



# "OVER THE TOP"

## AN AMERICAN SOLDIER WHO WENT

### ARTHUR GUY EMPY

MACHINE GUNNER, SERVING IN FRANCE

© 1917 BY ARTHUR GUY EMPY

#### SYNOPSIS.

**CHAPTER I**—Fired by the news of the sinking of the Lusitania by a German submarine, Arthur Guy Empey, an American, leaves his office in Jersey City and goes to England where he enlists in the British army.

**CHAPTER II**—After a period of training, Empey volunteers for immediate service and soon finds himself in rest billets "somewhere in France," where he first makes the acquaintance of the ever-present "coddies."

**CHAPTER III**—Empey attends his first church services at the front while a German Fokker circles over the congregation.

**CHAPTER IV**—Empey's command goes into the front-line trenches and is under fire for the first time.

**CHAPTER V**—Empey learns to adopt the motto of the British Tommy, "If you are going to get it, you'll get it, so never worry."

**CHAPTER VI**—Back in rest billets, Empey gets his first experience as a mess orderly.

**CHAPTER VII**—Empey learns how the British soldiers are fed.

**CHAPTER VIII**—Back in the front-line trench, Empey sees his first friend of the trenches "go West."

**CHAPTER IX**—Empey makes his first visit to a dugout in "Suicide Ditch."

**CHAPTER X**—Empey learns what constitutes a "day's work" in the front-line trench.

**CHAPTER XI**—Empey goes "over the top" for the first time in a charge on the German trenches and is wounded by a bayonet thrust.

**CHAPTER XII**—Empey joins the "suicide club" as the bombing squad is called.

**CHAPTER XIII**—Each Tommy gets an official bath.

**CHAPTER XIV**—Empey helps dig an advanced trench under German fire.

**CHAPTER XV**—On "listening post" in No Man's Land.

**CHAPTER XVI**—Two artillerymen "put one over" on Old Pepper, their regimental commander.

**CHAPTER XVII**—Empey has narrow escape while on patrol duty in No Man's Land.

**CHAPTER XVIII**—Back in rest billets Empey writes and stages a farce comedy.

**CHAPTER XIX**—Soldiers have many ways to amuse themselves while "on their own."

#### CHAPTER XXI.

##### About Turn.

The next evening we were relieved by the 4th brigade, and once again returned to rest billets. Upon arriving at these billets we were given twenty-four hours in which to clean up. I had just finished getting the mud from my uniform when the orderly sergeant informed me that my name was in orders to leave, and that I was to report to the orderly room in the morning for orders, transportation and rations.

I nearly had a fit, hustled about packing up, filling my pack with souvenirs such as shell heads, dud bombs, nose caps, shrapnel balls, and a Prussian guardsman's helmet. In fact, before I turned in that night, I had everything ready to report at the orderly room at nine the next morning.

I was the envy of the whole section, swanking around, telling of the good time I was going to have, the places I would visit, and the real, old English beer I intended to guzzle. Sort of rubbed it into them, because they all do it, and now that it was my turn, I took pains to get my own back.

At nine I reported to the captain, receiving my travel order and pass. He asked me how much money I wanted to draw. I glibly answered, "Three hundred francs, sir," he just as glibly handed me one hundred.

Reporting at brigade headquarters, with my pack weighing a ton, I waited, with forty others, for the adjutant to inspect us. After an hour's wait, he came out; must have been sore because he wasn't going with us.

The quartermaster sergeant issued us two days' rations, in a little white canvas ration bag, which we tied to our belts.

Then two motor lorries came along and we piled in, laughing, joking, and in the best of spirits. We even loved the Germans, we were feeling so happy. Our journey to seven days' bliss in Blighty had commenced.

The ride in the lorry lasted about two hours; by this time we were covered with fine, white dust from the road, but didn't mind, even if we were nearly choking.

At the railroad station at F—we reported to an officer, who had a white band around his arm, which read "R. T. O." (Royal Transportation Officer). To us this officer was Santa Claus.

The sergeant in charge showed him our orders; he glanced through them and said: "Make yourselves comfortable on the platform and don't leave; the train is liable to be along in five

minutes—or five hours."

It came in five hours, a string of eleven match boxes on big, high wheels, drawn by a dinky little engine with the "con." These match boxes were cattle cars, on the sides of which was painted the old familiar sign, "Hommes 40, Chevaux 8."

The R. T. O. stuck us all into one car. We didn't care; it was as good as a Pullman to us.

Two days we spent on that train, bumping, stopping, jerking ahead, and sometimes sliding back. At three stations we stopped long enough to make some tea, but were unable to wash, so when we arrived at B—, where we were to embark for Blighty, we were as black as Turcos and, with our unshaven faces, we looked like a lot of tramps. Though tired out, we were happy.

We had packed up, preparatory to detrainning, when a R. T. O. held up his hand for us to stop where we were and came over. This is what he said:



Dead Bodies Everywhere.

"Boys, I'm sorry, but orders have just been received cancelling all leave. If you had been three hours earlier you would have gotten away. Just stay in that train, as it is going back. Rations will be issued to you for your return journey to your respective stations. Beastly rotten, I know." Then he left.

A dead silence resulted. Then men started to curse, threw their rifles on the floor of the car; others said nothing, seemed to be stupefied, while some had the tears running down their cheeks. It was a bitter disappointment to all.

How we blinded at the engineer of that train; it was all his fault (so we reasoned); why hadn't he speeded up a little or been on time, then we would have gotten off before the order arrived? Now it was no Blighty for us.

That return journey was misery to us; I just can't describe it.

When we got back to rest billets, we found that our brigade was in the trenches (another agreeable surprise) and that an attack was contemplated.

Seventeen of the forty-one will never get another chance to go on leave; they were killed in the attack. Just think if that train had been on time, those seventeen would still be alive.

I hate to tell you how I was kidded by the boys when I got back, but it was good and plenty.

Our machine gun company took over their part of the line at seven o'clock, the night after I returned from my near leave.

At 3:30 the following morning three waves went over and captured the first and second German trenches. The machine gunners went over with the fourth wave to consolidate the captured line or "dig in," as Tommy calls it.

Crossing No Man's Land without clicking any casualties, we came to the German trench and mounted our guns on the parapets of same.

I never saw such a mess in my life—bunches of twisted barbed wire lying about, shell holes everywhere, trench all bashed in, parapets gone, and dead bodies, why, that ditch was full of them, theirs and ours. It was a regular morgue. Some were mangled horribly from our shell fire, while others were wholly or partly buried in the mud, the result of shell explosions caving in the walls of the trench. One dead German was lying on his back, with a rifle sticking straight up in the air, the bayonet of which was buried to the hilt in his chest. Across his feet lay a dead English soldier with a bullet hole in his forehead. This Tommy must have been killed just as he ran his bayonet through the German.

Rifles and equipment were scattered about, and occasionally a steel helmet could be seen sticking out of the mud.

At one point, just in the entrance to a communication trench, was a stretcher. On this stretcher a German was

lying with a white bandage around his knee, near to him lay one of the stretcher-bearers, the red cross on his arm covered with mud and his helmet filled with blood and brains. Close by, sitting up against the wall of the trench, with head resting on his chest, was the other stretcher-bearer. He seemed to be alive, the posture was so natural and easy; but when I got closer I could see a large, jagged hole in his temple. The three must have been killed by the same shell-burst.

The dugouts were all smashed in and knocked about, big square-cut timbers splintered into bits, walls caved in and entrances choked.

Tommy, after taking a trench, learns to his sorrow that the hardest part of the work is to hold it.

In our case this proved to be so.

The German artillery and machine guns had us taped (ranged) for fair; it was worth your life to expose yourself an instant.

Don't think for a minute that the Germans were the only sufferers; we were clicking casualties so fast that you needed an adding machine to keep track of them.

Did you ever see one of the steam shovels at work on the Panama canal? Well, it would look like a hen scratching alongside of a Tommy "digging in" while under fire. You couldn't see daylight through the clouds of dirt from his shovel.

After losing three out of six men of our crew we managed to set up our machine gun. One of the legs of the tripod was resting on the chest of a half-buried body. When the gun was firing, it gave the impression that the body was breathing. This was caused by the excessive vibration.

Three or four feet down the trench, about three feet from the ground, a foot was protruding from the earth. We knew it was a German by the black leather boot. One of our crew used that foot to hang extra bandollers of ammunition on. This man always was a handy fellow; made use of little points that the ordinary person would overlook.

The Germans made three counter-attacks, which we repulsed, but not without heavy loss on our side. They also suffered severely from our shell and machine-gun fire. The ground was spotted with their dead and dying.

The next day things were somewhat quieter, but not quiet enough to bury the dead.

We lived, ate and slept in that trench with the unburied dead for six days. It was awful to watch their faces become swollen and discolored. Towards the last the stench was fierce.

What got on my nerves the most was that foot sticking out of the dirt. It seemed to me, at night, in the moonlight, to be trying to twist around. Several times this impression was so strong that I went to it and grasped it in both hands, to see if I could feel a movement.

I told this to the man who had used it for a hatrack just before I lay down for a little nap, as things were quiet, and I needed a rest pretty badly. When I woke up the foot was gone. He had cut it off with our chain saw but of the spare parts' box, and had plastered the stump over with mud.

During the next two or three days, before we were relieved, I missed that foot dreadfully; seemed as if I had suddenly lost a chum.

I think the worst thing of all was to watch the rats, at night, and sometimes in the day, run over and play about among the dead.

Near our gun, right across the parapet, could be seen the body of a German lieutenant, the head and arms of which were hanging into our trench. The man who had cut off the foot used to sit and carry on a one-sided conversation with this officer, used to argue and point out why Germany was in the wrong. During all of this monologue I never heard him say anything out of the way—anything that would have hurt the officer's feelings had he been alive. He was square all right; wouldn't even take advantage of a dead man in an argument.

To civilians this must seem dreadful, but out here one gets so used to awful sights that it makes no impression. In passing a butcher shop you are not shocked by seeing a dead turkey hanging from a hook. Well, in France, a dead body is looked upon from the same angle.

But, nevertheless, when our six days were up, we were tickled to death to be relieved.

Our machine gun company lost seventeen killed and thirty-one wounded in that little local affair of "straightening the line," while the other companies clicked it worse than we did.

After the attack we went into reserve billets for six days, and on the seventh once again we were in rest billets.

(To be continued next week.)

#### Registration Regulations, No. 2

##### 1. General Provisions.

1. Prescribed by the President. These regulations are prescribed by the President under the authority vested in him by Public Resolution No. —, approved —, 1918, and the act of congress approved May 18, 1917, and may be modified at any time.

##### 2. Persons required by the law to present themselves for registration.

Public Resolution No. —, approved —, 1918, contains the following provision:

That during the present emergency all male persons, citizens of the United States, and all male persons residing in the United States, who have, since the fifth day of June, nineteen hundred and seventeen, and on or before the day set for the

registration by proclamation by the president, attained the age of twenty-one years, shall be subject to registration in accordance with regulations to be prescribed by the president, and that upon proclamation by the president, stating the time and place of such registration, it shall be the duty of all such persons, except such persons as are exempt from registration under the act of May eighteenth, nineteen hundred and seventeen, and any act or acts amendatory thereof, to present themselves for and submit to registration under the provisions of said act approved May eighteenth, nineteen hundred and seventeen, and they shall be registered in the same manner and subject to the same requirements and liabilities as those previously registered under the terms of said act:

(Continued on page 6, column 1.)

#### WINTHROP COLLEGE.

##### Scholarship and Entrance Examination.

The examination for the award of vacant scholarships in Winthrop college and for the admission of new students will be held at the county court house on Friday, July 5, at 9 a. m., and also on Saturday, July 6, at 9 a. m., for those who wish to make up by examinations additional units required for full admission to the Freshman class of this institution. The examination on Saturday, July 6, will be used only for making admission units. The scholarships will be awarded upon the examination held on Friday, July 5. Applicants must not be less than sixteen years of age. When scholarships are vacant after July 5, they will be awarded to those making the highest average at this examination, provided they meet the conditions governing the award. Applicants for scholarships should write to President Johnson for scholarship examination blanks. These blanks, properly filled out by the applicant, should be filed with President Johnson by July 1st.

Scholarships are worth \$100 and free tuition. The next session will open September 18, 1918. For further information and catalogue, address PRESIDENT D. B. JOHNSON, Rock Hill, S. C.

#### REPORT ON GLENDALE MINERAL SPRING.

In the recent report of the Department of the Interior, GLENDALE MINERAL SPRING, of Bamberg, S. C., is mentioned as one of the valuable mineral springs of the United States.

GLENDALE MINERAL SPRING was discovered about three years ago and an analysis of the water made by Prof. Bracket, of Clemson College. Since that time other analyses have been made which show the great value of GLENDALE MINERAL WATER. This spring is located about three miles southwest of BAMBERG and within easy reach of the people of lower South Carolina who have not as yet fully realized the value of this excellent mineral water right in their midst.—adv. 5-30

#### NOTICE OF FINAL DISCHARGE.

Notice is hereby given that on June 12, 1918, the undersigned administratrix of the estate of C. W. Bessinger, deceased, will file her final return and apply to the probate Judge of Bamberg county for final discharge as administratrix of said estate.

MRS. JOSIE BESSINGER.  
May 14, 1918.

#### A GOOD FRIEND

A good friend stands by you when in need. Bamberg people tell how Doan's Kidney Pills have stood the test. Mrs. A. McB. Speaks of Rice St., Box No. 123, Bamberg, endorsed Doan's three years ago and again confirms the story. Could you ask for more convincing testimony?

"I had weak kidneys and pains in my back," says Mrs. McB. Speaks. "The pains were there constantly, and when I stood they annoyed me a great deal more. My kidneys acted irregularly and caused me much annoyance. I bought a box of Doan's Kidney Pills and after using them was greatly relieved. I gladly recommend Doan's Kidney Pills."

The above statement was given on May 30, 1914, and on January 22, 1918, Mrs. Speaks added: "I have had no trouble with my back or kidneys since Doan's Kidney Pills cured me. My advice to anyone troubled with backaches, dizzy spells, weak kidneys or any other symptom of kidney complaint, is to try this remedy, for it certainly is fine. All I have formerly said of Doan's Kidney Pills I gladly confirm."

Price 60c, at all dealers. Don't simply ask for a kidney remedy—get Doan's Kidney Pills—the same that Mrs. McB. Speaks had. Foster-Milburn Co., Mfgs., Buffalo, N. Y.

#### To Cure a Cold in One Day.

Take LAXATIVE BROMO Quinine. It stops the Cough and Headache and works off the Cold. Druggists refund money if it fails to cure. E. W. GROVE'S signature on each box. 30c.

#### RILEY & COPELAND

Successors to W. P. Riley.

Fire, Life  
Accident  
INSURANCE  
Office in J. D. Copeland's Store  
BAMBERG, S. C.  
BUY WAR SAVING STAMPS

Drives Out Malaria, Builds Up System  
The Old Standard general strengthening tonic, GROVE'S TASTELESS CHILL TONIC, drives out Malaria, enriches the blood, and builds up the system. A true tonic. For adults and children. 60c.

Whenever You Need a General Tonic Take Grove's.

The Old Standard Grove's Tasteless Chill Tonic is equally valuable as a General Tonic because it contains the well known tonic properties of QUININE and IRON. It acts on the Liver, Drives out Malaria, Enriches the Blood and Builds up the Whole System. 60 cents.

#### RED CROSS WEEK



"A great net of mercy drawn through an ocean of unspeakable pain."



Don't throw away your old Pots and Kettles we have mends it Will repair it to & 25c

Buy Them And Help Win The War  
FOR SALE EVERYWHERE

PHONE 15

TOM DUCKER

PHONE 15 NEXT TO COPELAND'S BAMBERG, S. C.

BUY W. S. S. and Help WIN THE WAR

BUY W. S. S. and Help WIN THE WAR

# HAVE YOU

bought your summer clothes yet? We are now able to fill your wants in cool cloth and palm beach suits. We have one of the best lines ever shown here, and as we bought early, we are in a position to save you some money.

#### HOW ABOUT THAT STRAW HAT?

We still have a nice assortment of panamas and leghorns. Come see our line before buying.



Buy Them And Help Win The War  
FOR SALE EVERYWHERE

H. C. FOLK CO.

BAMBERG, S. C.

#### Horses and Mules

We have a full stock on hand of Horses and Mules. Our stock is selected personally by a member of our firm, and each animal sold has the Jones Bros.' guarantee—and you know what that means. When you need a horse or mule, don't fail to come to our stables. We will take pleasure in showing you. Our stock is always in good condition—they are bought sound and sold sound.

#### BUGGIES, WAGONS, HARNESS

We have a splendid line of Buggies, Wagons, Harness, Lap Robes, Whips, Etc. We have a number of styles in Buggies and Harness, and we can suit you. We handle only the best vehicles to be had, and our prices are always right. Come to see us; you are always welcome.

Jones Bros.

RAILROAD AVENUE BAMBERG, S. C.

Back The Boys Up at The Front. Buy War Saving Stamps