

# "OVER THE TOP"

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

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## EMPEY AND A COMRADE HAVE EXCITING EXPERIENCE WHILE ON LISTENING POST DUTY.

**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 fails, 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. Much attention is required by wounded men from the corps of doctors and nurses. On listening post detail.

### CHAPTER XIV—Continued.

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If a man is killed he is buried, and the responsibility of the government ceases, excepting for the fact that his people receive a pension. But if a man is wounded it takes three men from the firing line, the wounded man and two men to carry him to the rear to the advanced first-aid post. Here he is attended by a doctor, perhaps assisted by two R. A. M. C. men. Then he is put into a motor ambulance, manned by a crew of two or three. At the field hospital, where he generally goes under an anesthetic, either to have his wounds cleaned or to be operated on, he requires the services of about three to five persons. From this point another ambulance ride impresses more men in his service, and then at the ambulance train, another corps of doctors, R. A. M. C. men, Red Cross nurses and the train's crew. From the train he enters the base hospital or casualty clearing station, where a good-sized corps of doctors, nurses, etc., are kept busy. Another ambulance journey is next in order—this time to the hospital ship. He crosses the channel, arrives in Blighty—more ambulances and perhaps a ride for five hours on an English Red Cross train with its crew of Red Cross workers, and at last he reaches the hospital. Generally he stays from two to six months, or longer, in this hospital. From here he is sent to a convalescent home for six weeks.

If by wounds he is unfitted for further service, he is discharged, given a pension, or committed to a soldiers' home for the rest of his life—and still the expense piles up. When you realize that all the ambulances, trains and ships, not to mention the man power, used in transporting a wounded man, could be used for supplies, ammunition and re-enforcements for the troops at the front, it will not appear strange that from a strictly military standpoint, a dead man is sometimes better than a live one (if wounded).

Not long after the first digging party, our general decided, after a careful tour of inspection of the communication trenches, upon "an ideal spot," as he termed it, for a machine-gun emplacement; took his map, made a dot on it, and as he was wont, wrote "dig here," and the next night we dug.

There were twenty in the party, myself included. Armed with picks, shovels and empty sandbags we arrived at the "ideal spot" and started digging. The moon was very bright, but we did not care as we were well out of sight of the German lines.

We had gotten about three feet down, when the fellow next to me, after a mighty stroke with his pick, let go of the handle, and pinched his nose with his thumb and forefinger, at the same time letting out the explosion, "Gott strafe me pink, I'm bloody well gassed, not 'alf I ain't." I quickly turned in his direction with an inquiring look, at the same instant reaching for my gas bag. I soon found out what was ailing him. One whiff was enough and I lost no time in also pinching my nose. The stench was awful. The rest of the digging party dropped their picks and shovels and beat it for the weather side of that solitary pick. The officer came over and inquired why the work had suddenly ceased, holding our noses, we simply pointed in the direction of the smell. He went over to the pick, immediately clapped his hand over his nose, made an "about turn" and came back. Just then our captain came along and investigated, but after about a minute said we had better carry on with the digging, that he did not see why we should have stopped as the odor was very faint, but if necessary he would allow us our gas helmets while digging. He would stay and see the thing through, but he had to report back to brigade headquarters immediately. We wished that we were captains and also had a date

at brigade headquarters. With our gas helmets on we again attacked that hole and uncovered the decomposed body of a German; the pick was sticking in his chest. One of the men fainting. I was that one. Upon this our lieutenant halted proceedings and sent word back to headquarters and word came back that after we filled in the hole we could knock off for the night. This was welcome tidings to us, because—

Next day the general changed the dot on his map and another emplacement was completed the following night.

The odor from the dug-up, decomposed human body has an effect which is hard to describe. It first produces a nauseating feeling, which, especially after eating, causes vomiting. This relieves you temporarily, but soon a weakening sensation follows, which leaves you limp as a dishrag. Your spirits are at their lowest ebb and you feel a sort of hopelessness and a mad desire to escape it all, to get to the open fields and the perfume of the flowers in Blighty. There is a sharp, prickling sensation in the nostrils, which reminds one of breathing coal gas through a radiator in the floor, and



Entrance to a Dugout.

you want to sneeze, but cannot. This was the effect on me, surmounted by a vague horror of the awfulness of the thing and an ever-recurring reflection that, perhaps I, sooner or later, would be in such a state and be brought to light by the blow of a pick in the hands of some Tommy on a digging party.

Several times I have experienced this odor, but never could get used to it; the enervating sensation was always present. It made me hate war and wonder why such things were countenanced by civilization, and all the spice and glory of the conflict would disappear, leaving the grim reality. But after leaving the spot and filling your lungs with deep breaths of pure, fresh air, you forget and once again want to be "up and at them."

### CHAPTER XV.

#### Listening Post.

It was six in the morning when we arrived at our rest billets, and we were allowed to sleep until noon; that is, if we wanted to go without our breakfast. For sixteen days we remained in rest billets, digging roads, drilling, and other fatigues, and then back into the front-line trench.

Nothing happened that night, but the next afternoon I found out that a

bomber is general utility man in a section.

About five o'clock in the afternoon our lieutenant came down the trench and stopping in front of a bunch of us on the fire step, with a broad grin on his face, asked:

"Who is going to volunteer for listening post tonight? I need two men."

It is needless to say no one volunteered, because it is anything but a cushy job. I began to feel uncomfortable as I knew it was getting around for my turn. Sure enough, with another grin, he said:

"Empey, you and Wheeler are due, so come down into my dugout for instructions at six o'clock."

Just as he left and was going around a traverse, Fritz turned loose with a machine gun and the bullets ripped the sandbags right over his head. It gave me great pleasure to see him duck against the parapet. He was getting a taste of what we would get later out in front.

Then, of course, it began to rain. I knew it was the forerunner of a miserable night for us. Every time I had to go out in front, it just naturally rained. Old Jupiter Pluvius must have had it in for me.

At six we reported for instructions. They were simple and easy. All we had to do was to crawl out into No Man's Land, lie on our bellies with our ears to the ground and listen for the tap, tap of the German engineers or sappers who might be tunneling under No Man's Land to establish a mine-head beneath our trench.

Of course, in our orders we were told not to be captured by German patrols or reconnoitering parties. Lots of breath is wasted on the western front giving silly cautions.

As soon as it was dark, Wheeler and I crawled to our post which was about halfway between the lines. It was raining bucketfuls, the ground was a sea of sticky mud and clung to us like glue.

We took turns in listening with our ears to the ground. I would listen for twenty minutes while Wheeler would be on the qui vive for German patrols.

We each wore a wristwatch, and believe me, neither one of us did over twenty minutes. The rain soaked us to the skin and our ears were full of mud.

Every few minutes a bullet would crack overhead or a machine gun would traverse back and forth.

Then all firing suddenly ceased. I whispered to Wheeler, "Keep your eye skinned, mate; most likely Fritz has a patrol out—that's why the Boches have stopped firing."

We were each armed with a rifle and bayonet and three Mills bombs to be used for defense only.

I had my ear to the ground. All of a sudden I heard faint, dull thuds. In a low but excited voice I whispered to Wheeler, "I think they are mining, listen."

He put his ear to the ground and in an unsteady voice spoke into my ear:

"Yank, that's a patrol and it's heading our way. For God's sake keep still."

I was as still as a mouse and was scared stiff.

Hardly breathing and with eyes trying to pierce the inky blackness, we waited. I would have given a thousand pounds to have been safely in my dugout.

Then we plainly heard footsteps and our hearts stood still.

A dark form suddenly loomed up in front of me; it looked as big as the Woolworth building. I could hear the blood rushing through my veins and it sounded as loud as Niagara falls.

Forms seemed to emerge from the darkness. There were seven of them in all. I tried to wish them away. I never wished harder in my life. They muttered a few words in German and melted into the blackness. I didn't stop wishing either.

All of a sudden we heard a stumble, a muddy splash, and a muttered "Donner und Blitzen." One of the Boches had tumbled into a shell hole. Neither of us laughed. At that time—it didn't strike us as funny.

About twenty minutes after the Germans had disappeared something from the rear grabbed me by the foot. I nearly fainted with fright. Then a welcome whisper in a cockney accent. "I s'y, myte, we've come to relieve you."

Wheeler and I crawled back to our trench; we looked like wet hens and felt worse. After a swig of rum we were soon fast asleep on the fire step in our wet clothes.

The next morning I was as stiff as a poker and every joint ached like a

bad tooth, but I was still alive, so it did not matter.

### CHAPTER XVI.

#### Battery D 238.

The day after this I received the glad tidings that I would occupy the machine gunners' dugout right near the advanced artillery observation post. This dugout was a roomy affair, dry as tinder, and real cots in it. These cots had been made by the R. E.'s who had previously occupied the dugout. I was the first to enter and promptly made a signboard with my name and number on it and suspended it from the foot of the most comfortable cot therein.

In the trenches it is always "first come, first served," and this is lived up to by all.

Two R. F. A. men (Royal Field Artillery) from the nearby observation post were allowed the privilege of stopping in this dugout when off duty.

One of these men, Bombardier Wilson by name, who belonged to Battery D 238, seemed to take a liking to me, and I returned this feeling.

In two days' time we were pretty chummy, and he told me how his battery in the early days of the war had put over a stunt on Old Pepper, and had gotten away with it.

I will endeavor to give the story as far as memory will permit in his own words:

Despite the excellent targets men are not allowed to shell Fritz, Empey relates in next installment.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

### SUCH A SMART BROTHER

But it is Entirely Probable Sister Did Not Appreciate His Peculiar Form of Wit.

A young lady in Lakewood is of the opinion that she is grown up—in which opinion she is not encouraged either by her parents or her older brother. She is fifteen, brother is sixteen. She thinks that young men should be allowed to call on her in the evening; brother jeers, parents shake their heads.

Finally the girl's mother consented to her having a certain approved boy call, provided he came on a Friday evening. And the excited damsel called the favored youth up on the phone and imparted the glad news. It is presumed that the young man (he was all of eighteen years old) spent a good deal of time at his toilet that evening—certainly the young lady took great care of hers. She was still primping when the avain rang the doorbell. Brother answered.

"Ah," began the caller, clearing his throat, "Is Miss Jones at home?" "Come in," answered Brother, equivocally. Then he went to the foot of the stairs and called—

"Molly! Quit cuttin' paper dolls an' come downstairs. One of your playmates wants to see you!"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

#### Always In.

It was the shopping period, and Miss Smith thought she would "drop in" on Mrs. Jones and ask her if she would assist her in the noble art of present-hunting.

"Is your mistress in?" she asked the young maid.

"Yes, miss," was the prompt reply.

She was shown into the drawing room. But an hour passed and no Mrs. Jones appeared. At last the lady got up and called to the maid:

"Did you tell your mistress I was here?" she asked.

"Oh no, miss," replied the girl quickly; "she hasn't returned from shopping yet."

"Not returned!" exclaimed the astonished visitor.

"No, miss. You see the mistress told me she was always home to you!"

#### Long Ride Before Him.

A cyclist who stopped at a village inn boasted about his abilities as a rider to such an extent that the landlady ventured to make a wager with him.

"Look here, mister," said the innkeeper, "you can't ride up and down this road till the church clock strikes six."

"Done," said the cyclist. "It's just close on five now," and the next minute he was speeding down the road.

After about an hour's riding the cyclist shouted to one of the bystanders, of whom many had assembled:

"I say, has the church clock struck six yet?"

"No, you idiot," was the blunt reply. "Our church clock never strikes at all."—London Tit-Bits.

#### Two Kinds.

There is a place in the world for reformers. Reformers are the gentlemen who created our great Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution of the United States. Bless them, we say. At the same time there should be more positive reformers and fewer negative reformers, the latter being well-meaning persons who are always against something and not for anything.—Atchison Globe.

**THE ONWARD MARCH** of Bronchitis and deep seated Coughs is arrested by Doctor Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery.

In those scrofulous conditions of the blood which invite Consumption; in severe, lingering Coughs, and Weak Lungs, which threaten you with this fatal disease, and when other help has failed—this medicine is a proved remedy.

As a blood-cleanser, strength restorer, and tonic it is sure to benefit. In all lingering Bronchial and Throat affections, and in every disease that can be reached through the blood, it never fails to benefit or cure. In tablet or liquid form. Tablets 50c.

The machinery of the body needs to be well oiled, kept in good condition just as the automobile, steam engine or bicycle. Why should the human neglect his own machinery more than that of his horse or his engine? Yet most people do neglect themselves. Clean the system at least once a week with Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets.—Adv.

#### Lumber in New Zealand.

Most of the better furniture and industrial lumber used in New Zealand is imported, such as oak, ash, hickory, etc., and comes largely from the United States, United Kingdom and Japan.

Dr. Pierce's Pellets are best for liver, bowels and stomach. One little Pellet for a laxative—three for a cathartic.

## SUFFERING CATS! GIVE THIS MAN THE GOLD MEDAL

No humbug! Any corn, whether hard, soft or between the toes, will loosen right up and lift off without a particle of pain or soreness.

This drug is called freezone and is a compound of ether discovered by a Cincinnati man.

Ask at any drug store for a small bottle of freezone, which will cost but a trifle, but is sufficient to rid one's feet of every corn or callous.

Put a few drops directly upon any tender, aching corn or callous. Instantly the soreness disappears and shortly the corn or callous will loosen and can be lifted off with the fingers.

This drug freezone doesn't eat out the corns or callouses but shrivels them without even irritating the surrounding skin.

Just think! No pain at all; no soreness or smarting when applying it or afterwards. If your druggist don't have freezone have him order it for you.—Adv.

#### The Real Test.

"Don't conclude that a man is a patient mortal because you've watched him sitting on a log fishing," said the milk toast philosopher. "Watch him while he's waiting for his supper."

#### Cuticura Stops Itching.

The Soap to cleanse and Ointment to soothe and heal most forms of itching, burning skin and scalp affections. Ideal for toilet use. For free samples address, "Cuticura, Dept. X, Boston." Sold by druggists and by mail. Soap 25, Ointment 25 and 50.—Adv.

#### Natural.

"Jever notice that when a girl is pretty men expect her to be silly? And then she goes and acts up to expectations."—Memphis Commercial Appeal.

## MOTHERS TO BE

Should Read Mrs. Monyhan's Letter Published by Her Permission.

Mitchell, Ind.—"Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound helped me so much during the time I was looking forward to the coming of my little one that I am recommending it to other expectant mothers. Before taking it, sometimes I suffered with neuralgia so badly that I thought I could not live, but after taking three bottles of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound I was entirely relieved of neuralgia, I had gained in strength and was able to go around and do all my housework. My baby when seven months old weighed 19 pounds and I feel better than I have for a long time. I never had any medicine do me so much good."—Mrs. PEARL MONYHAN, Mitchell, Ind.

Good health during maternity is a most important factor to both mother and child, and many letters have been received by the Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co., Lynn, Mass., telling of health restored during this trying period by the use of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

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