



"OVER THE TOP"

AN AMERICAN SOLDIER WHO WENT

ARTHUR GUY EMPEY

MACHINE GUNNER, SERVING IN FRANCE

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SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I—Fired by the news of the sinking of the Lusitania by a German submarine, Arthur Guy Empey, an American, leaves his office in Jersey City and goes to England where he enlists in the British army.

CHAPTER II—After a period of training, Empey volunteers for immediate service and soon finds himself in rest billets "somewhere in France," where he first makes the acquaintance of the ever-present "jam tin."

CHAPTER III—Empey attends his first church services at the front while a German Fokker circles over the congregation.

CHAPTER IV—Empey's command goes into the front-line trenches and is under fire for the first time.

CHAPTER V—Empey learns to adopt the motto of the British Tommy, "If you are going to get it, you'll get it, so never mind."

CHAPTER VI—Back in rest billets, Empey gets his first experience as a mess orderly.

CHAPTER VII—Empey learns how the British soldiers are fed.

CHAPTER VIII—Back in the front-line trench, Empey sees his first friend of the trenches "go West."

CHAPTER IX—Empey makes his first visit to a dugout in "Suicide Ditch."

CHAPTER X—Empey learns what constitutes a "day's work" in the front-line trench.

CHAPTER XI—Empey goes "over the top" for the first time in a charge on the German trenches and is wounded by a bayonet thrust.

Men on my right and left would stumble and fall. Some would try to get up, while others remained huddled and motionless. Then smashed-up barbed wire came into view and seemed carried on a tide to the rear. Suddenly, in front of me loomed a bashed-in trench about four feet wide. Queer-looking forms like mud turtles were scrambling up its wall. One of these forms seemed to slip and then rolled to the bottom of the trench. I

leaped across this intervening space. The man to my left seemed to pause in midair, then pitched head down into the German trench. I laughed out loud in my delirium. Upon alighting on the other side of the trench I came to with a sudden jolt. Right in front of me loomed a giant form with a rifle which looked about ten feet long, on the end of which seemed seven bayonets. These flashed in the air in front of me. Then through my mind flashed the admonition of our bayonet instructor back in Blighty. He had said, "whenever you get in a charge and run your bayonet up to the hilt into a German the Fritz will fall. Perhaps your rifle will be wrenched from your grasp. Do not waste time, if the bayonet is fouled in his equipment, by putting your foot on his stomach and tugging at the rifle to extricate the bayonet. Simply press the trigger and the bullet will free it." In my present situation this was the logic, but for the life of me I could not remember how he had told me to get my bayonet into the German. To me this was the paramount issue. I closed my eyes and lunged forward. My rifle was torn from my hands. I must have gotten the German because he had disappeared. About twenty feet to my left front was a huge Prussian nearly six feet four inches in height, a fine specimen of physical manhood. The bayonet from his rifle was missing, but he clutched the barrel in both hands and was swinging the butt around his head. I could almost hear the swish of the butt passing through the air. Three little Tommies were engaged with him.

They looked like pigmies alongside of the Prussian. The Tommy on the left was gradually circling to the rear of his opponent. It was a funny sight to see them duck the swinging butt and try to jab him at the same time. The Tommy nearest me received the butt of the German's rifle in a smashing blow below the right temple. It smashed his head like an eggshell. He pitched forward on his side and a convulsive shudder ran through his body. Meanwhile the other Tommy had gained the rear of the Prussian. Suddenly about four inches of bayonet protruded from the throat of the Prussian soldier, who staggered forward and fell. I will never forget the look of blank astonishment that came over his face.

Then something hit me in the left shoulder and my left side went numb. It felt as if a hot poker was being driven through me. I felt no pain—just a sort of nervous shock. A bayonet had pierced me from the rear. I fell backward on the ground, but was not unconscious, because I could see dim objects moving around me. Then a flash of light in front of my eyes and unconsciousness. Something had hit me on the head. I have never found out what it was.

I dreamed I was being tossed about in an open boat on a heaving sea and opened my eyes. The moon was shining. I was on a stretcher being carried down one of our communication trenches. At the advanced first-aid post my wounds were dressed, and then I was put into an ambulance and sent to one of the base hospitals. The wounds in my shoulder and head were not serious and in six weeks I had rejoined my company for service in the front line.

CHAPTER XII.

Bombing.

The boys in the section welcomed me back, but there were many strange faces. Several of our men had gone West in that charge, and were lying "somewhere in France" with a little wooden cross at their heads. We

in rest billets. The next day our captain asked for volunteers for bombers' school. I gave my name and was accepted. I had joined the Suicide club, and my troubles commenced. Thirty-two men of the battalion, including myself, were sent to L—, where we went through a course in bombing. Here we were instructed in the uses, methods of throwing and manufacture of various kinds of hand grenades.



Throwing Hand Grenades. From the old "jam tin," now obsolete, to the present Mills bomb, the standard of the British army.

It all depends where you are as to what you are called. In France they call you a "bomber" and give you medals, while in neutral countries they call you an anarchist and give you "life."

From the very start the Germans were well equipped with effective bombs and trained bomb throwers, but the English army was as little prepared in this important department of fighting as in many others. At bomb-

ing school an old sergeant or one of the sentry guards, whom I had the good fortune to meet, told me of the discouragements this branch of the service suffered before they could meet the Germans on an equal footing. (Pacifists and small army people in the U. S. please read with care.) The first English expeditionary forces had no bombs at all, but had clicked a lot of casualties from those thrown by the Boches. One bright morning someone higher up had an idea and issued an order detaching two men from each platoon to go to bombing school to learn the duties of a bomber and how to manufacture bombs. Noncommissioned officers were generally selected for this course. After about two weeks at school they returned to their units in rest billets or in the fire trench, as the case might be, and got busy teaching their platoons how to make "jam tins."

Previously an order had been issued for all ranks to save empty jam tins for the manufacture of bombs. A professor of bombing would sit on the fire step in the front trench with the remainder of his section crowding around to see him work.

On his left would be a pile of empty and rusty jam tins, while beside him on the fire step would be a miscellaneous assortment of material used in the manufacture of the "jam tins."

Tommy would stoop down, get an empty "jam tin," take a handful of clayey mud from the parapet, and line the inside of the tin with this substance. Then he would reach over, pick up his detonator and explosive, and insert them in the tin, fuse protruding. On the fire step would be

Trains into Monmouth

L've Portland 7:15, a m.	Gerlinger 10:20, Independence 10:32, Monm'th 10:50
" Salem 9:35, "	" " " " " " " " " "
" " 1:40, p m.	Dallas 2:45, " " " " " " " " " "
" " 3:45, "	Gerlinger 4:24, Independence 4:37, Monmouth 4:55
" " 6:00, "	" " 6:45, " " 6:57, " " 7:10
" Portland 3:30,	Connects with above
" Corvallis 6:45, a m.	Independence 7:35, Arrive Monmouth 7:45
" " 1:15, p m.	" " 2:14 " " 2:30
" Dallas 7:00, a m.	Arrive Monmouth 7:25
" Airlie 8:30, a m and 3:45, p m.	Arrives Monmouth 9:05 a m and 4:13 p m
Leave Independence, 6:50 a m, 7:35, 8:45, 10:35, 12:20, 1:30, p m, 2:20, 3:50, 4:40, 7:00	

Trains out of Monmouth

L've Monmouth 7:05 a m.	Independence 7:35, Gerlinger 7:49, Ar Salem 8:30
" Same as above	Portland 11:10
" Monmouth 1:45, p m,	" 2:14, " 2:27, Salem 3:10
" Same as above	Portland 5:50
" Monmouth 4:05,	" 4:40, " 4:55, Salem 5:30
" " 9:05, a m.	Dallas 10:00 " " 11:00
" " 4:30, p m.	" " 4:45, " " 5:35
" " 9:05, a m,	Independence 10:32, Corvallis 11:20
" " 4:55, p m,	" " 6:57, " " 7:45
" " 7:25 a m and 3:10 p m.	Arrives Airlie 8 a m and 3:40 pm
Leave Monmouth 7:05, a m, 8:15 9:05, 10:50, 12:30, M, 1:45, p m, 2:35, 4:15, 4:55, 7:10	

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