

"OVER THE TOP"

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

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EMPEY LEARNS THAT SOMETIMES A STREAK OF YELLOW CAN TURN PURE WHITE.

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 "cottons." 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 comrades 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. Soon afterwards Empey and his comrades repulse a determined gas attack launched by the Germans. His next experience is as a member of a firing squad which executes a sentence of death.

CHAPTER XXIV—Continued.

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On his left, in the darkness, he could make out the shadowy forms of trees; crawling on his hands and knees, stopping and crouching with fear at each shell-burst, he finally reached an old orchard and covered at the base of a shot-scarred apple tree.

He remained there all night, listening to the sound of the guns and ever praying, praying that his useless life would be spared.

As dawn began to break, he could discern little dark objects protruding from the ground all about him. Curiosity mastered his fear and he crawled to one of the objects, and there, in the uncertain light, he read on a little wooden cross:

"Pte. H. S. Wheaton, No. 1670, 1st London Regt. R. F. Killed in action, April 25, 1916. R. I. P." (Rest in Peace).

When it dawned on him that he had been hiding all night in a cemetery, his reason seemed to leave him, and a mad desire to be free from it all made him rush madly away, falling over little wooden crosses, smashing some and trampling others under his feet.

In his flight he came to an old French dugout, half caved in and partially filled with slimy and filthy water.

Like a fox being chased by the hounds, he ducked into this hole, and threw himself on a pile of old empty sandbags, wet and mildewed. Then—unconsciousness.

On the next day, he came to; far distant voices sounded in his ears. Opening his eyes, in the entrance of the dugout he saw a corporal and two men with fixed bayonets.

The corporal was addressing him: "Get up, you white-livered blighter! Curse you and the day you ever joined D company, spoiling their fine record! I'll be you up against the wall, and a good job too. Get hold of him, men, and if he makes a break, give him the bayonet, and send it home, the cowardly sneak. Come on, you, move, we've been looking for you long enough."

Lloyd, trembling and weakened by his long fast, tottered out, assisted by a soldier on each side of him.

They took him before the captain, but could get nothing out of him but: "For God's sake, sir, don't have me shot, don't have me shot!"

The captain, utterly disgusted with him, sent him under escort to division headquarters for trial by court-martial, charged with desertion under fire. They shoot deserters in France.

During his trial, Lloyd sat as one dazed, and could put nothing forward in his defense, only an occasional "Don't have me shot!"

His sentence was passed: "To be shot at 3:38 o'clock in the morning of May 18, 1916." This meant that he had only one more day to live.

He did not realize the awfulness of his sentence; his brain seemed paralyzed. He knew nothing of his trip, under guard, in a motor lorry to the sandbagged guardroom in the village, where he was dumped on the floor and left, while a sentry with a fixed bayonet paced up and down in front of the entrance.

Bully beef, water and biscuits were left beside him for his supper.

The sentry, seeing that he ate nothing, came inside and shook him by the shoulder, saying in a kind voice:

"Chero, laddie, better eat something. You'll feel better. Don't give up hope. You'll be pardoned before morning. I know the way they run these things. They're only trying to scare you, that's all. Come now, that's a good lad, eat something. It'll make the world look different to you."

The good-hearted sentry knew he was lying about the pardon. He knew nothing short of a miracle could save the poor lad.

Lloyd listened eagerly to his sentry's words, and believed them. A look of hope came into his eyes, and he ravenously ate the meal beside him.

In about an hour's time, the chaplain came to see him, but Lloyd would have none of him. He wanted no pardon; he was to be pardoned.

The artillery behind the lines suddenly opened up with everything they

had. An intense bombardment of the enemy's lines had commenced. The roar of the guns was deafening. Lloyd's fears came back with a rush, and he covered on the earthen floor with his hands over his face.

The sentry, seeing his position, came in and tried to cheer him by talking to him:

"Never mind them guns, boy, they won't hurt you. They are ours. We are giving the Boches a dose of their own medicine. Our boys are going over the top at dawn of the morning to take their trenches. We'll give 'em a taste of cold steel with their sausages and beer. You just sit tight now until they relieve you. I'll have to go now, lad, as it's nearly time for my relief, and I don't want them to see me a-talkin' with you. So long, laddie, cheerio."

With this, the sentry resumed the pacing of his post. In about ten minutes' time he was relieved, and a D company man took his place.

Looking into the guardhouse, the sentry noticed the cowering attitude of Lloyd, and, with a sneer, said to him:

"Instead of whimpering in that corner, you ought to be saying your prayers. It's badly conscripts like you what's spoilin' our record. We've been out here high onto eighteen months, and you're the first man to desert his post. The whole battalion is laughin' and pokin' fun at D company, bad luck to you! but you won't get another chance to disgrace us. They'll put your lights out in the mornin'."

After listening to this tirade, Lloyd, in a faltering voice, asked: "They are not going to shoot me, are they? Why,



He Betrayed His Country.

the other sentry said they'd pardon me. For God's sake—don't tell me I'm to be shot!" and his voice died away in a sob.

"Of course, they're going to shoot you. The other sentry was just a kid-din' you. Jest like old Smith. Always n-tryin' to cheer some one. You ain't got no more chance o' bein' pardoned than I have of gettin' to be colonel of my 'batt'."

When the fact that all hope was gone finally entered Lloyd's brain, a calm seemed to settle over him, and rising to his knees, with his arms stretched out to heaven, he prayed, and all of his soul entered into the prayer.

"O, good and merciful God, give me strength to die like a man! Deliver me from this coward's death. Give me a chance to die like my mates in the fighting line, to die fighting for my country. I ask this of thee."

A peace, hitherto unknown, came to him, and he crouched and covered no more, but calmly waited the dawn, ready to go to his death. The shells

were bursting all around the guard room, but he hardly noticed them.

While waiting there, the voice of the sentry, singing in a low tone, came to him. He was singing the chorus of the popular trench ditty:

I want to go home, I want to go home. I don't want to go to the trenches no more. Where the "whizzbangs" and "sausages" roar galore. Take me over the sea, where the Allemand can't get at me. Oh, my, I don't want to die! I want to go home.

Lloyd listened to the words with a strange interest, and wondered what kind of a home he would go to across the Great Divide. It would be the only home he had ever known.

Suddenly there came a great rushing through the air, a blinding, a deafening report, and the sandbag walls of the guardroom toppled over, and then—blackness.

When Lloyd recovered consciousness, he was lying on his right side, facing what used to be the entrance of the guardroom. Now, it was only a jumble of rent and torn sandbags. His head seemed bursting. He slowly rose on his elbow, and there in the east the dawn was breaking. But what was that mangled shape lying over there among the sandbags? Slowly dragging himself to it, he saw the body of the sentry. One look was enough to know that he was dead. The soldier's head was missing. The sentry had had his wish gratified. He had "gone home."

He was safe at last from the "whizzbangs" and the Allemand.

Like a flash it came to Lloyd that he was free. Free to go "over the top" with his company. Free to die like a true Briton fighting for his king and country. A great gladness and warmth came over him. Carefully stepping over the body of the sentry, he started on a mad race down the ruined street of the village, amid the bursting shells, minding them not, dodging through or around hurrying platoons on their way to also go "over the top."

Coming to a communication trench he could not get through. It was blocked with laughing, cheering and cursing soldiers. Climbing out of the trench, he ran wildly along the top, never heeding the rain of machine-gun bullets and shells, not even hearing the shouts of the officers, telling him to get back into the trench. He was going to join his company who were in the front line. He was going to fight with them. He, the despised coward, had come into his own.

While he was racing along, jumping over trenches crowded with soldiers, a ringing cheer broke out all along the front line, and his heart sank. He knew he was too late. His company had gone over. But still he ran madly. He would catch them. He would die with them.

Meanwhile his company had gone "over." They, with the other companies had taken the first and second German trenches, and had pushed steadily on to the third line. D company, led by their captain, the one who had sent Lloyd to division headquarters for trial, charged with desertion, had pushed steadily forward until they found themselves far in advance of the rest of the attacking force. "Bombing out" trench after trench, and using their bayonets, they came to a German communication trench, which ended in a blindpass, and then the captain, and what was left of his men, knew they were in a trap. They would not retire. D company never retired, and they were D company. Right in front of them they could see hundreds of Germans preparing to rush them with bomb and bayonet. They would have some chance if ammunition and bombs could reach them from the rear. Their supply was exhausted, and the men realized it would be a case of dying as bravely as possible, or making a run for it. But D company would not run. It was against their traditions and principles.

The Germans would have to advance across an open space of three to four hundred yards before they could get within bombing distance of the trench, and then it would be all their own way.

Turning to his company, the captain said:

"Men, it's a case of going West for us. We are out of ammunition and bombs, and the Boches have us in a trap. They will bomb us out. Our bayonets are useless here. We will have to go over and meet them, and it's a case of thirty to one, so send every thrust home, and die like the men of D company should. When I give the word, follow me, and up and at them. Give them h—! Lord, if we only had a machine gun, we could wipe them out! Here they come, get ready, men."

British prepare for the "Big Push," the forerunner of the battle of the Somme. Read about it in the next installment.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Striving After Strength.

We think that we shall win truth by striving after strength, instead of knowing that we shall gain strength just in the degree that we become true.—Phillips Brooks.

WORLD HAPPENINGS OF CURRENT WEEK

Brief Resume Most Important Daily News Items.

COMPILED FOR YOU

Events of Noted People, Governments and Pacific Northwest and Other Things Worth Knowing.

A new Ukrainian ministry has been formed with M. Lisogub as premier, says a dispatch from Kiev Wednesday.

With the approval of the emperor, the Japanese Red Cross has awarded Colonel Theodore Roosevelt a medal of honor.

Three British trawlers, although outranged by the enemy guns, recently fought four German submarines until put out of action by the U-boats.

Forty-five thousand railway workers in Prussia and Hesse are incapacitated with influenza and passenger traffic is much restricted in consequence, according to the Tageblatt, of Berlin.

An exhaustive inquiry by government officials into alleged plots of German industrial representatives for the establishment of German trade in America after the war was started in New York this week.

A dispatch from Washington to the New York Sun quotes Fuel Administrator Garfield as saying that production of coal in record-breaking quantities has virtually eliminated the possibility of a coal famine this winter.

Lieutenant James Saunders O'Neale, nephew of Secretary of the Treasury McAdoo, died on October 2 of wounds received in action. Before entering the Plattsburg training camp he was a sports writer for the New York Tribune.

Colonel Theodore Roosevelt was presented Tuesday with a portion of the seat of the airplane which his son, Lieutenant Quentin Roosevelt, was killed in while flying in France. The gift was made by Arthur E. Hungerford, a returned Y. M. C. A. official.

It was announced in the house of commons Tuesday that since the commencement of the war British troops have taken 327,416 enemy combatants, including 264,242 Germans. There are, it was also stated, 97,000 German combatant prisoners in the United Kingdom at present.

The war department does not plan to call all men within the draft up to 45 years by January 1, Secretary Baker said Wednesday in discussing press dispatches crediting John R. Mott, international secretary of the Y. M. C. A., with saying that he had been so informed by Mr. Baker.

Eighteen new ships of 98,900 total deadweight tons were added to the American fleet during the week ending October 25. The deliveries, announced by the shipping board, included the Victorians, an 11,800-ton vessel built at Alameda, Cal., and the Cape May of 10,100 tons, built at Sparrows Point, Md.

Victor L. Berger, former congressman, and three other prominent socialists, who were indicted last week by the federal grand jury on charges of violating the espionage act, pleaded not guilty Tuesday when arraigned before Judge F. A. Geiger at Milwaukee, Wis. Berger was released on bonds of \$10,000 and the others on bonds of \$5000 each.

Restrictions on the manufacture of furniture, eliminating all new patterns for the duration of the war and curtailing active patterns 50 per cent, are announced by the War Industries board.

A bill increasing the travel allowances of army officers on duty from 7 to 8 cents was sent to congress Thursday by the War department, with the explanation that 7 cents a mile is inadequate.

Sinking of the American cargo steamship Lake Borgne off the coast of France without loss of life was announced Thursday by the Navy department. The ship foundered after striking a rock.

Thomas W. Lawson, the Boston financier and independent candidate for United States senator, was injured when his limousine was overturned on the State road in Northboro, Mass., late Wednesday.

The whole of the province of Western Flanders and part of Eastern Flanders and Hainaut having been recovered from the Germans, the Belgian government has decided to establish its administrative departments in Bruges.

U. S. CANNON ARE LARGEST

Mammoth Long-Range Guns Pound Huns in France.

Washington, D. C.—Details of the achievement of the navy department in making available for use on the western front of great 16-inch naval guns, which press dispatches have reported to be hammering the German railway centers back of the Oise-Serre front, were made public Saturday by Secretary Daniels.

The naval guns which have been in operation since September 16, originally were intended for new battle cruisers but a change in the design in the vessels left the guns unavailable for that use. Rear Admiral Earle, chief of the navy bureau of ordnance, then recommended that the guns be sent to the western front and he was directed to proceed with the design and construction.

The guns are manned and operated by officers and men of the United States navy, under the command of Rear Admiral Plunkett, ex-director of the office of gunnery exercises and engineering performance. The first party of officers and men to handle the guns arrived in France June 9; the first shipment of material left this country June 20 and the entire organization was completed and ready to move to the battlefront in France late in August.

The guns are of 50 caliber, 66 feet long, weigh about 160 tons without their carriages, and are said to throw a heavier projectile and have a greater muzzle velocity than any weapon ever placed on a mobile land mounting. The weight of the explosive used with each projectile is many times greater than that used in the freak German long range guns, and in point of their destructive force they are incomparable.

The organization to man one gun requires an entire train, including the gun car itself, ammunition cars, a crane car, and construction, sand, timber, kitchen, fuel, workshop, berthing and staff radio cars. Many of the cars were especially manufactured, and the locomotives, 83-ton types with four pairs of drivers. One car is a complete machine shop, equipped with forge, lathes, grinders and drill press. The gun car as well as the ammunition cars are heavily armored, 1600 square feet of plate being required.

MONOPOLY IN RUSSIAN MAIDENS IS DECREED

London.—Russian maidens under the jurisdiction of certain provincial Bolshevik soviets become the "property of the state" when they reach the age of 18 years and are compelled to register at a government "bureau of free love," according to the official Gazette of the Vladimir Soviet of workers' and soldiers' deputies, which recently published that soviet's decree on the subject.

Under the decree, a woman having registered, "has the right to choose from among men between 19 and 50 a cohabitant husband."

The consent of the man chosen is not necessary, the decree adds, the man chosen having no right to make any protest.

A similar privilege of choosing from among the registered women is given every man between 19 and 50 "without the consent of the woman." This provision is described as "in the interest of the state."

Opportunities for choosing husbands and wives are to be presented once each month, the decree stated. Children born of such marriages are to become the "property of the state." Stringent rules and penalties are laid down for the protection of girls under 18. The decree further states that it has been based on the "excellent" example of similar decrees already issued at Luga, Kolpin and other places.

A similar "project of provisional rights in connection with the socialization of women in the city of Khivinsk and vicinity" has been published in the Gazette of the workers' and soldiers' deputies of that city.

Six-Day Flight Success.

Washington, D. C.—Using two army training airplanes, three aviators have completed a flight from Houston, Tex., to Washington. The aviators left Ellington Field at Houston October 17, and completed the trip in six days. The flight, said to be the first between the two points, was undertaken in part in the interest of the fourth liberty loan, the aviators dropping loan literature on towns in Missouri, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio.

Nut Shells Need is Great.

New York.—The government needs 1,000,000 pounds of nut shells and fruit stones daily for manufacturing gas mask charcoal and at present is unable to purchase one-third that amount. This and the failure of the public to co-operate fully by saving and sending in this form of waste from the kitchen have made it necessary for the chemical warfare headquarters here to renew its appeal.

GERMANY AWAITS ARMISTICE TERMS

Solf, in Latest Reply to Wilson, Says People Rule.

MILITARISTS OUSTED

Note Declares Berlin is Ready for First Step Toward Peace—Versailles Council is Called.

Copenhagen.—Germany's answer to President Wilson's latest communication says:

"The German government has taken cognizance of the answer of the President of the United States. The President is aware of the far-reaching changes which have been carried out and are being carried out in the German constitutional structure, and that peace negotiations are being conducted by a people's government in whose hands rests, both actually and constitutionally, the power to make the deciding conclusions.

"The military powers are also subject to it.

"The German government now awaits proposals for an armistice, which shall be the first step toward a just peace, as the President has described it in his proclamation.

(Signed) "SOLF."

Washington, D. C.—The unofficial text of Germany's reply to President Wilson was received Sunday night too late to be seen by President Wilson and other officials.

The question of an armistice and peace is already being considered by the allied governments and the United States. It will be discussed at a meeting of the supreme war council at Versailles, France.

The German reply is expected to clear the way for a general discussion of the individual views of the entente powers on peace terms and an agreement among the nations fighting Germany so that a united front on these questions may be presented to the common enemy. A London dispatch announced that Premier Lloyd George and Foreign Secretary Balfour had gone to Paris with military and naval advisers, indicating that the conferences between the representatives of the allied powers and the United States soon were to begin.

Germany's reply does not change the diplomatic situation. Those in the confidence of President Wilson have said that his dealings with the German government ended with his note informing it that the request for an armistice and peace had been transmitted to the allies and that further action rested with those governments. The German reply may or may not prove that Germany will accept such terms of an armistice as may be presented.

LUDENDORFF QUIT; KAISER ACCEPTS

Copenhagen.—General Ludendorff, first quartermaster-general of the German army, has resigned, says a telegram from Berlin. In accepting his resignation, the emperor has decreed that the lower Rhenish infantry regiment, No. 39, of which General Ludendorff long had been commander, shall bear his name.

London.—Official announcement was made in Berlin Saturday night that Emperor William had acceded to the request of General Ludendorff, the first quartermaster-general, that he be permitted to resign.

Fighting Ceases in China.

Washington, D. C.—Cable advices Sunday from Peking said the policy of reconciliation of the new president of China, Hsu Shih Chang, has already met with considerable success. Hostilities have ceased and the leaders of the southwestern provinces who have been opposing the central government at Peking have sent delegates to confer with the new president. The progress of the conference, it is said, has been satisfactory.

Austria's Reply is Ready.

Basel, Switzerland.—Austria's rejoinder to President Wilson's note is ready, according to Vienna papers. It was submitted to authorized quarters Sunday, and will be sent at once to Washington. It is couched in the most conciliatory terms.