

OVER THE TOP

By Arthur Guy Empey, an American soldier
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But I waited for no more, grabbing my bayonet, which was detached from the rifle, I gave the alarm by banging in empty shell case, which was hanging near the periscope. At the same instant, gongs started ringing down the trench, the signal for Tommy to don his respirator, or smoke helmet, as we all did.

Gas travels quickly, so you must not lose any time; you generally have about eighteen or twenty seconds in which to adjust your gas helmet.

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's 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 spout 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

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 stinging 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.

I shouted to the driver to stop, and in his nervousness he put on the brakes. We nearly pitched out head-first. But the applying of those brakes saved our lives. The next instant there was a blinding flash and a deafening report. All that I remember is that I was flying through the air, and wondering if I would land in a soft spot. Then the lights went out.

When I came to, Atwell was pouring water on my head out of his bottle. On the other side of the road the corporal was sitting, rubbing a lump on his forehead with his left hand, while his right arm was bound up in a blood-soaked bandage. He was moaning very loudly. I had an awful headache and the skin on the left side of my face was full of gravel and the blood was trickling from my nose.

But that ambulance was turned over in the ditch and was perforated with holes from fragments of the shell. One of the front wheels was slowly revolving, so I could not have been "out" for a long period.

The shells were still screaming overhead, but the battery had raised its fire and they were bursting in a little wood about half a mile from us.

Atwell spoke up. "I wish that officer hadn't wished us the best o' luck." Then he commenced swearing. I couldn't help laughing, though my head was nigh to bursting.

Slowly rising to my feet I felt myself all over to make sure that there were no broken bones. But outside of a few bruises and scratches I was all right.

Report of The Condon National Bank

No. 2881.
Report of Condition of THE CONDON NATIONAL BANK at Condon, in the state of Oregon, at the close of business on May 10, 1918.
RESOURCES

Loans and discounts (except those shown on b and c)	\$200,752.23	
Total		\$200,752.23
Overdrafts, secured, none; unsecured, none		
U. S. BONDS—Other than Liberty Bonds but including U. S. Certificates of Indebtedness		
U. S. Bonds deposited to secure circulation (par value)	12 500	
U. S. Bonds and certificates of indebtedness pledged to secure postal savings deposits (par value)	2 000	
U. S. Bonds and certificates of indebtedness pledged as collateral for State or other deposits or bills payable	10 000	\$4 500
LIBERTY LOAN BONDS:		
Liberty Loan Bonds, 8 1/2 per cent and 4 per cent unpledged,	203	
Liberty Loan Bonds, 8 1/2 and 4 per cent, pledged to secure U. S. Deposits	7 000	
Liberty Loan Bonds, 8 1/2 per cent and 4 per cent pledged to secure postal savings deposits,	1 000	
Liberty Loan Bonds, 8 1/2 per cent and 4 per cent, pledged to secure State or other deposits or bills payable		\$ 235
BONDS, SECURITIES, ETC. (other than U. S.)		
Securities other than U. S. Bonds (not including stocks) owned unpledged	12 500 00	12 500 00
Total Bonds, securities, etc.		12 500 00
Stock of Federal Reserve Bank (50 per cent of Subscription)		1 800
Furniture and Fixtures		8 500
Real estate owned other than banking house		8 788 74
Lawful Reserve with Federal Reserve Bank		14 077 54
Cash in vaults and net amounts due from national banks		29 628 02
Net amounts due from banks and bankers, and trust companies other than included in Items 13, 14 and 15		7 074 75
Checks on other banks in the same city or town as reporting bank (other than Item 17)		585 63
Total of Items 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18	28 119 90	
Checks on banks located outside of city or town of reporting bank and other cash items		\$ 888 47
Redemption fund with U. S. Treasurer and due from U. S. Treasurer		025
Total		\$309,108.04
LIABILITIES		
Capital Stock Paid in		50 000
Surplus fund		5 000
Undivided profits	\$15,096.51	
Less current expenses, interest, and taxes paid	5 255 87	7 789 64
Circulating notes outstanding		12 500
Net amounts due to National banks		2 864 98
Net amounts due to banks, bankers and trust companies		475 80
Total	2 740 78	
DEMAND DEPOSITS (other than bank deposits) Subject to Reserve (Deposits payable within 30 days)		
Individual deposits subject to check		176 356 97
Certificates of deposit due in less than 30 days—other than for money borrowed		27 545 23
Total demand deposits (other than bank deposits) subject to Reserve, Items 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40 and 41	203 911 50	
TIME DEPOSITS subject to Reserve (payable after 30 days or subject to 90 days or more notice and postal savings):		
Certificates of deposit—Other than for money borrowed		28 079 48
Postal savings deposits		7 814 14
Total of time deposits, subject to Reserve, Items 42, 43, 44 and 45	29 893 62	
War loan deposit account	17 000	17 000
Bills payable, other than with Federal Reserve Bank, including all obligations representing money borrowed, other than rediscounts		89 000
Liabilities other than those above stated, subscriptions to Third Liberty Bonds		1 882 50
Total		\$309,108.04

State of Oregon, County of Gilliam, ss:
I, Wm. Crawford, Cashier of the above-named bank, do solemnly swear that the above statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.
Wm. CRAWFORD, Cashier.
CORRECT—Attest: Geo. B. Dukek, A. Greiner, Wm. Wehrli, Directors.
Subscribed and sworn to before me this 20th day of May, 1918.
FRANK HOLLEN, Notary Public,
My commission expires Oct. 29, 1920.

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HEAR THE PATHEPHONE

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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

Continued on next page

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