



"OVER THE TOP"

AN AMERICAN SOLDIER WHO WENT

ARTHUR GUY EMPEY

MACHINE GUNNER, SERVING IN FRANCE

EMPEY JOINS PICK AND SHOVEL SQUAD AND DIGS TRENCHES IN NO MAN'S LAND.

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 falls, 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.

CHAPTER XIII—Continued.

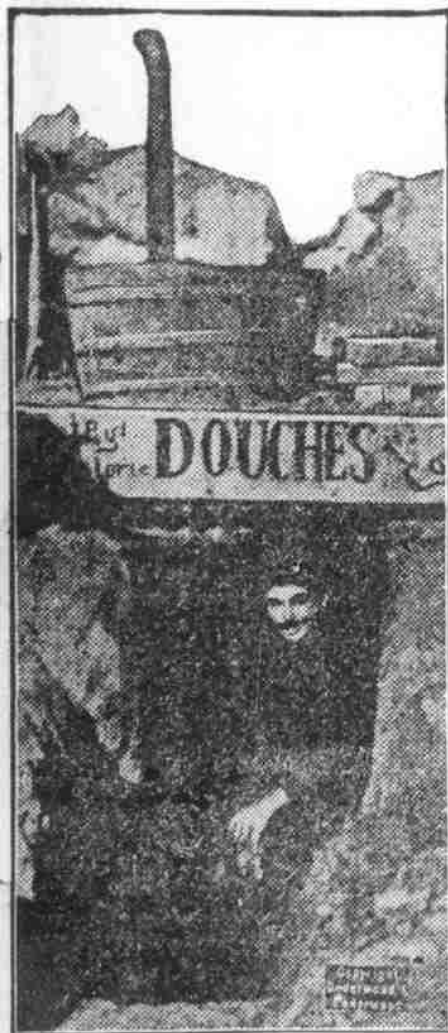
We lined up in front of the baths, soaked with perspiration, and piled our rifles into stacks. A sergeant of the R. A. M. C. with a yellow band around his left arm on which was "S. P." (sanitary police) in black letters, took charge, ordering us to take off our equipment, unroll our puttees and unlace boots. Then, starting from the right of the line, he divided us into squads of fifteen. I happened to be in the first squad.

We entered a small room, where we were given five minutes to undress, then fled into the bathroom. In here there were fifteen tubs (barrels sawed in two) half full of water. Each tub contained a piece of laundry soap. The sergeant informed us that we had just twelve minutes in which to take our baths. Soaping ourselves all over, we took turns in rubbing each other's backs, then by means of a garden hose, washed the soap off. The water was ice cold, but felt fine.

Pretty soon a bell rang and the water was turned off. Some of the slower ones were covered with soap, but this made no difference to the sergeant, who chased us into another room, where we lined up in front of a little window, resembling the box office in a theater, and received clean underwear and towels. From here we went into the room where we had first undressed. Ten minutes were allowed in which to get into our "clabber."

My pair of drawers came up to my chin and the shirt barely reached my diaphragm, but they were clean—no strangers on them, so I was satisfied. At the expiration of the time allotted we were turned out and finished our dressing on the grass.

When all of the company had bathed it was a case of march back to billets. That march was the most uncongenial



A Bathroom at the Front.

one imagined. Just cussing and blinding all the way. We were covered with white dust and felt greasy from sweat. The woolen underwear issued was itching like the mischief.

After eating our dinner of stew, which had been kept for us—it was now a cold block—we went into the canteen for another bath.

One would have heard our divisional baths and the other would have heard our company baths. But Tommy

had a "foe" or the chaplain's part of way, but no one was there among them.

There are so many instances of heroic deeds performed under fire in rescuing the wounded that it would take several books to chronicle them, but I have to mention one instance performed by a chaplain, Captain Hall by name, in the brigade on our left, because it particularly appealed to me. A chaplain is not a fighting man; he is recognized as a noncombatant and carries no arms. In a charge or trench raid the soldier gets a feeling of confidence from contact with his rifle, revolver, or bomb he is carrying. He has something to protect himself with, something with which he can inflict harm on the enemy—in other words, he is able to get his own back.

But the chaplain is empty-handed, and is at the mercy of the enemy if he encounters them, so it is doubly brave for him to go over the top, under fire, and bring in wounded. Also a chaplain is not required by the king's regulations to go over in a charge, but this one did, made three trips under the hottest kind of fire, each time returning with a wounded man on his back. On the third trip he received a bullet through his left arm, but never reported the matter to the doctor until late that night—just spent his time administering to the wants of the wounded lying on stretchers.

The chaplains of the British army are a fine, manly set of men, and are greatly respected by Tommy.

CHAPTER XIV.

Picks and Shovels.

I had not slept long before the sweet voice of the sergeant informed that "No. 1 section had clicked for another blinking digging party." I smiled to myself with deep satisfaction. I had been promoted from a mere digger to a member of the Suicide club, and was exempt from all fatigues. Then came an awful shock. The sergeant looked over in my direction and said:

"Don't you bomb throwers think you are wearing top hats out here. 'Cord-in' to orders you've been taken up on the strength of this section, and will have to do your bit with the pick and shovel, same as the rest of us."

I put up a howl on my way to get my shovel, but the only thing that resulted was a loss of good humor on my part. We fell in at eight o'clock, outside of our billets, a sort of masquerade party. I was disguised as a common laborer, had a pick and shovel, and about one hundred empty sandbags. The rest, about two hundred in all, were equipped likewise: picks, shovels, sandbags, rifles and ammunition.

The party moved out in column of fours, taking the road leading to the trenches. Several times we had to string out in the ditch to let long columns of limbers, artillery and supplies get past.

The marching, under these conditions, was necessarily slow. Upon arrival at the entrance to the communication trench, I looked at my illuminated wrist watch—it was eleven o'clock.

Before entering this trench, word was passed down the line, "no talking or smoking, lead off in single file, covering party first."

This covering party consisted of 30 men, armed with rifles, bayonets, bombs, and two Lewis machine guns. They were to protect us and guard against a surprise attack while digging in No Man's Land.

The communication trench was about half a mile long, a zigzagging ditch, eight feet deep and three feet wide.

Now and again, German shrapnel would whistle overhead and burst in our vicinity. We would crouch against the earthen walls while the shell fragments "slapped" the ground above us. Once Fritz turned loose with a machine gun, the bullets from which "cracked" through the air and kicked up the dirt on the top, scattering sand and pebbles, which, hitting our steel helmets, sounded like hailstones.

Upon arrival in the fire trench an officer of the Royal Engineers gave us our instructions and acted as guide. We were to dig an advanced trench

two hundred yards from the Germans (the trenches at this point were six hundred yards apart).

Two winding lanes, five feet wide, had been cut through our barbed wire, for the passage of the diggers. From these lanes white tape had been laid on the ground to the point where we were to commence work. This in order that we would not get lost in the darkness. The proposed trench was also laid out with tape.

The covering party went out first. After a short wait, two scouts came back with information that the working party was to follow and "carry on" with their work.

In extended order, two yards apart, we noiselessly crept across No Man's Land. It was nervous work; every minute we expected a machine gun to open fire on us. Stray bullets "cracked" around us, or a ricochet sang overhead.

Arriving at the taped diagram of the trench, rifles slung around our shoulders, we lost no time in getting to work. We dug as quietly as possible but every now and then the noise of a pick or shovel striking a stone would send the cold shivers down our backs. Under our breaths we heartily cursed the offending Tommy.

At intervals a star shell would go up from the German lines and we would remain motionless until the glare of its white light died out.

When the trench had reached a depth of two feet we felt safer, because it would afford us cover in case we were discovered and fired on.

The digging had been in progress about two hours, when suddenly hell seemed to break loose in the form of machine-gun and rifle fire.

We dropped down on our bellies in the shallow trench, bullets knocking



Trench Digging.

up the ground and snapping in the air. Then shrapnel butted in. The music was hot and Tommy danced.

The covering party was having a rough time of it; they had no cover; just had to take their medicine.

Word was passed down the line to beat it for our trenches. We needed no urging; grabbing our tools and stooping low, we legged it across No Man's Land. The covering party got away to a poor start but beat us in. They must have had wings because we lowered the record.

Panting and out of breath, we tumbled into our front-line trench. I tore my hands getting through our wire, but, at the time, didn't notice it; my journey was too urgent.

When the roll was called we found that we had gotten it in the nose for 63 casualties.

Our artillery put a barrage on Fritz' front-line and communication trenches and their machine-gun and rifle fire suddenly ceased.

Upon the cessation of this fire, stretcher bearers went out to look for killed and wounded. Next day we learned that 21 of our men had been killed and 37 wounded. Five men were missing; lost in the darkness, they must have wandered over into the German lines, where they were either killed or captured.

Splicing of stretcher bearers and wounded, it is very hard for the average civilian to comprehend the enormous cost of taking care of wounded and the war in general. He or she gets so accustomed to seeing billions of dollars in print that the significance of the amount is passed over without thought.

From an official statement published in one of the London papers, it is stated that it costs between six and seven thousand pounds (\$30,000 to \$35,000) to kill or wound a soldier. This result was attained by taking the cost of the war to date and dividing it by the killed and wounded.

It may sound heartless and inhuman, but it is a fact, nevertheless, that from a military standpoint it is better for a man to be killed than wounded.

Empey tells of many ways the soldiers have of amusing themselves, in the next installment.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

ZONE SYSTEM FOR ARMY'S PURCHASES

TERRITORY HAS BEEN ALLOTTED TO EACH OF THIRTEEN GENERAL SUPPLY DEPOTS.

ORDNANCE EQUIPMENT READY

Every Soldier Leaving for France Has Been Fully Outfitted—American Merchants Take Over the Interests of German Fur Men.

(From Committee on Public Information.) Washington.—A zone system for the apportionment of purchases throughout the United States and to facilitate distribution has been established by the quartermaster department. Territory has been allotted to each of 13 general supply depots. The general supply depot quartermasters are charged with the duty of ascertaining the manufacturing possibilities of their zones. On the basis of reports along this line forwarded to the acting quartermaster general, food and equipment for troops at the different camps will be purchased within the zone in which the camp is located.

Formerly nearly all of a particular class of supplies was purchased through a single general supply depot. Other articles were obtained through other supply depots. Manufacturers in sections distant from the particular supply depot buying their goods were at a disadvantage, and were unable to compete with rivals nearer the point. Under the new system most classes of supplies will be purchased through each of the 13 depots, and manufacturers will be able to transact their business through the depots nearest them.

Each general supply depot quartermaster besides ascertaining production facilities within his zone is instructed to recommend to the quartermaster general's office the employment of such producers as are in his judgment qualified to fulfill contracts. Each depot is expected to keep informed as to market conditions and spot goods located in that zone, and when shortages occur submit recommendations for purchase of articles which may be obtained within the zone.

Purchases are to be made after advertisement by open competitive bidding when time will permit. In emergency cases competition is desired whenever possible. The record of bids received and awards made will be open to public inspection.

The army ordnance department has thus far met every demand imposed by the new program for overseas shipment of American troops, according to a statement by the department. Despite the great acceleration in the sending of American forces to France, no infantryman goes aboard ship without a United States model 1917 rifle (modified Enfield), bayonet, belt, haversack, pack carrier, bandoleers, bayonet scabbard, and full mess equipment.

Tonnage is today a limiting factor in the shipment of ordnance material overseas, especially because of the present necessity of increasing the transport of infantry regiments. Sufficient supplies of artillery—French 75-millimeter and 155-millimeter and American heavy railway artillery—are already in France to meet the present demand. Sufficient machine guns are also immediately available for American forces in France.

A Canadian order in council provides that no person, with the exception of manufacturers of flour, bakers, confectioners, wholesale or retail dealers, or persons living at a greater distance than two miles from a licensed dealer, shall hold or have in his possession or under his control more flour, made wholly or in part from wheat, than is sufficient for his ordinary requirements for a period not exceeding 15 days.

Anyone living at a distance greater than two miles and less than five miles from a licensed dealer may hold or control flour made wholly or in part from wheat up to an amount sufficient for his ordinary requirements for a period not exceeding 30 days. Anyone living more than five and less than ten miles from a licensed dealer may have sufficient for his ordinary requirements up to 60 days, while a person living more than ten miles from such a dealer may have sufficient for his ordinary requirements for a period up to 120 days.

Any wholesale or any retail dealer licensed by the Canadian food board may not hold flour made wholly or in part from wheat in excess of a quantity sufficient for his ordinary trade requirements for a period exceeding 60 days.

The regulation regarding sugar parallels this save in the last clause. Manufacturers, wholesalers, or retailers may not have more sugar than is required for a period exceeding 45 days.

Habit.

"That telephone frets me like an aching tooth," said the man who jumps every time the bell rings. "Yes," commented the sardonic citizen; "there is a similarity; and the queer part of it is that you lack the nerve to have either taken out."

Another Instance.

Klicker—Wasn't there something about "obey" in the marriage service? Mrs. Klicker—That was dictated but not read.

Arrangements are being completed by which the interests of German fur men, amounting to several millions of dollars, will be purchased by American merchants and the money thus paid turned into the treasury.

Before the war broke in Europe, according to a statement issued by the alien property custodian, the trade of American furrers was practically nothing but a collecting and shipping agency for the Germans. Almost every pelt taken by American trappers went to Leipzig before it could be sold. Although London was the world's market, three-quarters of the fur shipped to London from America, Russia, and even China, went to Leipzig for dressing and dyeing.

The Leipzig dressers and dyers were recognized as the best in the world. Each year after the fur was prepared and German merchants had fixed the price, Americans were allowed to purchase as much as three-fifths of the year's output for manufacture into garments, but in so doing they were forced to pay the original cost, expense of dressing and dyeing, a big profit to the Germans, and a 30 per cent duty, before the furs were returned to America.

The war deprived Germany of the chance to purchase fur in London, and limited the supply from America—now also entirely cut off.

According to the Leipzig correspondent of a Christiania newspaper, the Leipzig spring fair showed exhibits of many substitutes and surrogates which have been placed on the market in Germany. Descriptions of some of these have been received by the United States chamber of commerce:

A surrogate for pepper is offered for sale which, judged only by its appearance, seems almost the same as real pepper. The color, odor and taste have been surprisingly well imitated.

A tea is shown to which the name of "German tea" has been given. It is prepared from any one or a combination of a great variety of plants, from strawberry leaves to linden blossoms. It is said to taste very much like genuine tea, but even a half dozen cups will not produce the stimulation caused by a single cup of real tea.

There are any number of surrogates for marmalades. Most of them are prepared from garden vegetables instead of from fruits, with a minimum amount of sugar.

Substitute soap is offered for sale, which is said to have been prepared from the oil in berries and from pumice stone. It lacks, however, the one main characteristic of soap, that of working up into a rich, creamy lather; otherwise it is very good. Substitutes are also to be had for laundry bluing.

Substitute bicycle tires are sometimes made of two concentric iron rings with small springs between them. They are very serviceable on asphalt pavements, but are not exactly as noiseless nor as easy riding as genuine rubber tires.

A large number of articles offered for sale had been prepared largely or entirely from paper—coarse working clothes for men and women, blouses, aprons, and other fabrics. There were paper belts which seemed capable of driving heavy loads.

Many artificial and substitute leathers were noticed. Brass and copper articles were not seen, and attempts were made to place substitutes on the market in the form of plated wares.

A committee on public information representative in London says:

London has never heard of a baseball season before, but will get its chance this year when the American baseball league gets its schedule of games well underway. There are eight American and Canadian teams recruited from various organizations stationed in London, with games scheduled for each Saturday during the summer.

The thousands of American soldiers who may pass through London, or be invalided or stationed here, are in a fair way to be made to feel that England is the next best place to home and that English hearts are kept warm for them.

"Make England the Sammy's 'blighty,'" is the way the English press puts it in urging readers to entertain the American troops. "Blighty" is the war word for everything the soldier wants in intervals of his fighting work; the place where friends, recreation, and homelike comfort await him.

The Weekly Dispatch recently called for suggestions for a public entertainment to be offered American soldiers and an instant response made thousands of dollars available for amusements and entertainments. The idea that found greatest favor, however, was to throw open the homes of the nation to the Sammys.

An officer commanding an American squadron operating with the British fleet has reported on a late inspection and speaks in high terms of the present state of efficiency in which he finds both ships and men.

"Vessels show the most gratifying improvement in battery and fire control," he said. "Our ships are smart, sleek and span, and have been recipients of many high compliments from British flag officers."

The Way to Do.

"You are wearing a very unbecoming hat," said Alma to Ethel. "Then," said Ethel, as she turned to the looking glass. "I am going to face the matter and make it the subject of thorough reflection."

Much Needed.

Church—Atlanta has a club which will endeavor to extend individual welcome to all new settlers. Gotham—But what is needed most is a club for fellows who don't see.

Studying the Bible

By REV. B. B. SUTCLIFFE
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TEXT—Search the Scriptures.—John 5:39.

All Christians should give some time to the study of the Bible and if our study is to be profitable a certain preparation is necessary.

This preparation consists first of a heart determination to read the Book. This is a fundamental law of Bible study, so simple that it is sometimes set aside, to our great loss. There is no way of understanding the Book except as we read

it and reread it and reread it. It requires a heart determination to do that, for our threefold enemy will rise up and say "no" when we attempt to read the Book.

The world will say "You are too busy" or you will think "There are too many important things requiring my time to use it reading the Bible."

Many look to the preacher to give them their spiritual food. The Lord does give his people pastors but the pastor's study can never take the place of one's own individual study. The world will do what it can to oppose the reading of the Book. The world has a subtle ability to fill our lives so full of seemingly important things, will bring so many crowding opportunities for the use of our time that we need a heart determination to make time for Bible reading.

The flesh will also oppose it. We become so tired physically. It is a remarkable thing that one can sit down with an interesting book and become so absorbed in it as to read far into the night and not feel sleepy. But how quickly the flesh wots when we would read the Bible for an hour or two in the evening.

The devil also will hinder if he can. He will suggest the difficulty of understanding what we read, will say the Bible is a closed book to our minds and do all he can to bring discouragement. But if we are to come to an understanding of the truth and keep our souls strong and healthy, we must read and reread the Book itself. Not books about the Bible, nor expositions by man, but the Bible itself.

In the second place, we must have a heart determination to allow the Book to mean what it says. We must permit it to define its own terms. We must make it explain itself. It will answer questions concerning the words and terms it uses. We go to the Bible unconsciously prejudiced. We think we know the truth and naturally suppose what the Bible says ought to agree with our thought. If it does not agree we are in danger of forcing into it our own ideas rather than let it mean what it says. We come to it too often for confirmation instead of information. I do not mean that one shall determine to accept all it says at once, nor to believe all it says at once, but I mean that we shall allow it to mean what it says and to define its own terms whether that agrees with us or not. And soon we will find that we agree with it. In this way much confusion will be avoided. In the third place, there must be a heart determination to allow it to speak to oneself. If I am to study the Bible profitably I must allow it to speak to me and not try to dodge. We are all more or less adept as spiritual dodgers. The incident, recorded in the fourth chapter of St. John is a very human picture. Our Lord engages the woman in conversation. She is hesitant about it because it is a strange thing for a Jew to speak to a Samaritan, but she enters into the conversation. Gradually our Lord goes a little deeper into her history until finally he puts his finger on the sore spot. She tries to escape the issue by attempting to sidetrack him. The moment he gets his finger on the sore spot, she says "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place for worship." That sounds religious and interesting, but it is a mere subterfuge to avoid the issue. We will do that in our minds to dodge what the Book says to us personally.

It is difficult to allow the Book to speak to our own hearts but Bible study is valueless and indeed dangerous unless it is allowed to bear fruit in our lives. It cannot be studied merely as literature. This then is the needed preparation for profitable Bible study—a heart determination to read the Book—to allow it to mean what it says and to permit it to speak to our own hearts.

Our Gentle Leader.

We have a Leader so gentle that we can go, as it were, to his tent at night and tell him we are afraid of tomorrow's warfare—that the hard battle has weakened our nerves. O tender Savior, wounded unto death, and yet strong in the consciousness of an indomitable power, thou, on that white horse, shalt lead us forth conquering and to conquer!—Bishop of St. Andrews.