

"OVER THE TOP"

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

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CHAPTER XXV—Continued.

When we took over the front line we received an awful shock. The Germans displayed signboards over the top of their trench, showing the names that we had called their trenches. The signs read "Fair," "Fact," "Fate," and "Fancy," and so on, according to the code names on our map. Then to rub it in, they hoisted some more signs which read, "Come on, we are ready, stupid English."

It is still a mystery to me how they obtained this knowledge. There had been no raids or prisoners taken, so it must have been the work of spies in our own lines.

Three or four days before the big push we tried to shatter Fritz's nerves by joint attacks, and partially succeeded as the official reports of July 1 show.

Although we were constantly bombarding their lines day and night, still we fooled the Germans several times. This was accomplished by throwing an intense barrage into his lines—then using smoke shells we would put a curtain of white smoke across No Man's Land, completely obstructing his view of our trenches, and would raise our curtain of fire as if in an actual attack. All down our trenches the men would shout and cheer, and Fritz would turn loose with machine-gun, rifle, and shrapnel fire, thinking we were coming over.

After three or four of these dummy attacks his nerves must have been near the breaking point.

On June 24, 1916, at 9:30 in the morning our guns opened up, and hell was let loose. The din was terrific, a constant boom-boom-boom in your ear.

At night the sky was a red glare. Our bombardment had lasted about two hours when Fritz started replying. Although we were sending over ten shells to his one, our casualties were heavy. There was a constant stream of stretchers coming out of the communication trenches and burial parties were a common sight.

In the dugouts the noise of the guns almost hurt. You had the same sensation as when riding on the subway you enter the tube under the river going to Brooklyn—a sort of pressure on the ear drums, and the ground constantly trembling.

The roads behind the trenches were very dangerous because Boche shrapnel was constantly bursting over them. We avoided these dangerous spots by crossing through open fields.

The destruction in the German lines was awful and I really felt sorry for them because I realized how they must be clicking it.

From our front-line trench, every now and again, we could hear sharp whistle blasts in the German trenches. These blasts were the signals for stretcher bearers, and meant the wounding or killing of some German in the service of his fatherland.

Atwell and I had a tough time of it, patrolling the different trenches at night, but after awhile got used to it.

My old outfit, the machine gun company, was stationed in huge elephant dugouts about four hundred yards behind the front-line trench—they were in reserve. Occasionally I would stop in their dugout and have a confab with my former mates. Although we tried to be jolly, still, there was a lurking feeling of impending disaster. Each man was wondering, if, after the slogan, "Over the top with the best of luck," had been sounded, would he still be alive or would he be lying "somewhere in France." In an old dilapidated house, the walls of which were scarred with machine-gun bullets, No. 3 section of the machine gun company had its quarters. The company's cooks prepared the meals in this billet. On the fifth evening of the bombardment a German eight-inch shell registered a direct hit on the billet and wiped out ten men who were asleep in the supposedly bomb-proof cellar. They were buried the next day and I attended the funeral.

CHAPTER XXVI.

All Quiet (?) on the Western Front.

At brigade headquarters I happened to overhear a conversation between our G. O. C. (general officer commanding) and the divisional commander. From this conversation I learned that we were to bombard the German lines for eight days, and on the first of July the "big push" was to commence.

In a few days orders were issued to that effect, and it was common property all along the line.

On the afternoon of the eighth day of our "strafing," Atwell and I were sitting in the front-line trench smoking fags and making out our reports of the previous night's tour of the trenches, which we had to turn in to headquarters the following day, when an order was passed down the trench that Old Pepper requested twenty volunteers to go over on a trench raid that night to try and get a few German prisoners for information purposes. I immediately volunteered for this job, and shook hands with Atwell, and went to the rear to give my name to the officers in charge of the raiding party.

I was accepted, worse luck. At 9:15 that night we reported to the brigade headquarters dugout to receive instructions from Old Pepper.

After reaching this dugout we lined up in a semicircle around him, and he addressed us as follows:

"All I want you boys to do is to go over to the German lines tonight, surprise them, secure a couple of prisoners, and return immediately. Our artillery has bombarded that section of the line for two days and personally I believe that that part of the German trench is unoccupied, so just get a couple of prisoners and return as quickly as possible."

The sergeant on my right, in an undertone, whispered to me:

"Say, Yank, how are we going to get a couple of prisoners if the old fool thinks 'personally' that that part of the trench is unoccupied,—sounds kind of fishy, doesn't it mate?"

I had a funny sinking sensation in my stomach, and my tin hat felt as if it weighed about a ton and my enthusiasm was melting away. Old Pepper must have heard the sergeant speak because he turned in his direction and in a thundering voice asked:

"What did you say?"

The sergeant with a scarlet look on his face and his knees trembling, smartly saluted and answered:

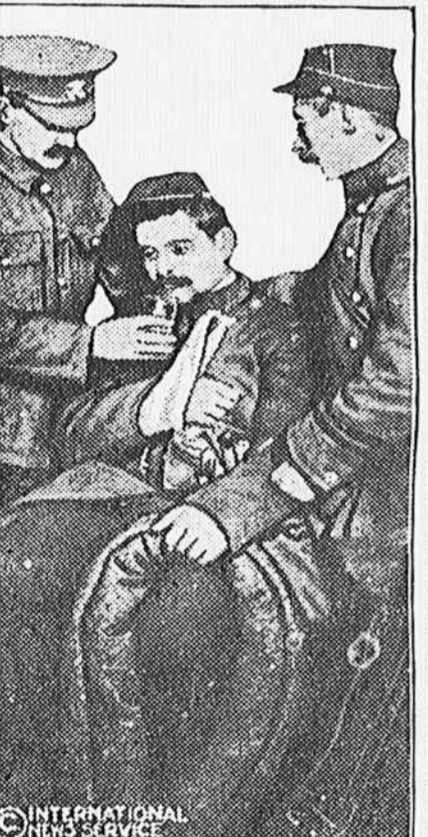
"Nothing, sir."

Old Pepper said:

"Well, don't say it so loudly the next time."

Then Old Pepper continued:

"In this section of the German trenches there are two or three machine guns which our artillery, in the last two or three days, has been un-



Receiving First Aid.

able to tape. These guns command the sector where two of our communication trenches join the front line, and as the brigade is to go over the top tomorrow morning I want to capture two or three men from these guns' crews, and from them I may be able to obtain valuable information as to the exact location of the guns, and our artillery will therefore be able to demolish them before the attack, and thus prevent our losing a lot of men while using these communication trenches to bring up re-enforcements."

These were the instructions he gave us:

"Take off your identification disks, strip your uniforms of all numerals, insignia, etc., leave your papers with your captains, because I don't want the Boches to know what regiments are against them as this would be valuable information to them in our attack tomorrow and I don't want any of you to be taken alive. What I want is two prisoners and if I get them I have a way which will make them divulge all necessary information as to their guns. You have your choice of two weapons—you may carry your 'persuaders' or your knuckle knives, and each man will arm himself with four Mills bombs, these to be used only in case of emergency."

A persuader is Tommy's nickname for a club carried by the bombers. It is about two feet long, thin at one end and very thick at the other. The thick end is studded with sharp steel spikes, while through the center of the club there is a nine-inch lead bar, to give it weight and balance. When you get stuck this club up in front of him, and believe me, the prisoner's patriotism for "Deutschland ueber Alles" fades away and he very willingly obeys the orders of his captor. If, however, the prisoner gets high-toned and refuses to follow you, simply "persuade" him by first removing his tin hat, and then—well, the use of the lead weight in the persuader is demonstrated, and Tommy looks for another prisoner.

The knuckle knife is a dagger affair, the blade of which is about eight inches long with a heavy steel guard

over the grip. This guard is studded with steel projections. At night in a trench, which is only about three to four feet wide, it makes a very handy weapon. One punch in the face generally shatters a man's jaw and you can get him with the knife as he goes down.

Then we had what we called our "come-alongs." These are strands of barbed wire about three feet long, made into a noose at one end; at the other end, the barbs are cut off and Tommy slips his wrist through a loop to get a good grip on the wire. If the prisoner wants to argue the point, why just place the large loop around his neck and no matter if Tommy wishes to return to his trenches at the walk, trot, or gallop, Fritz is perfectly agreeable to maintain Tommy's rate of speed.

We were ordered to black our faces and hands. For this reason; At night, the English and Germans use what they call star shells, a sort of rocket affair. They are fired from a large pistol about twenty inches long, which is held over the sandbag parapet of the trench, and discharged into the air. These star shells attain a height of about sixty feet, and a range of from fifty to seventy-five yards. When they hit the ground they explode, throwing out a strong calcium light which lights up the ground in a circle of a radius of between ten to fifteen yards. They also have a parachute star shell which, after reaching a height of about sixty feet, explodes. A parachute unfolds and slowly floats to the ground, lighting up a large circle in No Man's Land.

The official name of the star shell is a "Very-light." Very-lights are used to prevent night surprise attacks on the trenches. If a star shell falls in front of you, or between you and the German lines, you are safe from detection, as the enemy cannot see you through the bright curtain of light. But if it falls behind you and, as Tommy says, "you get in the star shell zone," then the fun begins; you have to lie flat on your stomach and remain absolutely motionless until the light of the shell dies out. This takes anywhere from forty to seventy seconds. If you haven't time to fall to the ground you must remain absolutely still in whatever position you were in when the light exploded; it is advisable not to breathe, as Fritz has an eye like an eagle when he thinks you are knocking at his door. When a star shell is burning in Tommy's rear he can hold his breath for a week.

You blacken your face and hands so that the light from the star shells will not reflect on your pale face. In a trench raid there is quite sufficient reason for your face to be pale. If you don't believe me, try it just once.

Then another reason for blackening your face and hands is that, after you have entered the German trench at night, "white face" means Germans, "black face" English. Coming around a traverse you see a white face in front of you. With a prayer and wishing Fritz "the best of luck," you introduce him to your "persuader" or knuckle knife.

A little later we arrived at the communication trench named Whisky street, which led to the fire trench at the point we were to go over the top and out in front.

In our rear were four stretcher bearers and a corporal of the R. A. M. C. carrying a pouch containing medicines and first-aid appliances. Kind of a grim reminder to us that our expedition was not going to be exactly a picnic. The order of things was reversed. In civilian life the doctors generally come first, with the undertakers tagging in the rear and then the insurance man, but in our case, the undertakers were leading, with the doctors trailing behind, minus the insurance adjuster.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Is Anyone Old in New York? In Bruce Barton's novel, "The Making of George Groton," the author says: "No one is old in New York. They drain in every year from all parts of the country—millions of men, young and vibrant. They stay and work, and grow into middle age; and then suddenly they vanish. One may walk for blocks on Fifth avenue or Broadway and hardly see anyone over fifty. Where do they go to? No one seems ever to die; no funerals clog the traffic. There are plenty of funerals, of course, but you don't notice them as you do in a little town. I have wandered for hours in the big woods, wondering where the birds go when they die; and never yet have I run across the body of a dead bird. What becomes of old birds? What becomes of old New Yorkers? These are twin mysteries to me. I cannot unravel them."

Got Along Without Metals. The cliff dwellers knew nothing of the use of metals. Their knives were made from the bones of the deer, highly polished and very sharp. Their household utensils consisted of pottery jars and casks made of fiber and covered with a substance resembling modern varnish. Although the earliest cliff dwellers were prehistoric, cave dwellers have existed in almost every age of the world.

Paris Achieves Lovely Afternoon Gowns



Now that women feel it a duty to make afternoon gowns do service for evening wear, the ingenuity of costumers is put to the test. From one of the great Paris designers comes the lovely gown pictured above and it is a triumph of French discernment and good taste; for it is quiet enough for daytime wear and distinguished enough for evening. It is of black satin with embroidery in silver thread. This combination appears also in French millinery from the most authoritative sources, but in hats black frame velvet is used instead of satin.

We may accept this gown as a criterion in hues and general make up of styles for the coming season. It has a narrow, plain underskirt of moderate length and a straight hanging over-garment vaguely confined to the figure by an easy girdle terminating in sash ends. The girdle is made of satin and that portion that encircles the waist is embroidered while the sash ends are plain. The skirt portion of

the overdress is as long as the underskirt at the back and considerably shorter in front. This is a new development of the tunic skirt which is destined to reappear in winter gowns. The embroidered band on the back portion is not so wide as it is on the front.

The sleeves and collar are especially interesting because they are both new departures. Both are as plain as possible but each is original. The sleeves are cut full length and flaring but are trimmed away at the wrist until the upper portion extends only a few inches below the elbow. The up-standing collar is of black crepe georgette and is supported by a few very small, unnoticeable wires.

Satin in black and in dark colors, promises to be of all fabrics the most used for afternoon gowns. New draped skirts and new tunic skirts appear and silver tinsel in embroidered bands is sure to be followed by silver lace in conjunction with them.

Among the Blouses for Fall



There is really an endless assortment of blouses all ready for women who look to the blouse more than ever to provide them variety in their apparel. Since we may not have so many frocks, what with the scarcity of wool and labor and everything, we must turn to the blouses made of cottons or those of silk to add the spice of variety to skirts and suits that are serving overtime.

Blouses are of two characters—those that are moderate in price—anywhere from about three dollars to eight or ten—and those that employ lavish or difficult handwork that brings their value up to two or three times the outside price of those in the other class. It seems inconsistent to talk of war-time economy in the same breath with these extravagantly priced affairs, but it is not always so; some of them are remarkably durable. The blouses that most women will buy, however, are the moderately priced models that are new and smart in design. French voile, fine batiste and georgette crepe are the materials to select—no matter what the price—for it is not in the materials but in the laces and other decorative features that take much time to make, that the high value lies. Women who know how to do exquisite needlework have the advantage because they can do this exacting handwork for themselves. Fine organdie is another material that helps solve the problem of dainty blouses at moderate prices.

Georgette remains a great favorite and the two new models shown in the picture for are of this delicate and beautiful material. They are among the considerable number that

either slip on over the head or fasten along one shoulder. In the blouse at the left two colors are used—a panel at the front in color joined to the white of the blouse by beadwork. Hemstitching is used in voile or other cottons and in silks to introduce a becoming touch of color by joining it to white blouses. This blouse has the round neck finished with a frill and the bands of ribbon laid over the cuffs, which are among new style features. The blouse at the right is of georgette in a pale color, braided with soutache in the same shade. It fastens on the shoulder under a collar that is ornamented with two small silk covered balls.

Julia Bottanelli

When You Put Laco On.

We are not doing much in the way of fancy work nowadays. Knitting takes up all our spare time, and to it we devote our energy. - But perhaps you will have occasion to sew some lace on a curving edge—like that of a centerpiece—and if you do, writes a correspondent, here is a little trick divulged by a woman who is experienced in such things. Roll the lace in a little roll and tie it with a thread so that it will not unroll. Then dip the straight edge in hot water. Just the edge, and about half the width of the lace. Wring the water out and dry the lace, still in the little roll. When it is dry the inside will be slightly shrunken, so that it will measure less than the outside, and so you will have less difficulty in fitting it to the curved edges of the centerpiece.

TO ALL WOMEN WHO ARE ILL

This Woman Recommends Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound—Her Personal Experience.

McLean, Neb.—"I want to recommend Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound to all women who suffer from any functional disturbance, as it has done me more good than all the doctor's medicine. Since taking it I have a fine healthy baby girl and have gained in health and strength. My husband and I both praise your medicine to all suffering women."



Mrs. JOHN KOPPELMANN, R. No. 1, McLean, Nebraska.

This famous root and herb remedy, Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, has been restoring women of America to health for more than forty years and it will well pay any woman who suffers from displacements, inflammation, ulceration, irregularities, backache, headaches, nervousness or "the blues" to give this successful remedy a trial.

For special suggestions in regard to your ailment write Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co., Lynn, Mass. The result of its long experience is at your service.

OXIDINE
Kills Chills
Good for Malaria, constipation, biliousness—a fine tonic. Guaranteed or money back. Behrens Drug Co., Waco, Tex.

Soldiers Soothe Skin Troubles with Cuticura
Soap, Ointment, Talcum Pkts. each. Samples of "Cuticura, Dry & Eaten."

WINTERSMITH'S CHILL TONIC
Sold for 50 Years. FOR MALARIA, CHILLS AND FEVER. Also a Fine General Strengthening Tonic. At All Drug Stores.

ONLY ONE CAUSE FOR WORRY

Decoction Put Up by Obliging Chemist Removed All Other Troubles From His Customer.

Rashuns was feeling uncomfortable as he trudged home in the rain. Suddenly he heard a laugh behind him and curious to know who could feel hilarious in such weather, he turned around and recognized Simpson, who was keeping dry with the aid of an umbrella.

"Suppose you're laughing because I've forgotten my umbrella?" growled Rashuns.

"No, no! Come under and I'll tell you," said Simpson. "I have just heard about Mason. He went to a chemist and said to the man: 'Give me something that will banish from my mind the thought of sorrow and bitter recollections.' That chemist must have been an obliging chap, for he made up a dose of quinine, epsom salts, wormwood and a little castor oil for Mason to take, and the poor old chap can't think of anything now except new schemes for getting the taste out of his mouth."

Dad's Great Scheme.

Father noticed that his rather obstreperous young son had the quality of thriftiness, and he resolved to appeal to it.

"Sonny," said he, "I'm going to give you a nickel every day if you're a good boy, on condition that every day you are naughty you give me a nickel. Is it a go?"

"I'd like to do it, dad," answered the little fellow. "But I can't afford it. I've only got \$1.26 in my bank to start on."—Peoples' Home Journal.

In the Tolia.

He (watching another couple)—I suppose he feels that he could not live without her.

She—Yes, and I don't think he'll have a chance to find out that he could.

SAVING WHEAT
is only one good point for

POST TOASTIES
(MADE OF CORN)
—says Bobby

