

"OVER THE TOP"

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

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EMPEY AND A COMRADE HAVE EXCITING EXPERIENCE WHILE ON LISTENING POST DUTY.

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. Much attention is required by wounded men from the corps of doctors and nurses. On listening post detail.

CHAPTER XIV—Continued.

If a man is killed he is buried, and the responsibility of the government ceases, excepting for the fact that his people receive a pension. But if a man is wounded it takes three men from the firing line, the wounded man and two men to carry him to the rear to the advanced first-aid post. Here he is attended by a doctor, perhaps assisted by two R. A. M. C. men. Then he is put into a motor ambulance, manned by a crew of two or three. At the field hospital, where he generally goes under an anesthetic, either to have his wounds cleaned or to be operated on, he requires the services of about three to five persons. From this point another ambulance ride impresses more men in his service, and then at the ambulance train, another corps of doctors, R. A. M. C. men, Red Cross nurses and the train's crew. From the train he enters the base hospital or casualty clearing station, where a good-sized corps of doctors, nurses, etc., are kept busy. Another ambulance journey is next in order—this time to the hospital ship. He crosses the channel, arrives in Blyth—more ambulances and perhaps a ride for five hours on an English Red Cross train with its crew of Red Cross workers, and at last he reaches the hospital. Generally he stays from two to six months, or longer, in this hospital. From here he is sent to a convalescent home for six weeks.

If by wounds he is unfitted for further service, he is discharged, given a pension, or committed to a soldiers' home for the rest of his life—and still the expense piles up. When you realize that all the ambulances, trains and ships not to mention the man power, used in transporting a wounded man, could be used for supplies, ammunition and re-enforcements for the troops at the front, it will not appear strange that from a strictly military standpoint, a dead man is sometimes better than a live one (if wounded).

Not long after the first digging party, our general decided, after a careful tour of inspection of the communication trenches, upon "an ideal spot," as he termed it, for a machine-gun emplacement; took his map, made a dot on it, and as he was wont, wrote "dig here," and the next night we dug.

There were twenty in the party, myself included. Armed with picks, shovels and empty sandbags we arrived at the "ideal spot" and started digging. The moon was very bright, but we did not care as we were well out of sight of the German lines.

We had gotten about three feet down, when the fellow next to me, after a mighty stroke with his pick, let go of the handle, and pinched his nose with his thumb and forefinger, at the same time letting out the explosion, "Gott strafe me pink, I'm bloody well gassed, not 'alf I ain't." I quickly turned in his direction with an inquiring look, at the same instant reaching for my gas bag. I soon found out what was ailing him. One whiff was enough and I lost no time in also pinching my nose. The stench was awful. The rest of the digging party dropped their picks and shovels and beat it for the weather side of that solitary pick. The officer came over and inquired why the work had suddenly ceased, holding our noses, we simply pointed in the direction of the smell. He went over to the pick, immediately clapped his hand over his nose, made an "about turn" and came back. Just then our captain came along and investigated, but after about a minute said we had better carry on with the digging, that he did not see why we should have stopped as the odor was very faint, but necessary he would allow us our gas helmets while digging. He would stay and see the thing through, but he had to report back to brigade headquarters immediately. We wished that we were captains and also had a date at brigade headquarters. With our gas helmets on we again attacked that hole and uncovered the decomposed body of a German; the pick was sticking in his chest. One of the men fainting. I was that one. Upon this our lieutenant halted proceedings and sent word back to headquarters and word came back that after we filled in the hole we could knock off for the night. This was welcome tidings to us, because—

Next day the general changed the dot on his map and another emplacement was completed the following night.

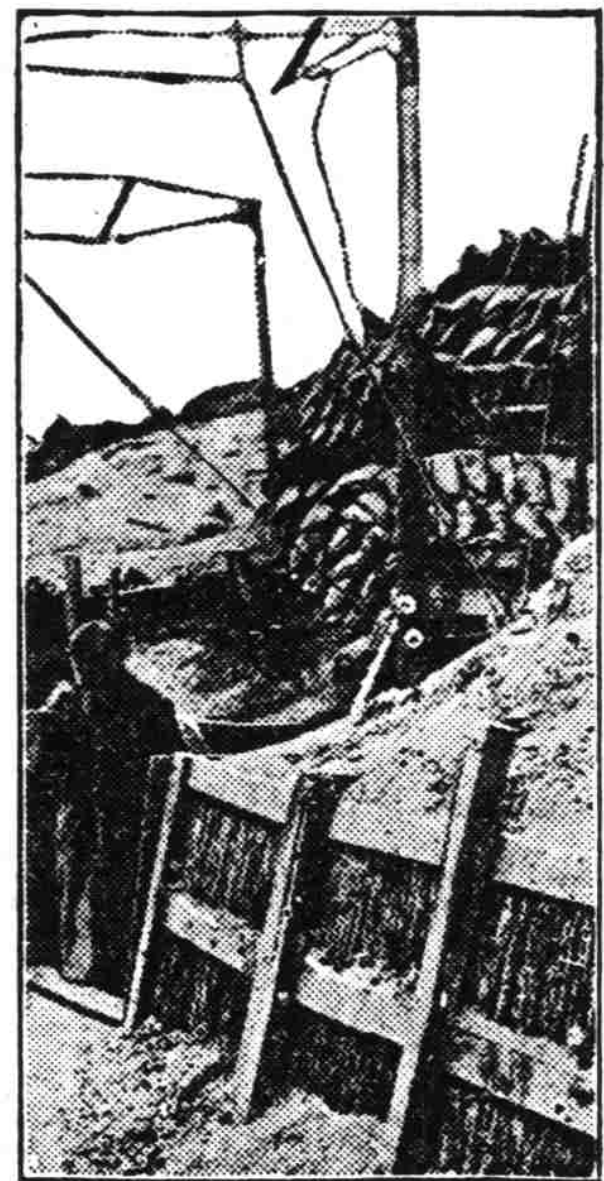
The odor from the dug-up, decomposed human body has an effect which is hard to describe. It first produces a nauseating feeling, which, especially after eating, causes vomiting. This relieves you temporarily, but soon a weakening sensation follows, which leaves you limp as a dishrag. Your spirits are at their lowest ebb and you feel a sort of hopelessness and a mad desire to escape it all, to get to the open fields and the perfume of the flowers in Blighty. There is a sharp, pricking sensation in the nostrils, which reminds one of breathing coal gas through a radiator in the floor, and you want to sneeze, but cannot. This was the effect on me, surmounted by a vague horror of the awfulness of the thing and an ever-recurring reflection that, perhaps I, sooner or later, would be in such a state and be brought to light by the blow of a pick in the hands of some Tommy on a digging party.

Several times I have experienced this odor, but never could get used to it; the enervating sensation was always present. It made me hate war and wonder why such things were countenanced by civilization, and all the spice and glory of the conflict would disappear, leaving the grim reality. But after leaving the spot and filling your lungs with deep breaths of pure, fresh air, you forget and once again want to be "up and at them."

CHAPTER XV.

Listening Post.

It was six in the morning when we arrived at our rest billets, and we were allowed to sleep until noon; that is, if we wanted to go without our breakfast. For sixteen days we remained



Entrance to a Dugout.

at rest billets, digging roads, drilling, and other fatigues, and then back into the front-line trench.

Nothing happened that night, but the next afternoon I found out that a bomber is general utility man in a section.

About five o'clock in the afternoon our lieutenant came down the trench and stopping in front of a bunch of us on the fire step, with a broad grin on his face, asked:

"Who is going to volunteer for listening post tonight? I need two men." It is needless to say no one volunteered, because it is anything but a cushy job. I began to feel uncomfortable as I knew it was getting around for my turn. Sure enough, with another grin, he said:

"Empey, you and Wheeler are due, so come down into my dugout for instructions at six o'clock."

Just as he left and was going around a traverse, Fritz turned loose with a machine gun and the bullets ripped the sandbags right over his head. It gave me great pleasure to see him duck against the parapet. He was getting a taste of what we would get later out in front.

Then, of course, it began to rain. I knew it was the forerunner of a miserable night for us. Every time I had to go out in front, it just naturally

rained. Old Jupiter Pluvius must have had it in for me.

At six we reported for instructions. They were simple and easy. All we had to do was to crawl out into No Man's Land, lie on our bellies with our ears to the ground and listen for the tap, tap of the German engineers or sappers who might be tunneling under No Man's Land to establish a mine-head beneath our trench.

Of course, in our orders we were told not to be captured by German patrols or reconnoitering parties. Lots of breath is wasted on the western front giving silly cautions.

As soon as it was dark, Wheeler and I crawled to our post which was about halfway between the lines. It was raining bucketfuls, the ground was a sea of sticky mud and clung to us like glue.

We took turns in listening with our ears to the ground. I would listen for twenty minutes while Wheeler would be on the qui vive for German patrols.

We each wore a wristwatch, and believe me, neither one of us did over twenty minutes. The rain soaked us to the skin and our ears were full of mud.

Every few minutes a bullet would crack overhead or a machine gun would traverse back and forth.

Then all firing suddenly ceased. I whispered to Wheeler, "Keep your eye skinned, mate; most likely Fritz has a patrol out—that's why the Boches have stopped firing."

We were each armed with a rifle and bayonet and three Mills bombs to be used for defense only.

I had my ear to the ground. All of a sudden I heard faint, dull thuds. In a low but excited voice I whispered to Wheeler, "I think they are mining, listen."

He put his ear to the ground and in an unsteady voice spoke into my ear:

"Yank, that's a patrol and it's heading our way. For God's sake keep still."

I was as still as a mouse and was scared stiff.

Hardly breathing and with eyes trying to pierce the inky blackness, we waited. I would have given a thousand pounds to have been safely in my dugout.

Then we plainly heard footsteps and our hearts stood still.

A dark form suddenly loomed up in front of me; it looked as big as the Woolworth building. I could hear the blood rushing through my veins and it sounded as loud as Niagara falls.

Forms seemed to emerge from the darkness. There were seven of them in all. I tried to wish them away. I never wished harder in my life. They muttered a few words in German and melted into the blackness. I didn't stop wishing either.

All of a sudden we heard a stumble, a muddy splash, and a muttered "Donner und Blitzen." One of the Boches had tumbled into a shell hole. Neither of us laughed. At that time—it didn't strike us as funny.

About twenty minutes after the Germans had disappeared something from the rear grabbed me by the foot. I nearly fainted with fear. Then a welcome whisper in a cockney accent, "I s'y, myte, we've come to relieve you."

Wheeler and I crawled back to our trench; we looked like wet hens and felt worse. After a swig of rum we were soon fast asleep on the fire step in our wet clothes.

The next morning I was as stiff as a poker and every joint ached like a bad tooth, but I was still alive, so it did not matter.

CHAPTER XVI.

Battery D 238.

The day after this I received the glad tidings that I would occupy the machine gunners' dugout right near the advanced artillery observation post. This dugout was a roomy affair, dry as tinder, and real cots in it. These cots had been made by the R. E.'s who had previously occupied the dugout. I was the first to enter and promptly made a signboard with my name and number on it and suspended it from the foot of the most comfortable cot therein.

In the trenches it is always "first come, first served," and this is lived up to by all.

Two R. F. A. men (Royal Field artillery) from the nearby observation post were allowed the privilege of stopping in this dugout when off duty.

One of these men, Bombardier Wilson by name, who belonged to Battery D 238, seemed to take a liking to me, and I returned this feeling.

In two days' time we were pretty chummy, and he told me how his battery in the early days of the war had put over a stunt on Old Pepper, and had gotten away with it.

I will endeavor to give the story as far as memory will permit in his own words:

Despite the excellent targets men are not allowed to shell Fritz, Empey relates in next installment.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By REV. P. B. FITZWATER, D. D., Teacher of English Bible in the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)
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LESSON FOR APRIL 28

JESUS REBUKES SELFISHNESS.

LESSON TEXT—Mark 9:30-50.
GOLDEN TEXT—If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.—Mark 9:35.

DEVOTIONAL READING—I Corinthians 13.
ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS—Matthew 5:41-42; 20:20-28; Luke 22:24-30.

PRIMARY AND JUNIOR LESSON MATERIAL—Mark 9:30-37.
PRIMARY MEMORY VERSE—Be kind one to another.—Ephesians 4:32.
JUNIOR MEMORY VERSE—I John 4:11.

I. The Stupidity of Selfishness. (vv. 30-32). Jesus with his disciples is on his way to Capernaum for the last time. He is soon to leave for Jerusalem, where he is to die on the cruel cross for the world's sins. He still seeks the way of retirement in order to be alone with his disciples, his object being to lead them into the apprehension of the meaning of the cross. The teaching which was interrupted at Caesarea by Peter's rebuke is now resumed, and with definiteness he declares the future event as already present.

1. "The Son of Man is delivered into the hands of men."

2. "They shall kill him."

3. "He shall rise the third day."

While pressing upon them continuously the fact and necessity of the cross, he never failed to show them the bright side—his triumphant victory over death in the resurrection. The hearts of the disciples were so steeped in selfishness that they failed to understand his teachings. If the disciples had more definitely attended to his teaching concerning the cross, they would have been better prepared for the hour of temptation which was so soon to overtake them.

II. The Wrangling of Selfishness. (vv. 33-37).

1. The searching question (v. 33). The omniscient Christ knew the secrets of their hearts. The fact that the disciples were wrangling about official position while the Lord was facing humiliation and death for them and the whole world, shows how completely the Lord was alone in his sorrow.

2. The silent disciples (v. 34). They were ashamed in his presence, because the selfishness of their hearts was revealed. To realize the presence of the Lord would shame us of much of our selfishness.

3. The stinging rebuke (vv. 35-37). "If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all." The greatest among men are those who are willing to take the lowest place and serve others. This truth he enforced in a concrete way by placing a child in their midst. This child was an illustration of dependence and ignorance. By example and word he shows that true greatness is expressed by willingness to aid the weak, to instruct the ignorant and to serve those in need. All such render service not merely to those in need, but unto Christ and God. True greatness, therefore, consists not in self-seeking, but rendering cheerful service to the needy in the name of Christ.

III. The Intolerance of Selfishness (vv. 38-41).

1. John's guilty conscience (v. 38). In the light of the teaching of Jesus, John was a little disturbed over having "forbid" a worker for Christ who did not follow after him. Doubtless this intolerance was in part due to jealousy for Christ, but also a selfish ambition. Many times Christians mistake bigotry for zeal for Christ.

2. Whom to tolerate (vv. 39-41). (1) Those who are casting out devils (v. 39). We should really satisfy ourselves that supernatural works are being done. Are demons being cast out? However, this is not final, as there is a supernatural work not of God.

(2) Those who are not doing this work in Christ's name (v. 41). Any worker going forth in the name of Christ, and for the glory of Christ, should be given Godspeed. If he is doing a good work, even though not in your way, or if not a member of your church or school, "Forbid him not."

IV. The Awful Issue of Selfishness. (vv. 42-50).

Selfishness results in ruin to others (v. 42), and also to the individual (vv. 43, 45 and 47). In either case the issue is eternal torment in hell. Selfishness is opposed to God, and that which is opposed to God must be eternally separated from him. Self-renunciation should be so complete that we should be willing to abandon the most necessary and lawful things in life—hands, feet and eyes—when they become occasions for stumbling either to ourselves or to others.

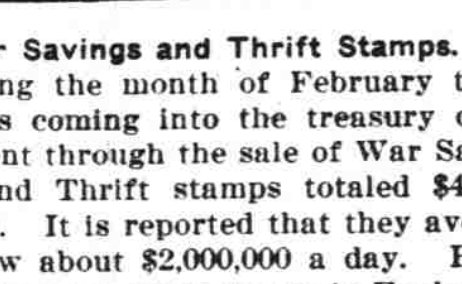
Need of Influence.

"Every one of us needs influence and some impulse outside of ourselves to compel us to strive for our ideals. The best impulse that can uplift the life is the friendship of Jesus. He says: 'Ye are as friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.'"

God's Presence.

Did it ever occur to you that the signs of God's presence are granted to the farmer more than any other man? Look around your home and fields and sea.

WHAT CAN WE DO?



War Savings and Thrift Stamps.

During the month of February the receipts coming into the treasury department through the sale of War Savings and Thrift stamps totaled \$41,000,000. It is reported that they average now about \$2,000,000 a day. Returns from the same source in England were \$37,000,000. The War Savings and Thrift stamps give everyone a chance to be "in" on the great business of winning the war. They are a fine investment and within the reach of everyone. Congress set \$2,000,000,000 as the amount to be raised by this means for the year. If this amount is reached it will cover the entire cost of the government's shipbuilding program for the year. It has now from this source enough revenue daily to build 10,000 tons of shipping and altogether has received to date funds for building 420,000 tons, or 84 ships of 5,000 tons each.

Our strength in this war has not made itself felt yet as it will be felt. Great reserves of it will be forthcoming. We have hardly felt the pinch of the war yet. In the War Savings and Thrift stamps we have an opportunity to all take a hand in building ships, and they must be built. Besides this the Thrift stamps are educating people, especially young people and children, to save and to use money for investment instead

of spending it for things that are really needed. Lack of thrift, in fact, seemed to be almost a national failing before the war. Establishing the habit of saving in people and children.

Work Which Only Women Can Do.

Whatever our other activities must "go on with our knitting, a very literal sense. Six million wristlets, and bands and the like, will be needed in far greater numbers than ever before. Surging and bandages, also, must be conserved. In these affairs world leans on women for support. If each woman gives a little time to Red Cross work, the world looks after the conservation of her own home, the great task of achievement will do the work needs depending on us. Our easy compared to that of the soldiers and sailors. It is amazing that are women, with time and means their disposal, who, because they have no relatives in the army or navy, taking no interest, much less an active part in the work to be done, are not worth fighting for, and be held up to the scorn they deserve. Now is the time when cold selfishness will betray itself.

FOR SLENDER LITTLE GIRLS



For the occasions that require her to dress-up a bit there are pretty frocks of crepe georgette and voile that will make the little girl look her best this summer. From her eighth to her fourteenth or fifteenth year she is apt to be a very slim, long limbed little person with a good many angles that are prominent and need to be well considered when it comes to choosing her clothes. Since there are designers who specialize in clothes for children the needs of the thin little girl and the needs of the fat little girl have been given expert attention—and the problems of distraught mothers solved for them.

Here is a dress of fine voile shown on a slim little girl of eleven that will bear study. It is in two pieces—a skirt and a long blouse, thereby disposing once for all of that bugbear in children's clothes—the waistline—by leaving it out of the reckoning. The skirt is suspended from a short underbodice, gathered on to it and fastened in the back. It is moderately full and has a two-inch tuck above the

three-inch hem. These give it a light weight and flare at the bottom and it is precisely even in length and reaches to the knees.

It is the blouse that provides the cleverness of its designer. It hangs from a very short yoke, and is covered quite full over the shoulders. The body of the blouse is smocked in three rows of smocking where it joins the shirred yoke. It is usual this season to use one or more colored silks in doing the smocking on white blouses and these little bits of color are very childish and pretty on dresses for little girls. There are two pockets at the bottom of the blouse with smocking across the top and buttons that repeat the color used in the smocking. They are set on purely as a finish—the blouse fastens with snap fasteners. The collar which is of wash satin like them in color and the sleeves are plain—three-quarter length.

Julie Botwin

Jackets and Skirts.

That jackets will be short rather than long seems to be a foregone conclusion, judging by the South-west fashions, and etons and boleros are decidedly in evidence. Not only suits but dresses, too, are seen in these eton and bolero styles, and very smart and youthful are these effects worn over blouses of crepe organdie.

Jacket and coat sleeves are narrow and close-fitting and in wrist length; skirts, too, are modeled with conservation of material very much in mind, for they are cut decidedly narrow and fairly short, though not as short as some fashionable skirts of last season. The average width of modish skirts is about one and one-half yards around and the length from four to six inches off the ground.

Georgette Blouses Trimmed in Voile. "If you haven't seen the new blouse of crepe georgette, trimmed in voile, you are missing something." A blouse buyer who has just returned from the Eastern markets, "They are very enticing, and are shown in regular, as well as slip-over style."

According to this, some authorities the rage for flit, both card and imitation, continues, and some pretty models are slip-overs with sailor collars trimmed in flit. Some of the new georgettes have little collars of white mousseline de soie, which adds a very satisfactory touch.

The freshest, prettiest of the new blouses are of net, in white and light shades. Batiste and voile are still popular for the high-necked ones, of which there are a great many shows.