

NEWSPAPER MAN DESCRIBES VISIT TO HEADQUARTERS

Nerve Centers of British and Canadian Armies Peaceful Even in Battle.

IS LIKE BUSINESS HOUSE

Function Calmly and Efficiently Without Turmoil or Slightest Disorder—Young Staff Officers Complain Because They Must Stay Out of the Show.

London.—During the past three years of warfare there have been daily communications emanating from a mysterious place called general headquarters, whose location or surroundings have never been mentioned, in fact are not known to the average soldier fighting in France, writes Hal O'Flaherty in the New York Sun.

To the citizen unacquainted with the affairs of giant armies the mention of the term general headquarters brings up a picture of a building in the heart of the great army activities, with mud-splattered couriers dashing up on horse or cycle and with sentries pacing to and fro armed to the teeth, while worried generals sit about great tables within tracing upon their maps the various positions in the front line.

The fact of the matter is that British general headquarters is perhaps the most peaceful and orderly place that one could imagine. The roads approaching the main buildings are not lined with troops and paraphernalia of war, nor is there any of the much-talked-of dramatics of fighting.

Guards Are Unarmed.

It is a business house, conducted on the most advanced systems of efficiency. The traffic coming up to the heart of the gigantic chain of fighting units is regulated by military policemen who know their business and keep motors and pedestrians going in the right direction.

The soldiers on duty in front of the building visited by the correspondent were unarmed and directed the arriving officers in a manner as courteous as that displayed by the commissaire at the war office in London. Within there was nothing to indicate the presence of the greatest army chiefs. The furnishings were modest, almost homely, and the atmosphere of the whole place was that of a peaceful and well conducted business establishment.

To secure an interview with one of the men who conduct the affairs of the British armies was simplicity itself. A telephone call sufficed to tell him of our coming and we were ushered into his office immediately upon our arrival.

An officer of the United States army, known as a "liaison officer," had quarters nearby. He has been working as hard as any man of affairs at home could work and his surroundings showed he wasn't in the habit of entertaining visitors.

"Take that rocking chair over in the corner," he said as we entered, and one of the party went over as directed and sat on the wooden box that had held his typewriter. A wooden table, two chairs and a rack for books made up the furnishings of his office.

On his table was a stack of correspondence a foot high, which if it could be read by the German high command would probably give them heart failure. There was something significant in that stack of letters. It was probably the first nucleus of a correspondence between the directing officials of the American army and the British upon whom they are depending for advice and information. Some day that little pile will have grown into an entire library of documents that will fill long ranks of filing cases. It is pioneer correspondence under the new order of things between Britain and the United States.

The following afternoon brought us by a lucky chance to Canadian headquarters, where we had the privilege of spending several hours with other men who are conducting operations. It was more than a lucky chance that brought us to Canadian headquarters almost at the same hour that the Germans began an attack—it was an act of providence.

Lighted by Lamps and Candles.

It can be set down here without further parley that two newspaper men were never treated more royally than we were by these men who at the moment we entered their quarters were directing a barrage against a strong German attack.

In the midst of tea the door opened and for a few minutes we were under the impression that every general on the western front had been deluged into our presence. It was a party of officers who had dropped in for tea and a chat with the army commanders. Instead they had a rather amusing talk with two American correspondents, who were found interesting because they had been with the American army on the Mexican border and in France and had some idea of what the United States troops could do. Their intense interest in preparations of the United States for war was manifested in every question, and their friendliness toward everything American was more than evident.

In two minutes the formality of introduction was over with and for fully

half an hour the Canadian general staff dropped their heavy responsibilities and enjoyed the unique experience of entertaining two Americans. It was the first time that such a gathering had ever assembled in this particular building and all made the most of it.

The staff captain who had introduced us suggested that we get a little exercise, explaining that the staff officers usually spent an hour in the evening playing badminton or some other game just to keep in condition. We went out to a well constructed court similar to a tennis court and taped off in the same manner. For an hour we watched four officers bat the feathered shuttlecock across the net with a display of skill and strategy that was worthy of men who used strategy in a greater and more deadly manner. We took a hand in the game for a time and then watched four others play off the staff championship.

Meet Famous Strategist.

When the game broke up and we reentered the headquarters building we were presented to a man whose name is famous the length and breadth of the British front. His keen stratagems and forceful work have won for him the praise and admiration of every Canadian fighting in France and his record as a fighter would fill several books. We were fortunate in having an opportunity of talking with him, for he, like the late General Funston, is keenly interested in newspaper work and it gave us a good start on the right plane. We explained to him our reasons for coming to headquarters and how the car that was to meet us had broken down.

"Well, I'm glad you're here, boys," he said. "I'll just arrange to have a couple of places set for you at dinner. How are things over in the U. S. A.?"

We had been talking with him only a few minutes when an officer brought to him word that an S. O. S. signal had been received from a certain point indicating that the Germans were preparing to attack. There was no bluster. The information was given in a low, steady voice and the orders for certain counter-measures were given in an equally unruffled manner. An hour later it was learned that the Germans had given up their attempt after being unmercifully flayed by the gruelling fire which our host had turned loose.

From time to time an officer would appear at the door and report the progress of various movements under way, and throughout the evening there was no letup in the handling of business. The whole procedure of this work of directing armies seemed to operate as smoothly as the service at the dinner table to which we were shown.

When the meal was finished and we were comfortably seated in the main room we heard from the lips of one of the officers a story of the thoughts and feelings of a man directing an offensive.

For the moment we saw a series of pictures thrown on the screen of our imagination. The officer asleep in his room. A servant calls him in the small hours. He dresses and walks slowly to his office, where a number of telegraph and telephone operators sit at keys and switchboards. A cup of coffee is steaming at his desk, a broad, flat table, upon which is spread a great detail map with flags marking the line of attack. He drinks the coffee, lights his pipe and turns to greet his brother officers.

Men Go Over the Top.

The hour of the attack is marked by a general glance at watches and then the phone rings. The men are over the top! Several phones ring. A number of objectives have been reached. An S. O. S. signal from "A" section. All reports are marked upon the big map by flags, and as each objective is reached a new flag is added. As reports of trouble come from different points certain barrages are instructed to cut loose with everything they have.

A "cut-in" shows the men lying by their guns, which are loaded and trained upon certain points. The S. O. S. signal comes to the gunner nearest the string, who reaches out and gives it a yank while the other gunners jump into action. Before the first shell has reached its destination a second is on its way and the big show is on in full swing. We see the men bombing the Germans out of dugouts; fighting hand to hand in the open ground with vicious thrusting of bayonets.

Finally the picture reverts to headquarters, where we see the officer, tired eyed but smiling, reading the congratulations from all along the line and transmitting them to the victorious men out in the shell holes and trenches.

"I don't believe there's a one of us that wouldn't have given a great deal to be right down there with our men," he said. "That's the worst of having a staff job. One must take a distant view of things and stay out of the show, which isn't a pleasant task, especially for that young officer who just handed me this report. I'll venture to say that he'd yell with joy if he got orders to go back to his regiment tonight."

Along toward midnight our disabled car came limping up to headquarters for us and our farewells were said outside the door in the inky blackness of a rainy night. We shook hands there in the darkness with these men who had been our hosts. From the distance came the deep-throated growl of heavy guns.

"We never let up on them," said a voice from the steps. "It has been just as you hear it now for months, and we'll keep on until we finish the job. We are going to win."

And that is the spirit that pervades not only the headquarters staff but every camp and every dugout on the British front.

MARATHON RUNNER DISPATCH BEARER

Henri St. Yves, Famous Sprinter, Now Carries Messages for French Army.

HAS MANY NARROW ESCAPES

Spotted by Germans While Carrying Orders, He Remains in Water-Filled Shell-Hole for Five Hours—Wants to Fly.

Paris.—Henri Saint Yves, the former marathon runner and now a dispatch bearer in the French army, has returned to Paris for a special 24-hour furlough, granted him because of a particularly perilous mission which he carried out in the course of his duties in the trenches in front of Saint Quentin.

While trying to carry orders from the advanced French trench line to a French machine gun crew which had established itself in a shell hole in the middle of "No Man's Land" half-way between the opposing lines, Saint Yves was "spotted" by two German machine-gun crews, also holding shell holes.

They opened a cross-fire on the former long-distance runner and he dropped into the nearest shell hole, which was almost full of rain water. Saint Yves remained in the water, with just his head above the surface to enable him to breathe, for five hours, or until after darkness. Then he crept out and made his way to the French machine-gun position, delivered the orders to the lieutenant in charge and made his way to the trenches again.

Sent to the Hospital.

Saint Yves had to go to a hospital for ten days, however, as the shell hole water in which he had been immersed so long was "gassy," having assimilated the poisonous properties of the gas shells from both sides which had been rained down in "No Man's Land." Several hours after Saint Yves emerged from the shell hole the poisonous water got in its effect.

Saint Yves was wounded in the leg last May, but has entirely recovered from that and asserts he will be able to run as well as ever if the war ever ends and he gets back into civilian life.

The marathon runner has applied for a transfer to the aviation, and his superior officers have indorsed his request. He expects to be called to an aviation school to begin his training at any time. Saint Yves will try to be brevetted as a fighting pilot for flying in single-seated machines.

"I hear that poor old Tom Longboat has been killed with the Canadians up near Lens," said Saint Yves. "Well, Tom was a wonderful runner, but no man ever lived that can run as fast as the Boche bullets."

"Our sector at the front—opposite Saint Quentin, where the Germans retreated to the Hindenburg line—is supposed to be quiet all the time, but we had a little fight up there a few weeks ago that was pretty lively. I was assigned as dispatch-bearer, carrying messages from the colonel up to the line, because the German bombardment had plowed up all the ground behind our first and second line of trenches and torn up the telegraph and telephone wires, and their artillery had also wrecked a lot of our wireless."

Had Narrow Escapes.

"I had several close shaves in crossing out in the open, with the German snipers potting at me from 1,000 meters away. A couple of big shells dropped pretty near me, too, but then you get used to shells, whereas machine guns and rifles always annoy you."

"Pretty soon I hope to be in the aviation service and after I get brevetted as a pilot and have some experience of flying at the front, I'm going to apply to be sent to America as an instructor for United States army aviators."

The wife and family of Saint Yves are now at Dieppe. Contrary to general belief, Saint Yves was never a waiter in a Paris cafe. Born in Rouen, he lived and worked there as a bicycle repair man prior to going to the United States eight years ago as a long-distance runner.

SURGERY CAN CURE CROOKS

Michigan Judge Declares Half the Criminals in the U. S. Might Be Saved.

Chicago.—"Fifty per cent of the criminals in this country under thirty years of age can be restored to good citizenship under proper surgical attention."

Judge George W. Bridgeman of Benton Harbor, Mich., made that statement at the dinner of the American Association of Official Surgeons in the Hotel La Salle here.

"Seventy-five per cent of the criminals brought into the courts of this country are between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four years and 80 per cent of them suffer from physical disability," said Judge Bridgeman. "In most of these cases this disability is responsible for mental disability, manifested in crime, and it is capable of correction."

Bedtime, Sonny

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The more quickly the people may come into an understanding of the Government's plan for saving money through the purchase of the war stamp the sooner will the campaign for the disposal of the entire issue of \$2,000,000,000 be concluded. Two sets of stamps will be offered the people. One will be for \$5, the other in the denomination of 25 cents. A thrift card is furnished that has spaces for 16 stamps. When these spaces are filled the card may be exchanged with the payment of odd cents, for a \$5 stamp. These are to be attached to a folder, known as a War Savings Certificate, which has blank spaces for 20 stamps. If these are filled between December 1, 1917, and January 31, 1918, the cost to the purchaser will be \$82.40, and on January 1, 1923, the Government will pay the owner of the certificate \$100—a net profit to the holder of \$17.60. This is based on an interest of 4 per cent compounded quarterly. The amount of War-Savings Stamps sold to any one person at any one time shall not exceed \$100 and no person may hold such stamps to an aggregate amount exceeding \$1,000.—Charlotte Observer.

Death of Miss Lucinda Edwards.

On Sunday morning, November 25, Miss Lucinda Edwards died at the home of Mrs. Virginia Edwards, aged 73 years. She had lived a life of service and usefulness. She was never married, but helped to raise a large family of children and no mother ever loved her children better than she did those. She was sick only from Tuesday until Sunday, but she suffered untold agony while she was sick. A dog bit her on October 15th, but it was not thought that the dog was mad. The dog died soon after he bit her. After she was taken she never could drink any water or take any nourishment at all. She appeared to be a raving maniac from Saturday afternoon until she died Sunday morning at nine o'clock.

She will be greatly missed, not only by the members of the immediate family, but by the people far and near, for she went about and nursed the sick, and had many friends who will truly mourn for her. She surely has been a friend to the writer.

Her funeral was preached on Monday afternoon and she was laid away in the Snipes grave yard near Princeton, to await the Resurrection Morn. May the Lord prepare and fit us that we may meet her on the shiny banks in the New Jerusalem, never to part again.

MRS. E. L. SNIPES.
Kenly, N. C.

Turner's Almanacs for 1918.

We have just received a lot of Turner's North Carolina Almanacs for 1918. Price ten cents each. By mail 12 cents. Herald Office, Smithfield, N. C.

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We have lots of useful gifts for Christmas from 5 cents to \$1.00.

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