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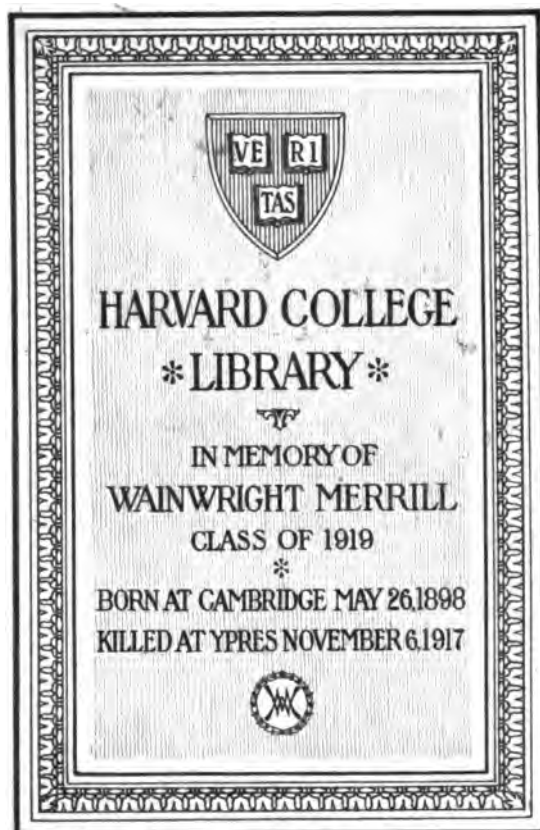
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# THE COMPANY HISTORY



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**THE STORY**  
**OF**  
**COMPANY B**  
**106TH MACHINE GUN BATTALION**  
**27TH DIVISION, U. S. A.**

**BY**  
**LESLIE S. BAKER**

**PUBLISHED BY THE COMPANY**  
**NEW YORK, 1920**





Ms. A. 9.2.106



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By Leslie S. Baker

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## PREFACE

**S**OUVENIRS of the Great War are numerous among the members of Company B. This additional souvenir has been published for the purpose of co-ordinating all the memories of our war experiences and of cementing more firmly the many friendships resulting from intimate association with each other under all sorts of conditions.

It is believed that these friendships are the greatest assets realized by us from our happy and unhappy times together.

The help of many has, of course, been necessary to bring this book to a final form for publication. To George Bucher the Company is indebted for the illustrations of the advertisements and the cover design. The Company further acknowledges a debt of gratitude to Elbert F. Morley, of Company A, who has donated the use of some of the cuts, as well as many valuable suggestions.

The statements made in the relation of the actual history are primarily intended to be only such as will interest the majority of the Company. The book is intended, of course, to be read by men who will breathe their own feelings into the text of the reading-matter, and so derive some amount of reminiscent enjoyment as they turn its pages.

LESLIE S. BAKER.

Brooklyn, N. Y., February, 1920.

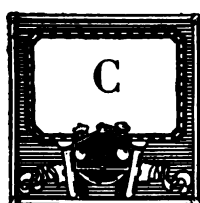


**PART ONE**  
**OVER HERE**



## PART ONE

### OVER HERE



OMPANY B, 106th Machine Gun Battalion, 27th Division, United States Army, had its origin at Camp Wadsworth, South Carolina, on October 17th, 1917, by means of a very simple and rather unromantic order from Headquarters, assigning thereto a certain number of officers, non-com's and privates.

Company B—on paper—had its origin on that date, but the real Company B was born some time earlier. In fact, the spirit which characterized the company in all its deeds, both over here and over there, was but a continuation of the spirit of the old First New York Cavalry. This regiment, the breaking up of which many regarded as a calamity, included the finest military element in New York State. The nine months spent by it on the Mexican Border in 1916 merely served to centralize the spirit of pride of organization, friendships, and experience in actual soldiering, and the ideals of common interest which everyone now realizes as being indispensable to the efficient fighting unit. The entire 106th Machine Gun Battalion was composed of this material, Company B being formed from all of Troop L, parts of Troops G, H and F, and a few men from the 10th New York Infantry.

The second calling of the National Guard to Federal service in July, 1917, found the First New York Cavalry quite intact, but with large numbers of new men who had enlisted since the outbreak of war. These new men—almost all of whom have by this time forgotten that they were ever "rookies"—immediately realized the character of the outfit they had joined, and conducted themselves accordingly. It is very easy to imagine with what pride some of their mothers chatted with each other about "what a lucky boy my Johnny was to get in with such a fine bunch," or "how fortunate that Bill is able to go away with all his friends," or even "since my Charley has been wearing spurs he has scratched up all the furniture," and the like.

But when the regiment mobilized at the Bliss Estate, Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, and the old camp became the haven to scurry back to before reveille should blow,—then we began dimly to realize that we were at last in the field. And then, after days and days of horse exercise, running from the Crescent Club, and a grand-stand retreat, with perhaps a date or two in the big town afterward, we were made to





GROUP AT BAY RIDGE

understand the nation's need for machine gunners. The course of machine gun lectures which followed closely upon this alarming information, with their easy references to such unheard-of things as mils, aparejo, cruppers and tactics, were absolute Greek to nearly all of us. Try though we might, we could not help believing that, in some unaccountable way, we had offended the powers that be, and were about to undergo our punishment therefor. We were told that machine gunners had to be among the brainiest men in the service, but we accepted this statement with a knowing nod, as if we knew full well that such talk was only to salve our consciences.

On October 9th, 1917, however, after we had been at Bay Ridge nine weeks, we entrained at Communipaw, New Jersey, bound for Spartanburg, and the secret was there broken to us that we were really going to become part of the 106th Machine Gun Battalion. Just why it was to be the 106th we could not, in our simplicity, for a moment imagine, but we explained it casually to the ignorant civilians by the fact that everyone thought in large figures in those days, and doubtless the War Department had done so, too.

Arriving at Camp Wadsworth early on the morning of October 11th, after a train ride which consisted of card playing between meals, we parted company with the dear old horses, which we had, till then, accepted as part of the Troop. The horses were conducted to the remount station and we were marched to a dreary spot and told to pitch camp. In the absorbing work of pitching tents, digging gutters and doing all kinds of policing, we were enabled for a time to forget the absence of the horses. The fact that during those first few days, when we drilled, we did so according to cavalry formations, made it seem possible that perhaps this machine gun talk might only be a bad



PICKET LINES AT CAMP BLISS

dream after all. Even long after we had ceased marvelling at the size of the Company as it ran around the Engineer's camp before breakfast, it needed only a few concentrated yells of "Cavalry" to bring us out of bed and into an impromptu parade. Thus, even that early, did we acquire a taste for belief in wild rumors.

But, though under a new name, the spirit of the old Cavalry prevailed. "Squads Right," as taught in a cotton field by Sergeant Freeman, was taken as a matter of course, and mastered in that spirit. We even accepted Captain Alpers' explanations of the different methods of "clearing the mask" as something which—like reveille—merely had to exist.

During the long days of early winter, when the possibility of drill or retreat depended entirely upon the weather, the good old pyramidal tents became very cozy. In those days army life was exactly as we had always imagined it to be. A good bed, three blankets, a comforter, and pajamas were army luxuries which we took for granted. Jumping out of them and dressing in the ice-cold tents was the worst hardship of the day. We had no machine guns to clean (even our rifles had been turned in), no such thing as English drill, no horses to groom—though many would have been glad of the chance—no censor, nor nothing much to worry us except frequent details and the occasional wondering what on earth had happened to that box of sweet stuff from home, and if we were going to stay at Spartanburg for the duration of the war.

This easy life was soon broken. On Thanksgiving Eve we spent



our first twenty-four hours in the Spartanburg trenches. These trenches were home-made, and presented two distinct dangers and many hardships. If you escaped freezing by leaving off the muffler that was given to you when you left home, the other danger was that you would allow some pussy-foot officer to approach your position unobserved, and thus lose the war. We were convinced that the primary object of sending us into the trenches at this time was merely to change our point of view, so that we would look forward to the morrow (Thanksgiving Day) as a day in which to really give thanks. We made three more trips to these same trenches during our stay at Spartanburg, and these other trips were for forty-eight and seventy-two hours apiece, so that by the time we were finished with our series of tours we felt that France itself could present no terrors to us in that line.

And then there was another occurrence about this time which made us realize that we had not been forgotten. This was the issue of blue hat cords, and the order forbidding us to wear the yellow hat cords or leather puttees. This was the last straw. Even up to the last minute most of us had had, 'way down in our hearts, a secret idea that it was all a mistake, and that we should once more be cavalry. The blue hat cord,

however, seemed to clinch the matter, and the yellow cord was carefully laid away to be worn when on furlough. Very probably we should not have taken the change so much to heart if we could have peeped into the future and glimpsed the overseas cap. Such a glimpse might have saddened—or horrified—us in other ways, but might have afforded some consolation in those hours of gloom.

Following closely upon the blue hat cord came the series of examinations prepared under the joint conspiracy of Captain Alpers and Lieutenant McLernon, dealing with our lack of knowledge about everything from interior guard duty to the color of the lining the



THE SUNNY SOUTH

Spartanburg policemen wore in their coats. These examinations made us realize that we did not know the army after all.

Without giving us time to properly recover from this shock, the heavy, clumsy and intricate Colt machine guns appeared on the scene. Our first shooting with them, done on the miniature thousand-inch range, was as thrilling to us, however, as would have been an actual barrage. In fact, after once having fired a machine gun, interest in the gun began to pick up considerably.

But one thing we could not get enthusiastic about was the gas drill. A certain number of hours a week had to be devoted to these performances, and it so happened that the hours assigned to our company were usually the coldest, so that we stood there and tried to put on our borrowed masks in less than six seconds, while our hands

and ears were fairly freezing. One day, however, we passed through the gas chamber, and that was more exciting, as there was always the hope that someone would be chump enough to put his mask on backward, and so get gassed, affording some excitement,—always provided, of course, that you were not the one.

Finally, in April, 1918, after hours and hours of "Fall out, one," we took our first hike, to the rifle range at Glassy Rock, thirty miles north of Camp Wadsworth. This, our first attempt with packs,—and such packs!—no one who took will ever forget. Nor



CAMP WADSWORTH

is one apt to forget, on the other hand, the pleasant two weeks spent at the camp at the foot of the mountains, with mountains to climb, mountain streams to bathe in, moonshine to hunt, pistol practice and firing the guns, and the big feeds at the mountaineers' houses.

But chief among the impressions made by the two weeks at the range was the day of the exhibition artillery creeping barrage—our first experience of shell-fire. The whistle of the shells which just skimmed our heads as we sat on the reverse slope of a small hill gave us a very good—almost too good—idea of a bombardment on the Western front. Afterward, as we walked back to camp, it was noticed that many impetuous individuals who had been bewailing the

fact that the war would be finished before we could get a chance to get across now found lots of other things to think and talk about.

One night in late April, shortly after the artillery barrage, the air became very heavy with rumors, and we were suddenly marched back to Camp Wadsworth, and told to send home our trunks and pack up for overseas duty.

During this period of waiting for further orders, the company received its first consignment of replacements. Forty-four men, direct from Camp Upton, brought the company up to full fighting strength, as there had been a number of changes since the organization of the company. However, there was scarcely time for the new men to become acquainted before we moved.

On May 1st, 1918, the company entrained in day coaches, bound for some Port of Embarkation. We were very naturally highly indignant at the idea of spending the night in day coaches—but that was before we had traveled in the French “Hommes-40 Chevaux-8” Pullmans. When we awoke the next morning we found ourselves at Camp Stuart, Newport News, Virginia, and, worst of all, in quarantine.

The rather hazy, excited week which followed gave us our first taste of barracks life. The big two-story buildings, the comfortable beds, the clean floor, electric lights, handy shower baths, and, above all, the wonderful early-May weather, were all too soon to be superseded by exactly the opposite.

However, thoughts of what the future held in store for us did not worry us at Camp Stuart. Even the pressure and confinement of the place, including as they did such things as a show-down inspection in a blinding sandstorm, and a helter-skelter issue of equipment, were somewhat eased by the famous baseball game held in the company street. The Border “Veterans” were firmly vanquished by the “Rookies” after a very enthusiastic and exciting game. Then, too, the many mothers, “honey-bunches” and “sweetie-pies” who appeared on the scene to speed us on our way made of Camp Stuart a very pleasant memory.

Finally all the rumors came to a head, and we embarked on the good ship “Antigone” on the morning of May 10th, 1918, bound eastward—we knew not where.

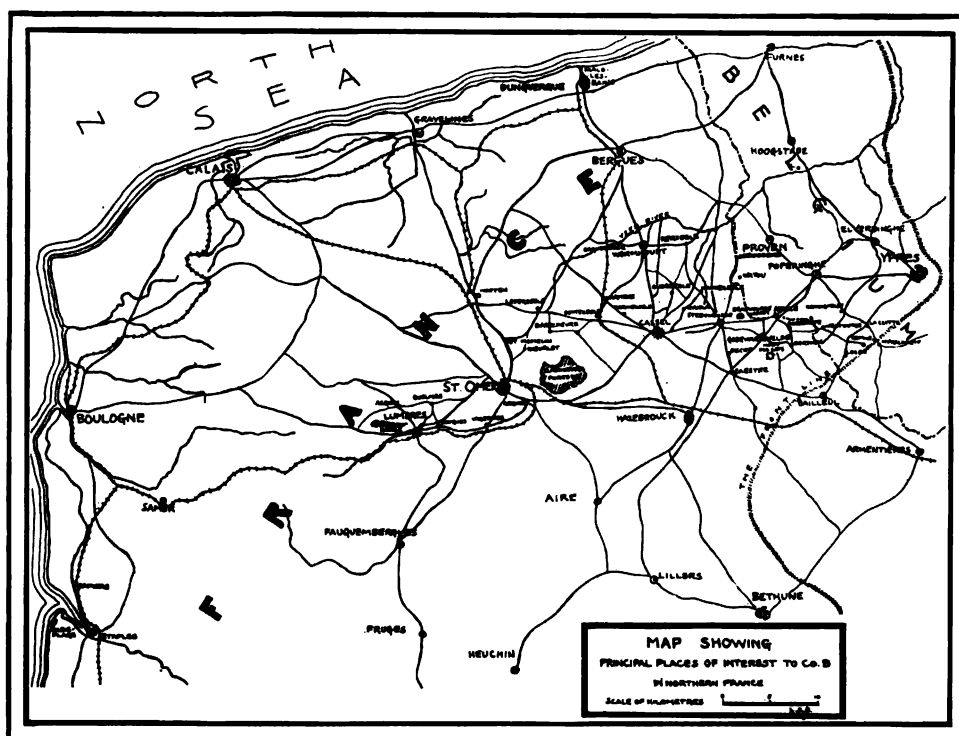




# PART TWO

## OVER THERE





## CHAPTER ONE

### TRAINING AND PREPARATION

#### *From Brest to Beauvoorde Woods*



IN May, 1918, a transatlantic voyage was regarded as uneventful and uninteresting by the world at large if the convoy did not sight at least one periscope. Judged from this standpoint, our voyage on the "Antigone" was uninteresting, but for most of us the entire trip at once presented thrills, discomforts, trials of patience, and the natural pleasures one derives from his first ocean trip. To begin with, for us one of the most thrilling and oft-recurring thoughts was that, from the moment we stepped on board ship, we entered the great wide danger-zone of the then-powerful Central Powers. Up to this time we had been in the war, of course, but under no greater bodily danger than that of catching a cold from "Jump up and spread your arms and legs" in the morning exercises, or getting gassed in the gas chamber. Now, however, all was changed, and we began to realize that, before we could return to America—if lucky—we should have undergone every possible danger and risk that the Hun, with his devilish ingenuity, could devise. It is not strange that these dangers should have been more than occasionally before our minds, as on an ocean voyage,—particularly the first,—one is apt to be thinking more of himself than, say, the future of democracy.

However, with the exception of one day when the convoy separated for target practice, the days were very similar. Long days they were—made doubly so by only two meals per day, and suffocatingly hot nights below decks. Even the English drill at 11 A. M. and the submarine "abandon-ship" drills every afternoon did not break up the days sufficiently. The evenings, in particular, were very long. We started getting hungry the minute after the "smoking-lamp" was put out—and most of us stayed that way. At these times, or "emergencies," as they were called, many opportunities arose for sampling the emergency ration of chocolate. Those fortunate enough to be on permanent submarine guard managed to get a midnight snack now and then.

Finally, however, just as we were beginning to experience heart-felt pity for the Australians, whose voyage lasted three times as long as ours, came a change. One morning, in addition to the unmoved panorama of the other ships of the convoy, the guard spied a number

of destroyers darting in front of and around the transports. The cruiser which had guarded our convoy up to that time seemed to take on the appearance of a mother hen, strutting along with great dignity, while her brood of little chicks, the destroyers, was forever scampering away from under her protective wings.

The ships entered the beautiful land-locked harbor of Brest on the morning of May 23rd, but, except for an unloading detail, we did not disembark until May 25th, remaining at anchor for the intervening period.

At first our impressions of France were, on the whole, rather pleasing. Our first sight of the rocks, small islands and lighthouses of Finistere, in addition to being very welcome, was most gratifying. The captive observation balloon in the harbor—the first we had seen—set us to speculating as to whether he could spot any submarines from his dizzy height. And the presence of several naval hydroplanes, as had been that of the destroyers and even the cruiser, suddenly seemed to make us realize that we, a very small unit in an ever-increasing army, were being watched over and guarded most carefully by that same army. For the first time it dawned upon us that, valuable as we had undoubtedly been to Uncle Sam when in America, now that we were safely overseas our value was immeasurably increased.

This thought was rather sobering. Far from making us swell with our new importance in the eyes of the world, it set us to thinking out the best ways and means for justifying the time, thought and money which had already been spent on our development. From then on, more than ever before, it was up to us to do all in our power to serve the high purpose for which we had been chosen—it was up to us all to qualify as good soldiers and remain at top-notch as long as the war—or we—might last.

With these and other conflicting thoughts being fast crowded out of our minds by many new and strange sights, we approached the shore in the lighter which acted as a ferry from transport to dock. After we had assembled on the quay, we marched up the long hill which passes through Brest, on our way, though we did not know it, to the Pontanezen Barracks, three miles inland.

Various impressions were crowded upon us—the quaint French houses with women and children leaning out from their windows and doors to wave their hands and cheer us along; the apparently total absence of able-bodied male civilians; the women washing clothes by beating them on the boards in a common, and dirty, wash-pool; the great numbers of good-looking French children who ran around in nondescript clothing, earnestly begging souvenirs, cigarettes and “tabac,” and yelling “Good-bye-ee” over and over again . . . such remains our first memory of Brest. We had not then learned that no Frenchman, young or old, man or woman, has ever been known to refuse a cigarette, and almost before we knew it we had dangerously diminished our own supply of smokes.

Arriving at the Pontanezen Barracks, our sense of insignificance returned. Here, at least, was reality. The long, uncomfortable-looking buildings that Napoleon himself was rumored to have quartered his troops in presented to us the beginning of a period during which our personal comfort depended largely upon our own ingenuity. Almost immediately we were made to feel the scantiness of the water supply in France. Shower-baths seemed suddenly to have become unheard-of luxuries, and even a canteen filled with much-hated but highly purified chlorinated water was not to be despised. We were still kept in confinement, but here, unlike Newport News, there was no place worth going A. W. O. L. to visit. And, as has been said, going A. W. O. L. was not one of the praiseworthy resolves that filled our minds at that time.

However, we wandered around the barrack-square during the day, waiting hours in line to pay exorbitant prices for delicious strawberries, poor chocolate, and fresh dates. When night fell there was nothing to do but to go to bed, if lying on the double-decked chicken coops could be so called.



FRENCH "PULLMANS"

But we stayed at Brest only two nights, from the Saturday on which we had landed until Monday, May 27th. On that day we packed up and marched back through the town, under a broiling sun. Before we entrained in the tiny, flat-wheeled French freight cars about which we had read so much, some of us managed, with the help of sailors, to fortify ourselves for the coming trip with bottles of wine, chocolate and fruits. The wine, of course, was strictly forbidden, but that fact seemed only to enhance its flavor. When presented in contrast to the cold dry rations which were to suffice each car for the coming thirty-six-hour ride, wine seemed the logical thing to buy; we had not become inured to chlorinated water at that time.

The train was finally made up, and pulled out at about 3 P. M. Strict injunctions had been issued against throwing anything from car windows which might litter up the roadbed. After our first fifteen minutes of riding like cattle, the novelty wore off, and after that time we were never allowed to get away from the flat wheel.

Many wayside stops were made, among them being a little town called Plouaret, which deserves honorable mention in this work because it supplied several of the good runners of the company with more wine. Usually at these wayside stops the men would jump off and stretch their legs, or the bolder try to engage the curious civilians

in rapidly acquired French, the most popular question being as to how many kilometres it was to Paris. The very mention of the word "mitrailleuse" was sufficient to bring to their faces a sad smile that was far from comforting. At that time, it will be remembered, the German advance on the Somme had not been stopped, and the machine gunners were doing the most work toward holding the enemy back. Hence the sorrowful "Adieu" which often accompanied a kissing of the finger-tips in our direction.

As we headed northeast, bound we knew not where, we made several stops for hot coffee. At such places we met our first English Tommies. The stories related by these men were, to say the least, disquieting, although at that time our immediate concern was how much longer the fool train was going to go lumbering along with its human baggage. However, such remarks as "We cawn't 'old 'im," or "Jerry comes over in droves," or "We gave 'im a wallop, Sam—you go in and finish 'im," could not help but make an impression. As we returned to the cars on these occasions we would sip more wine—as long as it lasted.

And who can forget that first night on the train, with its criss-crossing of legs, arms and bodies on the cold floor of the cars, with the flat wheels pounding you until it seemed as if they would lift you clear of the floor! No lights were permitted, and in our excess of caution, even under the benches cigarettes were kept shaded.

With the coming of dawn our spirits improved, as was only natural. Even the inspiring breakfast of cold canned beans, canned stewed tomatoes, and corned willie—to which we had been properly introduced while at Brest—tasted good to us after such a night. The long day passed for us somehow, as unfailingly as many such days to come were to pass. Men took turns sleeping on the packs, sitting in the doorways to watch the landscape slide by, and even lying on the car roofs. The country we were passing through was a succession of intensely cultivated fields, quaint towns whose names meant nothing to us, and innumerable crossings, each manned by a Frenchwoman as flagman.

Past midnight of the second night, and during a temporary halt of the train, we could hear the faraway rumble of the big guns, often described as distant thunder . . . it was whispered that we were near Amiens . . . home and mother had never seemed so far away until that one awesome minute. The train rolled on.

At about eleven o'clock the next morning, May 29th, after much bumping and jerking of couplings, the train finally came to a halt at a place called Noyelles. Though we did not realize it, this town was situated almost at the mouth of the much-talked-about Somme River. As we tugged our packs off the cars and fell in we must have presented a sorry spectacle of dirty, unshaven, tired and haggard men. We ate our cold lunch at the station without much enthusiasm.

Our barrack bags, which had remained invisible until then, now put in an appearance, and we were nonchalantly ordered to take from

them all our belongings we needed for the rest of the war, as there was no telling when we should see them again. Thus overburdened, we proceeded to the other side of the small town, where there was a British rest camp. Here we washed, shaved, rested, and partook of some very delicious tea—made only as the English can make it—and our first hardtack.

It was a very hot day, we were not in the best of condition, and consequently the comparatively short hike which followed this brief rest at the English camp tired us more than it should have. Our packs, with their bundles of extras, were enormous, and at that time we had not learned to roll a pack efficiently. Consequently, when we reached another British camp just outside of Nouvion, distant about five kilometres from Noyelles, we were about ready to drop.

We spent the night in the British conical tents, and it was revealed to us that we had a seven-mile hike before us on the morrow. During the night an air raid, with much flashing of guns and bursting anti-aircraft shells—but no results—took place almost immediately over our heads.

The “seven-mile hike” the next day—which, by the way, was Decoration Day, May 30th—was the worst torture we had experienced up to that time. The sun beat down on us all the time—there was no shade to speak of—and our tremendous packs were so heavy that they gave us sore feet. This was the hike which bent—but did not break—the back of one of the men at the rear of the column. This poor fellow’s back remained at an angle which made him look as if he were going to jump at any minute until we reached Oudezeele, months later, when it was finally ironed out flat again by the Medical Corps,—an inspiring sight. On the march Sir Douglas Haig’s automobile passed us, halted, and Sir Douglas himself took a look at the men who from that time on were to be a part of his own army. We were almost too tired to button up our blouses and collars, as we knew right well that he would congratulate Major Bryant anyway. We did not know whither we were bound, and according to our prejudiced estimates at least ten miles had been covered before we reached Rue, and were assigned to billets.

Rue was a good town. Major Bryant called the company together and gave us a short talk, announcing that our month of quarantine had come to an end, cautioning us to bear in mind the good name of the battalion in our future conduct, and giving us lots of other good advice.

During the first week at Rue the cost of champagne, “biftek” and chips, and all kinds of wine used up what money we had left. Many of us ran up no small accounts with the money-loving tradespeople, which were subsequently paid. A franc was so much smaller than a dollar, and could be spent so much easier, that the dollar, by its effacement, seemed also to dwindle in importance.

The company remained at Rue almost three weeks, and during that time several important occurrences took place. First, the trans-



port was organized, limbers and mules issued, and arrangements made for the permanence of the organization. Secondly, our gas masks and steel helmets were issued. Thirdly, we drew our allotment of Vickers machine guns, although we did not then know anything about them. Fourthly, we took part in the first review of the 27th Division in France. Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig and Major General O'Ryan reviewed the division on June 13th. The review will be remembered by those who participated in it chiefly by the numbers of low-flying aeroplanes which swooped down almost to the heads of the marchers.

After the review, it began to dawn upon us that we were to be brigaded with the British Army, though just how far we should go toward becoming British soldiers, or how much our viewpoints would be affected thereby, or even how long we would remain with them, it was not in our power to imagine.

Before we left Rue the barrack bags appeared once more. We revised our selection of equipment, leaving the unnecessary but still valuable personal articles in the bags. We were to see the self-same bags again after many months, but the much-valued personal articles vanished forever into the pockets of some thieves at the base ports. Whose fault it was that our property was not taken care of for us during the months of our wanderings through France was never determined, but all efforts to secure either the property or the culprits always proved futile.

We proceeded to Watiehurst, a small, anti-modern town across the Somme, on June 18th. Here we spent an enjoyable two weeks. Every day we would march to the beach of the Somme, a distance of

about six kilometres, to be instructed in the Vickers gun, to fire it, or to be practised in I. A. and elementary drill. Many an hour was spent at this spot, until after a week we could begin to tell the difference between such things as tumbler axis pins and side lever bush axis split keeper pins, and remember to screw down the head of the "milled 'ead 'andles" before we chucked the gun around. Fusee springs and cannellure packing ceased to be mysteries to us. All the instruction was given under the supervision of Lance-Corporal Taylor of the British Machine Gun Corps. Our new rolling kitchen followed us each day, and lunch was served at the range, the limbers carrying the guns back to Watiehurst for us each afternoon. At the English rest camp near the range the battalion baseball team easily gained a victory over a team from the 106th Infantry. Sunday visits to Cayeux, a town of some size on the English Channel, for a bath or a swim, became very popular. This was made possible by the results of an informal reception held in his billet by Lieutenant Badenhause, entitled "He comes out smiling."

One afternoon we marched to a field near Ault, a city farther south on the coast, to receive a gas demonstration. As it did not get dark at that time until ten o'clock, we had to wait and amuse ourselves by watching several scared meadow larks. The demonstration of the gas attack was thrilling and very realistic. In front of us a short trench had been dug and equipped with Strombos horns, rattles, bells, and other gas alarms. The men gathered to witness the demonstration, numbering over two thousand, were grouped a short distance back of the trench. After an instructive speech by the British officer in command of the proceedings, and promptly at zero hour, the gas attack began. Wind and weather conditions were perfect, and the clouds of smoke with which the deadly gas was supposed to have been charged followed immediately after the explosion of bombs, hand-grenades, firecrackers, and whatever else they had that would make a noise. Vereylights were shot up, Strombos horns blew and held their thin, wailing note, while all the other instruments to create a disturbance were turned loose. Men who had easily put on their gas masks in less time than six seconds in practice seemed to take at least two minutes to get them on right and adjusted properly. The effect produced was thrilling and exciting.

After the smoke of the cloud gas attack had cleared away, we were given two other demonstrations, the first being real poisonous gas blown over to us. The second was a reproduction of a "Projector" attack. Dummy projectors, filled with water instead of liquid gas, were fired from mortars behind us, landing in front of the trench and exploding with a dull significant plop. It was long past midnight when we returned to our billets.

On July 3rd we marched to Noyelles once more, and there boarded a train headed north. It was whispered that we were bound for "the bloody road to Ypres." The train had passed through Etaples and Boulogne when night fell. After another uncomfortable



night on the train, and just as dawn was breaking on the Fourth of July, we were routed out and formed ourselves at Wizernes, but would not have been any more enlightened as to where we were had we been told it was Vladivostok. Wizernes was, however, we found later, but a short distance from St. Omer. We plodded along in the early morning, skirting St. Omer, and finally halted in Clairmarais Forest at about 9:30 A. M., when we ate breakfast.

After breakfast we moved farther into the woods, and pitched camp. Revetments had already been constructed by the English before us, and we prepared to enjoy the expected two-day stay.

The next day, after washing, which from then on became even more of a luxury than before, Lieutenant Badenhause gave us our first instructions on the proper methods of packing and unpacking limbers. The company then commenced filling all the belts, and in the midst of this work we received orders to pack up and be ready to move forward in fifteen minutes. This banished our two days' rest.

We started hiking in the late afternoon, passing through the Clairmarais Forest, and doubling back senselessly on our tracks as if we were trying to fool some pursuer. After a long hike, which was noted for its two long rests, during one of which several "par" games were commenced, we arrived at a flat open field in the vicinity of Buysscheure. The chief thing that made this otherwise ordinary field worth remembering was an interesting French aeroplane in one corner of it.

We had as good a sleep as was possible in tents pitched at night, and awoke in the rain. The weather cleared, however, and we rolled our packs and loafed around all morning, leaving just after lunch.

We reached Zermzeele late in the afternoon, after following our guide, Hank Walker, for miles. Hank was mounted, and it evidently did not seem to be "much farther" to him, but to us the hike was interminable. We pitched our pup tents in a field alongside a farm house, which deserves honorable mention for having a good pump, with the best and coldest water we had tasted till then.

Several of the more adventurous spirits tried to sneak up to the line that night on some English lorries that passed through, but they did not succeed in their undertaking.

We prepared ourselves for a big sleep. The word was passed for eight o'clock breakfast and no reveille, the next day being Sunday, but before we got to sleep the order was changed to five o'clock reveille. We were to be rushed to a certain town (Cassel) to pass through before nine o'clock, and rush we certainly did.

We spent the hot, quiet Sunday morning climbing up the long hill leading over and through Cassel, but instead of stopping there and refreshing ourselves in the alluring estaminets, we kept right on going at full tilt, over the hill, and straight on down the wide Belgian-blocked road which led to Poperinghe, and, further on, to Ypres. It surely was one hot day, and what made things worse was the fact that we did not have any idea how much longer we were going to keep

on, and the seemingly hundreds of empty lorries which passed us did not cheer us up any. It really did seem to us as if a few of them could have been commandeered to carry some of our very heavy packs, instead of blindly keeping to the traditions of the American army and hiking every place with full packs.

There was an element of excitement in this hike, however, because we could see the camouflage screens on the side of the road, and realized that at least we were nearing the front. Not only that, but, before we passed through Steenvoorde, we were split up into platoon formation. We were later on to learn why this was done.

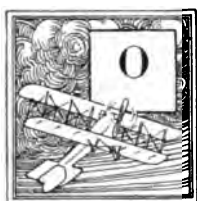
We finally stopped kicking up dust in each other's eyes at Beauvoorde Woods. Some knowing mortal had nicknamed this bunch of trees growing amid filth "Dirty Bucket Woods," and it certainly was both dirty and wet. We had to clear away most of the underbrush to pitch our pup tents, but, after that had been accomplished, we set about policing and cleaning up the woods, which presented the appearance of having been a first-class rendezvous for tramps, bottle manufacturers and wholesale canners. The numbers of unused French "75" shells lying around loose in the woods sufficed to give us a clew to the identity of our predecessors.

We expected to be moved forward again the next day, but the Tommies cheered us up by telling us that the front line was only eight kilos ahead of us, and so we realized that a long hike was out of the question, unless we wandered north and south along the front looking for a suitable opening. We were unofficially informed, however, that Beauvoorde Woods was to be our base, and we remained there from July 7th until July 16th. Captain Bousfield and the others who had preceded us to attend machine gun school rejoined us at that time.



## CHAPTER TWO

### RESERVE AND SUPPORT LINES



OUR stay at Beauvoorde Woods, however, was anything but uneventful. At about midnight of the second night, after most of the men had staggered and groped their way back to their respective tents through "bo-coo" mud, the first "Steenvoorde Express" went by. A muffled boom was all that announced its approach. This boom was much louder and yet sounded farther away than the accustomed smaller guns or the frequent anti-aircraft barrages. The muffled boom was followed by a heavy silence, which, in turn, was broken by a high-pitched, siren-like wail. We had heard lots of descriptions of the sounds of shells passing overhead, but not until that night, in the stillness of the woods, did we get a vivid idea of their terrifying effect. Luckily, there was a comforting short interval between the screech of the shell and the loud explosion which seemed to shake trees, ground, and pup tents at once.

Those who were awake either got up and hid or else snuggled closer to the ground and hoped that the next one wouldn't fall short. Those who were asleep awoke in time to be present at the bursting of the next few remembrances which Jerry threw over. Some were lucky enough to be so drugged by French beer that they slept through it all. Most of us were just conscious enough to lie flat on our backs and try to estimate, by the sound, just how far away they landed, and whether or not they were getting closer. We vaguely wondered if our identification tags were still around our necks, in case Jerry's gun had a worn barrel.

However, day dawned, as days have a habit of doing, with just the memory of the shelling, but a subway contractor should have been there to watch the way we dug "V" trenches beside each tent. Though many more "Steenvoorde Specials" came over on subsequent nights, nobody in the company went on record for using these trenches for anything but throwing empty bottles into.

By far the worst hardship during our first stay at Beauvoorde Woods was the turning in of our campaign hats in exchange for the overseas caps. We had had a suspicion all along that we were to receive these very useful but unornamental articles of clothing, but the reality was far worse than the anticipation. Before a day had passed, we had mastered all the intricacies of the overseas cap, including its ample protection from the beating rays of the sun or the broad

brim which so effectually prevented the rain from dripping down into the eyes. The only thing that comforted us when we wore the overseas caps for the first time was that everyone, even the officers, suffered alike. Soon we became accustomed to them, on the same principle as that of a Tommy, who would get lonesome if he did not remember to shine up his brass buttons each day.

So then, on July 16th, after we had spent all this time in Beauvoorde Woods without realizing that we were really in the reserve line, we were moved back again for a rest and additional training. Beyond Captain Bousfield and a few others who had been up to the line and under continuous shell-fire, we were totally ignorant of what the lines or the trenches were like. We were soon to learn.

The hike we took on July 16th, from Beauvoorde Woods to Nieurlet, a distance measuring twenty-five kilos on the map, was universally agreed to have been the most heart-breaking and corks-pulling one which we ever took. Certainly it and its sequel the next day together made the worst double hike which we experienced. July 16th, our anniversary of being mustered into Federal service in the National Guard, was a very hot day, and quite a few of the men were forced to drop out along the roadside from the combination of heat and physical strain. Those in the column thought the head of the column never would stop, or else had lost their way. When finally a halt was made it was with a groan, because no town was in sight. We rested for nearly an hour, easing our tired and blistered feet and eating supper on the roadside. We moved on once more with our heavy packs. After a time it began to get dusk, and it was nearly seven o'clock when we finally pulled into the one-horse town called Nieurlet. There were no other soldiers in the town, and in fact the town was scarcely large enough to conceal our battalion, but the town had one redeeming feature. Just outside of town the ground all around was very swampy, and the only means of travel was over bridges constructed of duck-boards. There was one small creek, however, which someone managed to discover, and there the company went, almost in a body. The water in the creek was not clean, but it was wet and cool, and that was all that was desired. There was a spring-board (evidently built by the British) from which to dive, and the terrors of the long hike were soon forgotten.

But the town's one redeeming feature was, after all, compensated by millions of mosquitoes which seemed to live, when we were not there, on the creek. When we were there, they lived on us. The company, with the exception of the transport, was billeted in a large two-story barn, which was cool, dry and fairly comfortable, if such a condition be possible with myriads of mosquitoes biting at every exposed place. The continual humming and buzzing of these insects would have been enough to keep us awake, ordinarily, but the night of July 16th was no ordinary night.

Shortly after midnight the humming of the mosquitoes gave way to a more distinct humming—the droning, rising-and-falling sound of

## NIEURLET

I've seen my share of action, yes, it has its own attraction,  
And I've hiked the roads of France both night and day.  
But to me the meanest feeling—oh, it sets my brain  
a-reeling—

Was when Jerry dropped his bombs on Nieurlet.

The line is often thrilling, with its shelling and its killing,  
And the gruesome sights one often has to see—  
But when you're in a billet sleeping, and through the sky  
he comes a-creeping—  
Say, believe me, Bud! That's not the place for me!

The "archies" started bumping, and the bombs commenced  
a-crumping,  
All we could do was lie there on the floor.  
We could hear his engine humming—then we thought our  
time was coming—  
General Sherman had the dope describing war!

They say the war is finished, but my wish is undiminished,  
I want to meet that Hun some future day!  
For his bombing raid succeeded—yes, he hit some chaps we  
needed,

On that moonlight summer's night in Nieurlet.

—CORP. YORK, A. E. F.

a Boche aeroplane. That he was bound our way there remained no doubt, and during the few terrifying moments when he could plainly be heard hovering a few hundred feet in the air above our unprotected heads he seemed to be toying with us as a cat does a mouse which she knows she has in her power. No anti-aircraft guns were in the neighborhood, and those who finally did arrive on the scene were too late to keep the Hun at a sufficient height to run a chance of missing his mark.

He dropped two bombs—"small" bombs, as one man in all seriousness referred to them, one narrowly missing the battalion transport, and the other landing just outside of the barn wherein D Company was billeted. The bombs came whistling down through the air, landing with a thud, and burying themselves into the ground, which shook so with the force of their landing that you could almost feel and hear the bombs squirming their way down into the ground. Then all was painfully quiet for the short space of perhaps one-fifth of a second, during which time, you may be sure, we had no difficulty in holding our breaths in expectancy. And then it happened—a loud, crunching crash—the bombs exploded almost at the same time—which lifted us clear of the floor on which we were sleeping, and which sounded so near by that we were sure our own building must be the one hit.

Followed silence, interrupted by the sound of falling tiles off our roof. French civilian women and children began to scream hysterically and to run about. The civilians left town as quickly as they could, fearing another attack, but returned after the danger was over. Reports came in that one man had been killed and seventeen wounded in D Company. Some stir was aroused by a school teacher who displayed some lights at the windows of his schoolhouse across the street, on the pretext of examining his glass to see if it was still intact. He was ordered to keep his lights out, and to that end a guard was put on for the remainder of the night.

Some two hours later a heavy thunderstorm fell, completely drenching the hapless men of D Company, whose house had been splintered from under them, so that, when morning came, they presented a sorry spectacle indeed. The Nieurlet air raid was the finest exhibition of German spy work that we witnessed, for we had only been in the town for five hours when the raid occurred, and previously the town had never been occupied by troops. Then, too, the orders of the evening before had been changed at the last moment, so that we could stop at Nieurlet instead of moving on farther, as had been planned. So that, unless there was some mode of prearranged signal, Jerry could not have known what town, and especially what buildings, to aim for.

We were to start hiking again the next morning at eleven o'clock, and before that time some of us managed to get in another swim. If anything, this day was hotter than the one before, in which we had hiked twenty-five kilometres. We had no idea how far we were to go,

nor in what direction. D Company, on account of its misfortune, was transported to the destination in lorries, and the hike was so stiff that some of us even began to wish that we had been bombarded, if for that reason we would have been privileged to ride. And then, we argued with ourselves, if it were so easy to obtain a few lorries for D Company, why not obtain a few more and transport the whole battalion? But, of course, one must not expect a man to look at things reasonably and with an unbiased viewpoint when he is trudging along fifty minutes without a break, with a heavy pack which burns in several unthought-of places, with feet that have large blisters all broken open on them, and unable to take off and carry his blouse without violation of orders. And then there was the consoling thought that for every step we took in the direction we were traveling we would have to retrace it in our next trip to the front, which could not be farther off than a week.

As a matter of fact, it was just a week. We arrived at Quelmes on the afternoon of July 17th, and left there again to go forward July 24th. Quelmes was a dirty town, as were most of the towns we were billeted in. For billets in Quelmes we had several small barns, which, after sleeping in them one night, made palaces out of pup tents. Those whom the smell did not affect were subsequently driven out of the barns by the rats. Every morning we would march to a machine gun range near Lumbres, where we had a solid week of very interesting firing, at varied ranges, including competitions and practice in actual gun drill. Near Quelmes, it will be remembered, was a still smaller town called Setques, which was kind enough to have a clear cold river running through it, across which huge trees had been conveniently felled, so that, after a dusty march to and from the range, sundown could have brought no finer celebration than a swim in such a place. The chief outstanding memories of Quelmes are: a farmhouse where a woman would cook as many eggs as you wanted, and thought nothing of selling hundreds of eggs every night; a number of aeroplane hangars which attracted a great deal of interest; and a heavy thunder shower which caught us unprepared on the Saturday before we left. The storm was interesting, as we were on the range at the time, and it came up so rapidly that, even before we could get the guns dismounted and put away, everything was drenched. Strange to say, as we marched home in the rain, with the water oozing out of our shoes, we sang all the way with a feverish energy. Seldom had we felt so happy or carefree—we were wet, we could get no wetter, so there was nothing at all to worry us.

Sunday passes were given out for St. Omer, the largest town remaining inhabited near the lines. St. Omer had a beautiful cathedral, and lots of beautiful restaurants which were evidently supported by, advertised by, and the property of "Officers Only."

July 24th found us hiking along in the cooling rain back the way we had come to Lederzeele, where we spent the night in a large barn filled with dry straw, which did not have too much odor. The next

day we moved forward once more, and finally arrived at our old stamping grounds, Beauvoorde Woods.

On this, our second appearance at Beauvoorde Woods, our opinion of the woods, we found, had changed somewhat. Instead of regarding it as merely a stopping-point in our journey to the front line, we realized that it was our base from which we would move forward in detachments. Moreover, the woods themselves were considerably cleaner, due to the fact that nobody had occupied them during our absence. We pitched our pup tents on the more open ground which had previously been used by A Company, and proceeded to make use of our knowledge of the best places in the neighborhood to get eggs, chocolate and vin blanc. We felt, more or less, that we were "home" again, and the sight of the familiar observation balloon which was moored at one edge of the woods served to increase this feeling.

Suddenly, however, one evening, at about one hour's notice, one-half the company was ordered to move forward with the guns, to occupy positions in the East Poperinghe Line, which was the support line to the front system. In the woods we had been held in reserve, and it was not until that time that we learned about the formation of the trench system of fighting which had been developed by the British during their four long years of it.

In front, and within direct fire of the enemy, was the front line system, occupied by the infantry, Lewis gunners, and machine gunners, with the light field artillery directly behind. Then, a few kilometres to the rear was the support line, which included the heavy artillery, 6-inch, 9-inch, 10-inch and 12-inch guns which were fired at long ranges, searching out the enemy's heavy artillery in similar relation to their front line system. Behind this was the third line, which was comparatively safe as far as personal safety was concerned, and in which everybody was held in reserve for immediate movement to either the support or the front lines, should either become necessary.

At Beauvoorde Woods, then, we were in the reserve, or third line. When we moved up to the East Poperinghe Line we were in the support line, out of range of the enemy with our short-range machine guns, and only able to sit still and be fired at by the enemy's guns without chance of retaliation except indirectly through the British heavy artillery. The gun positions were only used at night, and were kept camouflaged or screened from aeroplane observation during the day. At nearly all the positions there were deserted shanties to sleep in or keep dry. At one or two there were concrete "pill-boxes," which had been constructed by the "R. E.'s"—the British engineers, and one position boasted of a comfortable dug-out. Those living in the dug-out were more or less safe from shell-fire, as were those who had a pill-box to jump into should the shelling become too heavy, but the ones living in the shanties didn't know, one-half the time, whether the blinding flashes and tremendous explosions all around them were from our own guns or explosions from the Jerry



shells,—that is, until they got used to the difference in the sounds, which was not very long.

A gas guard had to be maintained at each position, as each was isolated from the other, and daylight communication between them was only made at the risk of being observed by Jerry's balloons. Then, too, each shanty was occupied by the British engineers, who would go out after dark and do their work on dugouts, saps, wires, etc., during the night and then spend their days indoors, either sleeping or else making souvenirs to carry home with them on their next leave. This was our first intimate contact with the British, and they did not lose any opportunities of entertaining us with vivid stories of the dangers of the line. In spite of these, their efforts to get our "wind up," as they said, the Tommies were very comforting, as they knew a lot of tricks of the game and we should have been a great deal more "windy" when the shelling became heavier for a few minutes than we would have if they had not treated the matter with comparative indifference. We learned then that the chief reason the Tommies were indifferent in the support line was because they were so "fed up" with four years of war that they didn't seem to really care whether this particular shanty was blown to smithereens or not. We wondered if we should ever become that calloused—and doubted it.

Our revelations as to the nature of the line, derived from our experiences of it in the East Pop. Line, were, to say the least, unusual. Instead of the horrible devastation which we had expected, we lived in blooming fields of potatoes and peas. Beyond a few shell holes—very large ones, too—there was no visible sign that a war was going on all around us. There were no guns to be seen in the daytime and the only sign of life was an occasional Tommy braving observation by walking around. It was a very easy matter to sneak out and dig up some potatoes to be fried, although that was forbidden. Each gun team was sufficient unto itself, doing its own cooking or heating the rations brought up at night.

The only annoying things about the East Pop. Line were the nights. After dark the camouflage from each gun position was cleared away and the guns kept mounted in readiness to repel any successful attack by Jerry. Each was given its own field of fire, should it become necessary, together with the proper ranges to commence firing at, so that we began to feel fairly important—until the guns opened up, and then we forgot our importance at once. The big guns on both sides seemed to save up their shells during the day and then let loose at night, their firing being based, no doubt, upon balloon and aeroplane observations gained during the day. While we had the comforting knowledge that Jerry was not considering us of enough importance to waste his big shells on us, the very fact that he was continually searching out the big guns scattered in positions all around us did not make us feel any better about it, as there was always the chance of his accidentally missing his aim and hitting us instead.

After seventy-two hours' occupation of these positions the other

half of the company was moved forward and relieved the first half for another seventy-two hours, while the first batch went back to Beauvoorde Woods and slept. The first bunch then in turn relieved the second for forty-eight hours, when the company assembled at Beauvoorde Woods again.

It was during this last forty-eight hours that the most interesting occurrences took place, consisting of a low-flying German aeroplane being chased right over one of our positions and a balloon being brought down by another plane.



## CHAPTER THREE

### FRONT LINE

*"I met with Death in his country,  
With his scythe and his hollow eye,  
Walking the roads of Belgium.  
I looked, and he passed me by.*

*Since he passed me by in Plug Street,  
In the woods of the evil name,  
I shall not now lie with the heroes,  
I shall not share their fame.*

*I shall never be as they are,  
A name in the lands of the free,  
Since I looked on Death in Flanders,  
And he did not look at me."*

—LORD DUNSANY.

ON August 2nd, 1918, at about midday, the entire company moved forward from Beauvoorde Woods, resting finally just outside of a battered village called Godewaersvelde. Late in the afternoon we were divided up by the captain into new squads, consisting of a corporal and two or three privates each, and given the numbers of the positions we were to occupy in the front line that night. In these new formations, then, and with light packs and without overcoats, we started forward, just before dark, so that, by the time we were within observation, darkness had settled in. We kept on moving forward, however, smoking our last cigarettes for the march at a point on the road decided upon by our officers, and wearing our steel helmets at all times. Never would we have been able to believe that these same tin hats which felt so large and heavy on the march could possibly seem so small and thin in the next few hours when we relied chiefly upon them to protect us against shrapnel.

We were left in no doubt whatever that we were approaching the front by the increase of the flashes of big guns all around us and the noise from each. We could easily distinguish the noises made by the German guns and our own. Then again, the increasing frequency of star shells, Vereylights, and other signals which appeared from time to time in front of us made it seem as if we should very soon land in the German lines if we kept up our present rate.

But all the thrills which we had imagined we would have in our first trip to the front line were exceeded and magnified by the reality of our first experience. There, a few hundred yards in front of us, was the center of the world. That is, almost everybody in the whole world was directly interested in and continually watching the developments of just what was before our very eyes. We felt then what an advantage it was to be just where we were, practically at the cynosure of all the eyes of the world, and actually felt sympathy with all those who could never have the thrill that was ours. Petty differences were forgotten—everything was forgotten in the magnitude of the display around us, and the realization of our own insignificance in the midst of the tremendous deadlock of which we were at last a part. We felt ourselves a part of the culmination of the weightiest plans, inventions and ideas of the brainiest men in the world. Everything which counted in life seemed to hinge upon the successful carrying through of the great war game, and we were to take our places in that game, with a supreme chance of doing things infinitely more useful to the cause of right than in our own simplicity of minds we had any right to expect.

After delays and hurried crossing of cross-roads where traffic was congested, and regulated by an M. P. stationed there, we marched over a well-remembered plank road and finally halted at a cross-roads which we were told was to be our stopping place as well as our assembly point. Here we were able to stop and relax, although there was no relaxation, as the echoes from many machine guns could plainly be heard and our own light artillery was firing right over our heads. It was by this time quite dark, but the darkness only sharpened our hearing and intensified our feelings, and we were illuminated from time to time by the rockets and star-shells which seemed to be going up right over us.

It was at this point, while waiting here, that Company C suffered its first casualties, a shell landing in the midst of a small group of men.

Waiting there was very irksome, and at the same time dangerous, as cross-roads were favorite spots for Jerry to shell, and when the guides for the different positions finally arrived we lost no time in following them. We relieved the machine gunners of the 53rd Brigade. At each gun position there was an English corporal and two Tommies, who steadied us considerably. Some of the positions had dug-outs, some had convenient saps, and others merely a sheet or two of corrugated iron over a portion of the trench. Most of the guns did night firing, using indirect harassing fire, and then mounted their guns on S. O. S. lines during the day, so that, when the signal, which was Red-over-Green-over-Yellow, or in some cases, three Reds, should go up, the guns might open up continuous fire immediately. Some of the guns might have done so in a minute or two, but others, especially after a night of firing in the mud and rain, would have taken about an hour to be ready, and so would have been of no use whatever.

Luckily, however, no S. O. S. signal went up during the six days we spent in these positions. We learned to adapt ourselves to the dis-

comforts of muddy trench life. The nights were not too cold; we had all day to sleep in if we didn't care particularly about eating. There was no reveille; there were no uniform regulations. You could do as you pleased; you didn't even have to salute officers. Nobody cared if your shoes were not cleaned or if you were not shaved; nobody cared how late you stayed up at night. It was forbidden to clean the guns without an officer's permission; the more mud you got on yourself the more you were camouflaged to resemble the trench.

So, although we did not realize it at the time, our life in the front line was far easier than army life back at the rest camps, where they had and enforced such things as reveille, taps, drills, inspections, K. P. and police details. The only things we had to worry us in the line were the Germans, and we could get mad at them openly, even when speaking to an officer.

And then there was the rum issue, which made us tingle all over and warmed us up so that we slept like rocks on the damp, chilly ground.

We were situated in that portion of the line which was just in front of Mount Kemmel, and the lines at this point had been in dispute for years. It was regarded as a quiet sector, but at that time the British feared a concentrated attack on the northern part of the line in an attempt to break through and capture the Channel ports. Luckily, several defeats suffered by the Germans in the south had led them to abandon this project, and, shortly after we had been relieved from these positions, Mount Kemmel was evacuated by them.

But the greatest hardship of the line was going out at night for the rations. The food was brought up, all sorted in bags marked for each position, and deposited at our assembly point, and one man from each position was detailed to go out from the position and run the risks of shell-fire, drowning in a shell-hole, losing his way, machine gun bullets, observation when a star-shell should go up, and getting the food soaked when he dropped flat on the ground at an explosion. This ration trip each night presented enough thrills for a lifetime, and it was a happy moment indeed when the position was finally reached safely and one realized that it would be someone else's turn the following night.

The only evening of the six that was at all out of the so-called humdrum life of the trenches, if such a life can properly be termed humdrum, was the night of August 4th. That, it will be remembered, was the fourth anniversary of the outbreak of war in 1914, and the Tommies told us there was going to be a "bit of a strafe" in celebration. There was. At about 11 P. M. it seemed as if every single gun of any calibre that had heretofore been lying quiet was given an airing, and as far as the eye could reach in back of us were continual flashes and loud, muffled reports. This continued for about half an hour—or so it seemed to us—and then they quieted down as suddenly as they had commenced. During the bombardment it seemed to us as if all the inactivity of the days in the trenches were suddenly shaken off, and we felt as if it were a Fourth of July demonstration which we were

enjoying. But our enjoyment was not to last very long, for as soon as our guns had quieted down and resumed their normal intermittent firing, the Germans had their little celebration, and all kinds of shells commenced dropping around us, the noise being just as terrific and the effect infinitely more terrifying than our bombardment. Ours had put us in such good humor, however, that we just lay low in the trenches and thumbed our noses at the poor fools who were trying to inflict casualties among our boys.

On the night of August 8th, after we had spent six days and nights in the trenches, we were relieved by the British machine gunners, and proceeded in small detachments back to Beauvoorde Woods. It was a long trip, and we were not quite sure what the orders were, or that the company headquarters—and the kitchen—would really be there or not. One thing we were entirely sure of, however, and that was that we did not want to linger once we were relieved. Our march back to the woods, by twos and threes, on lorries, in limbers and on foot, was not according to army ethics, but it was quite a relief to be able to move and to walk around with our heads erect. One platoon, obeying orders, waited on a road that was being shelled for over fifty minutes for the rest of the company, and then proceeded on its way without them. We were relieved at about eleven o'clock, but it was four in the morning, and just beginning to get light, when the last of the stragglers finally found where the company had hidden itself in the woods. Those who had stayed behind had very thoughtfully pitched enough pup-tents to house the entire company, and the next day we had a wonderful time just lolling around and going back to sleep again. And there was plenty of mail from home waiting for us, so that life was indeed worth living again.

We suffered two casualties while in the trenches. Al Schmitt was unlucky enough to sit down on some ground which had been saturated with mustard gas and suffered for many weeks from the burns. Clarence Eldert was wounded in the head when a shell landed on the machine gun he was seated near. The gun was entirely destroyed, and it was only by a miracle that he was kept from being blown to bits himself. This number of casualties was ridiculously small, considering the number of men actually engaged.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESTS

#### *From Oudezeele to Raincheval*



WE remained at Beauvoorde Woods all during the day of August 9th, and continued to rest there all the following night. The next morning, August 10th, we started for the rear once more. We were not in very good physical condition, but the officers considered it unwise to proceed back along the main road through Steenvoorde to Oudezeele, where we were bound. Instead, we skirted round Steenvoorde, doubling on our tracks, until we met the guide. He had a bicycle, and said the camp was just a little further on, so we believed him, and kept going for miles until we thought the guide never would stop.

A stop was finally made in a farmyard near Oudezeele. This farmyard was considerably more spacious than others we had seen, and the pool of water which is common in most farmyards of France was comparatively clean. Also, there was a good dry barn, with an undamaged roof and plenty of straw. As before, those who preferred to sleep out of doors pitched their pup tents alongside a reserve trench which had been constructed years before in the early period of the war. The kitchen was placed in a shelter of a large tree in the center of the yard. Amid these surroundings we spent a very happy, restful and contented two weeks of sunshine, warm weather, late evenings, and a generally lazy existence, with nothing to worry us in the slightest.

We had drawn our share of cooties from the trenches and the Tommies, so that some of the men were kept busy trying vainly to rid themselves of the things. The 27th Division show played at Oudezeele, where division headquarters had been established, and the notable playgoers in our midst made frequent trips to it. Fresh milk was purchased daily from a Frenchwoman near by, and was very fine in the coffee, and on the oatmeal in the morning. We had plenty of jam in our English rations, which attracted swarms of bees whenever we ate, so that to eat a slice of bread with jam spread on it required no little dancing ability. There were several competitions of gun drill, for speed and accuracy, and an individual company test for proficiency in I. A. (Immediate Action in remedying a stoppage when firing the gun). Several of the men got week-end passes to Dunkerque, and a few went to Calais, and had to walk all night so as to get back in time for Monday reveille. They returned telling of such wonderful

marvels as real street cars, ice cream, and beds with sheets on them. But the most noteworthy occurrence at Oudezeele was the "ironing-out" process administered to one of our number who was built so close to the ground that he appeared to walk along in search of a dropped coin. The medical corps, who officiated at the ceremony, were most heartless, and paid no heed to the screams of anguish from the writhing victim as he was pressed out flat. Their efforts, however, were justified, as from that time forth our Victor walked upright. His nerves, though, were badly shaken, and for a few succeeding nights he became subject to horrible nightmares.

When we left Oudezeele on August 22nd, it was to return to Beauvoorde Woods for nine uneventful days. This time, however, we lived in British conical tents instead of pup tents. The time was spent by most of the boys in making souvenirs, their ideas being taken from those constructed by the Tommies. It seems that a German attack had been anticipated at this time, so that we were rushed into reserve, but the attack did not materialize, so that we did not even go up to the support line this trip.

The outstanding features of this, our last stay in Beauvoorde Woods, were more drill and I. A. competitions, and a company intersquad athletic meet. Lord Salisbury cigarettes (very rare), soap, and Listerated chewing gum were obtained by the committee, and were awarded as prizes for each event. Also, there was a squad prize for the squad scoring the greatest number of points during the meet. There was some hesitation about holding the meet in the open, under possible enemy observation, but we got away with it.

The first event was a sixty-yard dash, run over a soggy field from which the wheat had just been harvested. Running on a track like that was similar to running on sand. There were fifty entries, so we had heats, semi-finals and finals. Morton Clark won the final by bare yard from Dave Gately, with Joe McIntyre third. Captain Bousfield acted as official starter, and the other officers were judges. Between the heats of the sixty-yard run was held the shot-put. "Shot put" was literally true, because the only shot we could find that would suit was half an empty 6-inch shell casing. We had no measurements so we did not know how far the shot was put, but, on the other hand we didn't know how heavy the shot was, so it did not make much difference. Then we had a running high jump, which was won in dramatic style by Harry Blythe. The running broad jump was won by Bob Sime. The last event, the squad relay race, was won by Phil Corwin's squad. Joe McIntyre's squad won the largest number of points, and so was awarded the squad prize, eight cakes of soap. Platoon honors—but no prize—went to the first platoon.

We said good-bye for good to Beauvoorde Woods on August 31st, after having camped in four different distinct spots in its dirty shade. We remained at a large field between Steenvoorde and Winnezele for four good days, during which time we were questioned about gas and its peculiarities by the division gas officer. It will never be



forgotten how surprised he was when we foolishly admitted that we had never worn our gas masks for four hours. Consequently, the very next day we were ordered to wear our gas masks from eight o'clock in the morning until noon, which we did—most of us.

It was such a wonderful day, however, and we had wasted so much of it in this fashion, that when the Captain said, before dismissing us, "I hope that everyone will remember he has had his gas mask on for four hours in case anyone should ask him," we felt like doing anything active. The inter-platoon spirit which had been fostered by the athletic meet a few days before accordingly broke out anew, and an impromptu football game was arranged between the first and second platoons, and was won by the second platoon with one touchdown. Between playing and watching the game, however, we were able to forget the terrible gas masks and the torture of wearing the plagued things for four hours without a break. The game itself clearly showed that a team which had no signals at all was not much worse off than a team which had hastily-prepared signals that wouldn't work without confusion.

On September 5th we marched to Heidebeke, Belgium, where we entrained again. On this hike there were a few opportunities to buy real milk chocolate at several of the towns we passed through, and by the time we reached Heidebeke we had all eaten our fill. This did not deter one enterprising youth, however, from buying a supply of fifty cakes of Chocolat Menier and a few cartons of American cigarettes as a proof against possible pangs of hunger. As things turned out, though, he found himself left with all the stuff on his hands, as he found that nobody wanted to buy any more chocolate.

We stayed on the train all that night, and, in the morning, before we reached our destination, the train moved along so slowly that we had lots of time to hop off and pick wild blackberries that grew alongside the roadbed. We detrained at a place called Candas, but did not know where we were from that clue. Slinging our packs, we started hiking, past a German prison camp, and on and on until we wondered where we were going even more than we had wondered where we were. This hike was notable on account of its lack of shade. At only one point, for a few hundred yards, was there any shade at all, and it was a very hot day. The poor young man who had all the chocolate did not want to throw it away, and could not give it away, as that would have necessitated carrying it, so he strapped it on to his pack, and after we finally stopped managed to get his money's worth of enjoyment out of what was left unmelted.

Our hike took us into and through a wonderful wood, free from underbrush, with such tall trees that they formed a natural arch to screen us from the glare of the sun, which had become almost more than we could stand. There was a vast majority among those present in favor of remaining in the wood for the rest of the war, but we kept right on through it and encamped in the town of Raincheval, just the other side of it. Raincheval, from the first, presented the appearance

of a dirty, one-horse and totally uninteresting town of about four or five hundred inmates, and the yard which they allotted to us to pitch our pup tents in was small and dirty as well. We remained in this yard for one long rainy week, with seldom a night passing in which at least one pup tent would be kicked down by men returning to camp after a champagne and cognac party. As it began to get cold at night then, we received orders to pack up and move camp into the aforementioned woods, where there were a number of clean bow huts, made of corrugated iron, and built by the British.

These huts were a paradise after pup tents with muddy ground, their chief advantages being that we could keep dry and have a light after dark to read or write letters, due, of course, to the opaque roof.

We had some good times in these huts during the month we remained at Raincheval. Someone discovered an excellent Expeditionary Force Canteen—run by the English—near by, and we could there buy all the extras in the line of food luxuries that we wanted. We had good dry bed-sacks to sleep on,—we were not worked too hard,—there were several families in town who would cook anything one wanted (provided he paid for it)—and the war news at that time, being that of the Allies' successful advance, was very encouraging.

Therefore, it is not surprising that we enjoyed ourselves at Raincheval. We were given to understand that our division was to be used as shock troops, and would probably soon be pushed into a vital point in the line.

While at Raincheval there was another inter-platoon football game, as well as a company game with C Company. C Company beat our company team, while the second and third platoons battled to a 0—0 score. Then, while we were here, the famous "Delinquents Club" was organized, founded and flourished. The membership and initiation fees to the club were very small. In fact, new members to the society were not even proposed by the old-timers. The chief purpose of the club was to uplift the morale of the company, and to this end the "active" members labored and labored; doing, in fact, about all the labor that would naturally fall to the lot of all the privates. All men absent from or late at reveille, be it only three steps out of the line when the Top Sergeant yelled "Fall in," were automatically elected "active" members of the club, with all privileges while in France to be withheld from them. This imposing sentence, however, was soon forgotten in the rush of more important events.

One day we were told that we were going to have manœuvres. To the average soldier very few things are more uninteresting than manœuvres, so this announcement did not cheer us up very much. But these were to be on a grand scale, as we were soon to find out. We started westward one afternoon, and hiked five hours with only ten minutes rest each hour, and at dark found ourselves at Canaples, and a long way from home. We pitched tents, however, and got a little sleep, being allowed no liberty into the town of Canaples, but being forced to remain within the confines of camp. Reveille was

very early, so that we could get a flying start, which we did. Up to noon, we had the limbers with us to carry the guns, so that all we had to carry was our packs. We moved slowly, very slowly, back in the general direction of Raincheval until after lunch, which we had on the road. It seemed that the attack was very well timed, because it began right after lunch, which gave us a chance to eat first. We advanced, with the guns, empty ammunition boxes, and our packs, from one hastily constructed gun position to another. One platoon was the base platoon, and stayed near the limbers; another platoon was more in the nature of a link between headquarters and the platoon which kept going right forward with the infantry. Those unfortunates who were in this last platoon kept moving forward, mounting and dismounting the gun, aiming at imaginary enemies with imaginary ammunition, lugging the guns over hills and roads and keeping right up with the infantry all the time, until about four in the afternoon. At that time the whole platoon was "all in," and the only thing which comforted them was the sight of a trench mortar battery doing the same thing with all their heavy paraphernalia. At four o'clock some official-looking car stopped near us, and everybody breathed a sigh of relief, and we started back. But our sighs of relief were unwarranted, because the new orders were that, as we had not kept the proper amount of liaison with the troops on our left and right, we had to go back, start again, and do it all over again. We did not take this order too seriously, as it was physically impossible, and surely enough, when we got back to where the limbers awaited us, we threw the guns on them and hiked off for Raincheval and home, stopping on the road for supper, and arriving back at camp long after dark.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE DEVASTATED COUNTRY

*From Tincourt to the Hindenburg Line*



ON September 24th, after waiting at Raincheval for over three weeks, we were ordered to get up one morning at three A. M., eat some lukewarm mucilage that had once been oatmeal, and drink some sugarless coffee, pack up, and start out. We entrained at Authieule, some distance away, early in the morning, and rode southward all day.

This train trip was the most interesting we had ever had, as, from the time we passed Villers-Bretonneux, which town marked the point at which the Germans had been stopped in their advance of the spring, the whole country was devastated, and bore the unmistakable signs of terrific fighting, such as we had heard of but until then had not seen. Scarcely a single house had a roof left intact, and there were no signs of any living thing, not even trees, except now and then a solitary Tommy or two, working on the railroad or poking about in what had been but a short while ago a hastily constructed trench. All the afternoon we rode through this interesting country, until shortly before nightfall. A blockade in the road ahead of our train delayed us for over an hour just south of Peronne, and it was dark when we finally passed through the ruins which had once been that flourishing city.

On this trip we knew our destination to be Tincourt, and a billeting officer had been sent ahead to secure billets for the battalion. After seeing the sort of country we were entering, however, we did not hope for much in the shape of comfort as far as billets were concerned, and we were right.

We disembarked (September 24th) at Tincourt, but it was after midnight before we arrived at a small woods northwest of Templeux-la-Fosse, another ruined town that we passed through on the hike. In this woods were a few "elephant-shelter" huts such as we had had in Raincheval, but these were somewhat different, having no floors, and little shelter from the wind at each end of the hut. No lights were permitted, but it was a fine night, with a full moon, so that it was easy to see while the packs were unrolled. The men curled up in their blankets for a sleep. From three o'clock on, however, it rained, and those who were not sleeping in the huts got drenched.

We managed to dry out, though, during the day which followed, and we explored the woods and the systems of trenches, barbed wire and dugouts, which had been occupied by the Germans less than a week

before. We had been expressly warned against picking anything up, as there was no telling how many concealed mines had been left in alluring spots. Our enthusiasm for souvenirs had been dampened by several stories which had drifted our way before we reached the woods, one of them, for instance, relating how two British stretcher-bearers had come across the body of a dead Jerry lying on a stretcher. They, in all good faith, decided to give the poor wretch a decent burial, and to that end picked up the stretcher. Jerry, it seems, had anticipated just that, and bits of the 'Tommies' clothing were found near the hole.

Accordingly, we were rather careful about what we stepped on or what we picked up. One "apple-knocker" even went so far as to procure about a hundred feet of wire and attach it to a Jerry belt with a bayonet attached, the bayonet being stuck into the ground. After getting a safe distance away he gave a jerk to the wire, expecting to witness a beautiful explosion. But nothing happened, and the belt and bayonet were his.

The remainder of the day was spent by most of us in erecting suitable shelters with the help of corrugated iron, in case it should rain again the coming night. It did not, however, and we enjoyed a comfortable sleep—the last one, by the way, that most of us were to enjoy for some time to come.

Then, on the morning of September 26th, we were told that the time for "big stunt" had arrived, and that we were going to go in the line to try to break through the Hun's strong positions in the famous Hindenburg Line. Shortly after breakfast the gun teams were picked, and those who were to stay behind and guard the kitchen and camp were chosen, and everybody set to work polishing up each gun, turning all the ammunition in the belts, seeing that the limbers were packed properly, and attending to all the things that a last-minute inspection of the equipment made necessary.

At this point in the proceedings, however, the morale of the company was very much shaken by a queer malady which affected seventeen of the men, all of whom got very sick inside of half an hour. The symptoms were those of ptomaine poisoning, and were so violent in many cases that a few had to be carried back to the huts on stretchers, while the rest groped their way there. Many thought they had been gassed, but Doc Tebbutt seemed to decide that the illness was due largely to a poisoned portion of the hash which had been served for breakfast that morning, due to the fact that most of the men taken sick were from the same platoon and ate together on the mess line.

This unforeseen accident necessitated a rearrangement of many of the squads, and almost all of the men who had been selected to stay behind were thereupon assigned to squads, and the kitchen and headquarters guarding was left to the sick men when they should have recovered.

The company lined up shortly after two o'clock at Tincourt Woods, therefore, and marched forward to do their part in breaking through the Hindenburg Line.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE HINDENBURG LINE "STUNT"

By CHARLES DE B. DOWNES



ARTHUR TRAIN in one of his interesting "Tutt and Mr. Tutt" short stories has the former inquire, "How much perfectly accurate testimony do you think is ever given in a court?" To which his partner replies with conviction, "None!"

Holding much of the same opinion about a good many of the tales former members of the A. E. F. seem addicted to telling, I frankly hesitate about giving written testimony of the part I played, with better and worthier men, at the breaking of the Hindenburg Line. For, after all, what I write can be little more than a loose-jointed account of my own personal impressions. And if we may consider a personal impression impartially, it is, perhaps, simply a reflection of one's state of mind at the time the impression was made.

That is about all there is to this account of an event that was both great and heroic to the men who took part in it, as well as in the history of the war. However, it may help a bit for me to confess that I kept a diary of a sort in France and, like some others, wrote several letters that the censor apparently never read. To that pocket diary and to those letters I owe what otherwise might be mistaken for a good memory. Incidentally, I have also tried very hard to keep my imagination seated upon the three-legged stool of facts, not so much from choice but in order to avoid as much raucous criticism as possible.

\* \* \* \* \*

At three o'clock in the afternoon of Thursday, September 26, 1918, the 106th Machine Gun Battalion left an impromptu camp near Tincourt and began its march to the Lines to take an active part in what is now known as one of the most momentous and decisive battles of the war—the breaking of the Hindenburg Line.

But—to speak more intimately—few of us in B Company realized at the time the vital part we were to play in the five crowded days that followed.

Looking back upon it now it seems we were either very dull-witted or very poorly informed not to realize that the success of the Allied advance—which began with Foch's brilliant attack on the Marne late in July—hinged altogether upon forcing the Germans to retire from

their strong positions on the British front between Cambrai and St. Quentin. The British and American drive at that point—as we know now—forced a German retreat on the entire front, and thus released the French in the South, who had advanced as far as possible without too boldly exposing their left wing that connected them with the British right.

We realized little of this at the time because we hadn't seen a newspaper for several weeks and few of us knew exactly where we were.

But the march to the front had enough dramatic color to satisfy the most exacting. Yet we were not interested in what might be termed war's local color, and were rather coldly indifferent to our surroundings. It was not a matter of deliberate training that enabled us to view with passive interest the ruins of towns and all the wanton debris and inevitable devastation of war. We had not in any conscious way cultivated indifference. It had grown upon us naturally and was as much a matter of physical and mental necessity to us as food and water. Without this singular indifference a man could not "carry on."

The average human mind cannot receive many shocking and violent impressions—which are naturally intensified by a vigorous imagination—without becoming somewhat blunted. So after the first few shocks of war a man's sensibilities grow calloused, and his imagination becomes a bit torpid. It is part of the law of adaptability. And so we passed among the ruins of blasted towns and disemboweled fields without interest.

However, an incident occurred which gave us a momentary thrill. The British observation balloons in that sector were pretty well forward and we were passing through the balloon zone when suddenly and without warning a Jerry plane swooped down from unseen heights and headed straight for the big balloon, firing incendiary bullets from its machine gun directly into the unprotected gas bag. Then, turning swiftly but with wonderful grace, it glided off again toward the German lines. The two observers dropped from the basket and after falling rapidly for several seconds their parachutes opened and they drifted slowly with the wind, two weird figures under white umbrellas, to the ground. The balloon, of course, started to smoke and then burst into enveloping flames and was completely destroyed. The remarkable part of it was this same thing happened to two balloons almost simultaneously and with the same result. By the time the Allied planes had started in pursuit the two Jerries were safe behind their own lines.

We continued on our way without stopping. It was a long and trying hike, and we were glad when we stopped in the cool of the evening to mess on the roadside.

After eating we resumed our march with an interval of some forty yards between platoons, as a precaution in case the road were shelled.

We passed through the artillery zone as the big guns were beginning their usual night harassing fire.

And it must have been about eight o'clock, for it was getting dark, when we finally reached a point where, at the time, it was thought inadvisable to proceed further with the limbers. So we halted and each squad unloaded its own gun equipment and the limbers were moved off the road. There seemed to be a little more excitement than the occasion warranted, because there was no heavy shelling in our immediate vicinity.

However, after some delay each man was ordered to take as much equipment as he could carry and follow along in single file, keeping the squads together as much as possible. We started off and found we had taken the wrong turn, so we sat by the side of the road and waited until somebody ascertained the direction we were supposed to go. Then we started off again up a hard, hilly, back-breaking road. Every one of us had about as much as he could carry. As an illustration I personally started with four full ammunition boxes suspended at the upper and lower end of a pick-axe handle, a petrol tin full of water and a bunch of sand bags. Everybody was loaded down and staggering. Even Lieutenant Selby, who was leading, had four boxes of ammo. Numbers 1 and 2 changed off carrying the gun and tripod alternately, and by the time we reached our destination we were all carrying something different than we had started with. To cite another instance in the squad I was in, Charley Rea had the gun, a pick and a bunch of sand bags, and I had the tripod and two boxes of ammo.

It was black night by the time we had gone half way and the whine of Jerry's shells was uncomfortably close. In the distance star shells and rockets festooned the night and the thunder of the guns was never still. At one point several gas shells landed on the road directly in front of us and the gas alarm was given. That meant everything had to be dropped on the spot and gas masks adjusted. Then we groped and stumbled and choked for breath, but managed to push on until Lieutenant Fuller tested the air and found it clear.

We had to make two trips along that road carrying equipment entirely by hand. Each way it was a good mile and a half, and to use an inelegant but vivid phrase we "sweated blood." The road was being irregularly shelled and on the second trip "Clint" Swan, Frank Lynch and several others were hit with shrapnel and had to be carried to the rear.

When we had completed the second trip, and before the gun positions had been selected, we were all crowded into a small signal headquarters trench for rest and safety. We got neither. For we were hardly settled before two "whizz-bangs" landed on the parapet of the trench, killing "Goldie" Hardgrove and George Staudenmayer, wounding several others, and jangling our nerves like broken fiddle strings. That was probably the worst moment any of us ever experienced. We were for the moment pretty nearly demoralized, every



one of us, but thanks to Lieutenant Selby's presence of mind we didn't have time to think about it. He hustled us out of the trench and we started moving our equipment further forward to a shallow, soggy trench where we set to work digging gun emplacements and arranging our positions.

We had been working for about half an hour when Lieutenant Fuller returned from Company Headquarters with a clear conception of what was to be done and with definite ideas about the way to do it. With him came one of the best of soldiers and staunchest of men—



THE CANAL DU NORD

Sergeant Miller of the ——— Battalion of the ——— Australian Division. Both the advice he gave and the example he set were of inestimable value to our efficiency and morale.

I should like to state here unqualifiedly that Lieutenants Fuller and Selby and Sergeant Miller were the three men to whom the credit is due for B Company's wonderfully efficient work under all kinds of difficulties during the Hindenburg Stunt. Sergeant (later Lieutenant) Fisher is another

who merits unstinted praise for his cool and capable bearing under fire. Of the men in B Company who deserve medals for gallantry and resource under fire Fuller and Selby head the list. I have mentioned these four men because I personally saw what they did and because they stand out more prominently in my memory for that reason.

Every man who went into the lines can recall the men who not only played the game without wincing but who also did things in a quiet way that passed officially unobserved but which were acts of downright whole-hearted heroism.

We had made good headway on our gun positions when Lieutenant Fuller arrived from Company Headquarters. And then the rain came. Softly and hesitatingly at first like a quiet mist which changed suddenly into a bleak, cold rain accompanied by a sharp, penetrating wind that lashed and stung us throughout the night.

In a short time it had covered the ground with a layer of slippery, slimy mud which made walking a matter of great difficulty. But we had to walk and we also had to carry 50-pound boxes of ammunition.

We went down the road that ran past our positions to a sunken road parallel to our trench about 200 yards distant. That sunken road was the jumping-off place for the Infantry attack the following morning. It was full of shell holes and debris and unclean things of

all description. It only continued as a sunken road for a short distance, and then rose to the level of the surrounding fields. At that point we had to detour a considerable distance to avoid crossing the line of fire of an Australian field battery that was hammering incessantly at the Hun lines. We relished that part of the activities, although the noise was deafening and the flashes of the guns absolutely blinding. But the trying part of the situation was that Jerry was trying to silence that battery and was "bumping" all over the landscape in his attempts, and we were a miserable part of that landscape and longed earnestly to be elsewhere.

We finally started back with a box of "ammo" between each two men. We carried on for a short distance and then we cracked. We were physically exhausted. The march during the day had taken some of our pep; the two trips required to bring our equipment up to the line had heavily drained our stamina; the nerve tension under the continual shelling, and the sight of some of our own friends wounded, had eaten like acid into our reserve strength; and finally, digging the emplacements, and the long walk in the dark, slipping along through the rain and mud, falling into shell holes and trying to do what at the moment we were physically incapable of doing, produced the inevitable result—we were all completely exhausted.

But it can truthfully be said of every man that night that not one wanted to quit nor even thought of doing it. Lieutenant Fuller took the responsibility on his own shoulders and ordered us to dump the "ammo" in a pile by the side of the sunken road.

There we left it and went back to our positions to finish getting ready to fire the barrage at dawn.

Just a few minutes before zero hour five of our guns were put out of action by shell fire. "Ferdie" Friedrichs was killed and every member of each crew was more or less seriously wounded.

And then the attack on the outpost positions of the great Hindenburg system commenced.

The artillery barrage opened with a deafening roar and the air was full of the shock and moan of many shells.

Just in front of our positions was a gently sloping hill. Near its crest were concealed some of the German outpost machine gun nests. Our doughboys, supported by British tanks, walked up that hill with



BELLICOURT

shells bursting all around them and throwing geysers of earth and smoking metal high into the air. They walked forward slowly and methodically, wasting neither breath nor steps, mounted the hill and took all their objectives and a little more, despite a murderous machine gun fire that checked them at the summit.

The tanks were handicapped by the mud and only a few reached the top of the hill. Several were put out of action and burst into flames as they rolled backward down the hill, but the doughboys kept going.

After a while the wounded and the prisoners began to come back, and the day broke clear and crisp with heavy intermittent shelling that never stopped throughout the next forty-eight hours.

The 106th Infantry that had borne the brunt of the attack that morning suffered heavy casualties and it was necessary for the British artillery to hold the captured positions for forty-eight hours with a continuous barrage.

Those forty-eight hours for us were what is officially called quiet. It was simply a case of holding on and taking everything Jerry sent over without a single chance to hit back. And we took more than our share.

During that time the artillery kept pounding incessantly, smashing and pulverizing the barbed-wire entanglements that constituted a formidable part of the Hindenburg defense system. At places those entanglements were more than six feet high and thicker than a wheat field.

All Saturday night and until five o'clock Sunday morning of the 29th the British artillery fired and pounded and never rested. Every two hours a ten-minute barrage would sweep through the German support lines and into the enemy artillery zone like a withering hurricane.

We rested and slept the best we could in reliefs and waited for the big drive to start. During the day the Germans shelled the stretcher bearers as they came back along the road past our positions.

Saturday night, September 28th, was cold and the rain came and went in squalls. Battalions of tanks moved up silently through the night toward the front. The German artillery was very active and shelled heavily all night. Shells moaned and wailed through the darkness and "krumped" with grisly precision every few minutes. Enemy planes were also busy and the deadly shattering explosion of air bombs drowned at times the roar of the guns.

Toward dawn the weather cleared and a little after five o'clock Sunday morning things quieted down. Even the Hun guns were comparatively still. There was a feeling of expectancy in the air and it seemed that the stars blinked and winked and wondered at the oppressive silence.

And then slowly and silently out of the east came the pale, cold, frosty dawn with a tinge of amber on the far horizon. We loaded our guns and waited and held our breath, for the silence was like a weight.

Slowly the hands of our watches climbed to 5:45. Then far off in our rear two big naval guns boomed and growled. It was the signal for which we waited. Suddenly the air was rent asunder as hundreds of guns for miles around burst forth into a drum fire barrage of rage and thunder, flattening the earth and all living things that were upon it in the neighborhood of the German lines.

Our machine guns spit fire and shot and sprayed the German infantry lines with thousands upon thousands of machine gun bullets. Nothing lived within the battered German trenches except those who had gone down into the tunnels deep within the bowels of the earth.

The noise was ear-splitting and the flashes of the guns tore the soft twilight of the dawn and set both sky and earth ablaze with the red fury of war.

The German S. O. S. signal flashed high into the sky—two green rockets over a red—and the big guns of the Huns roared and “krumped” in desperate effort to check the advancing American and Australian infantry.

Shells of every description—high explosive shells, overhead shrapnel, gas shells, ground shrapnel, whizz-bangs, incendiary shells and machine gun bullets—roared, shrieked, moaned and whined and crashed to atoms everywhere. Every square yard seemed the objective of some shell, and we only escaped destruction by some whim of Fate or by some mathematical inaccuracy on the part of the German artillery officers. Looking back on it now, it was positively uncanny.

But, oh, the glory and the splendor and the zest of it all! Rome never saw its equal and Napoleon never conceived of a spectacle so supremely epic. It made of Homer a dry, prosaic old babbler, and Dante's *Inferno* a placid dream.

When the barrage lifted the doughboys went over the top supported by British tanks manned by American crews. They broke the Hindenburg Line and pressed on in the striking claws of a fierce and desperate resistance. The “Aussies” followed up and crossed the canal and mounted the bridge on the other side. Yet the roar and thunder of the guns never ceased.

While the big guns in the rear moved forward the field pieces redoubled their efforts and as soon as the “heavies” started firing again the field batteries would limber up and dash forward behind six-horse teams through shot and shell to unlimber again well forward and begin hurling shell after shell into the retreating Huns. It was intensely picturesque and gripping and at times seemed almost theatrical.

The wounded and the prisoners started coming back as the Australian reserves advanced, and we were on the receiving end of a German barrage laid down to prevent the movement of reserves and supplies.

That night we held strong positions precautionary to any possible counter attack. It rained again and we spent a most miserable night. We were cold and wet and hungry, and the heavy shells continued to

“krump” and crash all around us. The night was black and full of gusty wind and rain.

Reports filtered through slowly and there was a lot of general uncertainty about the results of the day. So we stood by our guns and shivered until the clammy, gray dawn broke, when we received hot coffee and began to hear piecemeal fragments of the news.

And I think many of us thought in this strain:

*Though the thunder of battle rolls in the distance,  
The living press on through the dark and the rain.  
O war is hell, and the living suffer  
But the dead lie facing the falling rain.*

But that mood passed when we were relieved a couple of days later and treated royally back at camp. A hot meal, chocolate, candy and plenty of cigarettes, made possible by the energies of “Tod” Fisher and the Mothers’ Auxiliary fund, plus a good night’s sleep, made new men of us in the morning and we remembered only the “high spots,” the exhilaration and the zest of it all.

That’s all, perhaps, we remember now—the good times we had together in those days that seem so long ago. They were good times and hard times and times that tested men, and they held days that men of this generation will never see again.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### FRONT LINE AGAIN

*From Buire to La Sabliere Woods*



THOSE who, by reason of the so-called "hash-poisoning," had been forced to remain behind the lines in safety while all this was going on, got their first taste of how the folks at home must have felt while there was fighting. There was this advantage, however, namely, that only a comparatively short time would elapse before the worst would be known, and known definitely. There were no casualty lists to pick up in the morning, to be sure, yet nevertheless there was the same uncertain helplessness that all our families and loved ones must have been experiencing during all those months that we were in danger.

Yet it seemed as if no feeling of restrained helplessness could equal that experienced by the men in the back-area when the first news of casualties among their comrades began to come back to them. And there was nothing to be done but to chafe at the restraint which kept them behind the lines, and out of reach of opportunities for retaliation on the brutes who had hurt their friends.

But one opportunity was given to be of service, and this opportunity involved one of the hardest and most unpleasant tasks in the world: that of burying one's friends. The bodies of the three men who had been killed, Ferdie Frerichs, Goldie Hardgrove and George Staudenmayer, were taken to the small cemetery at Saulcourt, and given decent Christian burial, Chaplain C. E. Towle, of the British Army, conducting the services. There they now lie, three white crosses marking their graves. Even the cemetery itself indicates the nature of the struggle between the two armies. The greater number of the graves are those of the old French families who lived in Saulcourt in times gone by. Next to them are the graves of the English dead, killed during the retreat before the tremendous advance of the Hun in the spring. Then, in their turn, come rows of German graves, which tell a silent story of a successful advance by the British over the same ground they had given. And, lastly, are more English, Canadian and Australian graves, which show the Hun must have given terrible resistance. And then there are the three graves of our boys, the only Americans in the silent, peaceful little cemetery nestling quietly near the ruins of the unhappy town.



"O. U." RAMICOURT

With this sad, but eminently satisfactory deed accomplished, the kitchen and company headquarters moved up to Villers-Faucon on September 29th, there to await the return of the company from their successful breaking of the line, and the more successful holding of that line for days afterwards. Relieved from their positions, the men, tired, haggard, dirty and careworn, returned to spend the night of October 3rd at Villers-Faucon, and hiked back to Buire the next day.

Conspicuous among the memorable deeds of the company during this trying week was the notable work of the transport, which brought the rations up to the men over roads full of shell-holes and under almost constant shell-fire from big guns. The traffic along these roads, at night, was enormous, and consequently highly congested, which fact made the work more hazardous and difficult. The success of the operations was made possible largely by the splendid work of Proctor and Bucher, who worked like the mules they drove, the former with a high fever most of the time.

Buire was almost indistinguishable as a town, except by its indication on the map. There were no houses left standing, but there were quite a few small elephant huts with dry floors in them. But the exposure of the trenches had been too much for the health of a great many of the boys, and hardly a day passed wherein a few of them

were carried off to a hospital train with the influenza or pneumonia. The enforced close proximity of the small huts made the flu spread more rapidly than it should have, so that by the time we left Buire less than forty remained in good health in the company, excluding the transport.

The only interesting things at Buire were the baths at Doingt, near by; watching the snappy but rather foolish English guard-mounting in the town; listening to the band of the 108th Infantry; and a memorial service of the 108th Infantry, given by the survivors on October 7th, in honor of those of their comrades who had fallen. At these services, it will be remembered, Colonel Jennings of the 108th Infantry made the announcement that the entire division was going back of the lines for a long rest, having done its duty.

Instead of going to the back area, however, we left Buire after dark on the evening of October 8th and marched to Villeret, a small town which had been almost within the Hindenburg Line, and was directly south of the quarry where company headquarters had been a week before. This place had no billets whatsoever, so most of us rolled up in our blankets on the ground without removing our clothes, as the night was frosty and the ground damp. It was midnight before we were settled, and there were frequent anti-aircraft barrages put up right over us, so that the fragments of shells spattered all around us. One plane, in particular, was foolish enough to get caught in the glare of a searchlight, but escaped unharmed. This was, nevertheless, a very pretty sight as we lay on the ground looking up at it, the tiny white wings resembling a moth fluttering around in the glare of an arc light on a street corner back home.

We left Villeret directly after lunch on the following day, October 9th, after most of us had tired ourselves out building shelters to spend the next night in, and started a long but interesting hike. We marched right through the Hindenburg Line, then behind our lines, marveling at its wonderful defences of wire, concrete pill-boxes and dug-outs, and noting the devastation all around us, indicating the desperate stand of a retreating enemy. We marched through Bellicourt, under which ran the celebrated underground Canal du Nord. We trudged along through Nauroy, Joncourt and Montbrehain, until darkness overtook us at Ramicourt. All along the road were strewn the bodies of the Germans who lay where they had fallen in the haste of the retreat. The numbers of German signs everywhere made us realize that the country we were then marching through had been part of Germany for over four years. We slept in the dilapidated but well-remembered railroad station at Ramicourt, after eating supper in the dark. One advantage of eating in the dark was that if you were hungry and a quick eater you could double up on the line without the mess sergeant's noticing you. But, on the other hand, in the darkness the mess sergeant really had the advantage, because he could serve anything and in small portions without having them discovered until too late.



## SAULCOURT CEMETERY

By F. S. YORK, Jr.

A picture that is burned deeply into my memory is that of three graves in a little French cemetery at Saulcourt, not far from Villers Faucon, in battle-scarred France. One rainy morning in September, 1918, I helped dig those graves. We buried three of our best boys there, and while cannons roared a few miles eastward a British Army chaplain conducted the simple service.

We stood there with uncovered heads. The rain was falling, but no one noticed that. We were thinking of home and of the mothers who were fighting the hardest battle of all. Somehow we did not pity those three brave lads. They had died at their guns in one of the greatest battles of the greatest of all wars. If death had to come, who wouldn't choose to die as they did? And as we stood there with bowed heads the words of those inspired verses came to me:

"Take up our quarrel with the foe,  
To you from falling hands we throw the torch—  
Be yours to hold it high;  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders' fields."



ESCAUFORT

The next morning was perhaps the most interesting, from the point of view of souvenirs, that many of us had had up to that time. Immediately after breakfast we wandered around among the battered German machine gun nests, inspecting the broken tank on the hill, throwing Mills bombs, finding German notebooks and pictures, and marking the progress of the fight, chiefly from the direction in which the dead Australians lay, with their arms outstretched and their fists clenched. A woman's dress was found in one of the machine gun nests, proving that Jerry had enlisted the aid of the women to help him fire his machine guns. We did not see any signs of the much-talked-of German atrocities, except in one solitary instance. While passing through Joncourt, the evening before, in one of the houses which lined the road lay the body of a woman with her throat cut, but we could only conjecture whether or not this had been suicide.

We moved forward again from Ramicourt after lunch on October 10th, and hiked as far as Premont, where we ate supper again in the dark, and pitched pup tents in a small orchard. It rained most of the night and we awoke to the joys of breaking camp, rolling our packs in the rain and starting forward again. This we did at 7:30 A. M.

We did not keep to the road, but hiked over fields to a small hollow east of Premont, sheltered from observation by a small woods, named on the map La Sabliere Woods. This hollow was to be our headquarters, even as Beauvoorde Woods had been in the northern

country, so we pitched tents again and rested that afternoon. One-half the company was chosen to go forward and occupy the trenches that night, and so they got ready to move at fifteen minutes' notice, striking their tents, and waiting, packs rolled. When the word finally came it was three in the morning, and it had rained continuously since shortly after dark, starting, it seemed, almost immediately after the tents had been struck. There were only a few tents left standing, and these were crowded to capacity by the men who wanted to rest out of the rain, but many simply lay there in the mud and rain, waiting for the order to move.

They went forward, at length, and occupied the temporary first-line trenches near Becquigny, on the morning of October 11th, remaining in the trenches all that day and firing a short barrage at 4:30 P. M. This barrage was short, but it was answered immediately by heavy shelling of overhead shrapnel from Jerry, and it seemed miraculous that no casualties resulted in the company. In fact, from this time on the company seemed to bear a charmed life, because pure dumb luck was the outstanding feature of whatever engagement the company was mixed up in. Shells would land very near, but the fragments never seemed to hit anything but the ground, trees or the trench.

The other half of the company moved forward from the hollow that afternoon and relieved the first half just after dark. The relief was not accomplished without considerable waitings and delays, due to the guide's losing his way. The trenches were at the outskirts of another small wood, the trees of which did not average more than fifteen feet in height. The company at that time was only of sufficient strength to man four guns, whereas the other companies of the battalion consisted of eight guns each. Many of the shells of the afternoon had contained mustard gas, so that at various points of the woods the concentration of gas was quite strong. Luckily, however, it was raining once more before the relief was completed, so that the danger from gas was not so great as it would have been had the ground been dry. Secure in the knowledge of the habits of mustard gas, gleaned from paying wrapt attention to the lectures of Frank Lynch and John Mulvaney, we gained the positions in safety. It was then found that, due to the firing of the barrage and also to the rain and mud, three of the four guns of the company were totally out of action, and could not have fired a shot. Four new guns were at that time on their way up, but the guide lost his way and it was only through the efforts of Herb Fischer that they were finally found, filled with water, and brought to the gun positions before day broke. There had been no occasion to use the guns during that time, however, which was fortunate, as, had there been a counter-attack, the positions must have been sacrificed.

Meanwhile, temporary company headquarters had been moved up to a house in the town of Becquigny, so that, when the first half of the company again relieved the other half the next night (October

13th), those who had been in the trenches only had to go as far back as Becquigny, and not to the hollow.

So then October 13th found half the company doing their second twenty-four-hour shift in the line, with the other half resting at Becquigny. October 13th was a wonderfully clear, sunshiny day, in direct contrast to the week preceding, in which it had rained almost every day. As a consequence the sky was dotted with aeroplanes, flying at all heights and in all sorts of formations, and with observation balloons stretching away to the left and right as far as the eye could reach. A wonderful air battle took place almost directly over our gun positions, and within easy view of company headquarters. Four German planes tried to steal over to shoot down the observation balloon just back of headquarters. A barrage was immediately put up, which was dangerous, as there were so many English planes in the vicinity. The Allied machines, however, did not appear to notice the German planes. Anti-aircraft guns opened up from hitherto concealed places all around us, but could not seem to hit the planes. The Jerries then, changing their plans, managed to separate one hapless English plane from his formation, and three of the German planes engaged him, while the fourth hovered around to give battle to any interrupting machines. All four fighting planes flew beautifully, doing nose dives, all sorts of turns, dips and spirals, firing at each other all the while. This continued for a few seconds, when suddenly the solitary British plane, crippled, circled slowly to the earth, making a safe landing between headquarters and our positions. The three German planes, apparently satisfied with their unfair work, immediately joined the other German, and escaped back over their own lines. Several of the men went to look at the plane which had been brought down, and it was found that the pilot had been shot through the head and killed instantly, while the observer, mortally wounded, had brought the machine down just before he, too, had collapsed. Inquisitive spectators were ordered away from the vicinity, however, as it was said that Jerry had a favorite habit of shelling the spots where aeroplanes landed, on the expectation of crowds collecting there.



PERONNE

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### OPEN WARFARE

#### *Through St. Souplet*



ON the night of October 13th the company was relieved from the line, and proceeded back to the hollow at La Sabliere Wood. All the next day and the following night the company rested, and the day was uneventful except for the passing through our camp of a number of whippet tanks, bound for the front.

Captain Bousfield had left the company at Buire with the flu, so that Lieutenant Badenhause was in command of what was left of the original company. On the afternoon of October 14th we received orders to be ready to move at fifteen minutes' notice, and the company was divided up into four squads, or one platoon, in command of Lieutenant Fuller. From now on, as had been the case in the Hindenburg Line stunt, the work of Lieutenant Fuller, together with that of Lieutenant Selby, cannot be given too much praise. They were with the men at all times, and their quick decisions, involving as they did all our lives, were such as to steady the men and give them confidence in the success of the operations. These two, with Herb Fischer, deserve the gratitude and heartfelt appreciation of everyone in the company, and it was largely through their untiring efforts that the company was brought through from that point on with only one slight (gas) casualty.

Several of the non-com's went forward in advance of the party and marched to Escaufourt to assist in making preparations for the coming barrage. The balance of the company followed just before dark, and arrived on the scene to find a row of stakes and aiming marks all prepared for them. It only remained for us to dig "V" trenches behind each gun position, and to fill sandbags with which to steady the tripods. This was accomplished during comparative quiet, only a few shells landing on our right at regular intervals. Our gun positions were directly behind a six-foot hedge, over which we fired, and so were screened from view in front. Nevertheless, we gathered shrubbery to camouflage our positions, although that proved to be unnecessary, as our work was finished before it got light the next morning.

It rained again for a short while during our digging of the positions, just so that we should not get too lonesome or dry, but luckily cleared off again. The positions prepared, we tramped back to a barn

in Escaufourt for a brief sleep. The owner of the barn was a Frenchman who had evidently been ill-used by the Germans for four years, as he was only too glad to speak French again and was ready to give us anything we desired.

We were awakened shortly after four o'clock and given a very good breakfast, rudely cooked at the fireplace by one or two of the privates. Our shoes had had a chance to get almost dry by the fire-side, so that we might have been worse off. Zero hour for the barrage was 5:20 plus thirty seconds, and before five o'clock we were out at our positions setting up the guns and getting everything in readiness for the coming barrage. Our work consisted mainly in laying each gun according to the proper direction, which was so-and-so-many degrees to the left of our aiming marks. This was no slight job in the dark and with the consciousness that a good deal depended upon our accuracy.

At 5:20, just thirty seconds before we opened up, a battery of machine guns started their musical rattling fire on our right, and just before it came our turn the artillery tore loose behind us. The roar was so great that we could hardly distinguish Lieutenant Fuller's whistle to commence firing, but we pressed the thumb-pieces anyway, and the barrage was on.

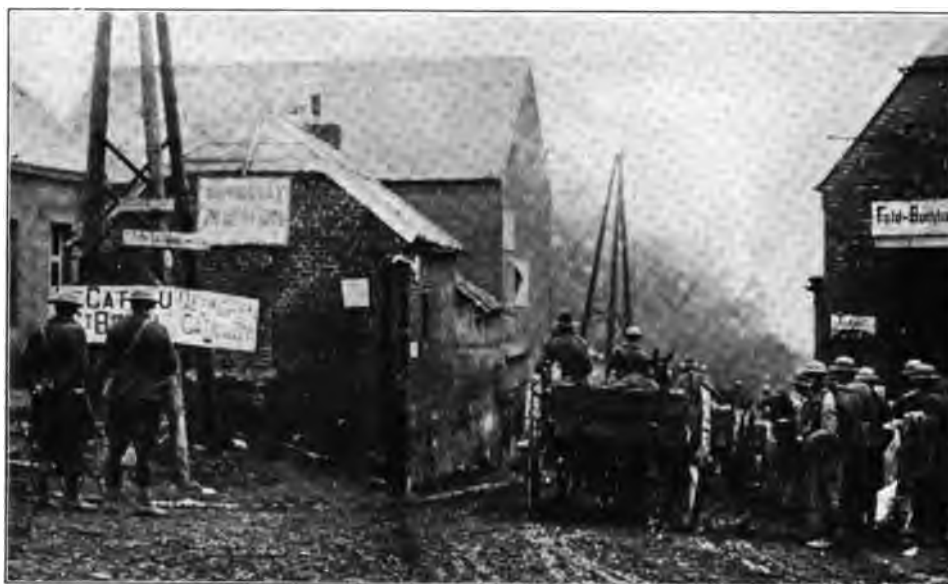
This barrage was shorter than the previous ones, but while it lasted was just as exciting. Not only that, but day was just breaking, and the mist of the dawn, added to the smoke barrage being put over by the artillery, made the air so full of cordite that we had to wear the mouth-pieces and nose-clips of our gas masks. After ten minutes of steady firing, we were ordered to move forward, being used, with our four guns, as a battery of opportunity, while the other companies of the battalion, having eight guns each, remained behind in reserve.

So we started forward along the road, the limbers with us, and our gas masks half on, proceeding as far as St. Souplet, where we halted in the shelter of a building which had once been intact. The artillery quieted down slowly while we waited there, until it got so that we could begin to distinguish the German shells from the noises made by our own guns.

Finally the officers and Herb Fischer, who had been reconnoitering ahead, returned, and we again started forward. In the middle of the town was a hastily constructed first-aid dressing station, with many captured Germans acting as stretcher-bearers.

This novelty was soon forgotten when we turned a corner of the street and beheld before us a long road descending to a small river, and the rolling country rising and falling for miles beyond. It was a beautiful view, and at any other time some of us would no doubt have enjoyed it, but, with the realization that we could see the enemy's territory came the embarrassing thought that we could also be *seen*, standing as we were in the center of the road.

Those of us who did not realize this at once were soon made to know it by the numbers of 9.2's which began landing in the buildings



THE TOP OF THE HILL IN ST. SOUPLET

on our left and right, crumpling some of them up as if they had been houses of cards. We did not hesitate, therefore. As we descended the hill at double time, Lieutenant Badenhause, running in front of the mules, noticed the shells landing in the road in front of us. Consequently, with head-work for which we shall always be grateful, for to it we owed our lives, he turned us off into a side street on the right. We followed this for a few rods, and then down the hill again on a smaller street parallel to the main road, which was, however, screened from view. Several buildings, which in the shelling had been reduced to mere piles of bricks on the road, obstructed our passage, but everybody fell to on the wheels of the limbers, and practically carried the wagons over and on once more.

We again turned to the left and soon entered upon the main road again, a short distance down the hill from where we had turned off from it, and kept on going at full speed down the hill, hopping over broken down telegraph wires, hurdling bodies of dead soldiers, and dodging shell-holes made in the road. We finally arrived at the bottom of the road, where there should have been a bridge across the river situated there, which, by the way, was the LeSelle River, from the name of which the battle was named on our discharges. As a matter of fact,

We turned off to the left, following the river, and noting a number there had been a bridge, but Jerry had blown it up in his retreat, and there were engineers at work trying to build a new one under fire. A number of infantrymen standing waist-deep in the river, leaning against the opposite bank, as if they expected something would roll over on them. They were merely bracing themselves against the bank to ob-



BEYOND THE RIVER AT ST. SOUPLÉT

tain its added protection from the shell-fire, which in our excitement of running we had begun to ignore.

About a hundred yards upstream we found a small bridge, just big enough to allow the limbers to pass over, and which the Germans, in their haste, had forgotten to destroy. We crossed this and galloped another hundred yards to the beginning of a steep hill, where we sat down and rested, with ample protection from the shells, as the hill was steeper than the trajectories of the 9.2's. As we sat there and caught our breaths again and watched the big shells whizz overhead and land, some of them on the very road over which we had just come successfully, or now and then a few shells land in a building amid a cloud of brick-red smoke and dust and scattered debris, we gave inward thanks to the quick decision of our officers, and to our lucky stars, the combination of which had brought us through the town without a scratch. Sitting there on the hill was a somewhat similar situation as that of the artillery exhibition barrage at the range near Spartanburg, but, oh, how different!

Before we advanced again a wounded doughboy of the 108th Infantry was discovered with a bad wound in his leg, around which a pistol had been twisted as a tourniquet. Our only stretcher was used to carry him to the dressing-station back in the town. Just what we



should have had to do had we needed the stretcher later on, no one knows, but luckily we did not need it, although all the indications pointed that way at the time.

After a short rest, the mules and limbers were left in the shelter of the protecting hill, and the guns were moved forward over the hill into positions of support to the advancing infantry. At the top of the hill was a lot of barbed wire, cleverly arranged to be on the skyline, and an abandoned railroad. We were told that our barrage had fallen on the railroad, and the rusty engine and cars which were there bore many bullet holes to that effect.

We remained in our positions a few hundred yards beyond the railroad while the sun came out and tried to dry us as we lay on the wet ground. While here, Jerry's artillery, with its precision but typical lack of imagination, carefully searched out our positions, landing a shell just between two of our guns, and passing on. A little more either way would have put one gun team entirely out of action.

Again we moved forward, this time stopping in the shelter of a small hedge, behind which were nests upon nests of machine guns which were total wrecks, an inspiring exhibition of the thoroughness of the work done by our doughboys. Here we ate a cold lunch, consisting chiefly of canned goulash secured from the pockets of the dead Jerries lying around. All this time, the sun being out, fast scout aeroplanes flew back and forth in front of us, shooting down at the fleeing Germans. We were unable to see the Germans, however, due to the nature of the country.

In the midst of this rest word came in that Jerry was counter-attacking on our left, so we hustled the guns on our shoulders and double-timed over to the forward slope of a hill on our left. As soon as we stopped we scattered, each gun team picking a convenient shell-hole, mounting the guns, and loading up. In less time than we could have believed we were ready, with a commanding view of the whole skyline across which the attack was coming, but, after waiting expectantly for something to shoot at, and seeing nothing more than a few skulking figures on the skyline ahead of us, which we could not be sure were not those of our men, we were told that the attack had been repulsed. Most of us, in our selfishness, really were disappointed, as, if Jerry had come over then, we should have had what the English called "a beautiful shoot," and perhaps been given an opportunity to save that portion of the line.

After waiting there a vain half-hour, we retraced our steps to a sunken road on our right, and farther forward. Sunken roads are wonderful things, and the fact that France swarms with them is undoubtedly one of the chief reasons why so many of our boys are back in the U. S. A. to-day. This particular road was deep enough to render the chances of danger from shell-fire almost negligible, except in the case of a direct hit. The day was well along when we were finally told that we were to remain in the road all night. So we dug ourselves in at the side of the road. Just as we broke ground it started raining

and did not stop all that night. We mounted the guns at the top of the roadside and stood guard over them, but were not called upon to fire a shot. Thus ended a very eventful day, October 15th, beginning as it did with a barrage, the journey through St. Souplet, and ending up in the rat-holes along the side of the nameless sunken road leading east of St. Souplet.

Just as dawn was breaking on October 16th, we were routed out of our wet holes and formed ourselves on the road, to the tune of another artillery barrage and smoke screen. In the midst of this we proceeded over the top of the roadside and in single file walked over the fields beyond, able to see no farther than the man in front, and being forced to keep our eyes on him for fear of losing him in the mist and smoke.

We reached another convenient hedge, where we halted, and ate an appetizing and highly-Fletcher-ized breakfast of cheese, dates, and raw bacon. There was no dry wood to build a fire with, even if it had been advisable, in view of the ensuing smoke. The raw bacon, particularly after a cold wet night such as we had spent, was not the most palatable thing we could think of at the time. We had some coffee grounds, also, in the rations, so that all we needed to make coffee was water, sugar, and a fire, not one of which was available.

After breakfast, we picked our teeth and proceeded forward again. While rounding the corner of the hedge we had an intimate introduction to whizz-bangs. The first one, which exploded right in the path ahead of us, seemed to be a mine, for we could hear no warning screech. Also, its report was louder than the other kinds of shells. Needless to say, we did not linger long in the vicinity, as the first was followed by a few others, all equally nerve-racking. We hiked away, machine guns on our shoulders, across the open field.

C Company was with us at this time, so that our two companies, strung out across the field, must have made a pretty target for the artillery. At any rate, the shelling became so heavy that twice during our march over we were forced to scatter and seek the shelter of the many shell-holes. When the shelling would quiet down, we would resume the march. The narrowest escape, and by far the luckiest incident for the company during the entire day, occurred just after we had reassembled from a scurry to the shell-holes. A big shell screamed its way toward us and tore a big hole in the ground just a few yards to our left, and then, instead of exploding, ricocheted off across the field. It was a dud, and that fact saved the lives of probably a dozen men in our company alone.

We reached a road running parallel to the front, which had been the infantry's objective in the attack of that morning. This road will be remembered by its twin trees placed at intervals of a hundred yards. Luckily, our officers again used their heads, and instead of staying near the road, which was afterward heavily shelled, we scattered in shell-holes on the far side of it, keeping the guns mounted at all times.

Hot rations were brought up while we remained here, arriving about three in the afternoon, when we were good and hungry. While we were taking a "shell-hole siesta" after the meal, we were treated to the sight of seven German aeroplanes, flying at a moderate height, passing right over our heads. Instead of dropping their bombs on us, or shooting at us with their machine guns, they calmly whizzed by without seeming to take the slightest notice of us. This, in a way, hurt our pride, but most of us were perfectly willing to have our pride hurt rather than have them take more interest in us.

The planes, flying in formation, flew over to where our limbers had been left, near the railroad at St. Souplet, where they then dropped their bombs, killing nine of our company mules, but, miraculously, not even scratching any of the men. Meanwhile, the Allied planes were gathering strength for an attack on these daring German planes, but while they were thinking about it the Jerries turned around and flew back over our heads and reached their lines in safety.

Our imaginations now began to get busy, and we could almost witness the planes landing, handing over the picture they must have taken of our positions, some bearded, be-spectacled German photograph-expert developing them, and then telephoning to their artillery that there was some rubbish at D-a-34:26 (or thereabouts) that needed cleaning up. So, after sufficient time had elapsed for them to have finished all that, we began to sniff the air to see if we could smell the approach of the shells which had our names and addresses engraved on them.

But they never came. An alternative position, which our officers considered moving to, was heavily shelled shortly afterward, which may have been one instance of where Jerry used his imagination—but in vain.

Companies A and D came forward at this time, and fired an afternoon barrage from positions just in front of us. While the barrage was going on we moved to new positions, where we remained all that night. It was a beautiful night, with a full moon, but frosty and cold, and the damp slits of trenches that we had to curl up in, even reinforced as they were by several Jerry overcoats and blankets, were very cold indeed. Often it became necessary to climb out of the hole and run around the position to restore the circulation.

Here was where the rum issue came in handy again, because it came around just after dark. Doubtless if it had not been there to warm us up the night would have been much colder, and running around the positions more frequent.

However, we rejoiced in the prospect of a clear and rainless day to follow such a clear night, but we were doomed to disappointment, for no sooner did it begin to get light in the east than the sky clouded over and a dull drizzle began to fall.

This was October 17th, and after another cold breakfast we moved forward—this time without a barrage—about eight hundred yards to the vicinity of Jonc de Mer Farm, which place, by the way,

was an awful sight of debris, dead animals, dead Germans, and dirt and neglect everywhere.

Here we dug in again, mounting our guns on the edges of shell-holes, with lines of fire for defensive purposes, criss-crossing one another without running the risk of hitting the other guns. Here, it is interesting to note, our company headquarters, which even flattery would not call a decent dug-out, was in front of our gun positions.

This was our last forward position. We remained where we were the rest of that day, and all that night, living between the times when our rations put in an appearance on salvaged pumpernickel and canned goulash, both heated over Jerry's "Tommy's Cookers." During the night there was some shelling, but this was nowhere nearly as objectionable as the rain, which started about nine o'clock and did not once let up until after daybreak. Most of the shell-holes had, naturally, no system of drainage, and found themselves with three or four inches of water in them when the day finally arrived, and the morning was cold and damp.

To add to the unpleasantness, just about daybreak, when Jerry's infantry was at "stand-to," in anticipation of another morning attack on our part, Jerry's artillery put over a barrage, a great many of whose shells landed all around our positions. This, almost more than any other instance, gives an example of the luck which followed the company, because not a man in the outfit was hit by the fragments which spattered all around us during the barrage.

It stopped raining shortly after breakfast-time, and we spent the day where we were, trying to get dry and at the same time keeping low and out of sight of a hostile-looking church steeple behind the German lines, which might have contained any number of German high-power field glasses.

This day, October 18th, was the longest we had ever spent, because during the afternoon the rumor was passed around that we were to be relieved that night. Curiously enough this rumor came true, and the English machine gunners took over our positions and ammunition after dark.

We marched back along the way we had come over the fields, with light hearts but heavy mud-soaked feet, and arrived at Escaufourt, where we had fired our barrage, early in the morning of October 15th, four long days before. We were assigned to billets here, and, after another rum ration, served in the dark, we turned in and slept. The kitchen joined us here, and had a good breakfast for us, and we built a big fire by means of which we managed to dry out most of our clothes.

In the early forenoon we started back once more, through Buisigny and back to the hollow at La Sabliere Woods, our old stamping ground where we had started from six days before.

We stayed at the hollow that night, and early the next morning (October 20th) struck our tents and said good-bye to it forever, although we did not realize it. It was a long hike which followed,

back to Nauroy, situated in the heart of the Hindenburg Line, which we reached just before dark, but in time to secure what billets there were. There were very few houses left standing at Nauroy, and the best billets found proved to be cellars.

We hiked again from Nauroy on October 21st back as far as Marquaix, which was near Tincourt, our first stopping place in that part of the country. We spent one rainless moonlit night at Marquaix, at which time the crosses which had been made by the mechanics at Buire to mark the three graves of the boys that were killed, and which had been taking up space in the limbers ever since, were taken to Saulcourt, where they now mark the graves of Ferdie, Goldie and George.

The next day, October 22nd, we marched to Tincourt, and entrained for the back areas. Shortly after our train had left, a delayed mine exploded under the roadbed near Roisel, and delayed the rest of the division.

We disembarked at Villers-Bretonneux, of historic fame, and in the gathering darkness arrived at Vaire, a small quiet town on the Somme canal, four kilometres from Corbie. We arrived there in the middle of the night, and proceeded to make ourselves at home in the wreck of a once-proud dwelling of a well-to-do French countryman.



## CHAPTER NINE

### THE ARMISTICE SIGNED

#### *From Vaire to Connerre*



FROM a rather disagreeable and totally unfit place to rest in, as were our first impressions, Vaire turned out to be just the opposite. The month we spent there was the happiest we had known in France. Doubtless the signing of the armistice, which took place while we were there, had a great deal to do with our enjoyment of our surroundings, but nevertheless we were allowed a freedom in Vaire which was unsurpassed by any town we stayed at. We lost no time in making ourselves as comfortable as possible. Salvaging was a comparatively easy matter, provided it was done quickly, as Vaire had been under shell-fire. It was situated just beyond the line of the great German advance in the spring. In fact, the town of Hamel, distant two kilometres to the east, had been occupied by the Huns. From their positions at Hamel the Germans had shelled Vaire, until there was no sign of intact window glass to be found. Not only that, but the buildings were sufficiently demolished to make salvaging more simple. Above all, however, the village was comparatively uninhabited by civilians. Beds, made of chicken wire and boards, began to make their appearance out of unused cellars, and chairs were eagerly gathered to one's particular room of the house. A few, being dissatisfied with the house proper, skirmished around and found empty rooms in nearby dwellings, which, with a lot of hard work, they managed to fix up very comfortably.

Passes were necessary to visit Amiens, as there were many M. P.'s lurking around with wide-open arms, as three of the outfit found to their disadvantage. Unfortunately, not one of the three men involved had ever been an inmate of Blackwell's Island or Sing Sing (as far as we know), or else we should be able to print here an unbiased comparison of French and American jugs.

Division Headquarters were stationed at Corbie, distant a nice walk along the beautiful canal of the Somme. Consequently we were able to visit the Division Show there, as well as to buy lots of necessities in the line of food.

Leaves to St. Malo and England were given out for the first time while we were at Vaire.

One of the best things about Vaire, however, was the abundance of firewood. The nights had begun to get chilly, and without windows this would have been very much more noticeable without the chances of having a good fire in each room. However, the fact that our lights could not easily have been seen from hostile aeroplanes, because of the roofs of the houses, made the evenings cozy and long. Our means of illumination was candles, but often the only light we had was that of the fire. The company didn't do a thing to a huge pile of empty English ammunition boxes near the billet. At the rate they were consumed it is perhaps lucky that we did not remain at Vaire any longer than we did, or else we should have had to use some of the houses themselves for firewood.

Drills were not too strenuous at Vaire. Often the company would go out for a hike, either through Hamel, to search among the ruins, or along the canal. We understood that there had been an elaborate schedule for our drilling, but many a "physical exercise" drill, or "judging distance" exercise, or "rough ground" work, was construed to have been included in our hike. Near Hamel was a broad level field which the English had used as a soccer field, and on it we had some fine games of soccer, chiefly inter-platoon, though there were a few games between the ancient rivals, the privates and the non-com's.

There was very little celebration at Vaire on Armistice Day. There were so few civilians in town, and even these were so stunned with the almost unbelievable news, and there was no chance of buying champagne or wine without going all the way to Amiens and lugging it back, so that most of us merely breathed a sigh of relief, asked ourselves when we were going home, and went to bed.

There had been more excitement the night the Kaiser was reported to have abdicated. The news came over the wire after dark, and Joe Hopkins found an old unused bugle and blew a snappy First Call—the first, by the way, that we had heard in months—and everybody came scurrying over to the headquarters billet, expecting to see a fire, fight, or a building caving in. But instead Stu Rose read the wonderful news to the crowd by the light of a lamp, and, after a cheer, we went back to our billets again, wondering if it were really true, and, if so, what it would mean.

The armistice came along just as we should have otherwise been on our way to the front again, and while we could not help feeling thankful, most of us would have been anxious to go up again for a look around, and to come back loaded with desirable souvenirs.

From the time the armistice was signed most of our thoughts were centered around one vital question, which was, "When do we go home?" and the rumors which floated in the company and were passed from one to another between that time and the time we finally did go home, late in February, would have, if printed, made volumes.

We remained at Vaire until November 26th, just before Thanksgiving Day, taking keen delight in keeping unshielded lights going late at night, and wondering whether we were going to parade in

England or on Fifth Avenue on Christmas Day. Also, there was a chance of our being decorated by the King, though for what was not specified.

We did parade one day, however, before leaving Vaire, on a field near Corbie, where the entire division was reviewed by Major General O'Ryan. The review was held on a Sunday, in memoriam of the division's casualties. This was the first review of the division as a unit since the time Field Marshal Haig reviewed us, early in June.

On November 26th we entrained at Corbie, taking firewood and rations along to provide against what we were told would be a terrible trip of three days. To our surprise, however, the trip turned out to be neither terrible nor long.

We alighted at Connerré, near LeMans, and on the main road from Paris to Brest. We were told that it was the Embarkation Area, and that any day we *might* receive orders to pack up and hustle for the U. S. A.





## CHAPTER TEN

### THE WAR AT CONNERRÉ



BEFORE leaving Vaire, we had turned in to the British Government all our machine guns, together with ammunition and other equipment, so that we arrived at Connerré with nothing but the empty limbers and mules. There had also been a lot of other English equipment issued to us at Vaire, such as "Jerkin, leather, one," and mufflers and sweaters, but when we were shipped south all had to be gathered together and turned in, which gave the supply sergeant something else to want to get home for.

Very possibly if we had known beforehand just how long, or even approximately how long, we were to remain at Connerré, we should have had a much better time there than we did. As things were, the most sanguine among us hoped for an early departure to the States. But, even with their hopes, the soldier-characteristic of making oneself comfortable in spite of the surroundings made many of us seek private billets, with real beds, occasionally clean sheets, and a solid roof overhead. It was an awfully difficult task to roll out in the early morning and hurry around to beat the Topper's whistle at Reveille, as there was always the chance of its looking too much like rain. The good old clock in front of the Hotel de Ville, however, saved more than a few of us from indefinite K. P. by losing about five minutes regularly each night. The food served by the kitchen was good although most of us preferred the English rations we had been in the habit of getting. Here, however, there was no longer the helpless dependence upon the cooks, unless one was broke.

Much consternation was caused one day by the issue of brand-new American Vickers machine guns, with all their incidentals, all nicely clogged up with cosmoline. It couldn't be that they would issue all that stuff to an outfit almost on its way home! The guns were not touched for some days, however, but the wooden ammunition boxes were used, but only to hold the mess-kits of the men standing around eating. Finally we were ordered to clean the guns up and get ready for drill. This done, we proceeded to lug them up the hill to a field where instruction in gun drill, fusee springs, lock springs, crank handles, rollers, etc., was to begin all over again. Luckily, however, before we could get really started, it commenced to rain, and the guns were put away and left in their cases from that time on until the time came for

turning them in, when they were again packed in cosmoline. Truly, it was a great army at that time!

But a change came. We got a new Major assigned to us—Major Nathaniel H. Egleston—and Major Egleston's ideas were not entirely in conformity with the sort of discipline we had been having. In fact, he laid down, and enforced, regular periods of drilling, training and exercise for each company in the battalion, and brave indeed was the company officer who suggested a slight relaxation for the men.

Major Egleston will remain, in name, forever associated with the two fields near Connerré which bear his name (unofficially, of course). The first, or Egleston Field No. 1, was situated on the Paris road a short distance up the hill from the town, and was a plowed field, the furrows running north and south, which made it excellent for holding Saturday morning inspections. The second and more important, Egleston Field No. 2, was about three miles away, across the railroad, and on its wide expanse we performed many wonderful double-times with full packs, both for rehearsals and for the real inspections.

The trouble seemed to be that there was to be a competitive inspection, by battalions, of the entire army corps, and some incautious person had informed the Major to that effect. Accordingly, we had to get our wet laundry from the Frenchwoman who had just finished beating it with a ping-pong racket on a rock by the river, and roll it in our packs. This was ordered so that we might have everything ready for an embarkation inspection, should a showdown become necessary. In those days, the word "embarkation" had a magical effect on our spirits, and we promptly obeyed the order. Most of the trips to Egleston Field No. 2 were failures, from the viewpoint of unrolling our packs and spreading out equipment, until we began to get careless, and leave out certain heavy and unseen parts of the pack. One day, however, we were caught by Brigadier-General Pierce, and had a showdown when we least expected it. There was much borrowing and last-minute cleaning of mess kits with the sand while the General inspected D Company, and, thanks to the help of the color guard, who were B Company men, we were able to get by.

This competitive inspection idea did not arouse much enthusiasm in the men. If they wanted to know, we argued, who the best battalion in the army was, we would have admitted it readily enough, and saved all the bother of rehearsing, saluting the trees where the General's spirit hovered, and trying to "Rest" while standing with an embarkation pack on our backs.

Our best drill periods were in the afternoons, when we usually played baseball. Or, even in the morning drill period, frequently we would be taken for a long walk through the beautiful hills around Connerré. Connerré itself was dull enough until we got used to it, and by becoming used to it we ourselves became dull. When we first arrived there the great events in the life of the average Conneranian were the arrival of the St. Calais single-track train in the afternoon, the heavy silence when the clock in the church tower stopped, the daily

funeral procession up the hill to the cemetery, or the Wednesday morning markets in the Place. We, however, managed to add a few novelties, such as the opening of the Y. M. C. A. window each day by our dear old friend, Mr. Yerkes.

Speaking of Mr. Yerkes reminds us of the Christmas entertainment. Until Christmas day we had seen no snow in France, but in the morning of that day the snow began to fall, possibly just to let us know that it was really Christmas. It snowed for an hour or so and then stopped, but this did not dim our spirits any. Preparations, under the able leadership of Dave Gately, for a wonderful celebration dinner were being made on a large scale. The bunks of the men sleeping in the large billet on the corner of the Rue de la Jatterie and the Boulevard Marceau (imposing names, were they not?) were moved up to the loft or around the corner—anywhere, in fact, to be out of the way. The committee went to work. Gus Sulzer entered the spotlight by installing electric lights in the hitherto dark and gloomy barn. Boards were obtained from somewhere and made into tables and benches large enough to seat the entire company. And, last but not least, the food was roast pork, with all its incidentals, cooked by Roger Greenhalgh, Bill Down and Fred Johnson at their best. Chief among the incidentals were some home-made apple dumpplings, made by Jack Fannon.

The bunch were nearly starved, waiting until three in the afternoon for the festivities to commence, but once they were allowed inside to see what the transformed barn looked like, everyone forgot his troubles. A number of the fellows had volunteered as waiters, so that there was not much confusion. In fact, the chief noise to be heard after the XXX Hennessey had proclaimed the dinner officially in progress was the usual noise of a gang of hungry soldiers eating army-fashion. Cigars were included on the menus which Jack Kenny laboriously printed out by hand, but which nobody ever got, so that, after Bill Down had cried "Come on, you seconds!" until they stopped coming, we settled back on the benches, loosened our belts, and asked what was next.

Of course, the next order of the day was speeches, accompanied by cheers. All the officers made speeches, from blushing Baddy to "Petite" Selby, and even Scotty York became so excited that he spouted some of his poems, and then had remorse for being so brazen. Everything was cheered, including the army, the cooks, the Top Sergeant (actually), the food, the place, and, in fact, everybody and everything, with the possible exception of the Major.

When the smoke was at its thickest in the barn, somebody decided that we ought to have a minstrel show that evening, so the barn was cleared and the rehearsal commenced.

At seven-thirty the doors were opened again and in crowded all the company and a lot of curious civilians. The cooks made themselves forever famous by mixing a huge can of wonderful punch that looked like red wine, but might have had almost everything in it.

Music was furnished by Austin Leahy and Mort Clark on a hired piano and a borrowed violin, and the minstrel show, with its improvised footlights and dirt (and dirty) floor, was a huge success. Jimmie Lynch saved the show from becoming too dull to everybody but the actors by giving out a "few prizes" whenever there came a lull in dialogues. One of the best jokes occurred when the entire cast and chorus rose in their seats and demanded more punch—and got it! The climax of the whole show was when Mr. Yerkes was presented with his souvenir.

It was a mistake to prolong the show as long as was done, as, if the performance had stopped at the end of the first act, everybody would have been happy. Instead, the second act, which was more in the nature of high-class extemporaneous vaudeville, began to be a bore, until Bugler Brown saved the show by "singing a few parodies." We called it a day.

The celebration of the coming of the new year on New Year's Eve was performed in the same general manner by the great majority of the men in the company—only they got it at different places. There was no reveille the next morning, and practically no breakfast—nor desire for any. General O'Ryan had called a reception for the officers of the division, but some of the officers remembered another previous engagement.

From the first of the year until January 21st very little of note happened to disturb our usual quiet life at Connerré. Open-air movies were shown in the public square by courtesy of the Y. M. C. A., but the nights were almost too cold and our billets too cozy to attend very many of the shows. On January 21st, however, we marched to the Belgian Camp, about ten kilometres on the road to Le Mans, and stayed in the cold, dirty barracks there overnight. It rained hard during the night, and when we awoke in the morning we found ourselves almost marooned, with each barracks surrounded by water.

After lunch we were marched to a large field near the camp, there to be reviewed by General Pershing, as a division. On the march to the field a rehearsal for the proper method of coming into line when passing the General was staged on a very wet field. Most of us had to double-time in four or five inches of water.

However, we were assigned to our portion of the field, and remained where we were put from one o'clock until four, without moving a step, and with intervals for rests. The longest standing at attention occurred when the General decorated the heroes of the division. Possibly a large part of our restlessness was due to the fact that no one in our battalion was on the decoration list. When we finally did pass in review, it was with stiff legs and necks and nerveless feet. By far the best part of the review, next to the close view of the General himself, was the playing of the massed bands of the division, which made itself heard very distinctly over the entire field.

We remained at the Belgian camp again that night, and hiked



JUST IN TIME FOR THE WHISTLE

back to Connerre at a very rapid pace the next day, in a light snow, but heavy packs.

At about this time the daily inspections for cooties, etc., began to be held, which gave us another thrill about leaving for home. And then, too, our blankets were taken away and deloused, which made some of us believe almost anything.

Early in February a Y. M. C. A. secretary by the name of Babcock, who had an appetite even greater than a certain one of our officers, took charge of our amusements, and he soon proved himself to be a live wire. He hired, renovated, and installed a canteen in a barn on the Rue de Paris, half way up the hill. Not content with that, he had several stoves installed, so that we could go in there on cold days and keep warm when coal and wood began to be scarce. He had electric lighting put in and a stage erected. Every evening the hall was crowded, for there was always some special feature going on, either movies, boxing bouts, or the like. And then, when the weather became a little more pleasant, he had a basketball court built in back of the hut, and many inter-company games were played there, much to the worry of the non-com's in charge of quarters, whose duty it was to get the men together for cootie inspection.

In fact, just as things were running smoothly for our comfort, we moved, and on the morning of February 23rd we said good-bye to all our newly-made friends among the French townspeople, paid our bills, and took the afternoon train from Connerre station.

The three months we spent at Connerre will be looked back upon

by almost all of us with a pleasant sigh. There were trials of temper and of patience; there were times when we were ready to desert; there were times when it seemed as if there could be no excuse for the hardships that we were undergoing. But most of those times, under the gloss of time, are already half-forgotten, and the ready memory merely skips them over, to think of more pleasant things, such as the trips to Paris (via Le Mans), the baseball games, the good long sleeps, or, perhaps, Cecile's back room.

Our journey to Brest was rather uneventful, if more comfortable than other train rides. We were housed in the American-made eight-wheeled freight cars, which made riding far easier, even if the allotted space per capita was the same as in the smaller French cars. And there was the thought that we were finally started on the road that led to New York to take away our weariness. Before the train pulled out the Y. M. C. A. handed us coffee, soup, cocoa, cakes, chocolates, cigarettes and all sorts of things to keep us from getting hungry enough to take a chance on Corned Willy. Most of the privates had very few cigarettes, on account of their martyrdom to pride. The non-com's, it seemed, got a share of surplus Camels, making them get ten packs while the privates only received six, since there were not enough packs left over, giving each man six, to supply everyone with another pack. Much needless hard feeling resulted, which, however, was luckily soon forgotten. Will Boatright, by the way, went on record for saying, "'Taint right! I bought six packs and turned them in, too."

We detrained at Brest on the morning of February 24th in the rain, eagerly eyeing a large transport lying at anchor in the harbor. Wild conjectures were made that we were to be marched right on board, but these were merely wild conjectures, as things turned out. We were destined to go through a lot before we stepped on board. First of all, we marched along, after seemingly endless waiting, unslung our packs, grabbed our mess kits, and had a good meal of hot stew, which made us all feel better. After the meal we again fell in and hiked up the long hill through Brest, and on and on over the muddy road, in the rain, with wet overcoats and profane thoughts, until we reached the far end of the huge camp three miles inland. We were installed in pyramidal U. S. Army tents, surrounded by duckboards and mud, but with stoves and wooden floors in them.



## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### HOME AGAIN



THE next morning, February 25, 1919, nine months to the day from the time we first entered the Pontanezen Barracks, we marched to these old Napoleonic buildings which are so well known to the majority of the A. E. F., and were rushed through a body inspection. The camp was crowded with casualties waiting to be shipped home, and in the eyes of all these men we became objects of envy because we were to be shipped home as a division before they could start.

We remained in the tents for a few days, going through various show-down inspections, getting our French money exchanged, and eating huge, well-cooked meals at Kitchen No. 14, and then we were moved to what was called the "Ready Camp." This consisted of long, clean, dry barracks, with double-tier bunks, which were very comfortable. The name "Ready Camp" had a particularly pleasing sound to our eager ears, but it was not until after we had become settled there that we learned the real interpretation of the term "Ready." Instead of meaning that the occupants were ready to be shipped home, it really signified that the inmates must be "Ready" at all times to go on fatigue, all-night kitchen police, or any other little thing the fertile brains of the S. O. S. officers could invent. Not only was this a blow, but at this new camp we had to eat at Kitchen No. 5, and the excellence of No. 14 had spoiled us for the trash served at No. 5. Consequently, after a few sample meals at No. 5, most of us put on slickers and picked on the prize-winning kitchens to have the honor of serving us. These were usually Nos. 8, 11, and 14.

While at the Ready Camp we were given another body inspection. We had all gone a full week of working in the mud without bathing, and there was great fear that the result of this second inspection would be serious enough to detain us another week or so, until we could get a bath.

But nothing lasts forever, and just as we were resigning ourselves to the fact that Division Headquarters had forgotten that the 106th Machine Gun Battalion had not sailed for Hoboken we received orders to pack up and leave. So we got up early on the morning of March 5th and marched back down the long hill, again in the rain, and took the lighter for the battleship "Missouri." When the battalion had been put on board, and the men all assigned to their respective

hammocks, the anchor was weighed and we steamed out of the harbor just as night was falling on March 5th. The shores of France vanished from sight behind us in the gathering dusk, and with mingled thoughts we said farewell to the many pleasant and unpleasant experiences we had had during the nine months of our stay there. For some the war had meant wounds and the loss of dear friends; for others the war had not left its mark, physically; and there were still others to whom their clean, healthy experience of doing a man's job had given a broader outlook on life and firm resolutions to continue doing that man's job when they got back to America. Almost all of us had become better men for the experiences we had gone through at the cost of self-denial and self-sacrifice. And all of us brought back with us many firm and lasting friendships of the kind which nothing but constant comradeship and association with a common purpose could possibly have cemented.

The day-times of our trip home on the battleship were by far the best part of the trip. At night, the close quarters of the hammocks, the foul air, relieved somewhat by the ventilators, and the lack of space to properly turn in our bunks during the night, made the approach of day rather welcome. Yet it was with a growl and a grumble that we heard the four bells strike at six o'clock. This meant "Heave out," and "Hit the deck," and hoist up the hammocks to their hooks so that the tables could be laid out for breakfast. Those who were lucky enough not to be on K. P. or other fatigue—chosen by compartments—immediately went up on deck and stayed there all day, coming down below for meals only. In fact, lounging around below decks during the day was forbidden, even on rainy days. The wonders of the battleship, the guns, turrets and engines, soon ceased to be a novelty, and books were in great demand. Those working below had more to do to occupy their time, but far worse air to work in. The chief diversion during the day was to look at the chart of the ship's progress, which was published after lunch. The sailors' band, which played three or four times a day, and the canteen kept us from getting too lonesome for something to do, but the old battleship plowed its way along at a speed which was far too slow for most of us. Toward the latter part of the trip open-air movies were shown on the quarter-deck aft in the evenings, one party being hastily interrupted by a few stray waves washing over the low deck. English drill was performed some of the clearer days on the quarter-deck, much to the delight of the sailors. These sailors, by the way, were in direct contrast to those who escorted us over on the "Antigone," and were a fine set of men. One sunshiny afternoon a series of sporting games and boxing bouts was run off under the direction of one of the warrant officers on the forward deck.

Tuesday, March 18, 1919, turned out to be a foggy and rainy morning, so foggy, indeed, that when we passed the lightship all we could see was the top of her masts and the steam which escaped every time her fog horn blew. The rain, however, cleared away just as we





entered the harbor. When we beheld the familiar sights of Barren Island, Sandy Hook, Coney Island, and the Atlantic Highlands, everyone was perched on deck so as not to miss anything. A small tug, the "J. Hooker Hammersley," chartered by the friends of our Rochester boys, was the first to come out to meet us, and she circled all around us as we lay at anchor in the harbor. Then out came the two official tugs, the "Patrol" and the "Correction," with flags flying and the band playing and the gunwales crowded with friends straining their eyes to get a glimpse of us. Many signs were held up with names printed on them. Both boats passed alongside, one on each side, and then turned when astern of us, so as to again pass alongside at a lesser distance. As they were turning, however, someone started up our engines and the two tugs were left far astern as we steamed up into the Hudson River, past the Statue of Liberty, past the Battery with its tall buildings, and up the river to Pier 1, Hoboken, where we docked.

Before we were ready to disembark, however, the Mayor's Committee of Welcome boats caught up with us, but only the "Patrol" was small enough to creep up beside us as we lay moored to the pier, while the more crowded "Correction" had to lay off outside and strain its eyes. It was a disappointment for the friends of our boys, particularly as those on the tugs had been on them since early morning, through the rain, cruising up and down the harbor trying to pick us up.

We walked across the gangplank and put our feet on United States soil again with a feeling much like that of an actor who has just made his first appearance on the stage, secured a round of applause, and has just returned home in time to light his fire and put his feet in comfortable slippers once more. All kinds of canteen workers then passed along as we stood in formation, giving out everything in the line of refreshments and postal cards. We then embarked, past a movie-camera, on a ferry which took us to Weehawken, where we were met by friends on foot. We took the train from Weehawken to Tena-fly and then marched to Camp Merritt. All along the march through the town we compared this hike to others we had made in France, almost stumbled every time we would pass pretty American girls, and wondered what we were going to have for supper, and if so, who would be picked to be on K. P. Another chief worry on our part was concerned with how soon we were going to get passes, and for how long they would be.

That evening, after we had had our supper, which, by the way, was a good one, we were deloused, and our uniforms were returned to us looking as if they would have stood more chance of fitting a jellyfish than a stalwart returned hero. The next day passes were given out. The men living up-State were given seventy-two hour passes, while the New Yorkers got twenty-four or forty-eight.

On Sunday, March 23rd, we packed up and left Camp Merritt for the Armory in Brooklyn, arriving there late in the afternoon amid a warm reception all along the line.

We paraded in Brooklyn, with overcoats and wearing steel helmets, on Monday, March 24th, and the following day, March 25th, was the day of the famous parade of the 27th Division up Fifth Avenue.

We had to report at the Armory at 5:30 A. M., but luckily, we started from there minus the hated overcoats, as it gave promise of becoming a warm day. And a fortunate thing it was that we left the overcoats behind, as some of our number would undoubtedly have been left behind lying on the Avenue. The crowds were so great, being the first parade of a division of the A. E. F. in New York, that at many places they overflowed the curbs and we were forced to march in column of squads at various points and then to double-time to catch up and avoid leaving any gaps in the parade. These double-times did away with the periods allotted to us for five-minute rests, so that, from the time we left Tenth Street we did not stop until we reached 114th, marching at attention the entire distance, with the perspiration pouring down our faces and our tin hats boring holes in our heads. The chief thing which made all of us keep going was not discipline, but the prospect of seeing our families and friends at 104th Street, in the grand-stand there. When we passed that point the ovation was truly wonderful. But, after we had passed, the parade was over as far as we were concerned. However, General O'Ryan reviewed our tottering figures at 110th Street.

The arrangements for the parade had been very well planned, as we had no trouble in getting down-town and to Brooklyn again very quickly. Arriving back at the Armory once more, tired and dusty, we were informed that those wishing to do so were invited to attend a dinner at the Metropolitan Life Insurance Building at 5:30. As it was then 5 o'clock most of us went home.

It may be safely said without fear of contradiction that the climax of the career of Company B was reached when the company passed the stand at 104th Street on March 25th. All through its existence it had been working to encompass just those ideals which our friends hailed in us. After passing that point, however, Company B practically ceased to exist, except in the minds of its members.

On March 26th, the next day, we assembled at the Armory once more and entrained for Camp Upton to await discharge. The week we spent at Upton, waiting impatiently for permission to go home, and forgotten by almost everyone, was a miserable one. Camp Merritt had been a veritable paradise—if any army camp can be termed such—having all the facilities for comfortable living, with its cafeteria, barber shop, and easy communication with New York. Upton, however, was as cheerless as Merritt had been homelike. Too far from New York to get there easily, cold, wind-swept, and with its ultra-poor mess, it brought us back to earth with a jolt. Perhaps the blizzard we had while there helped to try our patience, but certain it was that the week was a long one.

One bright spot of our life at Camp Upton was the fact that a

special pass was secured for most of us to go to Brooklyn and attend the dance given at the Elks' Club on Saturday, March 29th, by the Junior Women's Auxiliary of Company B. The dance was a huge success, and all the credit therefor was due to the girls who worked so hard to make us have a good time. They were aided in their efforts by the fact that we could have had a good time anywhere, once out of Camp Upton, but, even without this assistance, they made us enjoy ourselves to the limit. For many of them the hardest work was that of dancing with us. Supper was served, and we went to our respective homes feeling much refreshed at the break in the monotony of existence at Upton and with a renewed confidence that we had not been forgotten. However, we took the Sunday train back again the next morning.

Wednesday, April 2nd, 1919, was the big day, when we were handed, after hours and hours of waiting until the paymaster recovered our lost payrolls, our long dreamed-of discharges, with the sixty dollars bonus. After a long train ride we pulled into the Flatbush Avenue station of the Long Island Railroad—free men at last.

The war was virtually finished, and we had done our share to bring it to a successful finish, at a cost, great though it was, comparatively small. It was our good fortune to return home with nearly the same men who had left home together in the dark days of 1917. Our casualties were constantly in our thoughts, and our only regret was that they could not have been with us to enjoy the wonderful feeling of home-coming. Our comforting thought regarding the three boys who sleep in the little Saulcourt Cemetery and the others elsewhere, was, and is—that they did not die in vain.



## COMPANY STATISTICS

### COMPANY B, 106TH MACHINE GUN BATTALION, 27TH DIVISION, U. S. A.

Organized at Spartanburg, S. C. (Camp Wadsworth), October 17, 1917.

Sailed for France from Newport News, May 10, 1918, on U. S. S. "Antigone."

Arrived at Brest, France, May 25, 1918.

Left France (Brest), March 5, 1919.

Arrived New York, March 18, 1919.

Demobilized at Camp Upton, N. Y., April 2, 1919.

Time spent in France: 9 months, 8 days.

Time spent in France before the armistice: 5 months, 17 days.

#### BATTLES:

Hindenburg Line, September 29, 1918.

Jonc de Mer Ridge, October 18, 1918.

Le Selle River, October 17, 1918.

#### SKIRMISHES AND EXPEDITIONS:

Knoll—Quellemont Farm, September 27, 1918.

St. Maurice River, October 19, 1918.

East Poperinghe Line, July 9, 1918, to August 20, 1918.

Dickiebusch Sector, August 22, 1918, to August 30, 1918.

#### CASUALTIES:

##### *Killed in Action:*

Hardgrove, Goldsmith H., killed in action September 26, 1918, at 11:30 P. M., at Hindenburg Line. He was buried in the Saulcourt Cemetery, after burial service read by Chaplain C. E. Towle, B. E. F.

Staudenmayer, George J. F., killed in action September 26, 1918, at 11:30 P. M., at Hindenburg Line. Buried at Saulcourt Cemetery.

Frerichs, Ferdinand J., killed in action on the morning of September 27, 1918, at about 6 A. M., at Hindenburg Line. Buried at Saulcourt Cemetery.

##### *Died in France:*

Ford, James V., died at a British Base Hospital from pneumonia about October 18, 1918.

Weed, Frank W. E., died at a British Base Hospital from pneumonia about October 19, 1918.

Schafer, Jacob J., died at a British Base Hospital from pneumonia about October 22, 1918.

*Wounded or Gassed:*

Byrne, Thomas E., wounded at Hindenburg Line, September 27, 1918.

Collins, Herbert C., wounded at Hindenburg Line.

Desmond, Daniel A., wounded at Hindenburg Line.

Dorn, Vernon V., gassed at St. Souplet, October 20, 1918.

Eldert, Clarence W., wounded at Dickiebusch, August 4, 1918.

Falk, Samuel, wounded at Hindenburg Line.

Galvin, William F., wounded at Hindenburg Line.

Grimm, Ralph W., wounded at Hindenburg Line.

Heingartner, Walter C., wounded at Hindenburg Line.

Heipt, Robert L., wounded at Hindenburg Line.

Hengge, Frank B., wounded at Hindenburg Line.

Leahy, Raymond D., wounded at Hindenburg Line.

Liedy, Lawrence J., wounded at Hindenburg Line.

Lynch, Frank, wounded at Hindenburg Line.

McBrien, James D., wounded at Hindenburg Line.

Mooney, Robert E., wounded at Hindenburg Line.

O'Reardon, Daniel G., gassed at Hindenburg Line.

Robinson, William A., wounded at Hindenburg Line.

Schmitt, Alfred D., gassed at Dickiebusch, August 5, 1918.

Sime, Robert S., wounded at Hindenburg Line.

Swan, Clinton C., wounded at Hindenburg Line.

Tillson, Mark D., wounded at Hindenburg Line.

Yeoman, Earl W., wounded at Hindenburg Line.

*Citation:*

Fischer, Herbert G. M., appointed Second Lieutenant October 30, 1918, on account of "gallantry in action and demonstrated fitness."



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FERDINAND J. FRERICHS







GOLDSMITH H. HARDGROVE





GEORGE J. F. STAUDENMAYER





FRANK W. E. WEED

10/10/10



JACOB J. SCHAFER



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JAMES V. FORD



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**WOUNDED**

1, Mark Tillson; 2, Earl Yeoman; 3, Clint Swan; 4, Clarence Eldert; 5, Frank Hengge; 6, Bob Sime; 7, Ray Leahy; 8, Bill Robinson; 9, Bill Galvin; 10, Jake Liedy; 11, Vic Dorn; 12, Tom Byrne; 13, Dan O'Reardon; 14, Bob Heipt; 15, Frank Lynch; 16, Jimmie McBrien; 17, Danny Desmond; 18, Herb Collins; 19, Walter Heingartner; 20, Al Schmitt.



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1, Jimmie Ouchterloney; 2, Howard Proctor; 3, Phil O'Reilly; 4, Pete Barnum; 5, Charles Skoug; 6, "Eddie" Edmondson; 7, Buck Barnard; 8, Charlie Rea; 9, Sam Flatto; 10, Frank Cox; 11, Paul Selby; 12, John Evans; 13, George Bucher; 14, Ralph Lehmann; 15, Phil Corwin; 16, Ed. Fitter; 17, Starr VanDeusen; 18, "Hap" Fendler; 19, John Mulvaney; 20, Lawrence Squires; 21, Jimmie Cotter; 22, Captain Bousfield; 23, Terry Hamlin; 24, Clarence Freeman; 25, John McMahon; 26, "Tex" How; 27, Stu Rose; 28, Jack Rowe; 29, "Herc" Belyea; 30, Percival Whitaker; 31, Charlie Downes; 32, Joe Schuld; 33, Tom Prior.



1, Lieutenant McLernon; 2, "Dusty" Rhodes; 3, Mort Clark; 4, Johnnie Maher; 5, Tom Adams; 6, William Stephenson; 7, Harry Blythe; 8, Don Campbell; 9, Reg. Moxley; 10, Gunwald Olsen; 11, George German; 12, Les Baker; 13, Jack Tiefel; 14, Ambrose Furlong; 15, Gedney Ross; 16, George Pierce; 17, Austin Leahy; 18, George McKnight; 19, Bob Lauder; 20, Bill Hallahan; 21, Jack Kenny; 22, "Chowder" Keane; 23, Charles Peirce; 24, Bill Raynor; 25, Edward Terry; 26, Ted Norcross; 27, William Blamire; 28, Harry Stephenson; 29, Bob Hall; 30, Tony Ferracane; 31, "Rosie" Titcomb; 32, James McCormick; 33, Herb Fischer; 34, Fred Schlegel.





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1, Fred Johnson; 2, Tod Fisher; 3, William Faulk; 4, George McManus; 5, Gus Supanschitz; 6, Bob Soper; 7, George Snyder; 8, Jimmie Waldron; 9, "Blink" Ayres; 10, "Wat" Tyler; 11, Amos Rogers; 12, Bill Down; 13, "Red" Murphy; 14, "Hutch" Hutchison; 15, Roger Greenhalgh; 16, Jimmie Lynch; 17, Lieutenant Badenhausen; 18, Dick Mansfield; 19, Harold Bentz; 20, "Hank" Walker; 21, Joe Hopkins; 22, Constantine Makris; 23, David McAuley; 24, Joe Sheerin; 25, Morton Isaacs; 26, Charlie Metzger; 27, Jack Correll; 28, Dave Hughes; 29, Howie Retersdorf; 30, William Kaval; 31, Harry Allison; 32, Bill Seery; 33, "Rosie" Rosenblum.



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1, Anton Reiners; 2, "Dinty" Rowan; 3, Harold Rand; 4, George Herrmann; 5, Les Kane; 6, "Doc" Hart; 7, Gus Sulzer; 8, Bill Kearney; 9, Bob Sackett; 10, Joe Sullivan; 11, "Red" Braker; 12, Fred Wellinger; 13, Jack Greason; 14, Dave Gately; 15, Lieutenant Fuller; 16, John VanDeventer; 17, Lieutenant VonderLieth; 18, Julius Oppenheim; 19, Howard Case; 20, Scotty York; 21, Gus Becker; 22, Ernest Grimm; 23, "Twill" Weller-ritter; 24, Eddie Reilly; 25, Eddie Lynch; 26, Bob Spencer; 27, Earl Ransbury; 28, Ed Kimball; 29, Joe McIntyre; 30, "Hets" Hetzel; 31, Simon Steinberger; 32, Captain Alpers; 33, Arnold Hoffman.

## THE MOTHERS' AUXILIARY OF COMPANY B

**S**URELY no history of Company B could be called complete without an account of the splendid work done by the Mothers' Auxiliary and its younger counterpart, the Young People's Auxiliary. The value of the efforts of both these organizations, all of whose members were interested primarily in making our army life happier and more comfortable, was too often undervalued by the members of Company B.

It is believed that a detailed account of some of the work done by these organizations will be both interesting and instructive. First, the Mothers' Auxiliary, which held over twenty meetings, had its first meeting November 15th, 1917, shortly after the company had left for Spartanburg. Eleven mothers were present at the first meeting, which was held at the home of Mrs. Elizabeth K. Carey, 426 State Street, Brooklyn. The idea seemed such a good one, however, that on the next meeting there were forty-five mothers present. Most of the meetings after the first were held at the Armory, and a definite organization, with officers and dues, was established.

The problem of raising money to add to the happiness of the men was always the most vital topic discussed at the meetings. Surely the dues of the members alone could not provide sufficient funds for this purpose, and so various measures were suggested and adopted. Yarn was first purchased from the treasury, and the members busied themselves in knitting socks. Then, on February 12th, 1918, was held a card party, which was quite successful and yielded a substantial increase to the treasury. At almost every meeting thereafter fancy articles, cakes, and hand-made goods were auctioned off or drawn for by lot. The articles were donated by the members, and the proceeds of the lotteries went to the gift fund which had been organized by the Auxiliary. The first definite result of this fund was a plentiful supply of cigarettes and tobacco that arrived in Spartanburg for the Christmas of 1917.

By the time the company had arrived in France the amount accumulated in the treasury had reached a point where it was quite possible for them to send two hundred dollars to us. This they did, and the money was used in buying chocolate, cigarettes, and other such luxuries, which reached us just after we had come out of the Hindenburg Line, at Villers-Faucon. No one will forget the pleasure which the gift of these supplies gave, or the added enjoyment which it gave by being a direct gift from those who were vitally interested in our

welfare. A second two hundred dollars was sent to us, and for Christmas, 1918, the Auxiliary sent over two hundred and fifty dollars, which was used in buying the extras for our Christmas dinner in Connerré.

When the armistice was signed and the pressing need for contributions to our comfort had diminished, the organization worked on plans for our home-coming celebration. The blue and red battalion banners so conspicuous in the New York parade on March 25th were the result of the united planning of our Auxiliary and the other Auxiliaries of the battalion.

The meetings, which came to be held once a month, gave the mothers a good opportunity to gather and compare the letters written them from France, and these letters formed the basis by which the needs of the company were estimated. A cable of greetings was sent to Connerré on Christmas, and was posted on the company bulletin board in the back of Cecile's court, near the kitchen.

The Young People's Auxiliary, consisting of the sisters, friends, and sweethearts of the men in the company, was formed during the summer of 1918, but it was not until October of that year that they combined with the Mothers' Auxiliary. They performed their share of raising money for the company, however, holding a photo-play in the Armory.

The crowning achievements of both Auxiliaries, though, were, first, the Young People's dance at the Elks' Club in Brooklyn on March 29th, and, secondly, the banquet held by the Mothers' Auxiliary at the Hotel Bossert in Brooklyn on April 7th, 1919.

There was considerable doubt as to whether the company would be able to secure permission to go from Camp Upton to Brooklyn for the Young People's dance, as the orders were very strict that no one waiting for discharge should be permitted to leave camp. It was found to be almost as hard to get a pass for Brooklyn as it was for an M. P. to get a bottle of cognac out of an estaminet in Connerré. Somebody managed it, however, and we took the afternoon train for Brooklyn. The dance was a huge success, even with our hob-nailed shoes and hot uniforms, and was the one bright spot in the week we spent at Upton.

The banquet at the Bossert, for most of us, was the farewell gathering together of the old bunch. Even at that, the absence of the Apple-knockers from Utica and Rochester was noticeable. After the dinner, which was a sumptuous one and very well arranged, speeches were made by Captain Bousfield, Colonel Bryant, Colonel McLear, and Brigadier-General DeBevoise. Dancing followed.

On April 11th, four days after the banquet, was held the last meeting of the Mothers' Auxiliary. Although there still remains over two hundred dollars in the treasury, the organization has disbanded, as the reasons for its work have now disappeared. During the twenty months of its existence the Auxiliary was supported and maintained throughout by twenty-seven mothers. There were many others who were members of the organization for a time, but, for various reasons,

were forced to drop out and leave the work of carrying on to these few. To the Auxiliaries, both Mothers' and Young People's, and especially to the unfailing efforts of the twenty-seven loyal mothers, we of the company shall always be indebted.

The final officers were:

President, Mrs. Samuel Greason; Vice-President, Mrs. E. J. Byrne; 2nd Vice-President, Mrs. Charles Waldron; Secretary, Mrs. Elizabeth K. Carey; Treasurer, Mrs. Charles Fisher; Auditor, Mrs. Peter McIntyre. Members of the Nominating Committee were: Mrs. Anna Vonderlieth, Mrs. Mary McManus, and Mrs. Carl Heingartner.



## ENGLISH HOSPITALS

By JAMES A. LYNCH

**A**LMOST all of our wounded heroes have had the experience of a round-trip excursion through an English hospital and convalescent camp. Nor was this privilege limited to wounded men. In fact, few there were indeed who remained immune to the foreign species that flew about waiting to be devoured by some unfortunate victim. Once these "flu" germs took hold, there was nothing left to do but to *allez-tout-de-suite* on a Red Cross train to the places above named.

The stories told by these men after having completed the excursion were at first hard to believe, but as the boys continued to come back to the company, and in their turn corroborated each other's statements, the stories were finally believed.

My own experiences were perhaps rather typical. Though some undoubtedly have wilder tales of the "con" camps to relate, I am quite sure that my tour was sufficiently like all others to cause a rush of reminiscent merriment to suffuse their faces.

I purchased my ticket for the tour just after the company left Buire, which will be remembered by all as the place where the "flu" germs conducted a special drill entitled "Fall out one."

My ticket called for a stretcher on a G.S. wagon as far as the Casualty Clearing Station, where many were called out but few got up—to answer "Here" to their names. I had often craved a ride in an automobile, and my wish was granted when a beautiful Red Cross ambulance backed up to the C.C.S. to take me aboard a Red Cross train.

As I lay on my back in the train I kept wishing that I'd be lucky enough to pull at least a good-looker for a nurse. But upon arriving at the hospital and gazing into her map, it was far from taking a shot of brandy, though the effect produced was somewhat the same. I quite disagreed with the fellow who wrote "I'm in love with a beautiful nurse."

I was scarcely comfortable in the place when this Norwegian sunset came to my bedside with a thermometer in her hand. The way she placed the thermometer under my tongue made me think she had hit her finger-nail with a hammer. She then grabbed my hand to take my pulse, and the way she looked into my eyes convinced me that she came from one of those Manchester families—the kind you can't get along with.



She had no sooner departed when she was back again with a glass of "Kill-or-Cure" in one hand and in the other a card that looked like the inscription plate on a coffin. After taking one gulp of the "Kill-or-Cure," I was ready to fold my arms and tell them to light two candles behind my head.

The following morning I awoke and found I was not alone. Directly opposite there were twenty Tommies and on my side of the ward were eighteen others. Another Yank and myself made a full house.

About 9:30 in walked the doctor with a Cockney swing, and one of the Tommies who was up and about clicked his heels and shouted "Shun." This brought all the Tommy bed-patients who were sleeping at an angle of forty-five degrees to the position of a man after he had been on ice for six weeks. The doctor then started his rounds, stopping at each cot, and inquiring in a carefree manner the condition of each man's health. The replies were always discouraging, but they didn't seem to discourage the doctor any.

Each morning he would enter in this manner, causing much worry to those Tommies who were able to get out of bed but didn't want to, for they were sure their company was up in the line.

This continued for a week, when I became well enough to be up and about. I had not had on my "blues" two minutes when the Norwegian nightingale was after me to scrub the floors. I looked at her very much surprised, and loftily explained that scrubbing floors was not my line, and passed the buck to one of the Tommies.

One of the patients by the name of Paddy seemed to have the doctor topsy-turvy. His case interested me very much. Although he didn't seem to be in much pain, he always seemed to have a high temperature when the doctor was around. Being of a Judy-friendly sort of fellow, I decided to make his acquaintance. I hadn't known him five minutes before I discovered the secret of his temperature.

He had a small bag under his pillow, which he showed me with a wink, and told me to watch his actions when the doctor was due. I decided to watch him the following morning.

About the time the doctor was due to arrive he would put this bag to his mouth and take a large gulp, jumping from his bed and at the same time waving his arms around. These calisthenics finished, he would jump back in bed again and await the doctor.

"Well, Paddy, how are you to-day?"

And with a wail and a moan came the answer, "Oh, doctor, I'm sick!" placing his hands above his heart.

"Where, Paddy?" asked the Doc.

And Paddy's only answer was "Here," where his hands lay.

The doctor tested his heart, and much to the surprise and envy of the other Tommies marked his card "Heart palpitation."

After the doctor had left the ward I asked Paddy what was in the bag, and he whispered, with another wink:

"Bluestone."

The same evening two Yanks appeared on the scene with not much ambition but with a terrible thirst. Waving a couple of loose francs in the air, they inquired at the same time if some kind gent wouldn't go out and buy some champagne for them. As the word champagne was mentioned Paddy's ears pricked up, he came to one of those snappy British salutes, and said:

"I'm your man."

He had not been gone on his errand half an hour before he was back with a starboard list that reminded me of that old familiar sign on the Brooklyn Bridge, "Loaded Teams Keep to the Right." His sense of direction seemed to be all right from the hips down, but from the head to the hips he seemed to be executing Left Oblique. This caused the two Yanks to gaze in dismay at Paddy's empty arms.

Nothing would do for Paddy but to perform for the boys, but his carrying on had not been going on five minutes before the Colonel himself appeared on the scene. It was the first time the Doc had caught Paddy away from his beloved bluestone, and Paddy felt like Samson without his hair.

This was Paddy's downfall, as instead of getting a nice "Blighty" his card was marked "The line." On his way out to the con camp the following morning Paddy winked at me and said:

"I'll be back."

The next day I was sent away to the "Con" camp in a Tommy's uniform and a pair of shoes five sizes too large for me. It seemed as though every two feet I walked forward I would fall back six, and I thought I would never reach the place. Upon arriving at the "Con" camp we were all lined up and assigned to a hut. My boudoir consisted of three boards, a bed sack with some wood shavings in it (but the fellow that had it before me must have been terribly hungry one night and ate all the shavings out of it), and two blankets. Feeling very kittenish that night, and being four francs, seventy centimes short of having five francs, I purchased a reserved seat at the movies for "tuppence-hapenny" and had no trouble striking a balance after having paid for it.

Returning to the hut and feeling rather tired after such a strenuous evening, I decided to retire early. On my right lay a Tommy with one eye open, and any one standing at a distance would think he was winking. I thought I would take him into my confidence and tell him what a wonderful evening I had had, but after wasting fifty or sixty perfectly wonderful questions and getting no reply I discovered he was sound asleep and had a glass eye!

The next day I was put in charge of a digging detail and had twenty men assigned to me. Lining them up into a column of twos, I marched at their head to the tool-house, but upon arriving there I discovered the whole bunch, except the first two men, had ducked. Detail was dismissed, and back to the hut I went to continue reading some of Nicholas Carter's great works.

## THE VICKERS .303

By DANIEL G. O'REARDON

'Ave you 'eard of the modern lady  
Called Mademoiselle Mitrailleur?  
She's a twentieth-century débutante,  
With morals a trifle loose.  
Oh, 'er mother was a gatling gun,—  
Who 'er father was no one knows.  
But she's trim and petite, and light and neat,  
And she doesn't wear any clothes.  
  
She's a regular rip-snorting son of a gun,  
Of calibre .303,  
With wonderful penetration,  
And a sting like an 'ive of bees.  
It tikes eight men to keep 'er clean,  
And she's very dyspeptic at times.  
You cuss 'er like 'ell when you're out on rest,  
But it's "ma chérie" up in the lines.  
  
Oh, 'er blinkin' guts are steel clean through,  
And so is 'er bloomin' 'eart,  
And to keep 'er always running smooth,  
It tikes a lot o' art.  
She's got a stutter in 'er speech,  
That's bad fer the nerves of 'er foes.  
Their wind is up when they 'ears 'er voice,  
Lest they reap the death she sows.  
  
'Er trajectory's low; 'er velocity high,  
And she'll kill at a bleedin' mile,  
And she'll eat through a belt of ammo  
In thirty seconds' time.  
But still you can never trust 'er,  
She's fickle like most of 'er sex.  
So, if you would woo 'er, be patient,  
Or your temper she'll often vex.  
  
She'll work like a charm behind the lines,—  
She'll be sweet as a lamb at the range,—  
But up in the line, when she's needed most,  
In 'er manners there's often a change.  
When the zero hour comes whisperin' down  
And the barrage opens up with a bang,  
And you press the blinkin' trigger,  
Then surer than 'ell she'll jam.

She's last in the rear-guard action,  
 And hides like a maiden coy,  
 Till the waves of life ebb thick and fast,—  
 Then she stutters with bleedin' joy.  
 She fires where the ranks are thickest  
 In a steady leaden hail,  
 And dies like a little 'ero,  
 Ringed 'round with the hulks of the slain.

Last in retreat,—but she never retreats,—  
 First when it comes to a push.  
 Then it's out in the open you'll find 'er,  
 In shell hole, field, or bush,  
 Pushing 'er outposts boldly  
 Under the enemy's fire,  
 Shinning up trees to a nest with the bees,  
 Or lying knee-deep in the mire.

'Er 'arvests stretch 'cross northern France,  
 From the ocean to the Vosges rim,  
 On hill and plain, and shell-scarred vale,  
 Where Mars proclaimed him king.  
 Harvests of scarred crosses,—  
 Hosts of forgotten graves,—  
 Carved on the fields where they lived and loved,  
 And fighting, died to save.

She's a giant without a conscience,  
 And a vampire cruel and cold,  
 Who fights for the highest bidder,  
 And whose soul is bought and sold.  
 A 'owling, snapping she-wolf,  
 Whose fangs are cruel and long,  
 She sings like a luring siren,  
 And men die to the tune of 'er song.

'Ere's to the lads who fought 'er  
 And felt 'er murderous fire,—  
 'Ere's to the mothers who bore them,  
 To sister, sweetheart and sire,  
 'Ere's to the little devil 'erself,  
 And 'ere's to the song she sings.

\* \* \* \*

Her voice is hushed forever,  
 And we hear 'er never, never—  
 In the glorious, victorious,  
 Piping times of peace.

## A FIGHTER

There's a certain type of fighter, he's a daring, dashing  
blighter:

He never seems to know the word retreat.  
With a bayonet on his rifle, you can bet he'll never trifle—  
And as a fighting man he's got old Jerry beat.

When the British go to battle, with their usual flash and rattle,

The man I speak of often does the most,  
He's a great offensive scrapper, and as a soldier very dapper,  
And though he's talkative, you'll seldom hear him boast.

He showed his blooming starch when he stopped the Hun in  
March,

They were headed for the Port of old Calais.  
With a shout of bold defiance, and artillery for reliance,  
He stopped them in his own aggressive way.

When you look back through the ages, turning over history's  
pages,

You'll find brave deeds of men in every war.  
But no breed of man looms bigger than the rough-and-ready  
"digger,"

My hat's off to Australia. It's her son I'm speaking for!  
—CORP. YORK, A. E. F.

## VILLERET

Here was the church—these massive boulders would  
Remind us of tall spires. Not far away  
Among debris, and broken bricks of clay,  
The yawning cellars show where houses stood.  
Deep silence here—throughout the neighborhood  
Reigns quiet, ever quiet, night and day.  
The only signs of life are rats at play,  
Or tufts of grass, which peep from piles of wood.

Yet once there lived a happy people here—  
Young lovers, arm in arm, upon this ground  
Were wont to stroll. Old Frenchmen, year on year,  
Heard shouts of playful children ring around  
Each house. But now, the very atmosphere  
Is still. And desolation reigns profound.

L. S. B.

## TO CECILE

By CORP. YORK, A. E. F.

There's a vision that's dear to my battered old heart,  
It's the cause of the pain that I feel—  
There's a face in my memory that never can part,  
It's the "tres jolie" face of Cecile.

In the little café where we passed the long day,  
Our lives were as gay as could be—  
We drank to her eyes, and told beaucoup lies,  
And our only reward was "Merci."

There was love in her eyes, and her sweet little sighs  
Told us there were kisses to steal.  
My thoughts cross the sea—to the "Rue de Paree,"  
And the little café of Cecile.

## ASK ANY VOLUNTEER

Would you chance it again if the army was calling?  
Would you straighten and click with your heels?  
Would you throw down your pen and pick up your bayonet,  
To slog it again through the same foreign fields?

Would you leave the old home and the ties that still bind you,  
To answer the challenge of some foreign foe,  
And go back to the hell that you went through in Flanders—  
Just for your country—old pal, would you go?

Would you stick to your job in a haven of safety,  
If over the seas they were pulling a stunt?  
Why, you'd oil up the Vickers, old pal, in a jiffy,  
And label your letters: "I'm off to the front!"  
—SCOTTY YORK.



## OUR LETTER BOX

**D**URING the summer of 1919 several form letters were sent out to the men in Company B asking them to set down the incident or thing most worth remembering in their army experience. The replies received were varied, ranging from the highly sentimental Statue of Liberty to the general topic of the tanks going through at the Hindenburg stunt. The replies as a whole were rather discouraging in volume or originality. However, the best received are set down below, in the hope that they will recall the incident to the reader.

\* \* \*

For example, Austin Leahy recalled the time when the train bearing its human baggage was passing over the bridge at Rouen. Those sitting on the door-step of the car he was in noticed a peculiar odor in the atmosphere—one which was unrecognizable to them. Various conjectures were made, and the prevailing opinion was settled upon that there must be a glue factory in Rouen, as nothing short of a glue factory could produce such an effect. At that particular moment, from the interior of the car came Jake Liedy's tremulous voice, saying:

"Oh, my feet hurt—but they feel better with my shoes off."

\* \* \*

Buck Barnard writes as follows:

"The most amusing thing I remember occurred when we were figuring the firing data in the Vaux Andigny woods, and one of Jerry's nose-caps made a graceful and whistling entry on the scene. McIntyre scrambled behind Lieut. Badenhause with a look of absolute protection."

\* \* \*

Eddie Lynch is frank, at any rate. He writes:

"Just received your letter, as I have been up at Saratoga for the last month. There is no particular incident that I can mention, as my army life was a blank."

\* \* \*

Tod Fisher went on record for saying that the Christmas dinner in Connerre, and the entertainment afterwards were the things he remembered most vividly. "Particularly," says Tod, "the time when my dear old friend, Mr. Yerkes, got his prize."

\* \* \*

Oddly enough, no one recalled the time when this same Tod Fisher bade the men in the elephant hut at Raincheval a fond good-night, saying,

"And once more before I say good-night. . . ."  
when he was interrupted by the captain's indignant voice.

Or who can ever forget Jake Liedy telling the story of his life to eager listeners in this same hut at Raincheval? Jake is very modest about appearing in print, as may be judged from the following:

"I enjoyed being with B Company much more than with F Troop. In regards to a few lines from me on the Company History, put in A. Lincoln's speech for me. Some time if you come to Staten Island, drop me a line, and I will endeavor to take you to the Seamen's Home and other places of interest."

\* \* \*

Jimmie Ouchterloney is both generous and helpful. He recalls the "first night in Dirty Bucket Woods, when the shells were screaming over our heads, and McIntyre and Ray Leahy were running around, shouting, 'They're shellin' the woods,' while every one else was reaching for that little ol' gas mask and tin hat."

Others may remember, says Jimmie, how, during the air-raid on Nieurlet, when the bombs were falling the fastest, Jack Kenny was insisting that "They were only small bombs, and Jerry will call again with larger ones in an hour or two."



GROUP AT BAY RIDGE

Again, to quote Jimmie further, we have Gus Sulzer leaning out of a box car, greeting his henchmen, the German prisoners, with a "Wie gehts, Fritz?"

Or Jake Liedy, once more, who is perhaps too much picked upon, in his high pitched voice, spurning shot and shell, and remarking coolly,

"I'll go for the rations—this war is a joke."

\* \* \*

Possibly most of these recollections have passed into the most unused cubby-holes of our minds by this time. At any rate, no one but Scotty York was unfeeling enough to set down Victor Selig as an experience. But then, as we all know, Scotty was prejudiced in favor of his protege.

Speaking of Selig reminds us of Szczecinski trying to imbibe the proper way to execute "Squads Left" from the all-too-patient non-com's at Camp Stuart.

\* \* \*

Countless recollections will come crowding each other in our memories as a result of a few starters such as these. Who can ever forget the sight of Mulligan's stroke as he was swimming in the canal at Setques; or Edmondson, on New Year's morning, with the

French civilian clothes on, disguising his walk; or Lance-Corporal Taylor of the British Machine Gun Corps instructing on the "Firing-pin-'ole"; or Baddy blushing and pulling down his coat-tails; or oiling up the limbers for inspection; or the sergeants going to the head of the mess line; or the gendarmes at Connerré; or the time Dan O'Reardon's pistol went off at inspection at Raincheval; or Major Egleston inspecting the battalion at Connerré; or Eddie Burke shooting crap; or climbing over the fence at Bay Ridge; or, in that same connection, Moxley and Lehmann getting caught by the M. P.; or the ash-cans in the middle of the company street at Spartanburg; or Joe Riley getting his National Guard discharge at Spartanburg; or "passing the word" to fellows in the stable tent; or the "rookie" monkey drills at the armory; or even our trips to Paris?

\* \* \*

Paul Selby contributes the best one from far-away Odebolt, Iowa. He says: "The most amusing thing I remember was when Hetzel came running into the company kitchen at Vaire, with a grenade in his hand ready to explode, which he proceeded to put into Bill the Cook's pocket, together with the advice for Bill to run like hell so he wouldn't spoil the kitchen."

\* \* \*

After all, the most agonizing times are glossed over through the kindness of time, and now we only remember the amusing or the interesting ones. It is best so.



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REA, CHARLES W.	2322 Andrews Avenue, New York, N. Y.
REILLY, EDWARD J.	144 West 34th Street, New York, N. Y.
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## OUR OWN BOOK REVIEW

**"What a Young Man Should Know,"** by Clarence Eldert. 12mo., profusely illustrated. Barker's, 1920. \$1.50.

In this great work the author has spared no effort to portray the ideal life for the individual. The work is thrilling throughout, in many cases being a counterpart of the author's own experiences. Young or old, its readers will profit by its teachings. It should attain a wide sale.

**"How I Cornered the Stock Market,"** by James A. Lynch. 8vo., illustrated. Sinn & Co., 1920. \$4.60. With introduction by Joseph I. Sheerin.

By following the author's example in this magnificent work, it is easy to see how fortunes are made and lost in a moment. The scenes depicted are vivid, and the plot and counterplots are excellent. The author established his reputation in "Jap-a-lac and Its Uses," which is now in its 12th edition.

**"The Evils of Prohibition,"** in words of one syllable, by Frank Lynch. The Mac-Nolan Co., 1920. 12mo. \$.25 net.

Like Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" and "Gulliver's Travels," the author uses the simple direct speech of the proletariat in bringing home his arguments. The arguments, by the way, are the only things he brings home. Every Senator and Congressman should read this book. Other works by the same author: "The Misuse of Politics," "Mike Leonard, or The Mystery of the Crossed Fingers."

**"How I Won My Discharge,"** by Joseph T. Riley. 8vo., illustrated. William Beineman, London, 1918. \$1.80.

Theodore Roosevelt's Biography could scarcely be more straightforward. His style is faultless and the general appearance is quite the thing. The author adds charm to his book by a frontispiece containing a portrait of himself being borne in triumph on the shoulders of his fellows.

**"The Upright Life,"** by Victor E. Selig. 12mo. Christian League Publishing Co., 1920. \$2.25.

Copies of this great work are limited, and orders must be placed immediately. In the book, which contains over two hundred photographs of himself in different stages of development, the author makes quite clear the only true and upright life. Other works by the same author: "The Value of Corrugated Iron," "How I Won My Way to Fame with a Spade."

**"Songs and Parodies,"** by Bugler Brown. Gretna's, 1920. \$3.00 net.

The *New York Times* says: "This book is destined to make a great name for itself. It is positively guaranteed to cure the 'blues' and quicken the spirit." The book contains over three hundred masterpieces in the author's own handwriting.

**"The Quintessence of Short-Changing,"** by Gedney B. Ross. University Heights Lithographing Co., 1920. \$3.29. Subject to reduction.

The author is confessedly a past master at the art he practices. Only a man brooding deeply upon these shortcomings of mankind could write such a book.

**"Hygiene and Digestion,"** by Harry VonderLieth. Scrivener's, 1920. \$3.00.

Seldom has such a delicate subject been so daintily handled as by this well-known epicurean. One might almost infer that the author is entirely absorbed in his subject, so accurate is his account.

**"The Powers of Speech,"** by Henry E. Walker. Barker's, 12mo., 1920. \$1.50 prepaid.

This, the most recent work of the author of "What to Say and How to Say It," presents new possibilities to the student of foreign languages.

**"The Buckshee Top Sergeant,"** by James D. Ouchterloney, co-author with Frank R. Hutchison. New York Press Publishing Corp., 1920. 3 volumes. \$6.00.

Although the time is pretty late for successful war stories, we believe that this excellent production deserves honorable mention as containing the essence of greatness. The co-authors vie with each other in demonstrating their views on the subject presented. We do not know which to accept.

**"Souvenirs of Ancient Babylonia and Egypt,"** by Donald B. Campbell.

The author is a noted curio-collector, and has exhibited his collection many times before the crowned heads of Europe. His description of the scenes amid which, at great personal risk, he obtained his present unrivalled collection of curios is a romance in itself. He is also the author of "Skulls and Their Uses."

**"The Stage as a Profession,"** by Charles B. Fisher. Doublenight-Wage Co., 1920. Cloth. \$2.00.

The tragedy of many a simple country lass may be laid at the door of the evident truths expounded in Mr. Fisher's theories. The glare of the footlights can almost be felt by the reader through the magic spell of the author's convincing arguments.

**"An Artist's Reverie,"** by John J. Kenny. Bolton, Muffin Co., 1920. \$2.50.

Few artists have had the distinction of being selected to engrave the menus for Christmas dinners in France, but such is Mr. Kenny's proud boast. Mr. Kenny is not only an artist, but a poet, and his prose is interspersed with really excellent poetry, such as could only have been possible during times of extensive leisure.

**"The Full Bread Basket,"** by David T. Gately. D. C. Sheath & Co., 1920. \$4.00. All rights reserved.

The author is most competent to demonstrate the evils of the present system of the food supply and its illegal control. His description of the excellent dinner of Louis XIV, on page 488, in particular, seems to savor of the utmost in luxury and variety.

**"Step by Step,"** by Ambrose B. Furlong. Appleman's, 1920. \$3.00.

This is the story of a young and ambitious bank messenger, wherein he succeeded by dint of perseverance and care in details. We suspect that the author is writing his autobiography.

**"The Silver Bugle,"** by Starr Van Deusen. Sinn & Co., 1920. 3 volumes. \$1.50.

This book contains not only the principal bugle-calls of the various nations, but adds a treatise on phonetics, and the proper method of pursing the lips so necessary to the success of the truly great bugler.

**"The Missing Helmet,"** by Lawrence J. Liedy. Staten Island Publication Co., 1919. \$2.00.

In this masterpiece the author spares no effort to make the reader acquainted with all the details of his great mystery-story. The style is a bit heavy, however, and a repetition tends to spoil an otherwise excellent novel. The author's other great work is by far superior: "Nine months on the Border, and Still a High Private."

**"Finance and the Banking Business,"** by Adolph H. Badenhausen, with compilation of tables by John Van Deventer, D.S.C., P.D.Q. Barker's, 1920. \$5.00 net.

The author has devoted considerable space and effort to make his story comprehensive to even the most ignorant. He commences with the rudiments of the banking and money-lending business, explaining very clearly the causes which led up to his following this business as a profession. It should prove a valuable addition to every library.

**"My Success in Life,"** by Casimir L. Szczecinski, D.B., A. L. Dirt Co. 1920. \$8.00.

The author's first claim to fame was in his excellent interpretation and paraphrasing of the Infantry Drill Regulations. In this present work he goes further and excels himself, even to the most incredulous.

**"Travelogues Through Paris,"** by John Mulvaney, B.W. The Twentieth Century Co. 1920. 12mo., profusely illustrated.

To the writer of such a book as this nothing appears too insignificant to escape notice. He has a very deep æsthetic sense of beauty and its true representations. The book will make an admirable study, and should be on every parlor table, if only for its illustrations. Other books by the same author: "Mustard Gas and Its Properties," "The Servant Girl Problem."

**"Prisons I Have Known,"** by John W. Maher. Sing Sing Publication Co. 1920. \$8.00.

The author speaks with the sanction of such well-known prison authorities as F. S. York, Jr., J. B. McIntyre and C. D. Downes. His authenticity of detail cannot be questioned. His book is pleasing and instructive. The prison scenes related are such as would stir the very depths of emotion.

**"Morning Exercises,"** by Harold W. Bousfield. Appleman's. 1917. \$2.00.

The author, who is well known as the author of the thrilling serial, "The Delinquents Club," which had a most successful run in "The Camp Wadsworth Road Review," has given us a hint of still greater promise in this work. It is more than a text-book on hygiene, and the fact that its author teaches us by his example is still more a claim to fame.

**"What to Do When Challenged,"** by Hugh N. McLernon. 12mo., translated from the original Greek. Henry Bolt & Co. 1920. \$2.00.

One of the most absorbing of the after-war publications. A veritable treasure of practical information and brim-full of interesting anecdotes from the author's personal experience.

**"Piano-Playing Simplified,"** by Austin V. Leahy. E. P. Mutton & Co. 1920. \$4.00.

Mr. Leahy uses the Knobby piano exclusively. That fact speaks for itself. His work is so simple that a child could learn by following his explicit instructions.

**"Two Weeks in Oblivion,"** by Leslie Kane. Scrivener's. 1920. \$8.00.

The writing of this book is somewhat abstruse, and the reader is apt to wonder what it is all about. However, the author brings home his points one by one at the close of the book, which is in four volumes. Other works by the same author: "The Sleeping Sickness," "Fogs I Have Known."

**"Gambling and Its Evils,"** by David B. Hughes. Utica Press Bureau. 1920. \$1.00.

Beginning with the lottery system, the author points out the evils of every form of gambling now in use. Throughout his book his style denotes a thorough knowledge of his subject.

**"Selling Short on Biscuits,"** by Y. M. C. A. Yerkes, Sinn & Co. 1920. \$1.00.

A notable travesty on human life, with a slightly satirical turn.

**"The Chemical Properties of Oleomargarine,"** by Fred A. Johnson. The Mac-Nolan Co. 1920. Cloth, \$2.00.

The author is a well-known authority on his subject, and has made an exhaustive study of oleomargarine. His experiences with this interesting product are minutely related.

**"The Missouri Mule,"** by Howard W. Proctor. E. P. Mutton & Co. 1920. \$3.00.

An admirable treatise on animal psychology. It enables one to understand the human race, even after the first reading. We advise a second perusal.

**"Phrenology and the Art of Dodging,"** by Philip G. Corwin. Barker's. 1920. \$1.00.

The author is a well-known advocate of all forms of skull exercise. He claims in his great work that the thicker a man's skull is the better he can keep from danger. Other works by the same author: "Why I Smoke," "A Skin One Loves to Touch."

**"Beards and Their Uses,"** by Gustave A. Sulzer. Danderine Publishing Co. 1920. \$1.00.

Tracing the habits of beards from the period of the Paleolithic Age, the author presents his undebatable conclusion that a beard is more healthful, cleaner and better-looking than the smooth-shaven countenance.

**"The Mucilage Industry,"** by William Down. A. L. Dirt & Co. 1920. In leather, \$8.00.

The author mentions the origin of the manufacture of mucilage, and brings its consumption down to the present day. Other treatises by the same author: "The Oatmeal Mystery," "The Second's Paradise."

**"Whistling as a Recreation,"** by L. Stuart Rose, American Book Publishing Co. 1920. In morocco, \$3.25; In tune; \$4.00.

Seldom have the minor arts been so clearly demonstrated as in this book. The author is not bigoted in any way, but urges his readers to practice their own favorite form of whistling. However, he gives a remarkable preference to his own method, which is—but that would spoil his story. Every child should read this book.

**"A Pleased Customer,"** by Ralph R. Lehmann. Sinn & Co. 1920. \$2.00 postpaid.

Comprises a course in competitive salesmanship, in twenty short lessons. "The value of a pleased customer," says Mr. Lehmann, "cannot be over-emphasized."

**"Clearing the Mask,"** by George F. Alpers. Gretna's. 8vo., \$2.00.

The unbiased opinions of an eminent authority on mathematics. Should be studied minutely by all candidates for admission into courses on cattle-breeding at any of our universities. A valuable asset to the libraries of the most fastidious.

**"The Camel Outwitted,"** by Will Boatright. Fatima Publishing Co. 1920. \$1.20. per carton.

The author is undoubtedly a humanitarian of the highest type. This amazing mystery story of the Camel is only outranked by Old King Brady and Dick Merriwell. "Tain't right," says Mr. Boatright, "that the Camel should be treated so unfairly."

**"What's the Odds?"** by Edward H. Lynch. Bronx Printing Corporation. 1920. \$10.00 to \$5.00.

The story of a young adventurer in a land of constant crime, where he has to use all his wits to outwit his enemies. Also author of "Three to Two No Five."

**"The Ninety and Nine,"** by Thomas Prior. Scrivener's. 1920. Cloth, \$2.00 postpaid.

This famous melodrama recalls the days of the detective story craze. The only clue which Sherlock Jones, his hero, is able to find is the finger-print left on a man's chest, and the fact that the victim died coughing. It absorbs in every line, even though written in dialect.





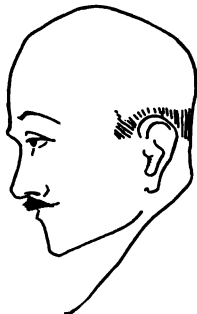
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