of adventure as though they were his daily bread.

War came and John enlisted, thinking that by doing he would have his desired round of adventure. He went across the "pond" and to the front. There he saw comrades shot down by him; dead men on their fields of operations; wounded men, mangled beyond repair, crying for death to take them from their misery; fields like Verdun where men unburied for years were scattered upon the ground; and all of the horrors that can be depicted, he saw. They came to be common place. The desire for thrills that had animated his being disappeared.

John came home and was discharged. He went back to his old job. When the fire alarm sounded, old working companions saw John start for a moment and then settle back to his work. They saw him grasp the morning paper, and pass by the story of the latest murder. Bill had seen in the paper that he had ever grasped the paper. Fires were commonplace. What was a fire compared to a night at the front when the star shells were flying; bombs from purring airplanes were falling into masses of humanity and shrapnel, gas and machine gun were taking their toll of wounded and dead?

John goes to dances today. He enjoys them after a fashion but he is not the same carefree lad that he was before 1918. He is probably a "wall-flower," according to the ideas of some of the girls. But John is no wall-flower; he is simply a man changed by the greatest of all experiences; an experience that cannot be duplicated anywhere save at the front.

At a recent meeting of the American legion in Astoria delegations from Seaside and Wauna posts attended. All of these posts have had a substantial increase in membership during the current year. An effort will be made to form a post in Westport soon.

An ex-soldier living in Mississippi, becoming the proud father of triplets, all girls, asked the American legion to suggest names for them. On his assignment that was a "good hand at poker," and therefore willing to "take a chance on your pick." It was suggested that the "three queens" be named Annie, Maude and Kate.

A proposal that the American legion be entrusted with the care for graves of Confederate veterans in the south has been made to General Julian S. Carr, Durham, N. C., commander of

the United Confederate veterans. National headquarters of the legion, sponsoring the move, also has made the same request of the Grand Army of the Republic.

"We see your ranks growing very thin, and while there are a few of you yet with the living, the legion has an ambition to prove its fidelity to you all by accepting as a sacred trust the privilege of caring for and decorating all of the graves of America's heroic dead, who fought on both sides of that struggle resulting in the rebirth of our nation," the legion's request reads.

The legion asks that it be allowed to assume its trust on the coming Memorial day, and after an exchange of our flags over the graves of your and our dead and a similar decoration for each and all throughout America will be binding and indisputable evidence of the unity of our country forever."

Oregon legion posts have been asked to place entrants in the athletic contests that will be held in connection with the national convention to be staged in New Orleans this October. There will be racing, swimming, boxing, wrestling and other athletic contests.

Readsport post of the American Legion comes forward with a declaration that it has in its membership the oldest enlisted man who saw service during the war. The candidate's name is Jesse E. Inman. He was born March 6, 1843, served as a civilian scout in the Civil War in 1871 and 1872. He enlisted as a navy blacksmith during the world war and had several months of service. He is engaged in Salvator Army work in Douglas county.

Legionnaires of Yamhill are starting the organization of a Boy Scout troop in their town. Arrangements for the formation of the troop are being made by Guy Wade, commander of the Yamhill post.

The American Legion post at Amity has made arrangements with the government for the use of army rifles for ceremonial purposes. An approved request for rifles has been forwarded by State Commander Goodell.

ROAD WELL CONSTRUCTED
County Engineer Approves Mapleton-Cushman Highway.

EUGENE, Or., May 26.—(Special).—The first section of 2300 feet of the new road being built by the Southern Pacific company between Mapleton and Cushman, along the north bank of the Siuslaw river, just completed, is a good piece of construction, according to P. M. Morse, county engineer, who has just returned from an inspection of the work, but it is very narrow and dangerous for timid drivers, he said.

The road, being built according to specifications and is much better than the old road that was destroyed by the railway company when it built its Coos Bay branch, but it is full of sharp turns at the top of high precipices. Turnouts are being provided every 200 or 300 feet, as two cars or other vehicles would be unable to pass at any other point in the road as far as it has been constructed.

2 HURT IN AUTO WRECK
Eugene Couple Injured When Car Turns Over Embankment.

EUGENE, Or., May 26.—(Special).—Mr. and Mrs. George Danner, of Eugene were seriously injured in an automobile accident near LeMoin, Cal., Tuesday, according to a letter received here from Mrs. Leona Robertson of this city. Mr. and Mrs. Danner left Sunday to visit their son, E. R. Danner, at Klamath Falls.

At LeMoin, a little place near Dunsmuir, their car went over an embankment, turning over. Mrs. Danner suffered a fracture of two ribs and Mr. Danner's arm was broken in two places.

\$305 in Prizes Offered.
OREGON AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE, Corvallis, May 26.—(Special).—Prizes of \$305 in scholarship prizes will be given next spring to the sophomores, and \$20 for the freshman girl. The A. J. Johnson prize for men is divided in like ratio. The Joseph Albert prize of \$20 goes to the senior man or woman, who has had the greatest and most wholesome influence for good during his college career. A new prize has been added, a silver loving cup, awarded by the Mountain States Power company of Corvallis to the senior man who has excelled in athletics in addition to maintaining a high standard of scholarship and character.

Eat Me at The Oaks Sunday The Elks

LIBERTY RANGE
Come and See How Inexpensive Summer Comfort Really Is

The Liberty Range on sale this week needs no introduction. We have been selling them for 10 years. Has six 3-inch covers, sectional plate top, polished large Oregon fire box; plenty of room for wood and coal. This range is fully guaranteed by Gadsbys. Special \$54.75

Combination GAS RANGE AND KITCHEN HEATER
A quickly kindled fire in the coal and wood heater at the end of this Wedgewood, warms up the atmosphere faster than any furnace and at a fraction of the cost.

Special Sale of Dining Room Suites
This practical combination makes it an absolute pleasure to cook with gas at all times.

Our Rug Department
In our large Rug Department, the most extensive display in the city, you will find just the right patterns and colors to faithfully carry out your ideas for a truly "better home." Prices also are very moderate.

White Porcelain enamel door fronts, splashers and dirt pan.
Most economical range you can buy.
Guaranteed by the Manufacturer.

Notice the Prices Below on Bedroom Suites
We find our stock of bedroom furniture is considerably larger than ordinarily at this time of the year and consequently have made sweeping reductions on practically every suite shown. The suite pictured above, including a full-length vanity dresser, is a beautiful Queen Anne period design finished in American walnut. It is a quality suite through and through and the special reduced prices on these pieces are all follow: Room set, \$49.50; Bed, \$36.00; Dresser, \$36.00; Chiffonette, \$35.00. Price complete \$154.50

Special Sale of Dining Room Suites
We have just placed on display a solid carload of the newest period styles in complete dining room sets. We have many more sets in the latest Italian Renaissance designs, there are also included many patterns in Queen Anne and other popular period styles. The complete suite pictured is one of the most attractive values we have had in many a day and its price complete, with six chairs, is only \$139.50

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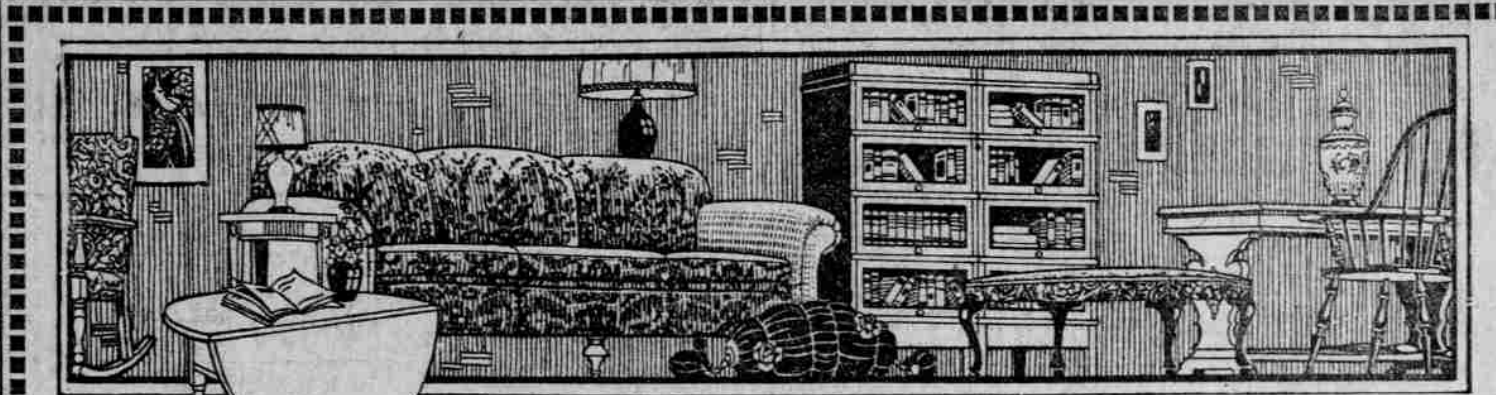
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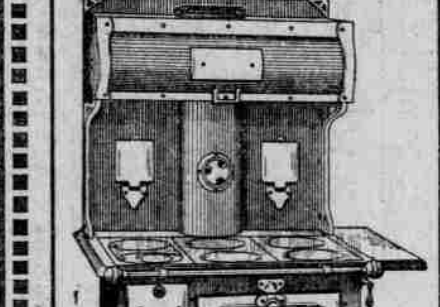
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Better Furniture, Better Prices, Better Terms

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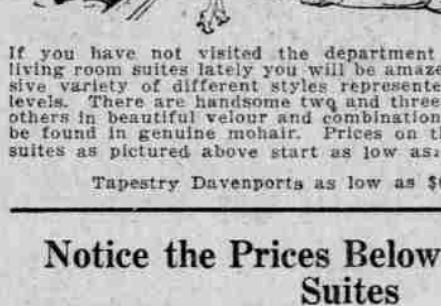
SPECIAL Top Icer Refrigerator \$19.75
A great sale of these top icer refrigerators at a bargain price. The case is finished in golden oak, with thickly insulated walls. A spacious food chamber, warranted to keep food perfectly, is full white enameled. Just 40 of these refrigerators to be sold tomorrow at this special price. Be early!



Colonial Four-Poster
The one style of bed that always is in the best of good taste. This is an exceptionally handsome pattern, finished in rich mahogany, specially priced at only \$45.00



\$2.25 Delivers This Rocker
Deeply upholstered fireside rockers with coil spring seats and heavy roll arms are priced now at a genuine saving. Upholstered in the very finest grade of brown and tan Spanish leather. These rockers will sell fast at this special sale price—\$22.50



Couch Hammocks
No other single piece of furniture you can buy will give you so much real satisfaction as a hammock. We have a wide variety of the more popular new styles at real economy prices.



Baby Carriages
All the newest styles and finishes are represented in our spring opening. Mothers will be sure to find the type of carriage wanted at prices as low as \$29.50. Go-Carts as cheap as \$18.



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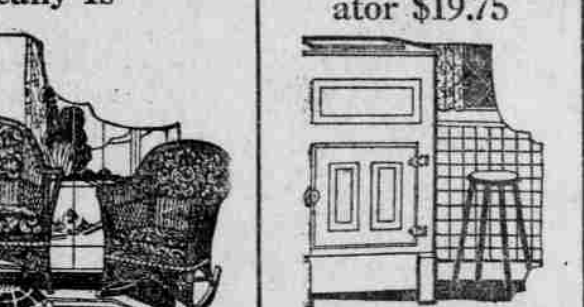
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