

"OVER THE TOP"

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

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CHAPTER XXVII—Continued.

Tommy generally replies that he did not stop to figure it out when he was hit.

One very nice-looking, overenthusiastic young thing, stopped at my bed and asked, "What wounded you in the face?"

In a polite but bored tone I answered, "A rifle bullet."

With a look of disdain she passed to the next bed, first ejaculating, "Oh! Only a bullet? I thought it was a shell." Why she should think a shell wound was more of a distinction beats me. I don't see a whole lot of difference myself.

The American Women's War hospital was a heaven for wounded men. They were allowed every privilege possible conducive with the rules and military discipline. The only fault was that the men's passes were restricted. To get a pass required an act of parliament. Tommy tried many tricks to get out, but the commandant, an old Boer war officer, was wise to them all, and it took a new and clever ruse to make him affix his signature to the coveted slip of paper.

As soon as it would get dark many a patient climbed over the wall and went "on his own," regardless of many signs staring him in the face, "Out of bounds for patients." Generally the nurses were looking the other way when one of these night raids started. I hope this information will get none of them into trouble, but I cannot resist the temptation to let the commandant know that occasionally we put it over on him.

One afternoon I received a note, through our underground channel, from my female visitor, asking me to attend a party at her house that night. I answered that she could expect me and to meet me at a certain place on the road well known by all patients, and some visitors, as "over the wall." I told her I would be on hand at seven-thirty.

About seven-fifteen I sneaked my overcoat and cap out of the ward and hid it in the bushes. Then I told the nurse, a particular friend of mine, that I was going for a walk in the rose garden. She winked and I knew that everything was all right on her end.

Going out of the ward, I slipped into the bushes and made for the wall. It was dark as pitch and I was groping through the underbrush, when suddenly I stepped into space and felt myself rushing downward, a horrible bump, and blackness. When I came to my wounded shoulder was hurting horribly. I was lying against a circular wall of bricks, dripping with moisture, and far away I could hear the trickling of water. I had in the darkness fallen into an old disused well. But why wasn't I wet? According to all rules I should have been drowned. Perhaps I was and didn't know it.

As the shock of my sudden stop gradually wore off it came to me that I was lying on a ledge and that the least movement on my part would precipitate me to the bottom of the well.

I struck a match. In its faint glare I saw that I was lying in a circular hole about twelve feet deep—the well had been filled in! The dripping I had heard came from a water pipe over on my right.

With my wounded shoulder it was impossible to shimmy up the pipe. I could not yell for help, because the rescuer would want to know how the accident happened, and I would be haled before the commandant on charges. I just had to grin and bear it, with the forlorn hope that one of the returning night raiders would pass and I could give him our usual signal of "sis-s-s-s," which would bring him to the rescue.

Every half-hour I could hear the clock in the village strike, each stroke bringing forth a muffled volley of curses on the man who had dug the well.

After two hours I heard two men talking in low voices. I recognized Corporal Cook, an ardent "night raider." He heard my "sis-s-s-s" and came to the edge of the hole. I explained my predicament and amid a lot of impertinent remarks, which at the time I did not resent, I was soon fished out.

Taking off our boots, we sneaked into the ward. I was sitting on my bed in the dark, just starting to undress, when the man next to me, "Ginger" Phillips, whispered, "Op it, Yank, 'ere comes the matron."

I immediately got under the covers and feigned sleep. The matron stood talking in low tones to the night nurse and I fell asleep.

When I awoke in the morning the night sister, an American, was bending

over me. An awful sight met my eyes. The coverlet on the bed and the sheets were a mass of mud and green slime. She was a good sport all right, and hustled to get clean clothes and sheets so that no one would get wise, but "on her own" she gave me a good tongue lashing but did not report me. One of the Canadians in the ward described her as being "a Jake of a good fellow."

Next visiting day I had an awful time explaining to my visitor why I had not met her at the appointed time and place.

And for a week every time I passed a patient he would call, "Well, well, here's the Yank. Hope you are feeling well, old top."

The surgeon in our ward was an American, a Harvard unit man, named Frost. We nicknamed him "Jack Frost." He was loved by all. If a Tommy was to be cut up he had no objection to undergoing the operation if "Jack Frost" was to wield the knife. Their confidence in him was pathetic. He was the best sport I have ever met.

One Saturday morning the commandant and some "high up" officers were inspecting the ward, when one of the patients who had been wounded in the head by a bit of shrapnel, fell on the floor in a fit. They brought him round, and then looked for the ward orderly to carry the patient back to his bed at the other end of the ward. The orderly was nowhere to be found—like our policemen, they never are when needed. The officers were at a loss how to get Palmer into his bed. Doctor Frost was fidgeting around in a nervous manner, when suddenly with a muffled "d—n" and a few other qualifying adjectives, he stooped down and took the man in his arms like a baby—he was no feather, either—and staggered down the ward with him, put



The Author Just Before Leaving for Home.

him in bed and undressed him. A low murmur of approval came from the patients. Doctor Frost got very red, and as soon as he had finished undressing Palmer, hurriedly left the ward.

The wound in my face had almost healed and I was a horrible-looking sight—the left cheek twisted into a knot, the eye pulled down, and my mouth pointing in a north by north-west direction. I was very downhearted and could imagine myself during the rest of my life being shunned by all on account of the repulsive scar.

Doctor Frost arranged for me to go to the Cambridge Military hospital at Aldershot for a special operation to try and make the scar presentable.

I arrived at the hospital and got an awful shock. The food was poor and the discipline abnormally strict. No patient was allowed to sit on his bed, and smoking was permitted only at certain designated hours. The face specialist did nothing for me except to look at the wound. I made application for a transfer back to Paignton, offering to pay my transportation. This offer was accepted, and after two weeks' absence, once again I arrived in Munsey ward, all hope gone.

The next day after my return Doctor Frost stopped at my bed and said: "Well, Empey, if you want me to try and see what I can do with that scar

I'll do it, but you are taking an awful chance."

I answered: "Well, doctor, Steve Brodie took a chance; he hails from New York and so do I."

Two days after the undertaker squad carried me to the operating room or "pictures," as we called them because of the funny films we see under ether, and the operation was performed. It was a wonderful piece of surgery and a marvelous success. From now on that doctor can have my shirt.

More than once some poor soldier has been brought into the ward in a dying condition, resulting from loss of blood and exhaustion caused by his long journey from the trenches. After an examination the doctor announces that the only thing that will save him is a transfusion of blood. Where is the blood to come from? He does not have to wait long for an answer—several Tommies immediately volunteer their blood for their mate. Three or four are accepted; a blood test is made, and next day the transfusion takes place and there is another pale face in the ward.

Whenever bone is needed for some special operation, there are always men willing to give some—a leg if necessary to save some mangled mate from being crippled for life. More than one man will go through life with another man's blood running through his veins, or a piece of his rib or his shinbone in his own anatomy. Sometimes he never even knows the name of his benefactor.

The spirit of sacrifice is wonderful. For all the suffering caused this war is a blessing to England—it has made new men of her sons; has welded all classes into one glorious whole.

And I can't help saying that the doctors, sisters, and nurses in the English hospitals, are angels on earth. I love them all and can never repay the care and kindness shown to me. For the rest of my life the Red Cross will be to me the symbol of Faith, Hope and Charity.

After four months in the hospital, I went before an examining board and was discharged from the service of his Britannic majesty as "physically unfit for further war service."

YIELDS "APPLE OF SODOM"

Curious Plant Which Grows on the Borders of the Dead Sea Produces This Fruit.

The Dead sea is situated in the southeast part of Palestine, and is called by the Arabs Bahr Loot, or Sea of Lot. It is about 47 miles long, with an average breadth of nine miles. Its depth varies considerably. It is fed by the Jordan from the north, and by many other streams, but has no apparent outlet, its superfluous water being supposed to be entirely carried off by the evaporation. The north shores of the sea are marked by the blackened trunks and branches of trees which are incrustated with salt, as is everything that is exposed to the spray of this sea.

On the southern shore is the remarkable mass of rock called Udsum (Sodom). It is a narrow, rugged ridge of hill extending five miles northwest, and consisting of rock salt. To the north of Udsum, and at no great distance, is the supposed site of the ancient Sodom.

On the borders of the Dead sea a curious plant grows which yields fruit called the "Apple of Sodom," beautiful on the outside but bitter to the taste, and, when mature, filled with fiber and dust.

The mean level of the Dead sea is 1,232 feet below the level of the Mediterranean. The water contains from 24 to 26 per cent of salts, of which 7 per cent is common salt. A salt-water fish put into the Dead sea perishes at once. Owing to its density due to salt the water of the sea is very buoyant.

Making the Dandelion Beautiful.

The original chrysanthemum, from which all the superb varieties we know today are descended, was, in its wild state, no bigger or handsomer than a dandelion. It is found that the latter grows with astonishing rapidity and luxuriance of bloom under cheesecloth shade.

New Book Mark.

Carried on the ribbon of a new book mark is a celluloid panel through openings in which appear various references that can be altered by moving pointers, with which the device is equipped.

After my discharge I engaged passage on the American liner New York, and after a stormy trip across the Atlantic one momentous day, in the haze of early dawn, I saw the statue of liberty looming over the port rail, and I wondered if ever again I would go "over the top with the best of luck and give them hell."

And even then, though it may seem strange, I was really sorry not to be back in the trenches with my mates. War is not a pink tea, but in a worthwhile cause like ours, mud, rats, cooties, shells, wounds, or death itself, are far outweighed by the deep sense of satisfaction felt by the man who does his bit.

There is one thing which my experience taught me that might help the boy who may have to go. It is this—anticipation is far worse than realization. In civil life a man stands in awe of the man above him, wonders how he could ever fill his job. When the time comes he rises to the occasion, is up and at it, and is surprised to find how much more easily than he anticipated he fills his responsibilities. It is really so "out there."

He has nerve for the hardships; the interest of the work grips him; he finds relief in the fun and comradeship of the trenches and wins that best sort of happiness that comes with duty well done.

THE END.

ROMEO WAS CLAD IN KHAKI

Played the Popular Game, Choosing the Dinner Table to Work on Affections of Waitress.

It is natural that we should be eager to do whatever we can for the boys in khaki; but sometimes, when the patriotic zeal is not accompanied by a sympathetic imagination, the beneficiary may pray to be delivered from our friends, writes "An American Woman" in the Outlook.

A homesick lad is likely to want either an atmosphere like that of his own home or else the exotic flavor the expectation of which has helped him to undertake the great adventure so cheerily.

In one family among my neighbors the son of the house was scandalized when one of their guests at Sunday dinner made the perfectly simple and natural request that he be permitted after the meal to repair to the kitchen where the pretty waitress was. Permission was denied, but young Romeo was not discouraged, and this letter came "To the Girl That Waits for Mrs. So-and-So: You are the best ever. Are you keeping company with anybody?" He added his name and a few personal details, and this delicious bit of identification: "If you don't know which soldier wrote this, it is the one that touched your hand under the dish when you passed the potatoes."

And Spain, Too!

Although neutral Spain may not be in the war, the Spaniards are certainly in it. The French have been perfectly well aware that hundreds of Spaniards joined the Foreign Legion, at the beginning of the war; so that Paris was not taken the least by surprise when 300 Spanish soldiers paraded in French uniform to receive decorations for valor. The Spanish colony patriotically welcomed them with fiery speeches, while the French loaded them with medals. Three received the reward of the Legion of Honor, and scores the Croix Militaire and the Croix de Guerre. Since, from a strictly legal point of view, the Spanish legionaries have imperiled their nation's neutrality, it will be interesting to know what Berlin will have to say about it; or rather about the 56 sinkings of Spanish ships and the 56 protests made by Spain, which "Frien-ly" Germany has consistently ignored.—Christian Science Monitor.

Siam Studies Philippine Health.

The Philippine model sanitary house which has aroused so much interest not only among Filipinos but also among residents of neighboring countries, has been adopted by Siam, and contractors located at Bangkok, having secured instructions from the Philippine health service, have begun the construction of a number there. The Siamese are keenly alive to the importance of promoting public health, and inasmuch as the health problems of Siam are very similar to those of the Philippines owing to climate and products, delegations of Siamese have arrived from time to time in Manila for the purpose of studying Philippine methods, one of them last year, being headed by his Royal Highness Prince Rangsit, brother of the king of Siam.

Casadepega Head.

This remarkable looking rock is known as a schist which is weathered and crumbled into a human expression which is startling. Not only is there a distinct resemblance to a man's profile but the head is apparently dressed in a periwig of the style of the last century such as the soldiers of Cornwallis wore. The rock is located on the top of a 2,000-foot hill on Seaward peninsula, Alaska, and is called by the natives the Big Head, or the Casadepega Head. The face is about eight feet high.

BOY SCOUTS



(Conducted by National Council of the Boy Scouts of America.)

SCOUTS HELP POLICE CITY.

When the patrolmen of Cincinnati went on strike, the city was left in a very serious situation.

The city officials called upon a number of civic organizations for assistance, including the Boy Scouts of America. The following editorial from a local paper indicates how well they did their work and how much it was appreciated:

"Saturday morning boy scouts were on duty as traffic officers at street intersections in downtown Cincinnati."

"The boys went at the work with the energy and enthusiasm which were to be expected of them. As these lines are written, one of the youngsters is bossing the traffic at the corner of Sixth and Walnut in a way that brings smiles of approval and encouragement from passers-by."

"Regulation of traffic is a necessity in Cincinnati. Law-abiding people will obey the orders of the boy scouts on traffic duty and try to help them in their work. If there are any small enough in mind to impose upon the boys, it is more than probable that they will find the undertaking both unsuccessful and costly."

SCOUTS GROWING RAPIDLY.

In spite of the fact that of the scoutmasters and other scout officials a large percentage volunteered for active service immediately following the declaration of the war, and another large percentage was called to the colors by the first draft law, the records show that today the Boy Scouts of America has 43 per cent more scout officials than it had on the day war was declared and 66 per cent more scouts than it had on the day war was declared.

For every man who will go, each community will have at least five or more men who have the same qualities of leadership for carrying on the work. It is not necessary for them to know scouting from the technical point of view in order to efficiently serve as scoutmasters. They can secure experience by following the same course as their predecessors. The war has proven not only in England, but here in America, that between 50 and 60 there are scoutmasters even better than younger men.

Today there are 440,890 men and boys as compared with 272,031 on April 6, 1917. What will the records be in one year? There will be at least 714,000 men and boys if this percentage of increase is maintained.

THE READY BOY SCOUT.

A hall to the lad who always does his bit!
When there is work, he hustles into it
With the zest of a batter who is swinging for a hit—
The ready and the steady and the heady Boy Scout.

He's often small, and he's never very big;
He's always square, and he cannot be a prig;
And when there is digging you ought to see him dig—
The ready and the steady and the heady Boy Scout.

The woodland lore is a bit of what he knows;
He loves the flag and follows where it goes;
He's a man in the making, the very best that grows—
The ready and the steady and the heady Boy Scout.
—John Clair Minot in Youth's Companion.

BOY SCOUTS RUN A CITY.

On a Saturday the mayor, the city officials and all members of the Sioux City commission turned over the city government to eight boy scouts for one-half hour.

The boy scouts held a regular session of council and discussed an ordinance for creating a city planning commission for Sioux City. At the end of the half-hour session the boys passed the ordinance creating such a commission, and then surrendered the reins of government to the city commissioners.

SCOUTS RUN FIRE ALARM.

The scouts of Roselle Park, N. J., have been placed in charge of the entire electric fire alarm system of the borough, including bells, house alarms, gangs, wire, alarm boxes, storage batteries and other equipment.

The appointment carries a salary of \$50 per annum which will be added to the troop treasury. For two years the troop has had the care of 42 fire hydrants and three flags.