

# "OVER THE TOP"

By An American Arthur Guy Empey  
Soldier Who Went Machine Gunner, Serving in France

Copyright 1917, by Arthur Guy Empey

## EMPEY AND HIS COMRADES REPULSE A FIERCE GAS ATTACK MADE BY THE GERMANS.

Synopsis.—Fired by the sinking of the Lusitania, with the loss of American lives, Arthur Guy Empey, an American living in Jersey City, goes to England and enlists as a private in the British army. After a short experience as a recruiting officer in London, he is sent to training quarters in France, where he first hears the sound of big guns and makes the acquaintance of "cooties." After a brief period of training Empey's company is sent into the front-line trenches, where he takes his first turn on the fire step while the bullets whiz overhead. Empey learns, as comrade falls, that death lurks always in the trenches. Chaplain distinguishes himself by rescuing wounded men under hot fire. With pick and shovel Empey has experience as a trench digger in No Man's Land. Exciting experience on listening post duty. Exciting work on observation post duty. Back in rest billets Empey writes and stages a successful play. Once more in the front trenches, Empey goes "over the top" in a successful but costly attack on the German lines.

## CHAPTER XXIII—Continued.

A gas helmet is made of cloth, treated with chemicals. There are two windows, or glass eyes, in it, through which you can see. Inside there is a rubber-covered tube, which goes in the mouth. You breathe through your nose; the gas, passing through the cloth helmet, is neutralized by the action of the chemicals. The foul air is exhaled through the tube in the mouth, this tube being so constructed that it prevents the inhaling of the outside air or gas. One helmet is good for five hours of the strongest gas. Each Tommy carries two of them slung around his shoulder in a waterproof canvas bag. He must wear this bag at all times, even while sleeping. To change a defective helmet, you take out the new one, hold your breath, pull the old one off, placing the new one over your head, tucking in the loose ends under the collar of your tunic.

For a minute, pandemonium reigned in our trench—Tommy adjusting their helmets, bombers running here and there, and men turning out of the dugouts with fixed bayonets, to man the fire step.

Re-enforcements were pouring out of the communication trenches. Our gun crew were busy mounting the machine gun on the parapet and bringing up extra ammunition from the dugout.

German gas is heavier than air and soon fills the trenches and dugouts, where it has been known to lurk for two or three days, until the air is purified by means of large chemical sprayers.

We had to work quickly, as Fritz generally follows the gas with an infantry attack.

A company man on our right was too slow in getting on his helmet; he sank to the ground, clutching at his throat, and after a few spasmodic twistings went West (died). It was horrible to see him die, but we were powerless to help him. In the corner of a traverse, a little, muddy cur dog, one of the company's pets, was lying dead, with his paws over his nose.

It's the animals that suffer the most—the horses, mules, cattle, dogs, cats and rats—they having no helmets to save them. Tommy does not sympathize with rats in a gas attack.

At times gas has been known to travel, with dire results, fifteen miles behind the lines.

A gas, or smoke helmet, as it is called, at the best is a vile-smelling thing, and it is not long before one gets a violent headache from wearing it.

Our eighteen-pounders were bursting in No Man's Land, in an effort, by the artillery, to disperse the gas clouds.

The fire step was lined with crouching men, bayonets fixed, and bombs near at hand to repel the expected attack.

Our artillery had put a barrage of curtain fire on the German lines, to try and break up their attack and keep back re-enforcements.

I trained my machine gun on their trench and its bullets were raking the parapet.

Then over they came, bayonets glistening. In their respirators, which have a large snout in front, they looked like some horrible nightmare.

All along our trench, rifles and machine guns spoke, our shrapnel was bursting over their heads. They went down in heaps, but new ones took the places of the fallen. Nothing could stop that mad rush. The Germans reached our barbed wire, which had previously been demolished by their shells, then it was bomb against bomb, and the devil for all.

Suddenly my head seemed to burst from a loud "crack" in my ear. Then my head began to swim, throat got dry, and a heavy pressure on the lungs warned me that my helmet was leaking. Turning by gun over to No. 2, I changed helmets.

The trench started to wind like a snake, and sandbags appeared to be floating in the air. The noise was horrible; I sank onto the fire step, needles seemed to be pricking my flesh, then blackness.

I was awakened by one of my mates removing my smoke helmet. How delicious that cool, fresh air felt in my lungs.

A strong wind had arisen and dispersed the gas.

They told me that I had been "out" for three hours; they thought I was dead.

The attack had been repulsed after a hard fight. Twice the Germans had gained a foothold in our trench, but had been driven out by counter-attacks. The trench was filled with their dead and ours. Through a periscope I counted eighteen dead Germans in our wire; they were a ghastly sight in their horrible-looking respirators.

I examined my first smoke helmet. A bullet had gone through it on the left side, just grazing my ear. The gas had penetrated through the hole made in the cloth.

Out of our crew of six we lost two killed and two wounded.

That night we buried all of the dead, excepting those in No Man's Land. In death there is not much distinction; friend and foe are treated alike.

After the wind had dispersed the gas the R. A. M. C. got busy with their chemical sprayers, spraying out the dugouts and low parts of the trenches to dissipate any fumes of the German gas which may have been lurking in same.

Two days after the gas attack I was sent to division headquarters, in answer to an order requesting that captains of units should detail a man whom they thought capable of passing an examination for the divisional intelligence department.

Before leaving for this assignment I went along the front-line trench saying good-by to my mates and lording it over them, telling them that I had



A Gas Helmet.

clicked a cushy job behind the lines, and how sorry I felt that they had to stay in the front line and argue out the war with Fritz. They were envious but still good-natured, and as I left the trench to go to the rear they shouted after me:

"Good luck, Yank, old boy; don't forget to send up a few fags to your old mates."

I promised to do this and left. I reported at headquarters with sixteen others and passed the required examination. Out of the sixteen applicants four were selected.

I was highly elated because I was, I thought, in for a cushy job back at the base.

The next morning the four reported to division headquarters for instructions. Two of the men were sent to large towns in the rear of the lines with an easy job. When it came our turn the officer told us we were good men and had passed a very creditable examination.

My tin hat began to get too small for me, and I noted that the other man, Atwell by name, was sticking his chest out more than usual.

The officer continued: "I think I can use you two men to great advantage in the front line. Here are your orders and instructions, also the pass which gives you full authority as special M. P. detailed on intelligence work. Report at the front line according to your instructions. It is risky work and I wish you both the best of luck."

My heart dropped to zero and Atwell's face was a study. We saluted and left.

That wishing us the "best of luck" sounded very ominous in our ears; if he had said "I wish you both a swift

and painless death" it would have been more to the point.

When we had read our instructions we knew we were in for it good and plenty.

What Atwell said is not fit for publication, but I strongly seconded his opinion of the war, army and divisional headquarters in general.

After a bit our spirits rose. We were full-fledged spy-catchers, because our instructions and orders, said so.

We immediately reported to the nearest French estaminet and had several glasses of muddy water, which they called beer. After drinking our beer we left the estaminet and hailed an empty ambulance.

After showing the driver our passes we got in. The driver was going to the part of the line where we had to report.

How the wounded ever survived a ride in that ambulance was inexplicable to me. It was worse than riding on a gun carriage over a rock road.

The driver of the ambulance was a corporal of the R. A. M. C., and he had the "wind up," that is, he had an aversion to being under fire.

I was riding on the seat with him while Atwell was sitting in the ambulance, with his legs hanging out of the back.

As we passed through a shell-destroyed village a mounted military policeman stopped us and informed the driver to be very careful when we got out on the open road, as it was very dangerous, because the Germans lately had acquired the habit of shelling it. The corporal asked the trooper if there was any other way around, and was informed that there was not. Upon this he got very nervous and wanted to turn back, but we insisted that he proceed and explained to him that he would get into serious trouble with his commanding officer if he returned without orders; we wanted to ride, not walk.

From his conversation we learned that he had recently come from England with a draft and had never been under fire, hence his nervousness.

We convinced him that there was not much danger, and he appeared greatly relieved.

When we at last turned into the open road we were not so confident. On each side there had been a line of trees, but now, all that was left of them were torn and battered stumps. The fields on each side of the road were dotted with recent shell holes, and we passed several in the road itself. We had gone about half a mile when a shell came whistling through the air and burst in a field about three hundred yards to our right. Another soon followed this one and burst on the edge of the road about four hundred yards in front of us.

I told the driver to throw in his speed clutch, as we must be in sight of the Germans. I knew the signs; that battery was ranging for us, and the quicker we got out of its zone of fire the better. The driver was trembling like a leaf, and every minute I expected him to pile us up in the ditch. I preferred the German fire.

In the back Atwell was holding onto the straps for dear life, and was singing at the top of his voice:

We beat you at the Marne,  
We beat you at the Aisne,  
We gave you hell at Neuve Chapelle,  
And here we are again.

Just then we hit a small shell hole and nearly capsized. Upon a loud yell from the rear I looked behind, and there was Atwell sitting in the middle of the road, shaking his fist at us. His equipment, which he had taken off upon getting into the ambulance, was strung out on the ground, and his rifle was in the ditch.

Empey is called upon to do duty as a member of a firing squad. His description of the execution is given in the next installment.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Traits of Bird Lovers.  
Years ago, during a winter's visit in London, I used to watch the persons who regularly fed the birds in Hyde park. I noticed that most of them were people of apparently humble circumstances, a few pretty close to underfeeding themselves. It was delightful to see how much pleasure they all took in keeping these birds from hunger.

Two that I saw each day for a week or so, evidently husband and wife, I ventured to speak to. Eagerly they talked about the birds as they might have talked about children, noting and relishing individual characteristics.

"We have become so fond of them," said the wife. "They recognize us now, many of them, and a few come to us quite fearlessly. We should feel quite uncomfortable if we should miss a day. They are like members of the family that have to be cared for."—Exchange.

A Swedish engineer's stoking device makes 1.8 tons of pulverized peat produce as much power in locomotives as a ton of coal.

## The Composite Girl

By LOUISE OLIVER

(Copyright, 1915, by the McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)

Katherine frowned with displeasure as she turned to the first story in the magazine the postman had just brought. The story with her own name at the top in large letters under the title had been illustrated as she had feared by Julian Fletcher, and Julian Fletcher had managed to spoil the last half dozen or so of her contributions to the National.

Other people raved about his work, and did not stop to insist upon the fact, as did the author, that an illustration should stick to the context. When a girl is said to come down a stairway in a queenly gown of velvet and spangles it is maddening to see in the illustration a debonaire lass tripping lightly down the steps in a frothy creation of juvenile ruffles and a sash. Also when one describes a heroine as having raven locks and dark, soulful eyes, it is the veriest heresy to have her reproduced in a picture with rather fluffy hair of an indiscriminate yellow and eyes of gray with an unmistakable sense of humor that compelled one who gazed to smile back in answering sympathy.

Just now the lady represented in the picture was supposed to be a haughty person who prided herself on her knowledge of clothes. Also she was supposed to be alighting from her limousine and drawing back in startled horror as she saw approaching the one person in the world she was trying to avoid.

But instead of horrified haughtiness, the artist had sketched in an expression of rather glorified naughtiness. There again was an expression that rather refused to take life seriously.

"If," said Katherine, "that man wants to be a buffoon, how does it come he's engaged to spoil perfectly serious stories? I'm going to write to the editor and tell him that if he wants any more stuff of mine he's got to hunt another illustrator."

She looked again into the eyes of the girl who was intended to be soulful. In spite of herself she smiled back. Then happening to look up into her own mirror, she was startled. Her own eyes looking back at her from the glass were the exact counterpart of those on the page. And her hair, wavy and caught back loosely from her face, with its part on one side, was exactly like that of the girl in the picture.

Then she caught up another picture, and another, and studied them, long and carefully. Then she took another inventory of herself.

Slowly the bright color mounted to her cheeks, and her breath came hard. The pictures in the magazine were of her, there wasn't a doubt of it. And now it came back to her gradually that she had heard people say they had noticed a resemblance. And the dress in the stairway picture was certainly hers, and the rather youthful knockabout suit of the limousine lady who was supposed to know how to dress, was a replica of her own blue jersey. And the hat!

Katherine grew thoughtful. What vengeance could she wreak upon Julian Fletcher, who, evidently knowing her by sight, had had his own little joke at her expense. But alas—even while planning vengeance, the gray-blue eyes, like those of the limousine lady, rather lacked the hardness essential to real vendetta.

She tossed back her head finally, having reached at least a partial decision, that is, in order to settle her account with one artist she must make up the difference she had had with another. Jerry Page, her erstwhile enemy, would now be essential to the fulfillment of her scheme and she must make up with him right away.

Poor Jerry! After all it was too bad the way she had treated him. She never dreamed she'd miss him so much until he had ceased to come. In the old days he had a way of giving three quick knocks and sticking in his head and saying: "Work's the password. Who goes there?"

If she was busy, she'd call out, "Kate." And he would softly close the door and vanish.

But if she called out huskily, "A great big bear!" he would let the rest of himself in, his pockets crackling suspiciously upon parcels from the delicatessen across the street.

Then Katherine would lay a cloth and they would have lunch together. Sometimes when he had sold a picture and she had sold a story they would go to dinner at a big hotel and to a theater to celebrate.

Lately, however, Katherine had sold so many stories that she needed no longer to live on the same street as the delicatessen. And having sold more stories she worked more, and her answer to Jerry's knock had more and more seldom been "A great big bear." But then she didn't have to depend on packages for her meals any more. She had her own maid in neat black and white to announce quietly that dinner was served. Jerry came a few times at her invitation, but he didn't seem to be himself. Finally he blamed her for not caring for his friendship and they had quarreled after discussing it.

But now she needed Jerry and she smiled rather wistfully as she put on her hat and coat for a visit back to the old street.

She knocked timidly at the studio door, and Jerry himself in his old velvet coat opened it.

With his hand on his heart he executed a most profound bow. "Faith," said he slowly straightening, "it's a beautiful dream I'm having. I never mean to go to sleep."

She came in smiling. "Well, wake up, Jerry. I don't want to talk to a somnambulist. I've come on business, and you'll have to be very wide awake."

"At your service, m'lady. Won't you sit down? It isn't often I have such distinguished company."

She laughed. "Say, Jerry, before I ask you to do something for me I want to tell you I'm sorry for everything. I see things differently now, but it never occurred to me until afterward that you would think my prosperity had gone to my head. I didn't mean to say those things, Jerry. Forgive me, will you?"

"It's an honor to have a grievance. If forgiving kills the hope of another visit, I'm loath to consent."

"Come off your exalted perch, Jerry," she laughed. "I guess I'm forgiven. Look here, I want you to help me to get even with Julian Fletcher. He's spoiling everything I write by sketching me into the illustrations. I can't imagine his motive."

"Perhaps you are his ideal. Most artists feel they can do better with an ideal. And perhaps you didn't realize it, but you're a very beautiful ideal for any artist."

She reddened. "Jerry Page, I believe you are defending him! I don't see why you should when he's taken the place you ought to have. He's the most popular illustrator today, I do believe. And his things can't be compared with yours. Think of his putting one girl into every picture!"

"That's forgivable. We all do it. We can't help it. You see, as I said, we get one girl into our head and it's all up, we can't see anything else."

"But he hasn't got me into his head. I never even saw him."

"Yes, Kate, dear, you did. You're looking straight at him."

"Jerry!"

"Surest thing you know."

"You're Julian Fletcher?"

"Yes."

"But you don't—you haven't got me—I mean—"

"Yes I have. I've got you in my head and my heart all the time. I couldn't tell you in the old days when all I could afford was an occasional meal. But I love you, Kate, and I want you. And in all your dear stories I see only you. Now what vengeance will you have?"

She considered a minute, then into her gray eyes returned the teasing smile of the stairway girl.

"This!" she said, going over to him and offering her mouth for a kiss.

## HAS SITUATION ALL SIZED UP

Writer on Metropolitan Daily Arrangely Imagines He Knows All About the Country Preys.

We are prone to hypercritically sniff at the country correspondence in the old home paper, and tire of its weekly monotony of trivialities. Out in the Good Intent neighborhood it seems as if some member of the Pumpelly tribe is everlastingly cursed with a rising in his head, or the Pumpelly girls are always Sunday afternoon at somebody else's home, or a certain feller is Wednesday eveninging at the Pumpelly residence, or Grandma Feebles is no better in spite of the fact that she is kin to the Pumpellys, or Zeke Fagg is tending 'Squire Pumpelly's north forty this year, or Uncle Tuck Pumpelly can't remember as wet or dry a season as this is, or young Angus Pumpelly has bought a new henryford and all the girls had better watch out, and a good deal more of equally unimportant information.

If we know nothing of the conditions in that region we decide that there are few persons of any consequence there except Pumpellys. If we are sophisticated we say, "Uh-huh! The correspondent is a Pumpelly!" The truth of the matter is that the items are written by a young feller named Smith, who is stuck on one of the Pumpelly girls. By-and-by he will marry her and presently thereafter cease writing about the Pumpellys. And then there will be another correspondent at Good Intent, and the Hefefingers or the Daubenspecks will have their innings.—Kansas City Star.

## Comforts for the Soldiers.

An air cushion is worth its weight in gold to the man in the trenches. These can be bought in various sizes and when not in use fit into a small rubberized envelope. "I would rather lose my whole kit bag than that air cushion," one of the returned soldiers told me. "It is great to have something soft to lay your head on, after hours and hours of tramping." Tablet ink also deserves mention. This can be dissolved in water and makes a splendid writing fluid. Fountain pens have a habit of running dry, and sometimes ink is hard to get.—Woman's Home Companion.

## Exit Inspector.

A school inspector happened to notice that a terrestrial globe in one of the classrooms was very dusty. "Why, there's dust here an inch thick!" he said, drawing his finger across its surface.

"It's thicker than that, sir," calmly replied the master.

"What do you mean?" exclaimed the inspector, glaringly.

"Well, you've—er—got your finger on the Sahara desert," came the reply.

What They're Putting Up.  
"Any building going on in this town?"  
"No mister. All we're putting up nowadays is arguments."

## Flake's Admiration for Darwin.

The biography of John Flake contains this comment in one of his letters from England: "Darwin is dearest, sweetest, loveliest old grandpa that ever was. And, on the whole, he impresses me with his strength more than any man I have yet seen. There is a charming kind of strength about him and about everything he does. He is not burning eager like Huxley. He has a mellow blue eye and is the gentlest of gentle old fellows. . . . None of these seem to know how great they are. Darwin is one of the most truly great men I ever saw."

## Heal Baby Rashes.

That itchy, burn and torture. A Cuticura Soap bath gives instant relief when followed by a gentle application of Cuticura Ointment. For free samples address, "Cuticura, Dept. 5, Boston." At druggists and by mail Soap 25, Ointment 25 and 50.—Adv.

## Daily Thought.

Look up and down; look forward and not back; look out and not in; and lend a hand.—Edward Everett Hale.

## Gospel Motorwagon.

A gospel motorwagon was constructed in 1896 for a New York pastor, in which he preached. It had capacity for ten singers and a folding organ.—Chevrolet Review.

## Earliest Guide Book.

The earliest guide book printed in English is "Instructions for Forraign Travel," published in 1642 by James Howell, a famous traveler of that day.

## Only One Possible Victor.

There are two sides to every question, but only one side can be the right side and only one side can come out on top.

## WHEN YOU WAKE UP DRINK GLASS OF HOT WATER

Wash the poisons and toxins from system before putting more food into stomach.

Wash yourself on the inside before breakfast like you do on the outside. This is vastly more important because the skin pores do not absorb impurities into the blood, causing illness, while the bowel pores do.

For every ounce of food and drink taken into the stomach, nearly an ounce of waste material must be carried out of the body. If this waste material is not eliminated day by day it quickly ferments and generates poisons, gases and toxins which are absorbed or sucked into the blood stream, through the lymph ducts which should suck only nourishment to sustain the body.

A splendid health measure is to drink, before breakfast each day, a glass of real hot water with a teaspoonful of limestone phosphate in it, which is a harmless way to wash these poisons, gases and toxins from the stomach, liver, kidneys and bowels; thus cleansing, sweetening and freshening the entire alimentary canal before putting more food into the stomach.

A quarter pound of limestone phosphate costs but very little at the drug store but is sufficient to make anyone an enthusiast on inside-bathing.

## In Primitive New England.

In the early days of New England history when there were no stoves in the churches, and women took hot potatoes in their muffs, men sometimes brought their dogs to church to serve as foot-warmers. For this privilege a charge was made of six-pence a dog.

## EAT LESS MEAT IF BACK HURTS

Take a glass of Salts to Flush Kidneys if bladder bothers you.

Eating meat regularly eventually produces kidney trouble in some form or other, says a well-known authority, because the uric acid in meat excites the kidneys, they become overworked; get sluggish; clog up and cause all sorts of distress, particularly backache and misery in the kidney region; rheumatic twinges, severe headaches, acid stomach, constipation, torpid liver, sleeplessness, bladder and urinary irritation.

The moment your back hurts or kidneys aren't acting right, or if bladder bothers you, get about four ounces of Jad Salts from any good pharmacy; take a tablespoonful in a glass of water before breakfast for a few days and your kidneys will then act fine. This famous salt is made from the acid of grapes and lemon juice, combined with lithia, and has been used for generations to flush clogged kidneys and stimulate them to normal activity; also to neutralize the acids in the urine so it no longer irritates, thus ending bladder disorders.

Jad Salts cannot injure anyone; makes a delightful effervescent lithia-water drink which millions of men and women take now and then to keep the kidneys and urinary organs clean, thus avoiding serious kidney disease.