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MORE OBSERVATIONS BY
THE ELLA SHEEPHERDER

(Alex Lindsay, Ione.)

While out with the lone demonstrating weeder on the Poe & Thompson ranch, known as the Stoops place the writer had his first experience with what seemed to him to be a German tank, making a bee line to begin operations by first attacking and annihilating the weeder, and then proceed over the hill and attack Ione. There seems nothing impossible, Mr. Editor, with the Kaiser; it is his delight to strike a blow where it is least expected and mutilate as many innocent women and children as he can, and just on such days as this when people will be collected from far and near to watch the sun's eclipse. But instead of being a German tank and a foe, it was a Holt caterpillar, and it had come to plow the field that I had just about weeded.

To a canny Scotchman, that had been almost raised between the stiffs of an Old Country plow, this was a sight long to be remembered. I have a recollection of the steam plow in the Old Country when I was a youngster, but it was operated by two traction engines, one at either end of the field. They sat stationary while the

plow was pulled from end to end by a cable. But most of the farmers were very skeptical at that time about how the ground should be plowed. In those days it was mostly plowed by foot burners and I imagine what some of the Old Country farmers would think about a caterpillar, where they were so particular about plowing the ground 6 inches by 9 inches and corner up, but that was the days of Auld Lang Syne.

I will give the Kaiser a rest and try and pass my opinion on a caterpillar. I don't know whether it got its name from the caterpillar or not, but it surely crawls and I and the weeder took to fresh pasture just across the fence. I always had my doubts if the work could please a Scotchman that had received his training behind a Scotch plow with Jock and Jenn that moved like a snail on a gallop, but a glance from behind the cat dispelled my prejudice, if I had any, against these new fangled ways of plowing. Here were plows lining it up just like a ribbon and not only cutting the ground 6 by 9 but 10 by 16 inches and making beautiful work, turning over 2 furrows each round of the field. This may sound like a fish story to a Scotchman if he had never seen one of these work, and besides the ploughs he had 3 packers behind. The average Oregonian of 25 years ago would have

said like myself, you are plowing too deep, but the answer I got from Mr. Poe was, "this land plowed that deep ought to raise wheat." I didn't dispute his word, for its wheat we need if we ever expect to bag the Kaiser. Taking a few notes as the cat crawls along, I got over the fence humming to myself "The Days of Auld Lang Syne," for then any country clod hopper could hold the plow. I don't know how I would feel on a cat but judging from the way it kept the engineer handling levers and using the steering wheel I concluded that it was his business, and that I, for one, would not exchange jobs with him.

At the noon hour I had the pleasure of meeting the engineer, H. J. Dana, a graduate of Washington State College, Pullman, Wash., a young man of very pleasing appearance, of a quiet disposition, who frankly gave me the information that I might ask about the cat, and I consider the half-hour I talked with him was very interesting. His able assistant and plow tender is John Clark, a Scotchman and typical "chip off the old block." John is doing good work. That afternoon this machine never made a stop unless changing gears. Just think of it, pulling 12 plows and not a wet hair on it, when I am sure the thermometer stood about 100 in the shade. If by hearing people talk, and being myself just a little prejudiced as a plowman of the old school, I frankly admit that I and my old Scotch plow are back numbers. The last plowing I did in Scotland was about 1886. They may be pulling their plows there now by airplanes.

It wouldn't be of much interest for me to try and describe a caterpillar, for it simply looks to me like a conglomeration of small pieces of steel, a mass of bolts and nuts, sprocket wheels and sprocket chains, all being propelled by a gas engine on the second deck, with a periscope projecting from the upper deck. This periscope the operator seems to watch very close when he is starting up and how much of a radius it takes in I do not know. But how different this caterpillar looks from the old Clayton & Shuttworth portable engine I used to run in 1879.

Now Kaiser Bill has also been looking through a periscope, after having completed one that took in the whole world about the year 1914. He grinned and snapped his teeth like a hungry coyote, a traitor and deceiver, a false teacher of his own countrymen. He looks through his periscope again and everything looks so near he starts like a hungry wolf to have dinner in Paris and supper in London. In his imagination he has captured the British fleet and to pay off an old score that happened in Manila Bay, he starts for America. America can do nothing he imagines, and he could see through his periscope that he would catch them napping. Yes, he could even see the big grain fields around Ella growing up in mustard and figured they would be quite an asset to his exchequer. But Kaiser Bill you have aroused the shepherds of Ella since 1914. Then all he was supposed to know was to eat the best mutton chops and throw the rest to his dogs; herd sheep year in and year out and at the end of each six months turn his wages over to Mr. Bush for a few drinks of beer and then finally his hard earned gold landed in the Kaiser's exchequer. A herder in these days was not allowed to read while out with sheep.

Today he will find things different in Ella. The shepherds are studying books ranging from a ten cent dictionary to the oldest history in existence, and so far they have not found out that might shall prevail against right. If history is true, the peoples of olden times seemed to put considerable faith in shepherds as they were leaders of the flock.

Kaiser Bill you will find us a patriotic bunch of shepherds around Ella. We are living on bone soup and hard tack, and if you want a square meal like we used to have you will find Ella wheat flour and Ella mutton chops behind the Yankee lines in France. I am sure they will give you a hot and grand reception.

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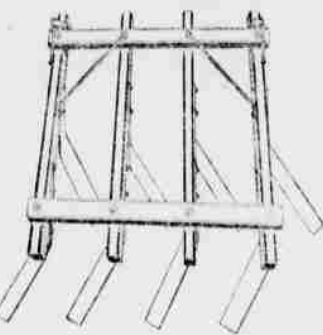
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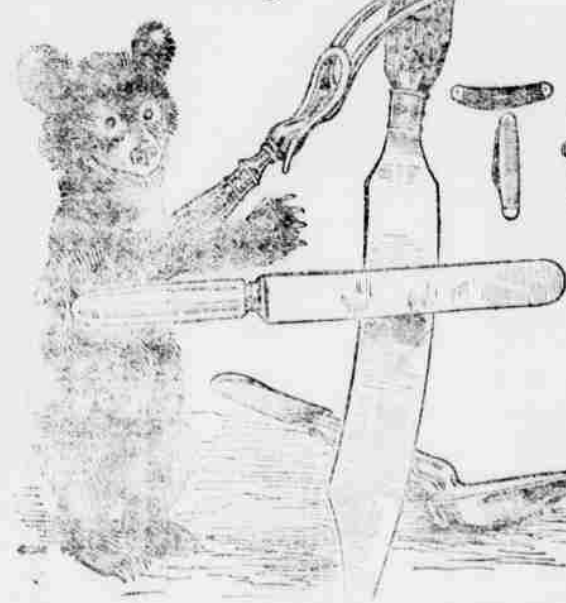
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