

AMERICANS AT THE FRONT

Red Triangle Man Who Accompanied Khaki-Clad Fighters to the Trenches Writes Intimately of What He Saw and Heard

Orderly Jim Gets The Horse Laugh

BY OUR OWN RING W. LARDNER



PRIVATE JIM

well all you must of got by this time so you dont have no surpris in the silent we i pull new millitery lang wich you havent never herd befor. you ced i was kidding about the Detale but belev me al their was never no kidding about that as their wont be about this ime going to tell you and you neednot worry about my kiding at becous it is strait stuff ime writting you from here who lie admitt sum of it sounds a good deal like kiding.

thats becous their is so mutch diffronts between the things you do in Sivillain life and what you do in the armie and their is beside a lot of diffronts in the word you use for the things you do, that Detale i told you about the kitchun poles la i of them & ime going to tell you about this other one this orderly wich leant orderly the same as you mean orderly back home. orderly is keeping your shoes under the bed when they mite be on top of the dresser in Sivillain life. hear in millitery life orderly is running a round for some elts becous their is so many fellas hear thais officers and cant run so pryvats are called orderly when they do this.

keeping shoes under the bed has nothink to do with orderly hear it is inspekahn. well all i day i was laying on my cott not doing mutch but laying their and thinkng about Aggie wem my name was hollered out and i quit laying and jump up it was the sarjint & he has ben soar at me ever senta i showed him up on the whistalling. i lerned about this orderly becous this same sarjint as the i lerned the whistalls meaning from. he ced me to after i jump up from laying on my cott pryvat Jim you will pleas be orderly, whats the matter sarjint i replide dont you think ime orderly enugh already cems hear & take a start at my cott and stuff. he calld me a stiff or sumthing al but i didnt hawl off and drive him i as per haps i shoud of you know me al, but he is a Sarjint and hitting a sarjint is esier to do than to get a weigh with. the sarjint as ive menshuned befor has moor influents than a pryvat fat has so i ced well what do you want then.

he ced you are want it as an orderly. i ced an orderly what, ime allways orderly sarjint and he ansnered back quick and snappy you are want it as an orderly for the curnel he has heard you no sumthing about hoorses is that true. well al i of droopt a couple remarks about playing the ponle or sumthing but i of never ben on a hoarse or near i as a driver. it was a grait onr tho al the curnel was wanting to give me i didnt want to dis appoint him and be side their sent nothinng a bout a hoarse that cant be lernt by any i with a littel brayuns in his dome.

i told the sarjint sur ime an old hand at this hoarse stuff brayns ive ben as near as from me to you to a hoarse often & a friend of mine drives a milk trale. well cut that stuff and com along be ced so i fell in behind the sarjint and we marcht out of the bar ux up to wear the stabulis in locat it i becng the orderly so the sarjint told me. well al they gave me two hoorses over to the stabul 1 for me & 1 for the curnel. i notised mine lookt funny with long ears and a tuff-looking tayxl & i ced hadent you better give me another i this hoarse looks pretty hard & tuff for travellng a round with a curnel on. they said & ced this is the hoarse every orderly riden on why not you. i got on allright but my legs were too long for the steer ups so i let them hang like youve seen in the movies al i must of lookd like alkilill albert alright with my legs rapped around the hoorses heels. the fellas hollered you gnat what are you ridelng off without the curnels hoarse for cum back & get it but it wasent exy al. this hoarse i had drawn for beeing an orderly was set on going june i weigh it wotud turn around for nothinng not quick and wank over the hoarse head lilein on my own wich is a hard i and didnt be come dented nor nothinng. went i lookd up the hoarse i had ben on was going down the road & i hollered how their hoarse whats the matter & a boob standng by sed dont you no thats not a hoarse but a mule haw haw haw. i ced by your lat i shoud think your related to him haw haw haw. you dont no ime the curnels orderly i ced & he shat up but i didnt see no moar of the curnel that day. Your friend PRIVATE JIM.

CARRY ON

*It's easy to fight when everything's right,
And you're mad with the thrill and the glory;
It's easy to cheer when the victory's near,
And you march in fields that are gory.
It's a different song when everything's wrong,
When you're feeling infernally mortal;
When it's ten against one, and hope there is none,
Buck up, little soldier, and cheer!*

*Carry on! Carry on! There isn't much punch in your blow.
You're glowing and burning and never get cold,
You're muddy and bloody, but bring out your mind,
Carry on! Carry on! You haven't the ghost of a show.
It's looking like death, but while you've a breath,
Carry on, my son! Carry on!*

*And so in the strife of the battle of life
It's easy to fight when you're winning;
It's easy to slave, and storm and be brave,
When the dawn of success is beginning.
But the man who can meet despair and defeat
With a cheer, there's the man of God's choosing;
The man who can fight to Heaven's own height
Is the man who can fight when he's losing.*

*Carry on! Carry on! Things never were looking so black;
But show that you haven't a cowardly streak,
And though you're unlucky you never are weak.
Carry on! Carry on! Brace up for another attack.
It's looking like hell, but—you never can tell;
Carry on, old man! Carry on!*

*There are some who drift out in the deserts of doubt,
And some who wander in blindness and gloom;
There are others I know, who in quietness go,
Because of a Heaven to follow.
But to labor with zest, and to give of your best,
For the sweetness and joy of the giving;
To help folks along with a hand and a song—
Why, there's the real sunshine of living.*

*Carry on! Carry on! Fight the good fight and true.
Believe in your mission, greet life with a cheer;
There's big work to do, and that's why you are here.
Carry on! Carry on! Let the world be better for you;
And at last when you die, let this be your cry:
Carry on, my son! Carry on!*

Robert W. Service.

Somewhere In France.

When our American troops started for the front, we fed them every four hours for forty-eight hours. They came in cold and tired and thirsty. We had six hundred loaves of bread for them, twelve cases of jam with twenty-four cans in a case, and three hundred pounds of coffee. We had two cheeses, weighing one hundred and eighty pounds each. We took a location on the quay, set up stoves, a boiler and served real American coffee. We gave the coffee away. For sandwiches we charged twenty-five centimes. They cost us thirty-five centimes. I went thirty-two hours on four slices of bread and coffee.

Then I started off with the men—artillery, they were. We left at 3 p. m. on a Friday. Twenty-nine of us were in a box-car with a bale of hay. When the wire came off the hay we needed a gas mask for the dust that shook out. There wasn't room for all to sleep. We were saddlers, shoers, mechanics, the ninth section of a battery.

We woke to a foggy morning. The men thought they were on the way to Paris. But we had come to the city of —, in a corner of France. We took the guns off the wagon, and marched seventeen kilometers to the town of —. We slept that night in the loft of a house. Men had been billeted there before us, and by morning I had a ring of white welts around my ankle from vermin. We lived there for three days with those visitors that didn't appear on the roll-call, and for nine days we never took our clothes off.

Horses Eat Anything

The boys were advised to slip off their revolvers. We rented a kitchen as a store-room for the guns. In renting that kitchen, I wore out my twenty-words of French. But we got the kitchen and we slept there in the room with the guns. We stayed five days in the place with the main horse line of the battery. The horses had large appetites and ate up caissons and any amount of leather stuff. One man came in and reported with his eyes in his bags. He said he was sorry, but his horse had got hungry in the night.

I thought I would go further up, so I got a horse. He was thin, I give you that for background, so you will be sympathetic to my next story. The boys were to ride bareback, and I had to ride him bareback razorback. For the next two days I ate my meals standing up.

Then I went to the brigade commander and he let me go to the front. We came to the first village this side of the border. It was full up of men billeted. I said I was tired enough to give seven francs for a bed. An old woman gave me a room in a house with the end blown off. She was a caretaker. The family had fled. She seemed to feel this way about it—"I'm about at the end of the line anyhow, and I'll stay by the stuff."

Two colonels walked me up to the dugouts, and that was where I parted friendship with my long overcoat. It slipped mud every stop.

Thirty men were in the dugout in fetid air. The Germans were one hundred yards away. In between looked like a lot of country anywhere. There were columns in a casual landing in a field about one hundred yards away. When we came back along the communication trench we found the ceiling of it shot through with a shell.

All Retire Early
Then I went to find our battery. Out along an old Roman road we came to a farmhouse located where a wise farmer would place it. The house was in ruins. All through this section men had been buried where they fell, batteries were dug in on the hillside, and soldiers were billeted in the ruins of villages. The fields around the farmhouse were shell-pitted. The Germans threw in one more shell at the house and killed two cooks and an assistant. Somewhere along the road a battery was dug in on the roadside. We saw gun-pits and then nine-foot dugouts and then more gun-pits. There was chicken-wire with grass tied in for camouflage, a wooden hill and a maze of barbed wire. I went into the mess kitchen for American soldiers, got the loan of a mess-kit, and had prunes, potatoes, meat and bread. I slept on the mountain-side in my cup of pup tent, with my head huffed in the trench shovel. We went to bed at 6.15 p. m. Life is blank after the active hours.

In the morning we dug emplacements for the guns. We were supposed to wait till the fog had cleared up. But when the first gun was mended, the boys couldn't wait to get

the rest ready. They had to let the Boches know they had come. At 4 p. m. on October 24, they sent the first shell fired by an American battery from an American-dug emplacement. It was Battery — of the — Field Artillery.

"Here's the first shot we're handing to the Germans," they said, and they all agreed it had to kill at least thirty-six men.

One man said our aim was bad. "In about fifteen minutes," he claimed, "you'll see a German pop up over the hill, asking, 'did we throw them something?'"

We sent four shrapnel for range, and took the distance at six thousand yards.

"Minus five to the left, same range, same elevation," came back on the telephone, and then:

"She's on her way."

They gave me the case of the first shell. I carried it on my belt, where it kept rubbing the spine. The boys fired five rounds before supper. They used French Seventy-fives.

"Mark all your data and go home," was the order, and they chalked the gun shell.

Case Sent to President
Another battery fired sooner than we did, but not from an American-dug emplacement. They fired from an orchard. The case of that shell went to President Wilson.

The purpose of my trip was observation and laying out an organization for Red Triangle work. So I went with a papoose containing a tooth-brush, socks and underwear. But I managed to smuggle in writing paper and games.

I came back by mule team, walked to —, flagged a Ford for the seventeen kilometers to —, and so down to Paris.

While we were at the front, the soldiers spent their spare time in getting up a good American meal in their minds—beefsteak, peas and crisp celery. Some of the fellows slept in old dugouts, but most preferred pup tents. They liked the experience.

"This is Jake," they said.

For Red Triangle work with them we are using two Fords, a motorcycle and a truck. In the base towns we are putting a double-walled tent and a fire, so they will have a warm place to sit and write. We shall sell them socks, chocolate, malted milk and coffee. For our men at the front we will carry stuff in a Ford as far as we can get and then go the rest of the way to the supply camp on foot. We are starting work with five Red Triangle men. We shall visit the outpost dressing stations and bring them magazines. Henry Crane, the nephew of the Rev. Frank Crane, the son of Robert Speer, and Shaw, the old Columbia center, are three of the men working at the front.

This experience in the trenches has meant a lot to two armies. It has cheered up the French, and it has solemnized our men.

HAIG

WE hear a lot of other men who've done artistic fighting, but Haig, who's won, again, is unknown at this writing. He doesn't hand our Haigish news to eager-eyed reporters, nor yet submit to interviews which might be called rip-snorters. He doesn't hunt the "feature" gent, or leave his post forsaken, to face a kodak in a tent and have his picture taken. I know not if he's short or tall, I've never seen his photo; but whether he is large or small, he's getting William's goat, oh! Some colonels view the hall of fame and think it El Dorado, but he who plays the mighty game is always in the shadow. I know not how he wears his beard, or who may be his tailor, but more and more his strokes are feared, and Wilhelm's growing paler. I've seen no pictures of his wife, or of his sons and daughters, or of his ancient home in Fife, beside some storied waters. The grand stand looks for him in vain, no gallery has known him, but when the Prussians plant their slain, they cuss him and bemoan him. With him there's no such word as can't, no obstacles affrighting, great man like our own silent Grant, he fights and keeps on fighting.

—Walt Mason.

(Copyright, 1917, by Geo. Matthew Adams)

THEY WANT TO KNOW

Every soldier reads Trench and Camp to find out what's going on, what has gone on and what is going to be going on in a day. The folks at home want to know, too. Send this paper to them.

