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"OVER THE TOP"

AN AMERICAN SOLDIER
WHO WENT
ARTHUR GUY EMPY
MACHINE GUNNER, SERVING IN FRANCE

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"On the afternoon of the fourth day of Fritz' contemptuous use of the road mentioned the captain and I were at our posts as usual. Fritz was strafing us pretty rough, just like he's doing now. The shells were playing leap-frog all through that orchard."

"I was carrying on a conversation in our 'tap' code with Cassell at the other end. It ran something like this: 'Say, Cassell, how would you like to be in the saloon bar of the King's Arms down Rye Lane with a bottle of Bass in front of you, and that blonde barmaid waiting to fill 'em up again?'"

"Cassell had a fancy for that particular blonde. The answer came back in the shape of a volley of curses. I changed the subject."

"After a while our talk veered round to the way the Boches had been exposing themselves on the road down on the chart as Target 17. What he said about those Boches would never have passed the reichstag, though I believe it would have gone through our censor easily enough."

"The bursting shells were making such a din that I packed up talking and took to watching the captain. He was fidgeting around on an old sandbag with the glass to his eye. Occasionally he would let out a grunt, and make some remark I couldn't hear on account of the noise, but I guessed what it was all right. Fritz was getting fresh again on that road."

"Cassell had been sending in the 'tap code' to me, but I was fed up and didn't bother with it. Then he sent O. S., and I was all attention, for this was a call used between us which meant that something important was on. I was all ears in an instant. Then Cassell turned loose."

"You blankety blank dud, I have been trying to raise you for fifteen minutes. What's the matter, are you asleep? (Just as if anyone could have slept in that infernal racket!) 'Never mind framing a nasty answer. Just listen.'"

"Are you game for putting something over on the Boches and Old Pepper all in one?"

"I answered that I was game enough when it came to putting it over the Boches, but confessed that I had a weakening of the spine, even at the mention of Old Pepper's name."

"He came back with, 'It's so absurdly easy and simple that there is no chance of the old heathen rumbering it. Anyway, if we're caught, I'll take the blame.'"

"Under these condition I told him to spit out his scheme. It was so daring and simple that it took my breath away. This is what he proposed:

"If the Boches should use that road again, to send by the tap system the target and range. I had previously told him about our captain talking out loud as if he were sending through orders. Well, if this happened, I was to send the dope to Cassell and he would transmit it to the battery commander as officially coming through the observation post. Then the bat-

tery would open up. Afterwards, during the investigation, Cassell would swear he received it direct. They would have to relieve him, because it was impossible from his post in the battery dugout to know that the road was being used at that time by the Germans. And also it was impossible for him to give the target, range and degrees. You know a battery chart is not passed around among the men like a newspaper from Blighty. From him the investigation would go to the observation post, and the observing officer could truthfully swear that I had not sent the message by 'phone, and that no orders to fire had been issued by him. The investigators would then be up in the air, we would be safe, the Boches would receive a good bashing, and we would get our own back on Old Pepper. It was too good to be true. I gleefully fell in with the scheme, and told Cassell I was his man."

"Then I waited with beating heart and watched the captain like a hawk. 'He was beginning to fidget again and was drumming on the sandbags with his feet. At last, turning to me, he said:

"'Wilson, this army is a blankety blank washout. What's the use of having artillery if it is not allowed to fire? The government at home ought to be hanged with some of their red tape. It's through them that we have no shells.'"

"I answered, 'Yes, sir,' and started sending this opinion over the wire to Cassell, but the captain interrupted me with:

"'Keep those infernal fingers still. What's the matter, getting the nerves? When I'm talking to you, pay attention.'"

"My heart sank. Supposing he had rumbled that tapping, then all would be up with our plan. I stopped drumming with my fingers and said:

"'Beg your pardon, sir, just a habit with me.'"

"'And a d—d silly one, too,' he answered, turning to his glasses again, and I knew I was safe. He had not tumbled to the meaning of that tapping."

"All at once, without turning round, he exclaimed:

"'Well, of all the nerve I've ever run across, this takes the cake. Those ——— Boches are using that road again. Blind my eyes, this time it is a whole brigade of them, transports and all. What a pretty target for our '45's.' The beggars know that we won't fire. A d—d shame, I call it. Oh, just for a chance to turn D 238 loose on them.'"

"I was trembling with excitement. From repeated stolen glances at the captain's range chart, that road with its range was burned into my mind."

"Over the wire I tapped, 'D 238 battery, Target 17, Range 6000, 3 degrees 30 minutes, left, salvo, fire.' Cassell O. K'd my message, and with the receiver pressed against my ear, I waited and listened. In a couple of minutes very faintly over the wire came the voice of our battery commander

issuing the order: 'D 238 battery. Salvo! Fire!'"

"Then a roar through the receiver as the four guns belched forth, a screaming and whistling overhead, and the shells were on their way."

"The captain jumped as if he were shot, and let out a great big expressive

d—n, and eagerly turned his glasses in the direction of the German road. I also strained my eyes watching that target. Four black clouds of dust rose up right in the middle of the German column. Four direct hits—another record for D 238."

"The shells kept on whistling overhead, and I had counted twenty-four of them when the firing suddenly ceased. When the smoke and dust clouds lifted the destruction on that road was awful. Overturned limbers and guns, wagons smashed up, troops fleeing in all directions. The road and roadside were spotted all over with little field gray dots, the toll of our guns."

"The captain, in his excitement, had slipped off the sandbag, and was on his knees in the mud, the glass still at his eye. He was muttering to himself and slapping his thigh with his disengaged hand. At every slap a big round juicy cuss word would escape from his lips followed by:

"'Good! Fine! Marvelous! Pretty Work! Direct hits all!'"

"Then he turned to me and shouted: 'Wilson, what do you think of it? Did you ever see the like of it in your life? D—n fine work, I call it.'"

"Pretty soon a look of wonder stole over his face and he exclaimed:

"'But who in h—l gave them the order to fire. Range and everything correct, too. I know I didn't. Wilson, did I give you any order for the battery to open up? Of course I didn't, did I?'"

"I answered very emphatically, 'No, sir, you gave no command. Nothing went through this post. I am absolutely certain on that point, sir.'"

"'Of course nothing went through,' he replied. Then his face fell, and he muttered out loud:

"'But, by Jove, wait till Old Pepper gets wind of this. There'll be fur flying.'"

Just then Bombardier Cassell cut in on the wire:

"'General's compliments to Captain A—. He directs that officer and signaler report at the double to brigade headquarters as soon as relieved. Relief now on the way.'"

"In an undertone to me, 'Keep a brass front, Wilson, and for God's sake, stick.' I answered with, 'Rely on me, mate,' but I was trembling all over."

"I gave the general's message to the captain, and started packing up."

"The relief arrived, and as we left the post the captain said:

"'Now for the fireworks, and I know they'll be good and plenty. They were. When we arrived at the gun pits the battery commander, the sergeant major and Cassell were waiting for us. We fell in line and the funeral march to brigade headquarters started."

"Arriving at headquarters the battery commander was the first to be interviewed. This was behind closed doors. From the roaring and explosions of Old Pepper it sounded as if raw meat was being thrown to the lions. Cassell, later, described it as sounding like a bombing raid. In about two minutes the officer reappeared. The sweat was pouring from his forehead, and his face was the color of a beet. He was speechless. As he passed the captain he jerked his thumb in the direction of the lion's den and went out. Then the captain went in, and the lions were once again fed. The captain stayed about twenty minutes and came out. I couldn't see his face, but the droop in his shoulders was enough. He looked like a wet hen."

"The door of the general's room opened and Old Pepper stood in the doorway. With a roar he shouted: 'Which one of you is Cassell? D—n me, get your heels together when I speak! Come in here!'"

"Cassell started to say, 'Yes sir.' 'But Old Pepper roared, 'Shut up!'"

"Cassell came out in five minutes. He said nothing, but as he passed me he put his tongue into his cheek and winked, then, turning to the closed door, he stuck his thumb to his nose and left."

"Then the sergeant major's turn came. He didn't come out our way. Judging by the roaring, Old Pepper must have eaten him."

"When the door opened and the general beckoned to me, my knees started to play 'Home, Sweet Home' against each other."

"My interview was very short."

"Old Pepper glared at me when I entered, and then let loose."

"'Of course you don't know anything about it. You're just like the rest. Ought to have a nursing bottle around your neck and a nipple in your teeth. Soldiers—by gad, you turn my stomach to look at you. Win this war, when England sends out such samples as I have in my brigade! Not likely! Now, sir, tell me what you don't know about this affair. Speak up, out with it. Don't be gaping at me like a fish. Spit it out.'"

"I stammered, 'Sir, I know absolutely nothing.'"

"'That's easy to see,' he roared; 'that stupid face tells me that. Shut up. Get out; but I think you are a d—d liar just the same. Back to your battery.'"

"I saluted and made my exit."

"That night the captain sent for us. With fear and trembling we went to his dugout. He was alone. After saluting we stood at attention in front of him and waited. His say was short."

"'Don't you two ever get it into your heads that Morse is a dead language. I've known it for years. The two of you had better get rid of that nervous

habit of tapping transmitters; it's dangerous. That's all!'"

"We saluted, and were just going out the door of the dugout when the captain called us back and said:

"'Smoke Goldflakes? Yes? Well, there are two tins of them on my table. Go back to the battery, and keep your tongues between your teeth. Understand?'"

"We understood."

"For five weeks afterwards our battery did nothing but extra fatigues. We were satisfied and so were the men. It was worth it to put one over on Old Pepper, to say nothing of the injury caused to Fritz' feelings."

When Wilson had finished his story I looked up and the dugout was jammed. An artillery captain and two officers had also entered and stayed for the finish. Wilson spat out an enormous quid of tobacco, looked up, saw the captain, and got as red as a carnation. The captain smiled and left. Wilson whispered to me:

"Blime me, Yank, I see where I click for crucifixion. That captain is the same one that chucked us Goldflakes in his dugout and here I have been 'chucking me weight about in his bearing.'"

Wilson never clicked his crucifixion. Quite a contrast to Wilson was another character in our brigade named Scott; we called him "Old Scotty" on account of his age. He was fifty-seven, although looking forty. "Old Scotty" had been born in the Northwest and had served in the Northwest Mounted police. He was a typical cowpuncher and Indian fighter and was a dead shot with the rifle, and took no pains to disguise this fact from us. He used to take care of his rifle as if it were a baby. In his spare moments you could always see him cleaning it or polishing the stock. Woe betide the man who by mistake happened to get hold of this rifle; he soon found out his error. Scott was as deaf as a mule, and it was amusing at parade to watch him in the manual of arms, slyly glancing out of the corner of his eye at the man next to him to see what the order was. How he passed the doctor was a mystery to us; he must have bluffed his way through, because he certainly was independent. Beside him the Fourth of July looked like Good Friday. He wore at the time a large sombrero, had a Mexican stock saddle over his shoulder, a lariat on his arm, and a "forty-five" hanging from his hip. Dumping this paraphernalia on the floor he went up to the recruiting officer and shouted: "I'm from America, west of the Rockies, and want to join your d—d army. I've got no use for a German and can shoot some. At Scotland Yard they turned me down; said I was deaf and so I am. I don't hanker to ship in with a d—d mud-crunching outfit, but the cavalry's full, so I guess this regiment's better than none, so trot out your papers and I'll sign 'em." He told them he was forty and slipped by. I was on recruiting service at the time he applied for enlistment."

It was Old Scotty's great ambition to be a sniper or "body snatcher," as Mr. Atkins calls it. The day that he was detailed as brigade sniper he celebrated his appointment by blowing the whole platoon to fags."

Being a Yank, Old Scotty took a liking to me and used to spin some great yarns about the plains, and the whole platoon would drink these in and ask for more. Ananias was a rookie compared with him."

The ex-plainman and discipline could not agree, but the officers all liked him, even if he was hard to manage, so when he was detailed as a sniper a sigh of relief went up from the officers' mess."

Old Scotty had the freedom of the brigade. He used to draw two or three days' rations and disappear with his glass, range finder and rifle, and we would see or hear no more of him until suddenly he would reappear with a couple of notches added to those already on the butt of his rifle. Every time he got a German it meant another notch. He was proud of these notches."

But after a few months Father Rheumatism got him and he was sent to Blighty; the air in the wake of his stretcher was blue with curses. Old Scotty surely could swear; some of his outbursts actually burned you."

No doubt, at this writing, he is "somewhere in Blighty" pussy footing it on a bridge or along the wall of some munition plant with the "G. R." or Home Defense corps."

CHAPTER XVII.

Out in Front.

After tea Lieutenant Stores of our section came into the dugout and informed me that I was "for" a reconnoitering patrol and would carry six Mills bombs."

At 11:30 that night twelve men, our lieutenant and myself went out in front on a patrol in No Man's Land."

We cruised around in the dark for about two hours, just knocking about looking for trouble, on the lookout for Boche working parties to see what they were doing."

Around two in the morning we were carefully picking our way about thirty yards in front of the German barbed wire, when we walked into a Boche covering party nearly thirty strong. Then the music started, the fiddler rendered his bill, and we paid."

Fighting in the dark with a bayonet is not very pleasant. The Germans took it on the run, but our officer was no novice at the game and didn't follow them. He gave the order "down on the ground, hug it close."

Just in time, too, because a volley skinned over our heads. Then in low tones we were told to separate and crawl back to our trenches, each man on his own."

We could see the flashes of their

rifles in the darkness, but the bullets were going over our heads."

We lost three men killed and one wounded in the arm. If it hadn't been for our officer's quick thinking the whole patrol would have probably been wiped out."

After about twenty minutes' wait we went out again and discovered that the Germans had a wiring party working on their barbed wire. We returned to our trenches unobserved with the information and our machine guns immediately got busy."

The next night four men were sent out to go over and examine the German barbed wire and see if they had



A Hidden Gun.

cut lanes through it; if so, this pre-arranged an early morning attack on our trenches."

Of course I had to be one of the four selected for the job. It was just like sending a fellow to the undertaker's to order his own coffin."

At ten o'clock we started out, armed with three bombs, a bayonet and revolver. After getting into No Man's Land we separated. Crawling four or five feet at a time, ducking star shells, with strays cracking overhead, I reached their wire. I scouted along this inch by inch, scarcely breathing. I could hear them talking in their trench, my heart was pounding against my ribs. One false move or the least noise from me meant discovery and almost certain death."

After covering my sector I quietly crawled back. I had gotten about half way when I noticed that my revolver was missing. It was pitch dark. I turned about to see if I could find it; it couldn't be far away, because about three or four minutes previously I had felt the butt in the holster. I crawled around in circles and at last found it, then started on my way back to our trenches, as I thought."

Pretty soon I reached barbed wire, and was just going to give the password when something told me not to. I put out my hand and touched one of the barbed wire stakes. It was iron. The British are of wood, while the German are iron. My heart stopped beating; by mistake I had crawled back to the German lines."

I turned slowly about and my tunic caught on the wire and made a loud ripping noise."

A sharp challenge rang out. I sprang to my feet, ducking low, and ran madly back toward our lines. The Germans started firing. The bullets were biting all around me, when bang! I ran smash into our wire, and a sharp challenge, "Alt, who comes there?" rang out. I gasped out the password, and, groping my way through the lane in the wire, tearing my hands and uniform, I tumbled into our trench and was safe, but I was a nervous wreck for an hour, until a drink of rum brought me round."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

PREPARE FOR "THE EAGLE'S EYE" WILL BE SEEN HERE WEDNESDAY

Another Splendid Serial Motion Picture to Begin Running in Newberry on That Date.

"The Eagle's Eye" will be shown in twenty episodes. It is a costly picture, but Mr. Wells will run it without extra charge and in addition to the regular program each day shown. It is a story of the Imperial German government's spies, plots and propaganda in America, by William J. Flynn, recently retired chief of the United States secret service. The episodes are of actual facts, interwoven with a romantic fictional plot, featuring the popular stars, King Baggot and Marguerite Snow. In the thrilling and fascinating pictures will be seen the heroic work of the secret service operatives in hunting down the perfidious and traitorous guest of the nation in adventures at sea and on land, which will rivet the attention of the crowds at this time of terrifying revelations of the dastardly secret workings of enemy aliens and their nefarious plots."

The first episode in Chief Flynn's revelation discloses a secret chapter

in the history of the destruction of the Lusitania and how the plan to sink the ship was aided by Imperial Germany's agents in this country."

As the arch-plotters of the Imperial German government's crimes in America discuss their plans, a counter-move on the part of the United States government is being developed. Dixie Mason, a beautiful and courageous young girl, who is an operative of the Secret Service receives instructions from Chief Flynn to ingratiate herself into the confidence of suspected agents of the alien spy system. Harrison Grant, the president of the Criminology Club, now a volunteer Secret Service operative, is active in following the movements of suspected spies."

At this time the Imperial German government's naval staff had planned its first great thrust at America—the sinking of the Lusitania. Wireless messages in secret code are being sent to Nauen, Germany, from the basement of a fashionable home in the most exclusive residential section of New York and through other mediums."

The Imperial German Ambassador and his aides are busy in Washington, while Heinrich von Lertz and his lieutenants are active in New York, concocting perjury evidence that the Lusitania carries guns as an excuse for her destruction."

Dr. Albert, in Washington, suggests that the United States may resent the sinking of the great liner. Von Bernstorff smiles and replies that the United States cannot fight, for it has no army. Boy-Ed, his face wreathed in his sardonic smile, replies "I have attended to that contingency, you know."

The conspirators discuss their final plans for insuring the sinking of the Lusitania and Boy-Ed says they can trust to "the genius of Potsdam" to do the rest."

As the Lusitania leaves her dock on May 1, 1915, two days late in sailing, a furtive-eyed man sends a cable message to Amsterdam, Holland, which was forwarded to Cuxhaven."

"Lucy has entered her last phase of illness. Doctors say progress till Thursday normal. After that difficult to diagnose."

Thus the Imperial German naval staff learns of her sailing and her course till the following Thursday. After that their sea scouts will keep them informed of her movements. Von Lertz, at the Hohenzoellern Club, after a telephone call from this man, smilingly leaves for a hotel where he is accustomed to dictate letters to a public stenographer."

The Lusitania sails across the sea. The message of the furtive-eyed man has been received at Cuxhaven, where the scorpions of the sea, the U-boats, await orders to sail to attack the liner. From Nauen wireless messages are sent to hundreds of small boats far out at sea—apparently fishermen, but actually scouts to give notice of the course taken by the vessel."

On May 7 the news that horrified the world is flashed to the four corners of the earth. The Lusitania, an unarmed merchant liner, has been sunk by German submarines, unwarned and with no protection to passengers—a violation of the law of nations, as act of inexcusable piracy. More than eleven hundred lives have been lost. People in Berlin look at their death medals and rejoice. The date on it has no significance to them. It commemorates an Imperial German "victory."

America stands aghast, stunned by the great calamity and the loss of over one hundred of its people. There is war in the air. The Imperial German plotters then make ready to strike the blows at the American navy as the sequel to the Lusitania plot, planned to make this country craven in fear of the consequences of war."

And Harrison Grant thinks of Dixie Mason and wonders how so attractive a girl can allow herself to be made the tool of such an unconscionable government."

RUSSIA BOWS TO HUNS. FORMALLY AGREEING TO GERMAN PEACE TERMS.

Russia has bowed to the Central Empires. The hard terms of the peace treaty submitted by the Germans at Brest-Litovsk have been agreed to by the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, in session at Moscow, in spite of the opposition of an important element of the Russian people."

The result of the vote was forecast in the announcement from Moscow on Friday that the Bolshevik delegates to the Moscow congress had at a party caucus voted in favor of the ratification. There was a faction, however, that registered its disapproval of the treaty, but the presence of Nikolai Lenin, the Bolshevik premier, probably united his followers and enabled them to roll up a large majority in favor of accepting the provisions of the German peace treaty."