DEAD MAN'S FLIGHT by F. C. PAINTON

Fawcett's

AUG. 25c
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Battle Stories

SECRETS OF THE GUN that SHELLED PARIS

by LIEUT. COL. H. W. MILLER

Are YOU afraid of losing your Job?

MANY men walk today in the company of fear—fear lest the next pay check be the last.

But—here and there you find a man actually advancing—increasing his earnings—bettering his position—forging ahead in times when most people fear for their bread and butter.

The answer is easy.

The man who's afraid of losing his job knows that there are many men walking the streets—men capable of filling his shoes—ready and eager to do it—for less money.

He's the untrained man—

The fellow who's getting ahead knows that he's difficult to replace—becoming more valuable every day—is in the preferred "few" class instead of the job-filling mass—

He's a trained man—

Do you want to get into this secure class—into the well rewarded field—out of the readily replaceable millions?

All right. Read these true records of other men—three out of thousands of similar stories about LaSalle members*—you can do the same—if you will—

Follows Lincoln's Example—Studies Law at Night

At 24—(this man's formal schooling ended with his twelfth year)—he was a laborer in a railroad shop. Wages were low and hours long.

Only four years later, he passed the bar examination and within a year he had a lucrative law practice. He has held several elective and appointive legal positions and is today an honored legal leader in his community.

In four years—studying law with LaSalle at nights and working daytimes at his railroad job—his initiative and perseverance took him out of the low-paid job and gave him prestige and independence.

What are you doing with your spare time?

* Names on request

From Clerk to Auditor—Now He is a Preferred Man

He stopped school at 15. His first job paid $20 a month, then $30 a month and at the time LaSalle first knew him, he was 19 and had worked up to a tracing clerk at $75 a month. "Wanting more pay, and a future," as he puts it, he enrolled for our Higher Accountancy training. In two months he took a job as assistant bookkeeper and at 21 he was assistant credit manager.

Today he is auditor of a large manufacturing company at a large salary, is secretary of another corporation and is taking his second LaSalle course in Business Management.

What are you doing to better yourself—besides wishing?

Seven Out of Nine Were Fired—This Man Stayed

One of our Industrial Management students in Pennsylvania worked in a group of nine men. When hard times struck, seven were discharged and only himself and one other kept.

Would you be kept if your firm cut the pay roll?

We could give you thousands of examples of LaSalle members—who have no fear of losing their jobs in hard times. This because they know that they have the trained ability which employers need.

For instance, there is our Higher Accountancy student in Delaware

who found out after our letter to his boss telling him of his enrollment that the boss was also an enthusiastic LaSalle student and that the traveling auditor to whom the boss reported regularly is a LaSalle graduate.

There are the numerous companies—hundreds of them—which have a standing offer to pay half the membership fee of any employe who enrolls with LaSalle and to refund the other half when that employe graduates.

Put Yourself in the Preferred Class

These few examples—and your now common sense analysis of business—are enough. No need to urge upon you that the trained man is in demand, that he is the first employe to be taken on and the last to be let go. You know that already.

"Knowing" is not enough—*action* is necessary. The first step is to get complete information—the facts about the business field which you prefer, its demands, its opportunities, and the details of the LaSalle training program for success in that field.

Are you in earnest? Then—send the coupon. It will bring you the facts—without cost or obligation—in an interesting, vital 64-page book. Act today.

LaSalle Extension University

THE WORLD'S LARGEST BUSINESS TRAINING INSTITUTION

---------- *Find Yourself Through LaSalle!* ----------

LA SALLE EXTENSION UNIVERSITY **Dept. 8493-R** **CHICAGO**

I would welcome an outline of the new LaSalle plan, together with a copy of "Ten Years' Promotion in One," all without obligation.

- ☐ **Business Management:** Managerial, Sales and Executive
- ☐ **Higher Accountancy**
- ☐ **Expert Bookkeeping**
- ☐ **C. P. A. Coaching**
- ☐ **Modern Salesmanship**
- ☐ **Traffic Management**
- ☐ **Railway Station Mgmt.**
- ☐ **Railway Accounting**
- ☐ **Modern Business Corres.**
- ☐ **Paper Salesmanship**
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- ☐ **Commercial Law**
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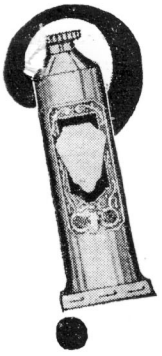
Name **Present Position** **Address**

Wanted....

a name for Our new HAND LOTION



$1000.00 CASH REWARD...!

This Contest is Open to EVERYONE.....

Suggestions To Help You Win

Both fancy and simple names may be submitted for any name may win. In selecting a name bear in mind this new hand lotion lubricates the tissues, disappears almost immediately leaving hands or face smooth, soft with satin-like appearance. It is composed largely of oil of almond, one of the most healthful skin preparations. It comes in handy tubes; no bottle to break and spill. You may submit the name of a flower, bird, tree, person, or in fact any name that comes to your mind; coined words are acceptable; such names as Almbu, Velvo, or Satin Skin, Hollywood Beauty Lotion, etc. There is no restriction on the name you submit. Make this your lucky day. Send your suggestion at once, be in time for the promptness prize, for the very name you send may win.

Now, don't think you can't win this prize. Your opportunity is just as good as anyone's, regardless of who you are or where you live. Last season we offered three prizes of $1000.00 each for names for our new tooth paste, our new shampoo and our new soap. Larry Donnelly, a young barber, sent the name "ACIDOFF" for the tooth paste, and Mrs. King of Barbadoo, Wisconsin, sent the name "LOXALITE" for the shampoo, and each received $1000.00. Mrs. Jobe of Aberdeen, South Dakota, and Miss Burbank of Rockland, Maine, both sent the name "OLINOL" for the soap, and both received $1000.00 each, also $100.00 extra for promptness. All the winning names for the above articles were simple names, you or anyone might have thought of them. In fact, the winners did not think much of the names when they sent them in, but it cost nothing to try for the prizes, so they scribbled off the names and mailed them in, and you can imagine their delight and pleasure when they were announced to be the winners. You, too, have the same opportunity, now, to win Fame and Fortune by sending us a name for our new hand lotion. It's up to you.

CONTEST RULES

This contest is open to everyone except members of this firm, its employees and their relatives. Each contestant may send only one name. Sending two or more names will cause all names submitted by that person to be thrown out. The prize will be awarded to the one sending the name we choose from among those submitted. Contest closes December 20, 1931. All names must reach us by that date. Duplicate prizes will be given in case of ties. To win the promptness prize—or $500.00 extra—the winning name suggested must be mailed within three days after our announcement is read.

HOLLYWOOD MARVEL PRODUCTS CO.
1023 N. Sycamore Ave. Dept. 404 Hollywood, Calif.

JOAN BLONDELL

stage and screen star now being featured in Warner Bros. pictures says she is delighted with our new hand lotion and container.

FREE Roadster or $500 CASH for Promptness

In order to get quick action, we're giving this beautiful new Ford Roadster, latest model, absolutely FREE. Or if you prefer you may have your choice of the Roadster, a Coupe, or Sedan, or $500.00 Cash. This is your opportunity. Send a name at once, be the winner, surprise your friends and neighbors by having the car and $1000.00 delivered at your door or $1500.00 all cash if you prefer. Don't think you can't win, for your opportunity is just as good as anyone's, if you will send a name at once. It costs you nothing to try.

$1000 PRIZE COUPON

HOLLYWOOD MARVEL PRODUCTS CO.
Dept. 404, 1023 N. Sycamore Ave.
Hollywood, Calif.
I am sending the following name for your hand lotion.

.....

Date this announcement was read.....

My name is.....

Address .....

NOTE—Being prompt qualifies you for the promptness prize outlined herein. © H. M. P. Co., 1931

CAPT. W. H. FAWCETT, Publisher
CAPT. ROSCOE FAWCETT, Editor

Fawcett's Battle Stories

Vol. VIII. No. 47 — August 1931

Dedicated to the fighting forces of the United States and Canada, whose gallant daring and deathless courage always have distinguished their deeds on land and sea and in the sky.

Smashing True Stories of War

Secrets of the Gun that Shelled Paris . LIEUT. COL. HENRY W. MILLER 18
At last, in defiance of Germany's threat of death for the author, the whole story.

The One-Man Army From Idaho . . . . . MALCOLM DOUGLAS 100
The thrilling story of a "Pershing Hero" from the Jackson Hole country.

Charge of the Fort Garry Horse . . . . . FREDERICK THOMSON 142
A Canadian cavalryman tells you of his perilous ride deep into German territory.

Two Complete Novelets

Dead Man's Flight . . . . . FREDERICK C. PAINTON 36
Chris Haines flies into a mysterious adventure and risks a traitor's death.

The Death Quartette . . . . . ARTHUR GUY EMPEY 78
Four vaudeville actors carry the code of the stage to the war-torn front lines.

Dramatic Battle Stories

Krauts For The Captain . . . . . HAROLD BRADLEY SAY 61
A battle of wits goes to the fastest thinker, even in No-man's land.

U-Boat Bait . . . . . JAMES L. HILL 69
Skipper Bill stakes his life on a desperate chance to prove his right to command.

The Boche Buster . . . . . CAPT. HARRY HOWARD BAIRD 109
Corporal Mike runs up against the most amazing adventure of his battle career.

Cossacks of the Red Czar . MAJOR MALCOLM WHEELER-NICHOLSON 116
Still time to get in on this glamorous novel of doughboys in Siberia. Part II.

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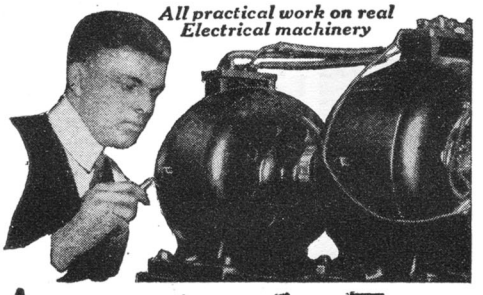
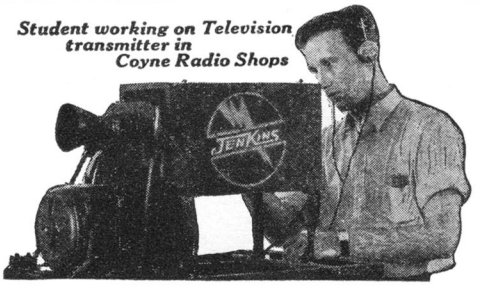
Get Into One Of These BIG PAY FIELDS



All practical work on real Electrical machinery

Amazingly Easy Way to Get Into ELECTRICITY

Don't spend your life waiting for $5.00 raises in a dull, hopeless job! Let me show you how to make up to $60, $70 and $100 a week, in Electricity —NOT BY CORRESPONDENCE, but by an amazing way to teach that prepares you for real work in just 90 days' time!



Student working on Television transmitter in Coyne Radio Shops

Learn RADIO TELEVISION TALKING PICTURES

Hundreds of jobs open! 5,000 Service Men needed. Big call for Wireless Operators. Many jobs in Broadcasting Stations. Talking Picture and Sound Experts in demand. And now Television is here! You 'earn all branches in 10 weeks of practical work at Coyne!

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Don't worry about a job! You get Free Life-time Employment Service. And don't let lack of money stop you. If you need part-time work to help pay expenses, I'll gladly help you get it. You can find out everything — ABSOLUTELY FREE. There are two coupons below. One will bring you my BIG FREE ELECTRICAL BOOK. The other will bring you my BIG FREE RADIO, TELEVISION AND TALKING PICTURE BOOK. Select the field you prefer and mail the coupon below. MAIL ONLY ONE COUPON —BUT BE SURE TO MAIL IT AT ONCE!

MAIL ONLY THIS COUPON FOR FREE ELECTRICAL BOOK

H. C. LEWIS, President
COYNE ELECTRICAL SCHOOL, Dept. C1-08
500 S. Paulina Street, Chicago, Illinois

Gentlemen: Please send me your big Free Electrical Book, with 151 illustrations. This does not obligate me in any way.

Name.....

Address.....

City..... *State*.....

MAIL ONLY THIS COUPON FOR FREE RADIO BOOK

H. C. LEWIS, President
RADIO DIVISION, COYNE ELECTRICAL SCHOOL
500 S. Paulina St., Dept. C1-3A, Chicago, Ill.

Gentlemen: Send me your Big Free Radio, Television and Talking Picture Book. This does not obligate me in any way.

Name.....

Address.....

City..... *State*.....

National Salesmen's Training Assn.,
Dept. K-264, N. S. T. A. Bldg.,
Chicago, Ill.

Without cost or obligation you may send me your free book, "The Key to Master Salesmanship."

Name .....

Address .....

City ..... State.....

Age..... Occupation.....

They Laughed When I Mailed This Coupon

..But It Brought Me The Book That Showed Me How to Make $10,000 a Year!

AS I walked up to the mail box, Joe nudged Ed and winked broadly for my benefit.

"Sh!" he hissed in a loud stage-whisper. "This is going to be the big turning point in Frank Parker's life! He's writing for a book that tells how to get into salesmanship. Pretty soon he'll be earning so much that he'll make the rest of us look like pikers!"

Ed snickered.

"Won't it be grand!" he grinned. "Now he can quit punching time-clocks and eating 40-cent lunches." He raised his voice. "Drop me a postal sometime when you get out into big business and start making $10,000 a year, will you, Frank?"

They both laughed uproariously. And probably it **did** seem like a joke to them that a $30 a week clerk would have the nerve to think he could ever get anywhere or make real money without some special "gift" or "pull."

But they laughed too soon. Just yesterday I sat down and wrote to Ed who is still at the shop, dragging along at the same old job.

"Dear Ed"—I wrote. "You asked me to send you a card when I 'got into big business and started making $10,000 a year.' Well, here's your card. Yesterday I was promoted to the job of assistant Sales Manager of the Western Metal Works, at a salary that goes with it. I'll loan you my copy of that book on salesmanship you used to think was such a joke."

Only a book! Just seven ounces of paper and printers' ink—but it contains one of the most vivid and inspiring messages that any ambitious man can read. It reveals the real truth about the art of selling, explains the science of selling in simple terms, and tells exactly how the great sales records of nationally-known star salesmen are achieved. And not only that—it outlines a simple plan that will enable almost any man to master scientific salesmanship without spending a moment on the road—without losing a day or a dollar from his present position.

A Few Weeks—Then Bigger Pay

Reason it out for yourself. Salesmanship offers bigger returns and delivers them quicker than any other line of work under the sun. But many people have subscribed to the foolish notion that a man has to be "born" with some sort of "gift" for salesmanship. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Just like any other profession, salesmanship is governed by certain fundamental rules and laws—laws which you can master as easily as you learned the alphabet.

Right now an unusual demand for salesmen is being reported. City and traveling sales positions are open in nearly every line all over the country. Last year requests for trained men were received from many firms, in all quarters. This employment service is free to both employers and employees, and thousands have secured excellent positions this way.

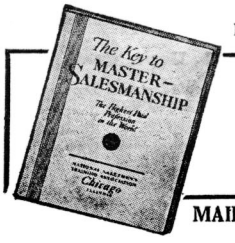
Free to Every Man

See for yourself **why** "The Key to Master Salesmanship" has been the deciding factor in the careers of so many men who are now making $10,000 a year. See how Mark Barichievich of San Francisco, Calif., for example, jumped from $8 a week as dishwasher to $150 as salesman. Find out how F. B. Englehardt of Chattanooga doubled his pay and commenced earning $7,000. Learn for yourself the REAL truth about the art of selling! If we were asking $2 or $3 a copy you might hesitate. But the book is now FREE. You do not risk one penny nor incur the slightest obligation. And since it may alter your entire future, it certainly is worth your time to fill out and clip the coupon at the top of this page. Why not do it now!

National Salesmen's Training Association

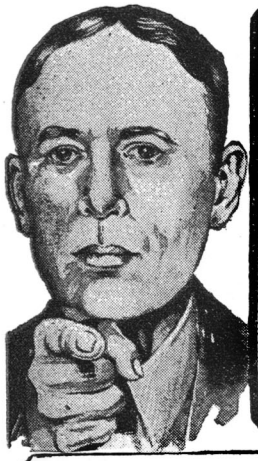
Dept. K-264

N.S.T.A. Bldg. Chicago, Ill.



Where Shall We Send Your Copy—FREE?

MAIL COUPON ABOVE TODAY



Do YOU Want a U.S. GOV'T. POSITION?

FOR MEN & WOMEN—AGE RANGE 18 to 50
INSIDE or OUTSIDE WORK—LOCAL or TRAVELING

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(Investigators)
Start $200 to $250 Month

Government Secret Service Work is one of the most fascinating and interesting branches of the service for men. These positions are located throughout the country and are both traveling and stationary. In addition to the high salaries that run up to $5000 yearly, all traveling expenses are paid while on the road.

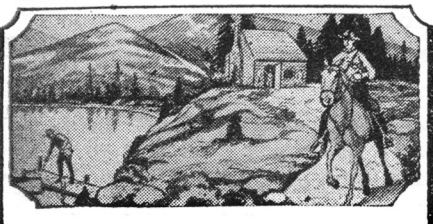
RAILWAY MAIL JOB

$1850 to $2700 Year

These positions are both traveling and stationary. When traveling you receive an extra allowance when away from home more than ten hours; and when you grow old you are retired with a comfortable pension for the balance of your life.

RURAL AND CITY CARRIERS
$1400 to $3000 Year

The Rural Mail Carrier is out in the open air and sunshine, easy, healthy work, short hours, with a large part of the day left to do as he pleases. Thousands of city positions available for those who prefer inside work, delivering mail in large office buildings. These positions available to both country and city people.



OUTDOOR POSITIONS

Ideal, healthy, fascinating employment, where you can enjoy the forests, plains, and mountain trails; sunshine and fresh air. Duties are patrolling our borders, delivering mail in cities and on rural routes, etc.

OVER 900 DIFFERENT KINDS OF POSITIONS

If you want a steady Government Position where strikes, hard times, politics, etc., will not affect you, where you can draw twelve months' pay every year, and then when you become old be retired on a pension for the balance of your life, get on Uncle Sam's Payroll. Stop worrying, enjoy your life. Pick the position you want, it belongs to you just as much as to anyone else. Then why not get it? It is all up to you! The positions described in this announcement are only a few of the many desirable ones obtainable. Fill out the coupon below, cut or tear it out, and mail today, and full particulars will be sent you immediately.

CUSTOMS INSPECTORS
$2100 Year to Start

The duties are to check and inspect goods brought into this country by tourists, merchants, and manufacturers. Inspectors are required to levy the duties, etc., and see that Customs regulations are not violated. This is a very fascinating work with splendid salaries.

MEAT INSPECTORS
$1500 to $1860 Year and Upward

This a very interesting work. Farmers, butchers, or anyone with a knowledge of live stock, food products, meats, etc., are in line for one of these positions. The salaries and promotions are based on the ability and interest shown in this work. Both men and women are eligible.

PICK THE JOB YOU WANT AND MAIL THIS COUPON NOW

BORDER PATROL GUARDS, FOREST and FIELD CLERKS. HEALTHY OUTDOOR POSITIONS

- ☐ Railway Mail Clerks
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- ☐ Tel. Operator
- ☐ City Mail Carrier
- ☐ Meat Inspector
- ☐ Bookkeeper
- ☐ Customs Inspector
- ☐ U. S. Guards
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- ☐ Matrons
- ☐ Watchman
- ☐ Skilled Laborer
- ☐ Postmasters
- ☐ Steno.—Typist
- ☐ Emigrant Inspector
- ☐ Seamstress
- ☐ Auditor

INSTRUCTION BUREAU
Dept. 373, St. Louis, Mo.

Send me immediately **FREE**, full particulars about positions marked "X". Also your big list of other positions obtainable, salaries, locations, how to qualify, opportunities, etc.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

The Fire Step

Bursts and Duds by the Editor

By Captain ROSCOE FAWCETT, editor.

NOW that the hullabaloo raised by General (Old Gimlet Eye) Smedley Butler over remarks attributed to Negro Minister Dantes Bellegarde of Haiti has subsided the time is ripe for consideration of just how Butler won his medals—and the comment that the recent row showed bad judgment by both parties.

How Butler Won Medals

The Haitian Minister was quoted as declaring that Butler was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for the capture of a fort that never existed—Fort Riviere. Immediately Butler howled to high heaven and the state department. Then the Haitian explained that because of censorship neither he nor the majority of Haitians had ever heard of the ancient French fortress on their Island or of its capture.

As a matter of fact there is such a fort—or what was left of it after the Marines captured it and used a few cases of dynamite in 1916. Butler's Marines pursued Cacos (native banditti) to the ancient fort, attacked and invaded, Butler among the first of the twenty-three marines who crawled through a hole in the wall. The total Marine casualties numbered one, a veteran hit in the face with a rock thrown by a Haitian woman! Undoubtedly it took courage to enter that old fortress, even though the Cacos were fleeing from it under automatic rifle fire from the outside.

There Was a Fort Riviere

But that is the battle for which Butler was awarded one of his two Medals of Honor.

Two years earlier at the capture of Vera Cruz, Butler was a major commanding a battalion. Medals were to be awarded. So many of the Navy and Marine officers engaged in the capture considered the affair in the light of a comic opera battle that they drew straws or shook dice to see who would be the heroes in their outfits—this on the word of a Marine officer who was there.

More Medals At Vera Cruz

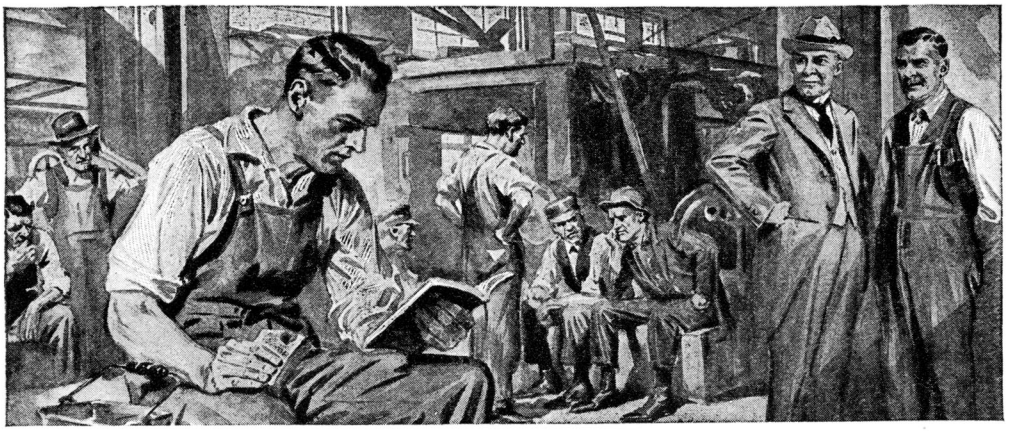
Marine commanders declined to designate any heroes. But when the Admiral insisted, they produced a roster of Marine officers present and medals were awarded according to rank. The lieutenants got mimeographed letters of commendation. Some Marine officers refused to wear their decorations and declined to accept the award. Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy, ordered them to accept them. One Marine colonel even produced a picture showing himself safely behind a building where his headquarters were protected from fire—exactly where he should have been—to prove he had been in no personal danger. He had to take the medal.

These incidents are offered in no way as a reflection on the valiant Marines whose glorious acts can be accorded no honor too high, but as interesting sidelights which were overlooked by the general press during the Butler-Bellegarde affair which assumed silly proportions. But General Butler was never the man to realize that actually there is such a thing as a deep, dignified and magnanimous silence that is more eloquent than words.

Deep Silence Can Be Loud

Roscoe Fawcett

—Editor.



"There's one man we're going to keep"

"ED WILSON, there, is one of the most ambitious men in the plant. I notice that he never fools away his spare time. He studies his International Correspondence Schools course every chance he gets.

"It's been the making of him, too. He hasn't been here nearly so long as Tom Downey, who was laid off yesterday, but he knows ten times as much about this business.

"I'm going to give him Tom's job, with a raise in salary. He's the kind of man we want around here."

How do you stand in your shop or office? Are you an Ed Wilson or a Tom Downey? Are you going up? *Or down?*

No matter where you live, the International Correspondence Schools will come to you. No matter what your handicaps or how small your means, we have a plan to meet your circumstances. No matter how limited your previous education, the simply-written, wonderfully-illustrated I. C. S. textbooks make it easy to learn.

This is all we ask: Without cost, without obligating yourself in any way, put it up to us to prove how we can help you. Just mark and mail this coupon for full particulars.

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS, Box 5080-J, Scranton, Penna.
"The Universal University"

Without cost or obligation on my part, please send me a copy of your 48-page booklet, **"Who Wins and Why,"** and tell me how I can qualify for the position, or in the subject, *before* which I have marked an X:

BUSINESS TRAINING COURSES

☐ Business Management	☐ Cost Accounting	☐ Business Correspondence	☐ Railway Mail Clerk
☐ Industrial Management	☐ Bookkeeping	☐ Show Card and Sign Lettering	☐ Mail Carrier
☐ Personnel Management	☐ Secretarial Work	☐ Stenography and Typing	☐ Grade School Subjects
☐ Traffic Management	☐ Spanish ☐ French	☐ English	☐ High School Subjects
☐ Accounting and C. P. A. Coaching	☐ Salesmanship	☐ Civil Service	☐ Illustrating ☐ Cartooning
	☐ Advertising		☐ Lumber Dealer

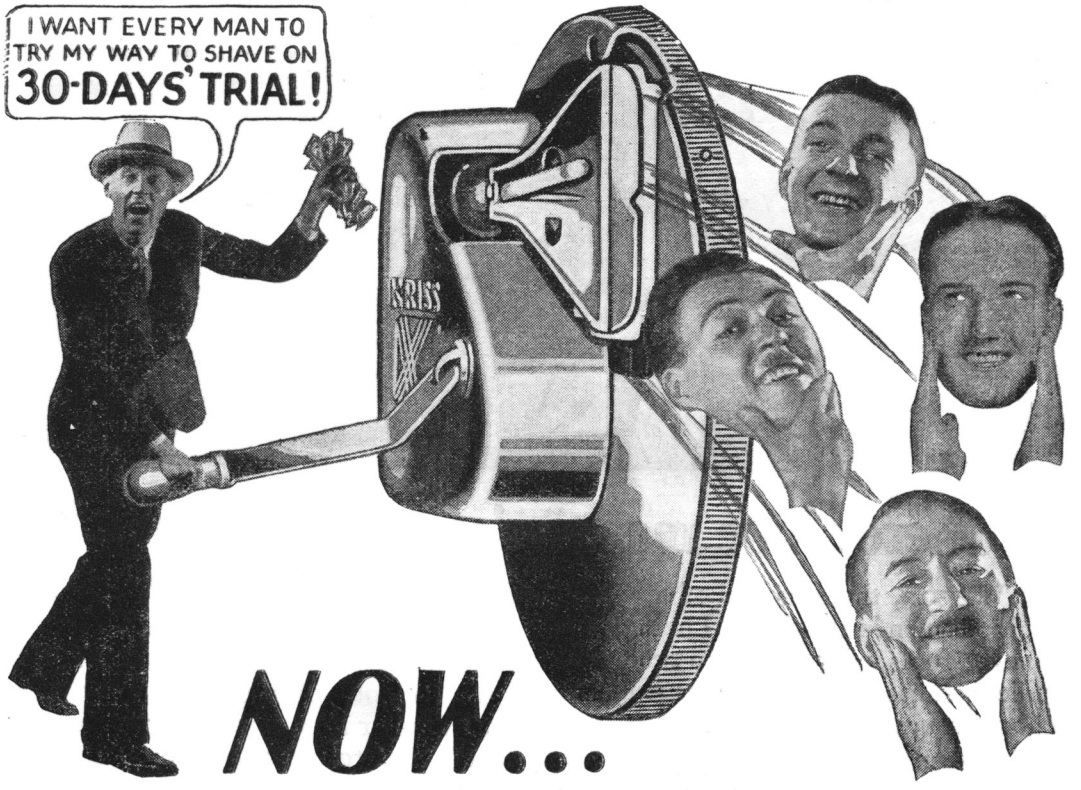
TECHNICAL AND INDUSTRIAL COURSES

☐ Architect	☐ Telegraph Engineer	☐ Aviation Engines	☐ Pharmacy
☐ Architectural Draftsman	☐ Telephone Work	☐ Plumber and Steam Fitter	☐ Mining Engineer
☐ Building Foreman	☐ Mechanical Engineer	☐ Plumbing Inspector	☐ Navigation ☐ Assayer
☐ Concrete Builder	☐ Mechanical Draftsman	☐ Foreman Plumber	☐ Iron and Steel Worker
☐ Contractor and Builder	☐ Machine Shop Practice	☐ Heating and Ventilation	☐ Textile Overseer or Supt.
☐ Structural Draftsman	☐ Toolmaker	☐ Sheet-Metal Worker	☐ Cotton Manufacturing
☐ Structural Engineer	☐ Patternmaker	☐ Steam Engineer	☐ Woolen Manufacturing
☐ Electrical Engineer	☐ Civil Engineer	☐ Marine Engineer	☐ Agriculture
☐ Electrical Contractor	☐ Surveying and Mapping	☐ Refrigeration Engineer	☐ Fruit Growing
☐ Electric Wiring	☐ Bridge Engineer	☐ R. R. Positions	☐ Poultry Farming
☐ Electric Lighting	☐ Gas Engine Operating	☐ Highway Engineer	☐ Mathematics
☐ Electric Car Running	☐ Automobile Work	☐ Chemistry	☐ Radio

Name.....Street Address.....

City.....State.....Occupation.....

If you reside in Canada, send this coupon to the International Correspondence Schools Canadian, Limited, Montreal, Canada



NOW...

An Automatic Shaving Wizard

That Ends The High Cost of Razor Blades And Revolutionizes Shaving Comfort!

NOW comes a St. Louis engineer with an invention that absolutely revolutionizes shaving. Now you can say goodbye to the constant expense of buying new razor blades. Now tough beards zip off with ridiculous ease without a trace of rasping or scorching or tender skin!

This amazing "automatic shaving wizard" is a blade-rejuvenator that takes the place of common blade stroppers. It introduces mechanically the diagonal sharpening stroke. It strokes the blade from heavy to light and ends the sharpening when the blade reaches the keenest cutting edge that steel can take.

Think of using the same old blade month after month and getting shaves even keener and slicker than when that blade was new! Imagine a better, smoother shave that stays fresh hours longer than ordinary shaves. Imagine the glorious comfort of a skin that never burns or feels hot and tender after shaving.

Men all over the country are using this startling device and are lavish in their praise of it. Even barbers are using it. P. M. Watch says: "I could never shave with a safety razor before—now it's no trouble at all." Walter Winner writes—"Still using the first blade." A. Dickerson has used only one razor blade for over a year. And so it goes.

I want every man to examine this revolutionary invention at my risk. Just tear out the coupon and I'll send you full details of my 30-Day Trial offer. End the high cost of razor blades and get shaving comfort such as you never dreamed was possible. Tear out the coupon now. I. L. Rhodes, Pres., Dept. K-3015, 1418 Pendleton Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

EXTRA MONEY FOR YOU!

No layoffs, no cut wages on this job! Just stick this invention in your pocket—demonstrate to friends—and collect profits up to $75 in a week! You don't risk a penny or do any high pressure selling. Simply distribute samples for free test—I guarantee your sales. Full time or spare hours, this is your chance to make more money than your regular job pays. Get the details. Check bottom line in coupon below.

I. L. Rhodes, Pres., Dept. K-3015
1418 Pendleton Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

Without obligating me in any way, send full details of your "automatic shaving wizard" that ends buying razor blades and gives keen, cool shaves forever.

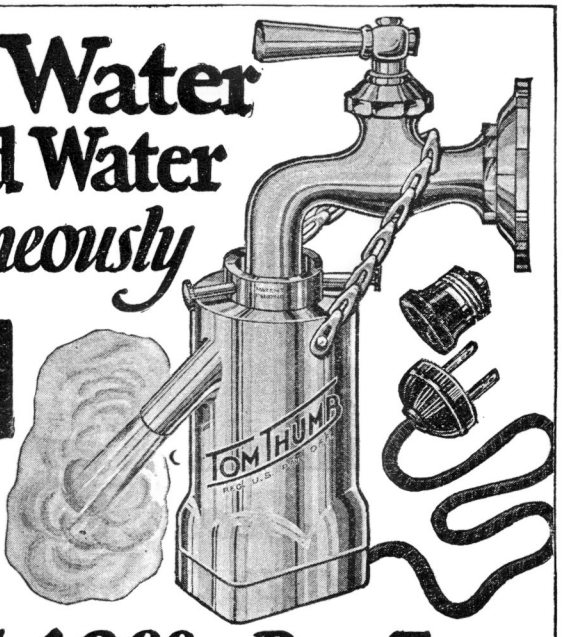
Name .....

Address .....

City ..... State .....

( ) Check here for my money-making offer.

Running Hot Water From Your Cold Water Faucet *Instantaneously*



Only $3.75 Complete

Agents! This Marvelous Invention Will Make Up to $40.00 a Day Easy

Just plug in at the nearest electric outlet and presto!—you have instantaneous, continuous running hot water from your cold water faucet. This tells you in a nutshell why the invention of the Tom Thumb automatic electric hot water heater will make it easy for you to make up to $40.00 a day.

The electric heated steaming hot water comes direct from the faucet instantaneously—yes, as quickly as you can turn on the current and the hot water runs indefinitely until you shut off the electricity. The cost is small—convenience is great. Useful wherever hot water is needed—no fuss or bother—attached to any faucet in a jiffy. Works on either AC or DC current. You and your customers will marvel and be delighted at this new discovery of electrical science. The small cost of $3.75 for the Tom Thumb, Junior (110 volts) or $5.75 for Tom Thumb, Senior (220 volts) does the work of any expensive hot water heating equipment costing several hundred dollars—the Tom Thumb absolutely eliminates the plumber or any other additional expense.

No Installation - Stick One On Faucet and Sale Is Made

Think of it! no installation, no extra expense—nothing else to do but to stick it on the faucet, turn on electricity and it is there ready for duty. Easily removed when not wanted and easily carried to any part of house where cold water is running and hot water is wanted. Has many uses—too numerable to mention here. Weighs only 1 lb., made entirely of aluminum. Cannot rust, no moving parts, nothing to get out of order.

If $40 A Day Sounds Good To You Rush Coupon

This new scientific invention offers tremendous sales possibilities. At the low price of $3.75 you should be able to sell at least forty a day. You pocket $1.00 cash commission on every sale. If you would like to know all about this proposition, sign your name and address to coupon or, better still, get started selling at once. Attach money order for $2.75 to coupon and rush to us. We will send complete selling outfit containing 1 Tom Thumb electric hot water heater, order blanks, selling particulars and everything necessary to help you get started making up to $40.00 a day at once.

Terminal Products Co., Inc.,
Dept. 1408, 200 Hudson St.,
New York, N. Y.

The Tom Thumb electric hot water heater looks like a big money maker to me. I am sure interested in knowing how to make up to $40.00 a day with this proposition. I have checked below the proposition I am interested in at this moment.

☐ Enclosed find money order for $2.75. Please send me one Tom Thumb Junior, order blanks and selling information. It is understood upon receipt of this sample outfit I will be permitted to take orders and collect $1.00 cash deposit for every Tom Thumb, Jr. I sell, or $1.50 for every Tom Thumb, Sr. I sell. It is understood I will send the orders to you and you will ship direct to my customers C.O.D. for the balance.

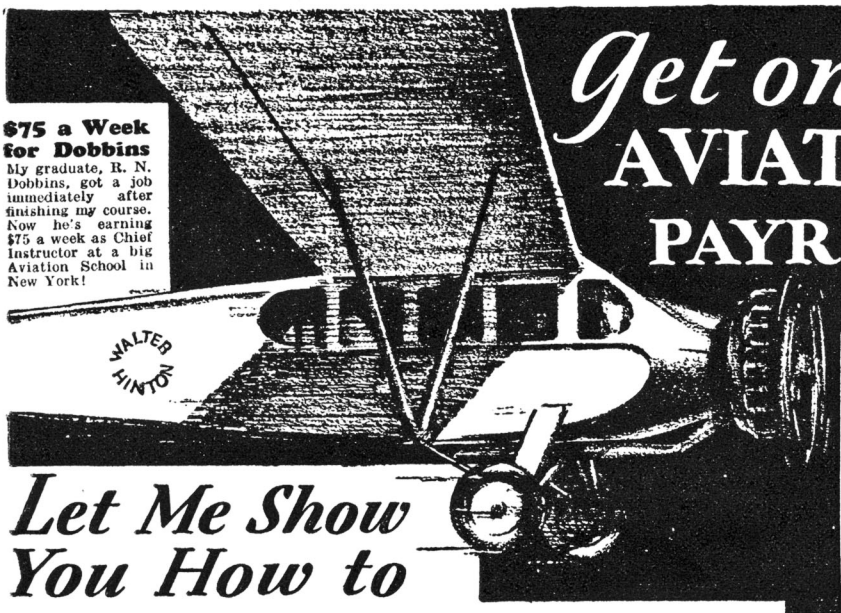
☐ I would like to have additional information before acting as one of your agents. Please send this by return mail free of obligation.

Name .....

Street .....

City ..... State .....

If you live outside of the United States, price is $1.00 extra on each unit, cash with order.



$75 a Week for Dobbins

My graduate, R. N. Dobbins, got a job immediately after finishing my course. Now he's earning $75 a week as Chief Instructor at a big Aviation School in New York!

Get on AVIATION'S PAYROLL!

Let Me Show You How to

EARN $60 to $100 a Week and UP in AVIATION!

My up-to-date home study Course gives you the ground work you need to *get and keep a real job* in this fascinating, fast growing industry. Scores of my graduates, who didn't know a thing about Aviation a few months ago, are holding down fine jobs right now—in the air and on the ground. *Over forty different types of jobs to choose from,* once you have this necessary training. Get the facts about my practical training, free Employment Service, and Money-Back Agreement NOW!

Walter Hinton

First to fly the Atlantic; first to fly to South America; first to explore the upper regions of the Amazon by plane. Flying Instructor in Navy for five years. Now giving ambitious men practical ground work training in Aviation at home. If you are 16 or over, mail the coupon below for your copy of his big new FREE Book today.

Aircraft Radio Course Now Included—FREE!

By acting now, you can get the benefit of a special offer which brings you a FREE special course in Air Craft Radio. With my free book, I will send you complete details about this special offer and tell you all about my complete practical course in Commercial Aviation.

No Previous Experience Needed

You don't even need a high school education—don't have to know anything about planes or engines to learn the ground work of Aviation with my Course. Everything is clearly explained—illustrated by hundreds of pictures, drawings and charts—made as simple and easy as possible. You get all the information you need to pass the Government's written examinations for Mechanic's or Pilot's Licenses, in a few short months. If you want to learn to fly, I can save you many times the cost of my Course on your flying time at good airports all over the country.

FREE Airplane Ride!

Right now I'm making an offer of a free airplane ride to all of my students. Write me at once and I'll send you complete information. Act now — to get in on this fine offer — while it is still open!

I'll Help You Get a JOB, Too!

My nation-wide Employment Department is at your service — the minute you are qualified to accept a job in Aviation. We are constantly in touch with scores of airports, plane factories, etc., that want trained men. Free Book tells all about how I helped my graduates get the kind of jobs they want! Mail the coupon now.

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Aviation is growing by leaps and bounds—while many other industries are slumping. Don't wait and let the other fellows get ahead of you. Think about your own future. Let me prepare you for a job paying $60 to $100 a week or more—in Aviation. Get the FACTS. Mail the handy coupon on the right today—right now—while you're thinking about it. I'll send you my big new FREE Book—packed with interesting facts about **your opportunities in Aviation by return mail!** Do it NOW.

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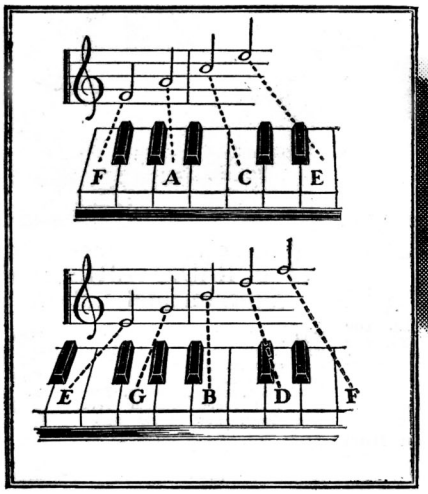
Name .....
(Print clearly)

Address ..... Age.....
(Must be 16 or over)

City ..... State.....

HERE IT IS....



—your first lesson in this popular, easy as A-B-C way of learning music

YES, learning to play your favorite instrument this thrilling new way is actually as easy as it looks.

Notice the first picture. The notes spell F-A-C-E—face. That wasn't hard . . . was it? Then look at the second E-G-B-D-F—Every Good Boy Does Fine. You can't *help* learning. All you do is look at the pictures and you know the entire scale!

Your next step is to play actual tunes, right from the notes. And all of the lessons of the famous U. S. School of Music course are just as easy, just as simple as that.

For by this remarkably clear course, you learn in the privacy of your own home, without the aid of a private teacher. No more tedious hours of dry theory or finger-twisting exercises.

Just imagine . . . a method by which you learn music in less than half the usual time, and at an average cost of only a few cents a day!

Easy as can be!

These fascinating lessons are like a game. Everything is right before your eyes— printed instructions, diagrams, and all the music you need. You can't possibly go wrong. First you are *told* what to do, then a picture *shows* you how, and then you do it yourself and *hear* it. The best private teacher could not make it clearer or easier.

Forget the old-fashioned idea that you have to have "talent" or "musical ability." You don't at all, *now!* More than 600,000 people who could not read one note from another, are now popular and accomplished players, thanks to the U. S. School of Music.

New Popularity—Plenty of Good Times

If you are tired of always sitting on the outer rim of a party, of being a professional looker-on—if you've often been jealous because others could entertain friends and were always in demand—if you've wanted to play but never thought you had the time or money to learn, let the time tested and proven U. S. School come to your rescue.

Don't miss any more good times! Learn to play your favorite instrument and be the center of attraction wherever you go. Musicians are invited everywhere, they are always in demand. Enjoy this greater new popularity you have been missing. Have the good times that pass you by. You can have them—easily!

PICK YOUR COURSE

Piano	Violin
Organ	Clarinet
Ukulele	Flute
Cornet	Saxophone
Trombone	Harp
Piccolo	Mandolin
Guitar	'Cello

Hawaiian Steel Guitar
Sight Singing
Voice and Speech Culture
Drums and Traps
Automatic Finger Control
Banjo (Plectrum, 5-String or Tenor)
Piano Accordion
Italian and German Accordion
Harmony and Composition
Juniors' Piano Course

Free Booklet and Demonstration Lesson

Our wonderful illustrated Free Book and Free Demonstration lesson explain all about this remarkable method. No matter what instrument you choose to play, the Free Demonstration lesson will show you at once the amazingly simple principles upon which this famous method is founded. As soon as the lesson arrives, you see for yourself just how anyone can learn to play his favorite instrument *by note* in almost no time and at a fraction of what the old slow methods cost. The booklet will also tell you about the astounding new Automatic Finger Control.

Read the list of instruments to the left, decide which you want to play, and the U. S. School of Music will do the rest. Act NOW. Clip and mail this coupon today, and the fascinating Free Book and Free Demonstration Lesson will be sent to you at once. No obligation, of course. Instruments supplied when needed, cash or credit. U. S. SCHOOL OF MUSIC, 358 Brunswick Building, New York City.

U. S. SCHOOL OF MUSIC,
358 Brunswick Bldg., New York City.

Please send me your free book, "Music Lessons in Your Own Home," with introduction by Dr. Frank Crane, Free Demonstration Lesson and particulars of your easy payment plan. I am interested in the following course:

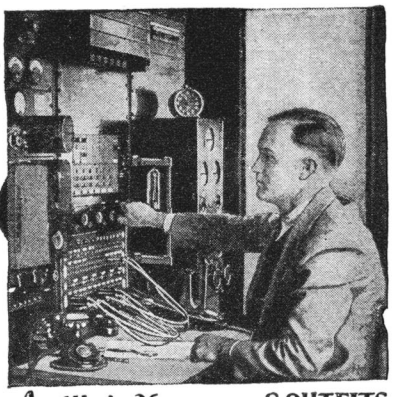
Have you
.....*Instrument?*.....

Name.....

Address.....

City..... *State*.....

I will train you at home to fill a GOOD JOB in Radio!



Here's Proof

If you are earning a penny less than $50 a week, send for my book of information on the opportunities in Radio. It is free. Clip the coupon NOW. Why be satisfied with $25, $30 or $40 a week for longer than the short time it takes to get ready for Radio.

Radio's growth opening hundreds of $50, $75, $100 a week jobs every year

In about ten years Radio has grown from a $2,000,000 to a $1,000,000,000 industry. Over 300,000 jobs have been created. Hundreds more are being opened every year by its continued growth. Men and young men with the right training—the kind of training I give you—are needed continually.

You have many jobs to choose from

Broadcasting stations use engineers, operators, station managers and pay $1,800 to $5,000 a year. Manufacturers continually need testers, inspectors, foremen, engineers, service men, buyers, for jobs paying up to $15,000 a year. Shipping companies use hundreds of Radio operators, give them world wide travel at practically no expense and a salary of $85 to $200 a month. Dealers and jobbers employ service men, salesmen, buyers, managers, and pay $30 to $100 a week. There are many other opportunities too.

So many opportunities many N. R. I. men make $5 to $25 a week extra while learning

The day you enroll with me I'll show you how to do 10 jobs, common in most every neighborhood, for spare time money. Throughout your course I send you information on servicing popular makes of sets; I give you the plans and ideas that are making $200 to $1,000 for hundreds of N. R. I. students in their spare time while studying.

Talking Movies, Television, Wired Radio are also included

Radio principles as used in Talking Movies, Television and home Television experiments, Wired Radio, Radio's use in Aviation, are all given. I am so sure that I can train you satisfactorily that I will agree in writing to refund every penny of your tuition if you are not satisfied with my Lessons and Instruction Service upon completing.

64-page book of information FREE

Get your copy today. It tells you where Radio's good jobs are, what they pay, tells you about my course, what others who have taken it are doing and making. Find out what Radio offers you, without the slightest obligation. ACT NOW.

J. E. SMITH, President
National Radio Institute Dept. 1HB1
Washington, D. C.

$100 a week

"My earnings in Radio are many times greater than I ever expected they would be when I enrolled. They seldom fall under $100 a week."
E. E. WINBORNE,
1414 W. 48th St.,
Norfolk, Va.

Jumped from $35 to $100 a week

"Before I entered Radio I was making $35 a week. Last week I earned $110 servicing and selling Radios. I owe my success to N. R. I."
J. A. VAUGHN
3715 S. Kingshighway,
St. Louis, Mo.

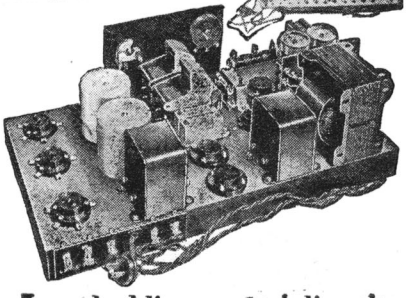
$500 extra in 6 months

"I find I made $500 from January to May in my spare time. My best week brought me $107. I should have taken it long ago."
HOYT MOORE
R. R. 3, Box 919,
Indianapolis, Ind.

I will give You my new 8 OUTFITS of RADIO PARTS for a home Experimental Laboratory

You can build over 100 circuits with these outfits. You build and experiment with the circuits used in Crosley, Atwater-Kent, Eveready, Majestic, Zenith, and other popular sets. You learn how these sets work, why they work, how to make them work. This makes learning at home easy, fascinating, practical.

Back view of 5 tube Screen Grid A. C. set—only one of many circuits you can build.



I am doubling and tripling the salaries of many in one year and less Find out about this quick way to BIGGER PAY

Radio Needs Trained Men

FILL OUT AND MAIL THIS COUPON TODAY

J. E. SMITH, President,
National Radio Institute, Dept. 1HB1
Washington, D. C.
Dear Mr. Smith: Send me your book. This request does not obligate me.

Name .....

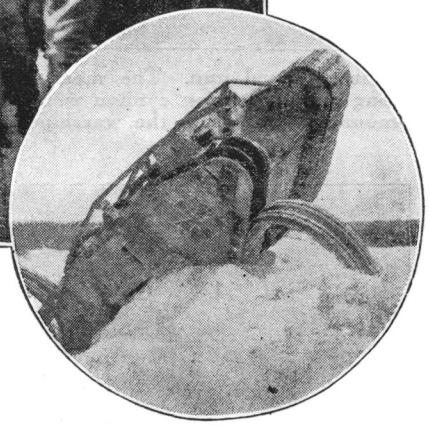
Address .....

City ..... State .....

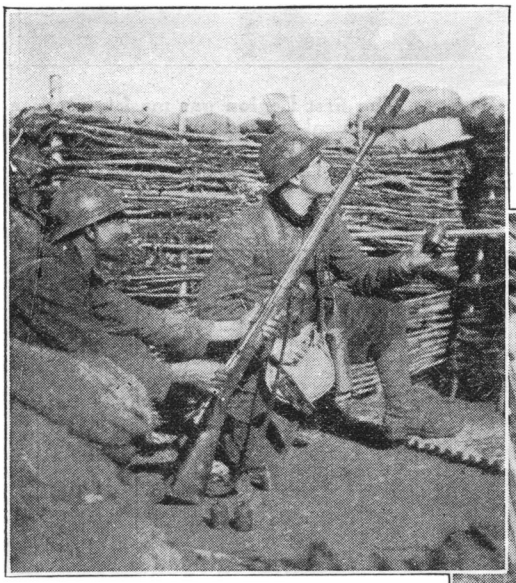
Lifetime Employment Service to all Graduates

WAR ALBUM

The final review. King Ludvig of Bavaria inspects crack Austrian troops which are being rushed forward to resist the crushing Italian drive.

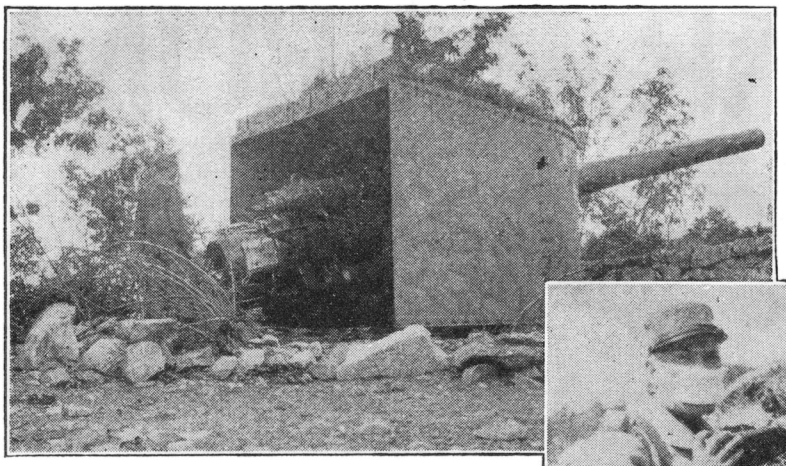


Disemboweled by a direct hit of a French 75, this German monster proved a steel coffin for the crew which had been dealing death to the Allies.

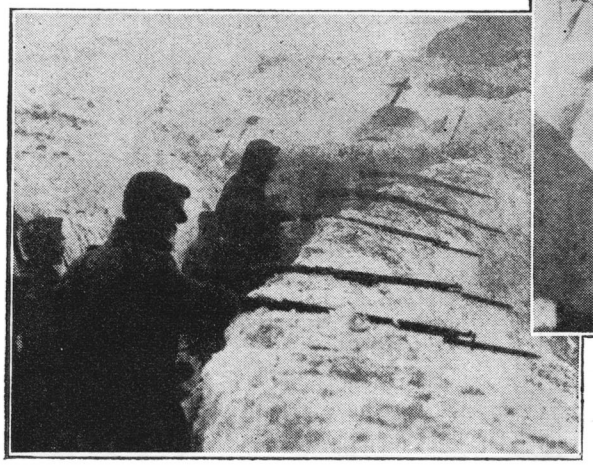


Iron eggs, scrambled! These two soldiers of the French Foreign Legion are sending over a deadly barrage of rifle grenades at Lassigny. The grenade barrage was followed by a charge with naked steel.

Before the attack! These Legionnaires are passing out grenades to be used in a night attack. The rockets at the left were used to call for a barrage.

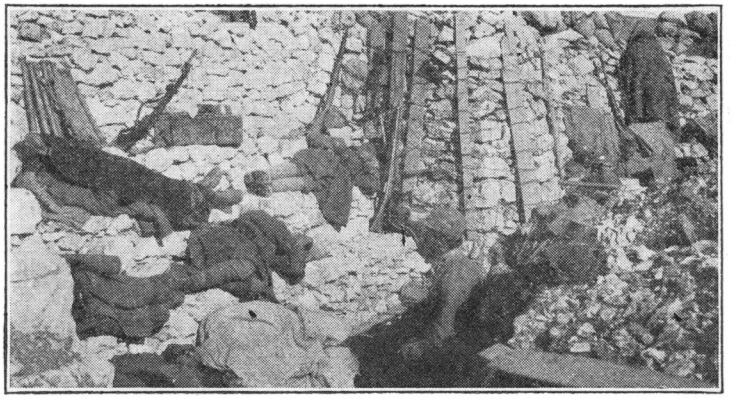


Remounted naval gun. The most effective of all long-range Austrian cannon were these turret-mounted guns from the warships.



The first Legion gas mask! Thus, a chemical-soaked piece of gauze around the nose and mouth, the heroic Legion faced the gas horror.

Here they come! An actual attack picture taken in the Austrian trenches. While the man in the foreground loads his piece the Italians are charging towards him. The un-manned rifles are tributes to the Italian marksmanship.



Resting at the front. The soldier in the cape (upper right) keeps a vigilance while his Austrian comrades snatch forty winks. Notice the stacked clubs at the left, favorite close-combat weapons of the Austrians.

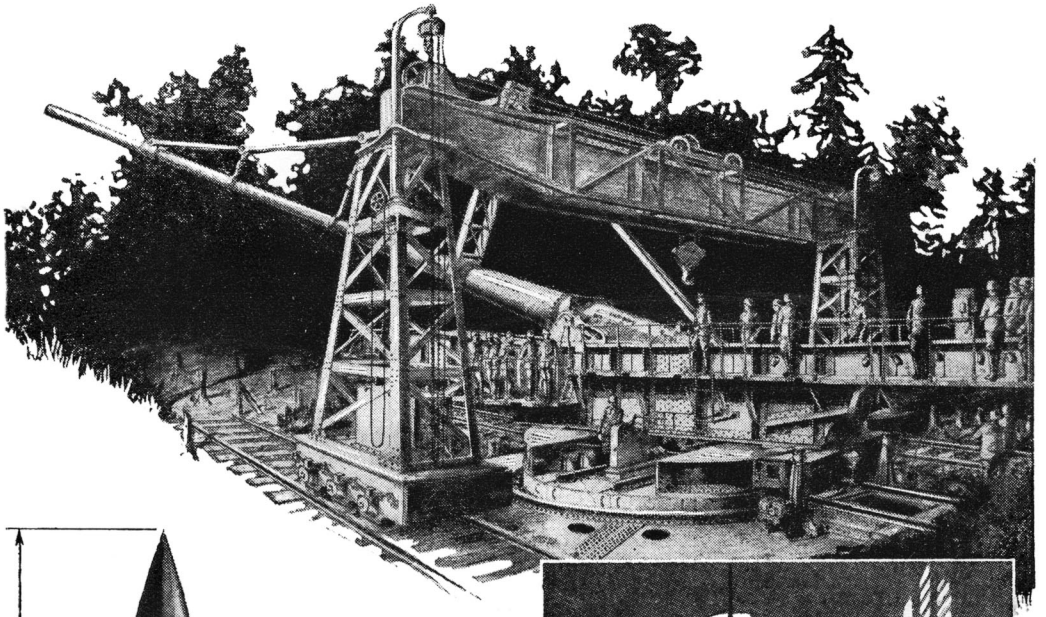
Load and fire! Working their bolts desperately to pick off the charging Blue Devils, these Austrian soldiers fell victims of their attackers' bayonets.

The Kaiser's gunners were too enthusiastic in serving this 77. Overheated, the gun burst and the shrapnel shell killed an adjoining gun crew.

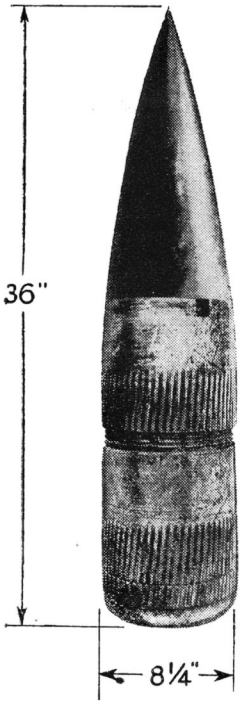
Flame thrower in action! Note the asbestos helmet on the Austrian soldier who is turning the muzzle of his liquid-fire machine on the charging Italians. The attackers are hidden behind the flame and smoke.

Freak explosion! A "Big Bertha" completely demolished the adjoining building and neatly pared off the second story of the house in the foreground, leaving the chimney intact. The roof at the right caved in from the concussion.

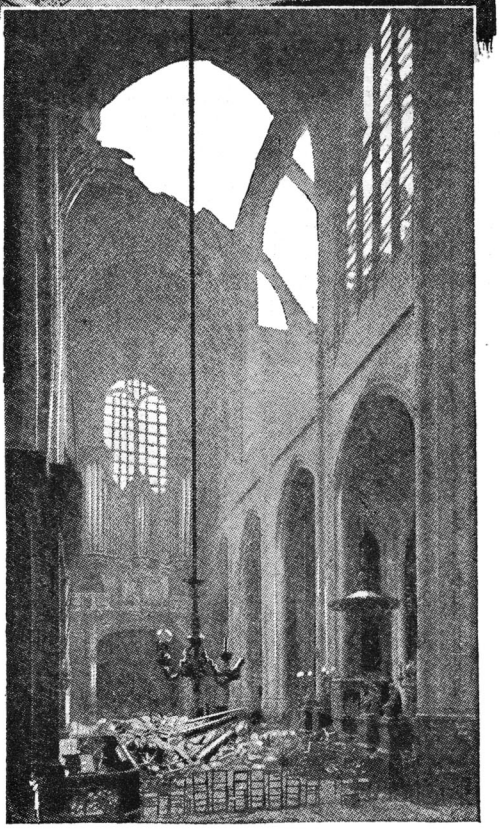
SECRETS OF THE GUN



Exclusive picture of the huge gun in the Laon position which shows the method of installation and the large crew. Note the brace necessary to keep the barrel from sagging.



One of the shells designed to fly from the muzzle of the famed gun and strike terror in Paris miles away.



Eighty-eight killed, sixty-eight injured! That was the deadly toll of the Mystery Gun when it crashed a shell through the roof of the Church of St. Gervais and trapped the faithful at prayer.

THAT SHELLED PARIS

Death for high treason! That was the fearsome threat for anyone daring to reveal the secret of the gun that fired on Paris. Nevertheless, Col. Miller obtained military pictures and technical secrets from confidential sources and here reveals the astounding story of the mystery gun.

By

LIEUTENANT COLONEL HENRY W. MILLER

SATURDAY, the 23rd of March, 1918, dawned in Paris as one of those rarely beautiful early spring mornings for which France is famous. A persistent dull rumble, as of an approaching storm, came out of the north from the savage offensive begun two days before, in the early morning hours of March 21st, by the German Armies of Von Hutier, Marwitz and Below.

But neither the sinister significance of the offensive, going worse than badly for the British armies, nor the hour and a half of suspense of the night before, between the terrifying warning by siren horns of the approach of German bombing planes and the ringing of bells and the sounding of the "retreat" by bugles to announce their return across the lines and the end of danger, could diminish the delight of the early risers with the beautiful morning. Slowly the mists last to rise over the Seine floated away, and by seven o'clock all Paris was asparkle with bright spring sunshine.

Time's pendulum and Fate's plans worked on inexorably to 7:20 when the few people about on the Quai de Seine in the northeastern section of the fortified portion of Paris were violently startled by the crash of something that exploded on the stone pavements in front of house number 6 along the Quai. Fragments and missiles hissed through the air spattering the stone buildings and breaking windows. Seemingly no one was hurt. The immediate question to everyone nearabout was: "What was it?" To soldiers it sounded like the explosion of a 77mm. high explosive shell; to civilians it resembled the crash of a 22-pound air bomb, the sound of which was becoming familiar to people in Paris. As always, a few hurried to the scene, curiosity overcoming caution. Fragments of metal were found, some of them too hot to hold. These were shown to the gendarmes of the vicinity who had been instructed to hurry to the scenes of explosions of air bombs, the only kind Paris had known so far, and for three years only at night. To some of those more distant who had heard the explosion, it meant the enemy; to others something less serious; most of the people of the city had not heard it at all. So by itself this one explosion meant but little. "Air bombs", was the common verdict. But what curious bombs!

At 7:40, a second explosion occurred, not so loud to those at the scene of the first because it was a mile and a half away. But the sound and shock were terrific to the hundreds about the Gare de l'Est where

◆ COMPLETE IN THIS ISSUE ◆

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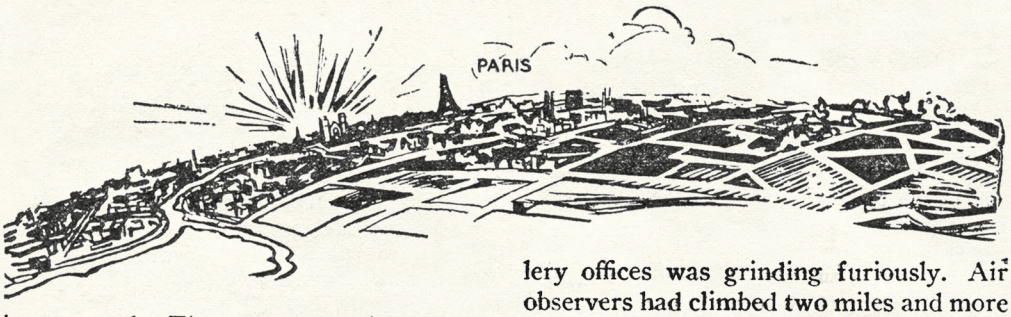


it occurred. The pavements here were crowded, even so early. In front of the railway station there is an entrance to the three metro or subway lines which have a junction at this point. The bomb struck on the cobbles of the Boulevard de Strasbourg, not a hundred feet from one entrance to the subway lines, and exploded entirely above the surface of the street. For an instant the hundreds of people were stunned; the cobbles were torn up for several yards and fragments of metal and stone spattered the walls of houses and tore the people; the concussion broke windows all about, turned over and demolished a news stand and some carts. Eight of those who lay about on the streets and pavements were dead. Thirteen others were more or less seriously hurt.

The second explosion set the wheels of officialdom grinding. Anything that happens in so public a place, killing eight and wounding thirteen of a crowd that is hurrying by three separate subway lines to all parts of the city, quickly receives every variety of attention. The gendarmes immediately telephoned to headquarters the nature and extent of the calamity in so far as their hasty examination permitted them to explain. Newspaper offices learned from Police Headquarters the causes of the sounds and where the explosions had occurred. Reporters hurried to the scene.

At 8:05 there was a third explosion, on the Rue de Chateau-Landon. Except to those in the immediate vicinity, the sound was more muffled than the previous two; the shell had burst within a building.

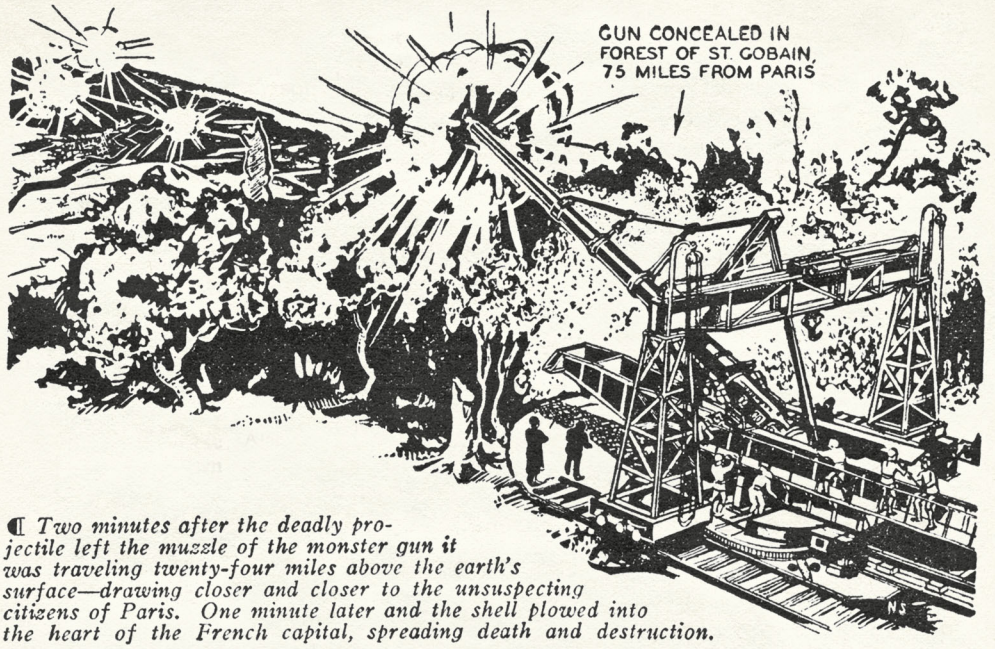
THE machinery of the Paris Defence Service office, the Police Department, the Municipal Laboratory and the artillery offices was grinding furiously. Air observers had climbed two miles and more into the sky and searched in vain for the bombing planes or Zeppelins. The telephones in all technical service offices were jangling or were busy with conferences about the nature of the bombardment and the curious fragments of metal. It was already clear to the air bomb and artillery projectile experts that the bombs were not air bombs. No air bomb case was ever made of steel over two inches thick; nor was any such case ever supplied with copper bands. And some of the fragments of this thing had grooves in them, cut in the steel itself.

The question confronting the Paris Defence Service could no longer be evaded. The bombs had been dropping for nearly two hours; nine people had been killed, seventeen wounded, houses demolished, and alarming rumors were spreading; even that the German army was within field gun range of Paris. The business of the city was going on with little noticeable interruption or derangement, but gradually the rumors were affecting it.

Between 9:04 and 9:15, information was received of the seventh explosion, in Chatillon. A momentous decision was then made, and at 9:15 the order was given and at once carried out to sound the sirens.

At 9:15, with the offices and stores all over the city functioning almost as usual, subway trains, busses, and trolley cars running on schedule, children at school, men and women at work, many entirely ignorant of the disturbances, the sirens on all large buildings and on fire trucks passing through the streets began that screeching which for three years had been a dread sound to all Parisians.

The effect of the alarm sounded by the sirens at 9:15 was truly electrical.



¶ *Two minutes after the deadly projectile left the muzzle of the monster gun it was traveling twenty-four miles above the earth's surface—drawing closer and closer to the unsuspecting citizens of Paris. One minute later and the shell plowed into the heart of the French capital, spreading death and destruction.*

The city stopped, and it did not require long. From the usual Saturday morning activity at 9:15, it was reduced in a comparatively few minutes almost to midnight inactivity; the silence became painful, and for the next hour the explosions of the bombs landing even miles away could be heard.

"Extra" papers quickly appeared on the streets. The newsboys were besieged and many papers were sold before the police could seize them. The people detained in shelters were naturally more than eager for news. In the main the extras had not been censored. The orders against "too much" news, however accurate, were severe. The managers of some of the papers, mostly the socialistic variety, saw fit to be explosively irritated over this interference with their business.

By 9:30 the artillery officers were beginning to admit to themselves that the projectiles might be coming from within the German lines. The grooves in the steel and the enormously heavy side walls and base of the projectile indicated an extremely high powder pressure, hence probably a correspondingly high initial velocity of the shell.

It was true that the nearest point of the German line was sixty-seven miles away. The gun would certainly be at least six and possibly as much as ten miles behind the lines for even moderate safety. This made at least seventy-three and perhaps seventy-seven miles.

Maps of the army fronts were consulted for clues on locations. A line running due northeast through the center of Paris passed through the center of the pronounced "corner" of the German line created the year before when they retired on the Somme. The city of Laon was in this corner or pocket, and the point of this corner was, or had been two days before, the nearest point of the German line to Paris.

Some officers remembered, and by reference at once confirmed, that during the previous September formidable excavating, possibly for large gun emplacements, had been noticed in this salient. And an air photograph taken merely in general reconnaissance over this region on March 6th revealed two new railway curves of the kind commonly used in the French army for railway artillery, leading off to the southwest from the Laon-Amiens railway line near the little village of Crepy.

In such an emergency one is sorely tempted to accept seemingly reasonable conclusions. Perhaps it was not surpris-

ing then that certain artillery officers came to the conclusion as early as 9:30 that Paris was being bombarded by a new long range gun of about eight inch calibre, probably located in the region of Laon, and more than likely on one of those two new railway curves at Crepy, about 120 km. or 75 miles from the center of Paris.

A communique was made up at 10:00 o'clock in some office in Paris and sent to the newspaper offices. This was displayed on bulletin boards and read as follows:

> At 8:30 some German planes which were flying at a very low altitude succeeded in crossing the lines and in attacking Paris. They were at once pursued, both by the Paris defence airplanes and those of the Front. Several of the points of fall of bombs have been registered. There are a few victims. A later communique will specify the results and the details of the raid.

Projectiles continued to fall at more or less regular intervals but at ever increasing distances from each other.

A second communique was sent to the newspapers at four o'clock. This was displayed on their boards and set for the night and morning papers. It said:

> The enemy fired on Paris with a long range gun starting at 8:00 A. M. At intervals of a quarter of an hour, shells of 240 millimeter calibre fell on the capital and its suburbs. There are about a dozen dead and about fifteen wounded. Measures are being taken to counter-shell the gun.

SHORTLY after nine in the morning General Bourgeois who was in command of the sound ranging division of the French armies, was instructed to set some of his thirty-two units along the Front at the work of locating the gun firing on Paris.

They had no success during the morning, their sound detecting instruments registering only a confusion of sounds. But they reported noticeably increased volumes of sound at somewhat the same intervals as those between explosions in Paris and these sounds came from the suspected region of Crepy. Many guns were firing at rather irregular intervals from the Laon corner.

The air reconnaissance service had also been busy and late in the day some observers returned with the report that all the area in the Laon corner was covered with a haze of smoke pots, and that though they could not see anything clearly, it seemed that there were guns firing from some railway tracks near Crepy.

Something had to be done to stop the bombardment, and at once. Orders were therefore telephoned late in the evening to Group Commander Stapfer at Mont Notre Dame to detach a battery of his 305 mm. or 12-inch rifles on Batignolles railway carriages and start them at once for Vailly on the Soissons-Rheims railway. They were to be emplaced as quickly as possible on any available siding near Vailly and would begin firing at the earliest possible moment on the map point whose coordinates were 47.23. This was at the end of the shorter railway curve on the air photo of March 6th.

No one in Paris was surprised when a dull boom announced at 6:50 on Sunday morning that a second day's bombardment had begun.

The first place struck on Sunday was not more than a half mile from number 6 Quai de Seine where the first shells had fallen Saturday. The projectile missed the corner of the next house by only a few inches. There was a recess between the two. It burst instantly on striking the wall just beside a second floor window and wrought heavy damage within and without. One person was killed and fourteen wounded.

On the front page of "Le Matin," under a picture showing people on the street looking and pointing toward the sky, was a small map with Paris marked in the lower left corner and St. Gobain and Laon in the upper right. A heavy line was drawn between Paris and St. Gobain. In the text of the article one read:

"It was soon known (on Saturday) that the gun that was bombarding Paris had just been discovered by air observers in the forest of St. Gobain, seventy-five miles from Paris, and measures were taken at once to counter shell it."

It became obvious to officers of the Paris Defence Service and others early

on the first day of the bombardment that additional regulations would have to be provided for the new emergency and the all too frequent air raids of the past few weeks. The "sirens," by which the alarms for the bombardments had been sounded on both mornings, had been used previously for air raids only. The effect of them was therefore such as to interfere too seriously with the necessary routine business of the city. A new method of warning people of a bombardment had to be adopted. "Le Matin" and other papers published some of the new regulations on Sunday:

"Beginning tomorrow, a bombardment by cannon will be announced by the beating of drums and blowing of whistles by the gendarmes. This is to be known as 'Alarm number 3.' When this alarm is sounded, people are prohibited from gathering in crowds. The 'All's clear' for bombardments by cannon will be given as for air raids, by the ringing of bells and blowing of bugles."

The Palm Sunday bombardment continued without interruption.

The "All's well" was sounded at 3:30. But long before, during most of the day, in fact, the streets, boulevards and parks were filled with people. The bombardment seemed to be losing its element of terror. Very few people had seen any signs of destruction, and the newspapers contained no descriptions of it and reported the casualties very indefinitely.

ON THE French front, captive balloons with observers searching for some definite signs of the locations of the gun or guns had been hanging in the sky all day, as all the day before, targets for the German field guns and the machine guns of planes.

Airmen had made frequent trips over the Laon corner, but again the whole country was obscured by a mist or smoke or perhaps both.

The sound rangers had been on the alert since nine o'clock Saturday morning, but still with no success.

The twelve inch railway battery, ordered up from Mont Notre Dame by way of Soissons the night before, reached Vailly at dawn. The men had been laboring since early morning to emplace one of the guns for firing at the end of the shorter curved track, though there was still no confirmation that the Paris gun was there.

The work of the French gunners, as of the Germans operating the Paris guns, would be "map shooting" at a target that could neither be seen nor observed. The orienteur officer and his assistants were busy all morning in working out the firing data so that they might begin as soon as the carriages were emplaced.

One gun was emplaced by noon, and at 12:30 the first shot was fired at the end of the shorter and closer curve. They continued firing most of the afternoon. Reports reached them in mid-afternoon that no projectiles had fallen in Paris since 12:26. The guess that the Paris gun was at the end of the short curve must have been right. Lucky for them that they had found that chance picture of March 6th!

At 6:50 A. M. Monday, the first projectile from the already facetiously named "telegraph gun" burst in the Allee Verte which ran between the Rue de Sabin and the Boulevard Richard Lenoir in the 11th arrondissement. This was nearly a mile and a half from the point at which the first projectile burst on Saturday. No one was harmed.

Ten minutes later, the fifty-third projectile of the bombardment struck on the Rue Tandou, killing one person and wounding another. Rue Tandou was another short street two blocks long, very close to the Quai de la Loire, across from the Quai de Seine. The shell burst at the back of a house on the north side of the street. The short interval of ten minutes seemed to indicate that, as on Sunday, more than one gun was firing.

Then, as though to prove that the tragic and the ludicrous are constantly jostling each other to lead life's procession, the alarm was given in the manner announced on Sunday.

The Paris gendarme was a sedate, dignified individual. He represented law and order. And here, in the midst of this

bombardment, he was projected rudely upon the stage to be a clown. Clowns, or something, were needed to break the tension; but that the gendarmes should officiate as such was not intended.

Here and there, in all directions, was heard the beating of drums and blowing of whistles.

Here came a sedate policeman, spic and span in his meticulously neat uniform, sheepishly beating a drum and blowing a whistle. His technique in beating the drum compared favorably with that of the three year old who has received a drum at Christmas. Pedestrians and others who came to their doors to see what it meant stared in amazement, and then a goodly number of Parisians roared with laughter.

The newspapers of the day contained more interesting comments, reports and theories. A Swiss paper of Bale reported a German official communique of Sunday, the 24th, as saying:

"We have bombarded the fortified city of Paris with some long range guns."

The "Strassburger Post" said, commenting on the bombardment:

"This bombardment is not only a measure of retaliation; it is also an extremely powerful war measure, psychologically and materially."

Paris papers, "Le Temps," "Le Matin," and others, reported more information and theories. General Mochot, head of the Artillery Technical Department, said:

"The existence of a gun with a range of 100 to 120 kilometers did not astonish ballisticians; it was a marvelous invention, but not impossible."

THE guns were silent on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. No one knew why, but it was appreciated none the less.

During this period of inactivity, it was decided (but not announced) that Alarm Number 3, which had proved so amusing on Monday morning, would not be repeated. The much abused gendarmes made a vigorous protest against the indignity. In anticipation of a continuation of the bombardment, pedestrians were advised to walk on the north and east sides of streets; they were cautioned also against remaining on the top floors of buildings during a bombardment and against gathering in crowds.

Good Friday, March 29th, promised to be the desired uneventful quiet spring day so fitting for the usual religious ceremonies. At the Church of St. Gervais, a magnificent stone structure on the Place St. Gervais opposite the Hotel de Ville and only a block from the Seine between the islands, the worshippers had finished the three hours of service and were kneeling in prayer. The place was crowded. It was just 4:30.

Suddenly the hundreds of kneeling worshippers were startled by a terrific crash overhead, an explosion. A projectile had struck the roof. Those looking up quickly saw a stone pillar crumpling, beginning to fall. Then the stone vault supported by this pillar began to crack, crumple, and in a second, scores of tons of stone, some blocks weighing a half ton, were pouring down upon the mass of people.

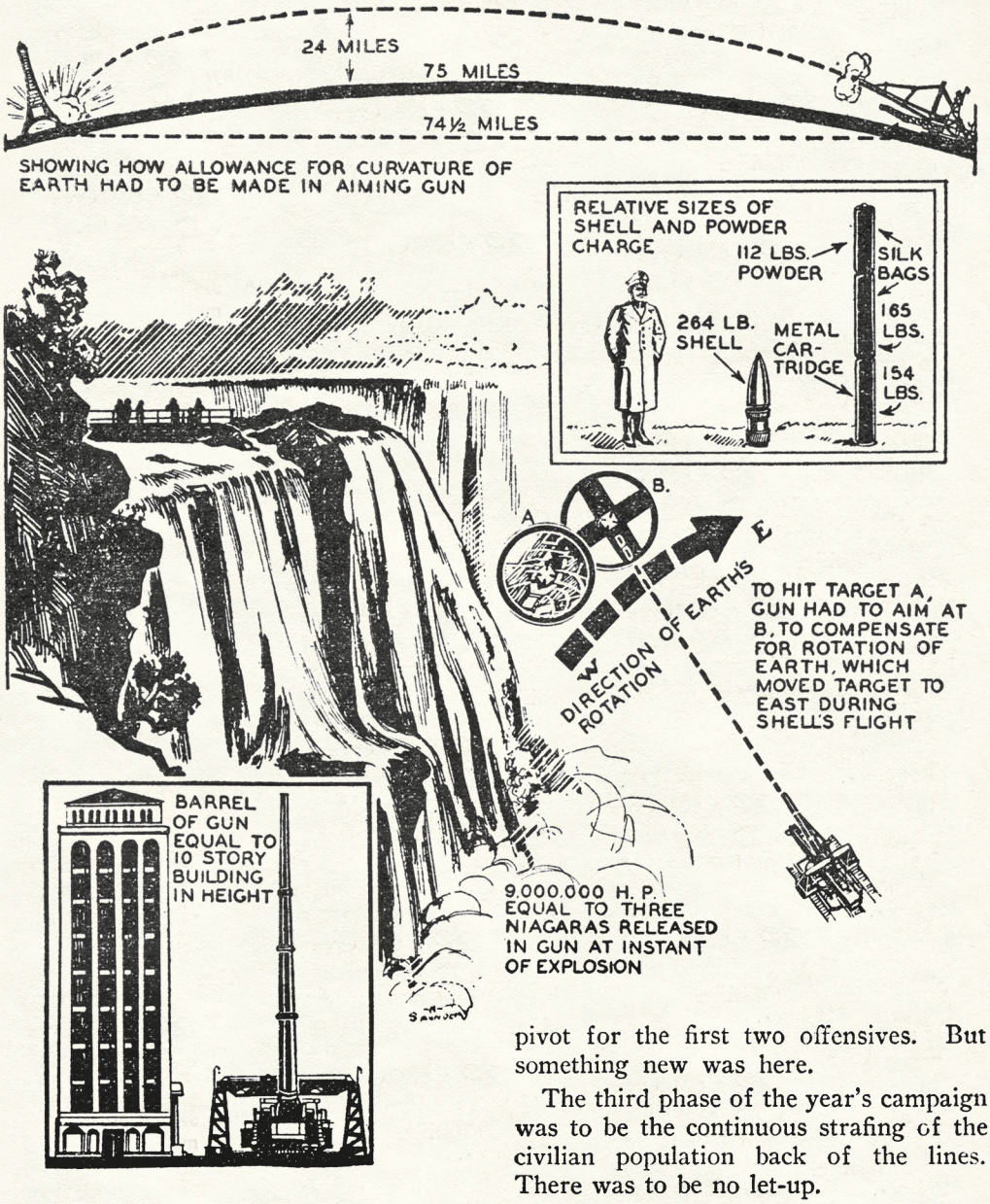
To try to escape was futile. In a twinkling, the cathedral resounded with the crashing of the roof, the impact of the masses of stone, the shrieks of the injured and dying. Those not caught in the fall made a rush for the doors, for blocks and fragments of stone continued to fall.

Immediately the frantic work of rescue began. As rapidly as possible, the injured were taken out; then the wrecks that had been human beings were uncovered from the mass of stone that filled the nave of the cathedral, in places more than six feet deep.

The surmise in the Artillery Office on Friday night was that the four shells of the day were shot from a new gun. The three entirely over the city and one almost on the target seemed to indicate, when one compared this performance with that of the previous Saturday, that a new gun was being used.

EARLY March was a period of intense activity in the German Army. Nowhere was there more intense and enthu-

Strange Facts on Wonder Weapon



siastic activity than down in that corner left in the line after the retirement of early 1917 on the Somme, the corner about the city of Laon; the Laon Corner.

Not so great activity in this region in piling up supplies, for this would be the pivot for the first two offensives. But something new was here.

The third phase of the year's campaign was to be the continuous strafing of the civilian population back of the lines. There was to be no let-up.

The beginning had been made on the 30th of January on Paris, which was to be the central objective. Thirty planes had succeeded in dropping 141 bombs containing nearly four tons of explosive on and about the city. And when the planes crossed the line to bomb other

towns, the alarm was sounded in Paris lest the planes be headed that way.

But the real surprise was coming, and the men laboring on the slopes of the little Mont de Joie along the Rheims-Laon-La Fere-Amiens railway just north of the Village of Crepy-en-Laonnois were spurred to greater activity to finish all their preparations before the orders could be given for the first of a series of war-ending offensives.

The German army was going to give the world its biggest surprise, in the shelling of the city of Paris from this point.

It was not surprising that the men from the Navy and artificers from Krupp's, busily at work north of Crepy in the Laon Corner, were driven at their tasks by the greatest pride and enthusiasm. Their entree was to be a climax of surprises, the last great, spectacular, dramatic surprise. They felt all the more pride in the achievement in that so many seemingly insurmountable difficulties had been mastered. Early in 1916, when Dr. von Eberhardt presented his theories and calculations to Director Rausenberger, a veritable genius in the designing of artillery, it seemed that a range of sixty miles could be attained with available powders, and a gun that could be made on existing machines.

It was a daring exploit, the dream of a physicist, appreciated and accepted by the more practical genius, Rausenberger. Then came the conferences with the Admiralty Ordnance officers, Admirals Rogge and Gerdes, in Berlin. Did they see any use, any need for such a gun? They did, of course, but more was needed. Did the Army High Command, meaning General Ludendorff? He did also; in fact, contrary to his custom, he was enthusiastic.

So work was begun on the designing of all parts of the final unit, gun, carriage, projectile, and powder containers. All went beautifully until the end of 1916 when, to the consternation and dismay of all concerned in Berlin and at Krupp's, a telegram came instructing them to increase the range of the gun to seventy-five miles.

A way was finally found to attain that end, and more, eighty miles. By the summer of 1917, this gun was finished and taken to Meppen for testing. The question was raised and discussed many times as to whether this extreme range and the unique method of attaining it would have been realized had it not been for the Somme retreat and Ludendorff's telegram instructing them to increase the range to seventy-five miles.

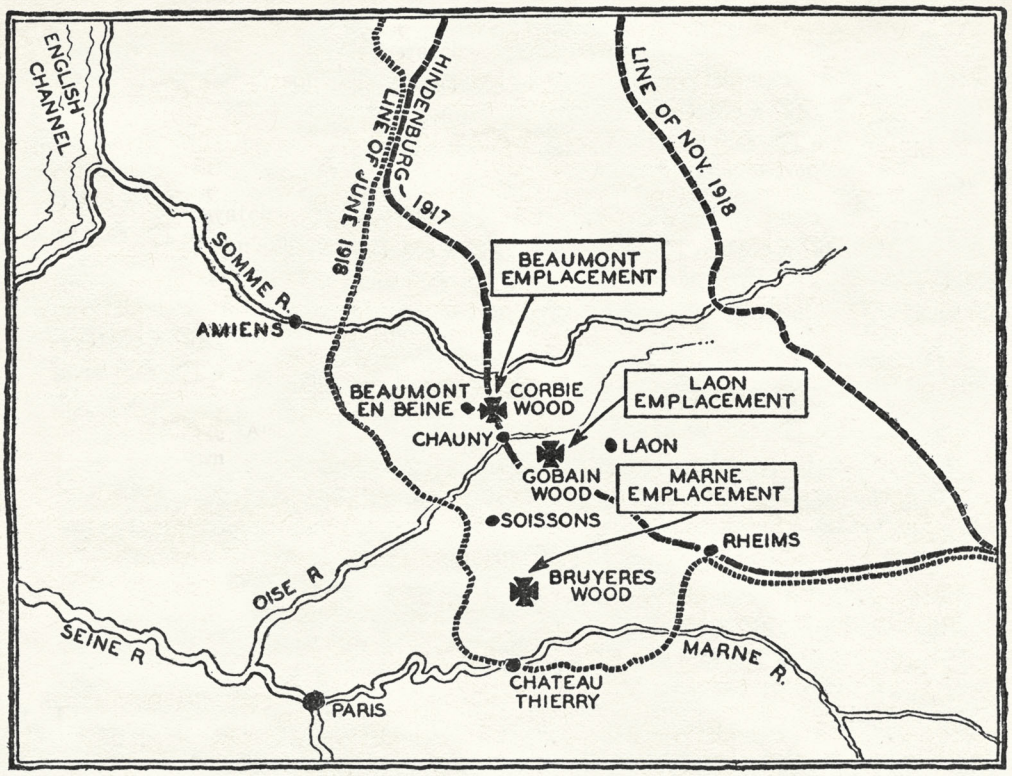
The difficulties experienced with the projectiles were unexpected. The first, fired in July, was an utter failure. Several new designs tested in September were equally dismal failures. A beautiful gun and no projectile. A radically different design of projectile was tested in November. It was a failure but the idea seemed to hold out hope. Modified forms of the November shells were tested in December; there was more hope, and real success was achieved in January, just in time.

The choice of the Laon Corner for the super guns had a very definite connection with the need to increase their range from sixty to seventy-five miles. As the lines were in January, 1916, the sixty mile range was ample, and afforded some choice of positions for the gun. After the retirement on the Somme in 1917, there was only one position where adequate concealment could be secured along an existing and favorably located railway line, even with the increase in range of the gun to eighty miles.

The only possible positions were in the Laon Corner; and the choice there was sharply limited. It would not be wise to work such guns at their extreme range; they would wear out rapidly enough under the most favorable of conditions. And it was necessary to emplace them in the densest and oldest wood available for effective concealment.

There actually was no choice of positions. The eastern slope of the Mont de Joie in the St. Gobain Wood was the only possible place.

This was dangerously close to the lines and easily within the range of French railway guns. Cannon of such value as



The three emplacements of the famous gun that shelled Paris from a distance of seventy-five miles are shown by the Imperial German crosses. Simultaneous with the super long-range bombardment the Germans started their giant March drive, with which they planned to take Paris.

The line running through Chateau Thierry shows where the horde was stopped and just how close their plan came to success. So great was the effect of the mystery guns on the morale of citizens and soldiers that the Paris Gun is claimed by many to have gained the distance between the lines of 1917 and June 1918 (see map).

The line of November, 1918 represents the defeated German army after the Yanks took the matter in hand at Chateau Thierry.

these new long range rifles should never be placed within so short a distance as seven miles of the lines as they would be here; but the combination of circumstances demanded the risk.

Three separate positions were prepared. One begun in September was in the rather sparse and young growth wood known locally as "la Sapiniers."

A considerable clearing was necessary about the emplacement, about seventy feet wide by nearly a hundred and fifty feet in length, the long edges of the rectangle pointing toward Paris, almost due southwest. The track from the main line to this emplacement, which was called Number 1, in order of construction, was about a half mile long, and beyond a false branch it was most carefully camouflaged.

Within the main clearing and near the northeastern side, a pit was dug, about thirty-five feet square and fifteen feet deep, for the concrete emplacement. The making of this was a tedious job. Its interior was octagonal in shape and in several steps, a total depth of ten feet. Two rings of anchor bolts were embedded in the concrete and a steel base ring on which the gun carriage would rest and turn was bolted to the concrete by these.

This ring, twenty-seven feet in outside diameter, was in six parts, which were fitted together so perfectly that there were no perceptible joints. The raised portion

between the outer and inner rings of bolts was very perfectly machined to permit the traversing or turning rollers to roll on it with the least effort.

Heavy concrete shelters were constructed to the right and left of the concrete emplacement with their tops barely above ground. The tops of these were more than four feet thick, advisedly strong, for they were to house ammunition and the gun crew, too, in emergencies, and there must be no question of their adequacy.

All knew perfectly that once the guns began firing the enemy air observers would be over only too quickly searching for them.

A branch line for other emplacements was led off from the main line about a half mile farther north. At the end of about a half mile, a short line was run off to the right and parallel with the main branch line for several hundred yards to a position not far from the large clearing. The main branch continued on to the clearing, across it, gradually climbing till it entered the wood on the far side. Just within the wood, it terminated at the third emplacement. It was a little over a half mile from the main track to Number 2 and about a mile and a quarter to Number 3.

IT HAD been decided since the construction of the first carriage, the one intended for emplacement Number 1 in "la Sapiniers," that a simpler type of carriage would suffice. The pits at Numbers 2 and 3, which were identical in shape and dimensions, would therefore house heavy timber structures instead of massive concrete as at Number 1.

Both emplacements were well camouflaged with grass-covered wire netting.

One installation was to be completed as early as possible, so that if the army preparations were complete when the weather forecasters announced a probable two weeks of fine weather and the first offensive was ordered, one gun at least could go into service. Gun Number 1 was the logical selection.

The first cars to be pushed in on the 'la Sapiniers' branch contained the five parts of the Gantry crane required to install the carriage and then the gun.

The final item for assembly was the gun, the great achievement. No such gun had ever been seen before. It had been made from one of the Navy's newest 15 inch 45 calibre rifles but now it was almost double the original gun in length. It had been tubed down to 8.26 inches, and the extension of the tube beyond the 15 inch gun made the new gun a strange looking device. This, transported on its special cars, was run up to the emplacement, carefully raised by the crane, slipped through the cradle and its great breech lug bolted to the recoil and recuperator pistons.

The final step in the assembling and adjusting was a careful bracing and straightening of the long tube by means of what resembled one vertical or strut and the connecting links of a suspension bridge mounted on top of the gun. This was to prevent even the slightest drooping or bending. The most careful bore sighting was necessary to insure that the axis of the "Jack's Beanstalk" was a straight line and not a curve.

This was a laborious process but absolutely necessary. A smooth bore muzzle section had been ripped off at the proving ground for failure to brace and straighten the tube. If not braced it drooped nearly an inch in its entire length.

Some officers, one of them a geographer and a reserve officer, were busy at night and by day determining with the utmost accuracy the true north line and from this the exact direction of the line through the center of the base of the carriage and the center of Paris. When this was determined, the base ring was engraved with an index mark which would serve as the zero mark in aiming the gun.

Work was finished at Emplacement Number 1 early in March, and Grand Headquarters was so notified. The erection of the carriages at Number 2 and 3 was still in progress. Some apprehension

was felt on March 6th, a beautiful day, when French planes were discovered overhead; reconnaissance planes, and the observers were taking pictures. Nothing was moved, men remained under cover while the planes were about lest their motions betray any unusual activities. Trees were not yet in all the sockets, in very few of them in fact, but it was hoped that the other precautions would prove effective. Fortunately, the nets were all in place over the emplacements.

Other work than that of erecting the guns had been in progress. Anti-aircraft guns were installed in the wood on the north side of the main railway line where the Number 2-3 branch left it. Other batteries had been placed along this branch at about the center of the large clearing, and still others along the narrow gauge railway line running north from Crepy past Emplacement Number 2.

Smoke pots were placed all about in the Laon Corner so that the emplacements might be effectively obscured no matter what the direction of the wind. Telephone lines were run from Battery Headquarters to a number of heavy field batteries emplaced in this region. Battery Headquarters was connected by telephone with each of the Paris guns.

As soon as the work of installation at Emplacement Number 1 was finished early in March, the gun crews began their training. Training was certainly necessary for the procedure was distinctly unique. Seemingly every unit of the guns and carriages and ammunition was freakish; the gun interminable in length, with a smooth bore section, and the whole tube elaborately braced to keep it straight.

The carriage was nearly twenty-five feet high. The projectile was a relatively tiny thing with narrow copper bands far separated and the shell itself enlarged in advance of each. Grooves were cut into the steel, making the shell literally a screw.

In practice, the shell, which though small weighed 264 pounds, was brought from the storehouse in a tray on a special carriage. The tray was then lifted by a winch to the loading platform twenty feet up, the tray locked to the breech of the gun, and the rammer head fitted carefully to the base of the projectile. The shell was then pushed forward through the long powder chamber and when it reached the forward end it was slowly turned until by the 'feel' it was known that the raised portions of the shell, the screw threads, had entered the grooves in the bore of the gun.

Never such a procedure as this before. The need for this care would make the service of the gun slow. The projectile was not rammed in practice for it would not be easy to remove it. When later a real projectile would be put in, it would be fitted just as carefully and then rammed hard so that the 'lands' of the gun (the raised portions between the grooves) would bite hard into the forward copper band. The projectile would then remain in place when the gun was elevated to its extreme angle for firing.

The crews also practiced loading the powder charges. There were three; two bags and a metal cartridge. The charges in the metal case and one bag were fixed in weight, but the weight of the other bag would vary according to the state of wear or erosion of the gun, and numerous other considerations. All of the projectiles must leave the gun with as nearly as possible the same velocity if they were all to drop on the same target. But, as shot after shot would be fired, the terrific heat of the exceedingly dense gases would soften the steel walls of the gun, especially at the forward end of the powder chamber; the stream of dense gas passing over these surfaces would then scour away the metal to such an extent that each new projectile that was put in would stop or jam just a little farther forward. Thus each succeeding projectile would have a slightly shorter distance to travel in the gun.

If, then, the fiftieth projectile were to leave with the same velocity as the first, it would be only by virtue of the fact that it had been pushed harder in its shorter traveling distance. Hence the necessity for the variable third section of the powder charge.

ON THE 20th, news of the long expected order passed like a flash through all the armies, and, just before four o'clock the next morning, the usual first day of spring, the German artillery all along the front of Generals Below, Marwitz, and Hutier from the Laon Corner north past Arras began a five hour preparation for the first colossal offensive. The artillery forward of the Paris Gun region about Crepy took part, and such a drumfire of crashing, booming, and muttering cannon had not been heard before.

As if to satisfy the impatience of the Paris Gun crews, who could not see why they should not have been permitted to join this overture of artillery, the orders came from Grand Headquarters during the day to begin firing on the 23rd. The climax, the reward for all the labor, was at hand.

More drilling of the gun crews during that and the next day, for the rumor and hope that the Kaiser would come and inspect the guns in action was confirmed.

He would come down from headquarters at Avernes whither he had come in his special train sometime during the past few days. The crew of Number 1 must be perfectly trained for so special an occasion.

Professor von Eberhardt, early in 1916, had concluded that if one were to shoot a projectile of sufficient weight through the low dense layers of air at a high initial elevation and it were possible to give the projectile an initial velocity of about a mile per second, it would very quickly, twelve miles up, come into air so rare as to offer a negligible resistance and the projectile would then have approximately the desired elevation of 45 degrees that Galileo had proved correct for the maximum range in a vacuum.

The projectile would go on up, gradually nosing downward from the pull of gravity, and descend finally into denser and denser air to the earth, having traveled more than three-fourths of its horizontal distance or range in a virtual vacuum. He thought this should give an unusual range, provided the initial velocity of about a mile per second were possible. This had been found possible, and the elevation of the gun to give the greatest range was 50 degrees.

The first item in the calculations, the range, was fixed. But even here there was something unique in artillery operations. For all normal field artillery firing, the earth's surface is a plane. But not for these guns. So great were their ranges, and for the range in question, that is, to Paris, that the distance from the gun to the center of Paris, a straight line beneath the surface of the earth, of course, was nearly a half mile shorter than the map distance, which is the distance on the surface of the earth.

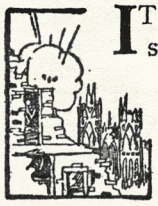
The final correction was more weird than that of the range, that is, for the compass direction. So great was the range that a correction had to be made for the rotation of the earth and this varied with the compass direction in which the gun would be fired.

If, for example, it were desired to fire on a target seventy-five miles due south, it would be necessary to aim or 'lay' the gun on a point east of the target. At the instant the projectile was fired it would be rotating about the axis of the earth at the speed of the gun. Seventy-five miles south, the distance around the earth in a plane perpendicular to its axis was greater; a point there traveled more miles per second and, as everywhere on the earth, from west to east. When the projectile had traveled south the distance of seventy-five miles, the point due south of the gun had moved on east. So to strike a point due south it was necessary to compensate for the differences in speed of rotation of points north and south about the earth's axis by aiming the gun east of the target.

Everyone connected with the Paris Gun Headquarters and Number 1 gun was astir even earlier than usual on this morning. Breakfast for all was quickly disposed of; few were interested in it. This was the great day for which all had been laboring so long. The culmination of all the trials, labor, disappointments, successes; the climax.

To the southeast, seventy-five miles away, lay the great city of Paris; begin-

ning its busiest week day, the people irritated over another raid alarm during the night, but still feeling secure with the French lines intact from La Fere around the Laon Corner and east past Soissons and Rheims.



IT WAS rapidly approaching seven o'clock. The weather forecasters thought the fog would hold for a part of the day, but one must not take unnecessary chances on being seen. The discharge of the gun and other guns in the Corner would be heard over the line only seven miles off, and planes would be up all too soon.

The commanding officer therefore ordered the smoke pots to the north lighted so that there would be a good screen over the whole corner in an hour. The gunnery officer called up the batteries north and south to inquire if they were ready; they were, and were standing by for his signal. Those guns would set all French sound ranging instruments to jiggling so violently that the discharge of the great gun would be undecipherable on their record charts.

The order for loading was given and all sprang to with a will. The projectile was hauled over on the ammunition track, hoisted to the loading platform, and its tray locked to the massive gun breech. The crew that had done this in practice so often fitted the rammer carefully to the base, slid the projectile forward to the end of the powder chamber, carefully turned it to fit into the grooves in the gun, and then with a mighty heave rammed it home.

The powder charges were already coming up to the loading platform; the first was slid into the powder chamber, then the second; each was pushed forward into place with the rammer. Then two tiny pressure gauges were fitted into special sockets in the wall of the chamber and the brass cased base charge was put in.

The gunnery officer with his sergeant inspected every move critically; the order to close the breech was given and, with the turning of the crank, the huge block of steel moved across, sealing in the projectile and powder. The block was locked in place and the crew scrambled down from the platform. The sergeant inspected and set the firing mechanism and signaled 'All's ready' to his officer. At once the switch was closed and, with the hum of the elevating motor, the great gun began to rise to its firing position.

The gun was up, everyone was out of the way who had no special function. The elevation was carefully set, checked by a special quadrant and by a second gunner. All was ready. The gunnery officer had all batteries on the phone, and when he received the final signal that the elevation had been checked, he called to all to stand by for the order.

At exactly 7:17, he gave the order on the phone; instantly, heavy guns, north, south, and west, fired practically in unison; in a second, the order to the Paris gun sergeant. With a terrific, crashing roar, the great gun belched forth a huge cloud of orange red smoke and incandescent gas. The projectile had gone. The great gun recoiled violently in its cradle, came to rest, and then slowly slid forward.

At once the elevating motor was set going and the gun slowly descended to be inspected and loaded again as before.

Meanwhile the seconds ticked off as the projectile mounted to unknown heights in its flight toward its target. From a position of rest in the gun, it had been set into motion with violent twisting and pushing. A million pounds pressure had been exerted on its base while it traveled up the gun.

There had been a terrific straining to set it turning at the rate of a hundred revolutions per second before it left the gun so that it would remain head-on throughout its journey. In a fiftieth of a second it left the muzzle of the gun at the velocity of 5500 feet per second, a mile per second, and with the energy of eight billion foot pounds.

As the projectile emerged into the air, it encountered a pressure of two thousand pounds from the fore attempting to stop it. In twenty-five seconds it was twelve

miles high and in air only one tenth as dense as that at the surface of the earth. It had lost heavily in velocity getting through that layer of dense air; from 5500 to 3000 feet per second. And the temperature had dropped below anything experienced on earth, at least to 70 degrees below zero.

In 90 seconds it was at its maximum height, 24 miles, and turning downward. There was no air to speak of up there. For at least fifty miles of its range, it traveled in a virtual vacuum. The velocity at the top of its path had dropped to 2250 feet per second. And then it began its downward journey. It gained steadily in velocity until at the twelve mile level it had regained the 3000 foot seconds it had before. But there began the real resistance to its flight; its velocity increased slightly, 75 seconds, and then it began to slow up even while falling.

At the gun, officers were studying their watches; 150 seconds; 160; 170; in just a few seconds, at the 186th, at some place in Paris that projectile would strike and burst. With what effect?

Not in forty-eight years had the great city of Paris been shelled. Not since 1870 when the besieging German army fired more than a million solid shot, some hot, and spherical shell into the city. In a few seconds it would again be a city bombarded by German guns.

Perhaps in that great city from which the projectile was now only ten seconds, eight seconds, distant, certain people were walking toward a corner, to walk into the projectile or out of danger. One hundred and eighty-six seconds; 7:20. *The projectile had burst.*

THE bore was hastily inspected, the pressure gauges removed and tossed down to the waiting ballistic officer, and after swabbing out the powder chamber, the crew at once entered, placed and rammed the next shell. As soon as it had been rammed, they measured the distance from its base to the breech face of the gun with a special gauge provided for that purpose.

This was a part of the procedure in calculating the weight of the next charge of powder.

In no previous gun had such instruments as pressure gauges been employed to learn the probable point in range at which the projectile struck and to correct the calculated weight of the powder for the next charge.

From the range table it should have been 69,000 pounds per square inch for the corrected range of 67.1 miles. But the gauges said that the pressure had been only 63,800 pounds. This was perhaps to be expected; a cold gun. Seven and one-half pounds extra powder were quickly added to the variable powder charge, and the bag sewn up for loading. The crew then fell to with enthusiasm to finish loading the second charge.

By eleven o'clock, the battery had got off fifteen shots. The last was fired at 10:52. This was excellent service and the ballistic officers' map showed a good record. The crew was feeling the strain, however, and the rapidly wearing gun was sizzling hot. Surely the Parisians had been 'strafed' sufficiently to produce something close to the expected panic.

During lunch time, word was received that the Kaiser would arrive about one o'clock. The resumption of firing was therefore delayed and everything about the gun was put in perfect order. He arrived with others from Headquarters before one o'clock and examined the whole installation with keen interest and satisfaction, and remained for the first few rounds beginning at 12:57.

Not many gun crews had had the honor of serving their pieces under the eye of the Kaiser, a long remembered privilege for this crew.

He departed after several rounds had been fired to inspect the other emplacements.

With almost identical weather conditions Sunday, firing began at Gun Number 1 at 6:47, a little earlier than on Saturday.

While at lunch, the Admiral was called to the phone to talk with Headquarters. Everyone was expectant; it must be news. "The French papers report a heavy bom-

bardment of Paris on Saturday by some German long range guns. No such range as these guns seem to have has ever been known. The life of the French capital is completely demoralized.... The battery is instructed to continue the bombardment."

The Admiral's face reflected the news as he listened to the report. The crew were hilarious when he told them the details; they must drink to such success. Wine and glasses were produced and the toast drunk, "Hoch!"

Hardly had the glasses been filled a second time, however, when the crash of something which had exploded in the meadow below set the windows rattling. How could it be? But there was no mistaking it, a projectile of the heaviest calibre, twelve inches or larger. It could only have come from a French railway gun, and it struck midway between Guns 1 and 3. This was to be real war then for the Paris gun batteries. The opponent had struck back, and accurately, within thirty hours of the first shot. But how could they have learned of the locations?

At 5:43, one more shot was fired from Number 1; a tentative shot to see if it would draw the fire of the French gun. It could not be possible that they had any listening devices across the line that could distinguish the discharge of the big gun from those of the great number of large calibre field pieces firing at the same time. The shot drew no answering fire.

THE bombardment Tuesday began early again, the first shot being fired from Number 3 at 6:47.

Gun Number 1 was beginning to act very erratically. In a few minutes the crew of Number 1 heard the expected discharge at Number 3. At 7:37 they got off their own shot; the lowest pressure yet, six miles short; it may have fallen as far out as the suburb town of Drancy. Hardly had they fired when there came over the phone the appalling news that Number 3 had blown up; what they thought was a shot a few minutes before had in reality been a serious calamity.

When the order to fire the third round from Number 3 was given, there was a blinding flash at the breech, a deafening roar and paralyzing concussion. The whole massive breech was blown off. Men of the crew were hurled about as so many sticks; seventeen were killed or wounded. In fact, there were only a few who were not hurt.

The few uninjured and less seriously injured about Number 3 carried the wounded into the underground quarters for first aid. Later they were taken down to the men's quarters at Number 2 where the battery medical station had been fitted up. Five men were dead. The business of "strafing" Paris was taking its toll at this end earlier than had been expected. Air bombing, even the bombardment by artillery that had begun on Sunday, had been thought of, expected even, but no such calamity as this. And to add to the effect of this calamity, the French guns were already at it and the great shells were dropping here and there with alarming promise of one finally landing on one of the emplacements themselves. Each detonation threw up a huge geyser of earth, or the woods reverberated with the crash, and one could hear the falling of the trees that were uprooted or broken off. The Fates had turned the tables in this game with a vengeance.

It was decided to discontinue firing from Number 1 until a thorough inspection could be made of Number 3 to learn if possible the cause of the premature explosion. Perhaps the projectile had not been rammed hard enough, had dropped back on the powder when the gun was elevated for firing. Then when it was driven forward it jammed at a slight angle, or the rifling of the gun and the projectile did not mesh. And, if so, the powder pressure had instantly built up to 10,000 atmospheres or more and what remained of the powder at that point practically detonated, as T.N.T., an unfortunate habit of powder under very high pressures. That could and might happen again. From now on the

crews would have to take to some bomb-proof cover.

After lunch, when the French guns were less active, Number 1 was again ordered into action and a shot was fired at 3:45. The pressure developed indicated that it had fallen nearly two miles short.

A council was called during the evening to consider the problems which had developed. Just when all seemed to be going so smoothly, a host of troubles had arisen. Gun Number 3 was out and the carriage damaged. Practically all of that crew were killed or injured. The French guns had the range and location with remarkable accuracy, and it was only a matter of a short time until one of those twelve inch or larger projectiles would drop on Number 1 emplacement, kill the crew and demolish the gun and carriage, or both. And Number 1 gun was consistently undershooting the target; it was not sending its shells within that portion of the city where the effect on morale would be the greatest.

It was decided to abandon both positions and to get Number 2 into action as soon as possible. Shells from the French guns had not been falling dangerously close to that position yet.

On Friday morning, Good Friday, the technicians reported Number 2 so nearly in firing order that it could go into action in the afternoon. There had been a three-day break in the bombardment, a great psychological advantage had been lost through two unforeseen tricks of Fate. The gun was in order by noon, and, preceded by more of the endless calculations of firing data and with new and ample precautions to protect the crew against a repetition of Monday's calamity at Number 3, the first shot left for Paris without mishap at 3:27. Number 2 was operating at an effective range of 74.4 miles, almost the same as Number 1, which was 74.5 miles.

A COUNCIL was called at the end of the day to decide upon some vital questions. First, the guns were wearing out at an alarming rate. Three were completely gone at the 8.26 inch calibre and the one operating on Number 2 carriage was apparently half gone with only twenty-five rounds fired. The second question was with reference to the growing volume and accuracy of counter battery fire. The French were now using more guns, many six inch guns which had a life of at least 3500 rounds each and could be served rapidly. This pointed to a not distant day when they would be showered with literally hundreds of such projectiles. Some of them would certainly land on and about the Number 2 position, which could not escape detection indefinitely.

Some Paris newspapers finally reached Headquarters. Among them was the interesting Sunday edition of 'Le Matin' with an article by a M. Charles Nordman, and a map showing the probable location of the guns. All week the absorbing and unanswered question at the battery had been: "How had they learned so soon where the guns were located?" The map in 'Le Matin' drawn not twenty-four hours after the first shot had been fired, located the batteries definitely in the Woods of St. Gobain, where they certainly were.

Only three shots were fired on Easter Sunday, all between two and three o'clock in the afternoon. This was in accordance with the plan to reduce drastically the daily firing, but to fire a few rounds every day to maintain the menace.

The performance and condition of the gun showed that it was worn out, so only one more shot was fired from it; on Sunday, the 7th, at 1:57. The projectiles were seating nearly six feet in advance of the position of the first when the gun was put into commission on Good Friday afternoon. Forty-eight projectiles had been fired from it and the last half dozen had fallen too far short. The high pressures of the first day had certainly shortened the life of the gun; but perhaps those long shots had been worth while. One of them certainly took a heavy toll, the one that struck the church of St. Gervais. The gun was condemned, and the next three days, Tuesday to Thursday, were

spent in removing it and in putting in a new one.

It went into action Wednesday, the 24th. A week later it was worn out. The great offensive elsewhere had been halted. The fifth gun, the first great offensive, and the first phase of the bombardment of Paris were finished. The gun had fired 64 shots and was worn out.

Orders were received at once not only to cease firing but to evacuate the entire position.

A NEW position had been selected in the newly won ground toward Amiens. It would be closer to Paris and away from the concentration of French guns.

German soldiers and civilians had been heartened by the success of the gun. It was reported half a million people had fled Paris. More than 180 shells had been fired into the city since March 23.

All Germany was sure the war would end in German victory before winter.

After twenty seven days—on May 27—the Paris gun opened fire from the new position. It was quickly discovered in Paris that the guns now being used were larger than the earlier guns. They had been rebored. The projectile now measured 9.45 inches. It was handling better. Its life had been more than doubled by the short reduction of the range from 75 to 68.3 miles. It was far more effective than the original Paris gun.

And now, pressing forward their offensive on a wide front, the German high command interspersed gigantic air raids with the incessant fire from the long range guns. It was concentrating on a nerve center, hoping to shatter the French morale as the French line gave way.

The plan might have succeeded but for the sudden news of what happened when American troops went into the Allied lines. Under first combat tests, the new reserves in olive drab which had been an entirely unknown quantity to both sides, now proved to be first rate shock troops, tenacious fighting men and astounding riflemen.

The new emplacement was at a point called Beaumont in the Corbie Wood and here a decoy emplacement was used to draw Allied fire to a point at safe distance from the real location of the guns. It offered new problems for the crew of the Paris gun for there were no test charts on the rebored gun. Firing was continued from the 27th of May to the 12th of June when the new location was abandoned and the guns were moved to Bruyeres wood.

Scarcely had firing been opened at the Valchretien farm there on the 15th of July when it was learned that the German offensive which had been so successful as to be pressed beyond all original plans, had been suddenly checked. Allied aircraft blanketed the sky. Again and again fire had to be held because of enemy craft. Allied forces threatened the Soissons-Paris railway and seemed about to cut off the Paris gun so that it would not be got away from Valchretien farm. On the 19th, after four disastrous days, the gun crew was ordered to evacuate the gun with all speed.

By nothing short of a miracle this was accomplished and the Paris Gun battery retreated to the former position at Beaumont.

On August 8, while the Paris gun was again firing from Beaumont, tanks were breaking the German line and whole divisions were refusing to fight. So desperate was the situation on the 9th that the Beaumont position was again evacuated. The bombardment of Paris was over.

The Great Retreat was already on.

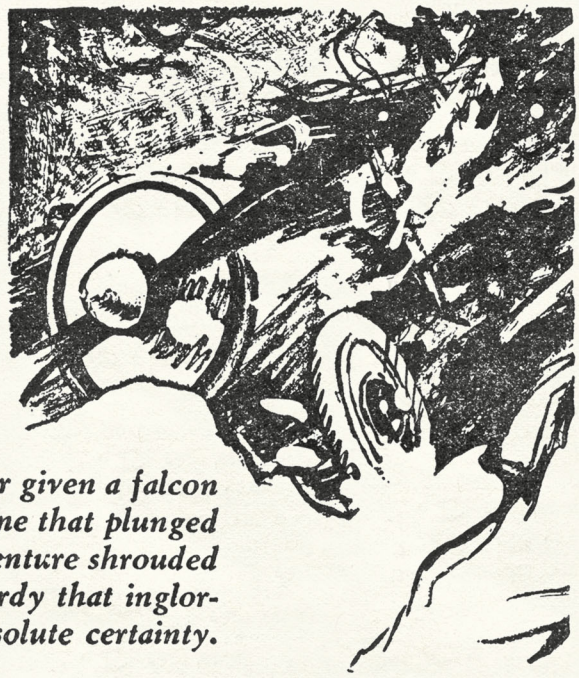
Two million Americans were already in France. A third million was on the way.

It was with difficulty, so fast was the retreat of their comrades, that the crews of the famed guns managed to destroy their monster cannon before joining the rout. The plans of the guns were rushed to Berlin where they were hidden away in secret archives against the day when Germany might again desire to bombard an enemy capital. In spite of the threat of death for any one revealing the secrets of this gun, Colonel Miller has given you the complete story.—The Editor.

COMPLETE NOVELET

BY

FREDERICK C. PAINTON



The strangest mission ever given a falcon of the war skies was the one that plunged Chris Haines into an adventure shrouded in secrecy and so fool-hardy that inglorious death seemed an absolute certainty.

DEAD MAN'S

IT WAS late afternoon that hot August day when Chris Haines closed the manettes on his tiny Nieuport fighter and piqued over for the Souilly airdrome which lay two thousand feet below. He pushed the joy-stick well forward and dove down the air with a shrill whistle of wire bracing, punctuated by the intermittent bark of the Gnome rotary motor. He allowed himself a good angle so as to keep the controls sensitive, although to himself he muttered that he had a good notion to crash the crate. He hated it that much.

Chris was a sensitive lad of twenty-two and it cut him to the quick to be flying the craziest looking bus ever seen on the western front. And in all truth, the Nieuport was singular looking. In the first place, she was painted a terrible orange that made her look as if she had jaundice. Secondly, she was a specially rigged job that looked like nothing else on the front. And lastly, she couldn't turn up eighty air miles per hour if Black Jack Pershing himself ordered it.

Yet this was the crate that Chris Haines had been flying for eight straight days between Souilly and an airdrome back of Pont a Mousson near Rebaux. Once a day Chris made the round trip, and was returning now. He always took a dispatch case full of papers with him; and he always brought another dispatch case back. What was in these cases he did not know. But in an army noted for dizzy details, this seemed dizziest of all. There was apparently no reason for this daily trip. He asked every one from Captain Larrabee down, the wherefores of this daily flight, and all he received was a curt order to mind his own business and not crash any more crates.

Chris fought off the clutching fingers of the burly German aviator as though his life depended on getting the precious brief-case into the flames of the plane—as indeed it did.

FLIGHT

What made him angriest of all this day, as he gave full top rudder and began to fishtail for the landing, was that he had chanced into the orderly room at Rebaux that day and had seen the adjutant stuffing the dispatch case with *blank* paper.

"It's none of your business," the adjutant had replied to his startled query. "And what's more, it isn't healthy to inquire. You take this case and alley-oop back to Souilly and stay behind our side of the barbed wire. If you get in a fight with the Krauts, you'll be court-martialed."

And now Chris's eyes caught the wind direction from the bellying white sock, and eased back gently on the stick.

"This," he announced, his voice drowned in the wire shriek, "is the nuttiest business a man was ever in, but so help me Godfrey, I'll find out about it tonight, or tell the whole A. E. F., including Pershing, to kiss my foot."

The stick knob sat in his stomach, the tail skid struck, then the wheels, and he slid forward fifty yards in what should have been a neat three-point landing. But a huge rock struck against his right landing wheel. The left wing tilted, caught the ground and after sheering off, stood the bus on her nose with a broken prop and sundry rents in her fabric.

Chris swore heartily through his clenched teeth.

"Was I to fall into a blotter factory I'd come out all wet," he groaned.

He was swearing softly at this new misfortune when Captain Larrabee came running across the field. He, too, spoke earnestly between clenched teeth. He seemed unusually enraged at the crackup of an obsolete Nieuport.

"By God, Haines, this makes ten crackups you've had in sixty days. What the hell do you think I am? And do you think Nieuports grow on bushes? You are, and I speak calmly and without emotion, the

lousiest flier, the most worthless pilot that these old eyes have seen in many years. And if it wasn't for—" he broke off sharply, and curtly waved Chris down out of the cockpit.

"Larrabee," Chris's voice came short and ugly. "You've called me plenty in these past two months, but by Godfrey you aren't going to call me any more names. I admit I've cracked up ten busses, including this orange monstrosity here. But none of the crashes was my fault. And you know it. I had hard luck. That's all, hard luck."

Larrabee saw the white fury of the boy, and being a good officer, he at once took hold of his momentarily lost temper.

"I'm sorry, kid," he said in a gentler voice. "Probably it has been hard luck. But what you've got to remember is that we can get pilots quicker than we can get crates for them to fly. And when one man writes off ten, why it's cheaper to get rid of him. I was going to ground you last week, and would, too, but for this mission—" again he stopped sharply.

Chris, his blue eyes snapping, his lean, muscular frame still quivering, got back to his original grievance.

"You were going to ground me before I was put on this silly, asinine job of flying the craziest looking bus in France between here and Rebaux. All right, ground me, then. I'm sick and tired of flying such a foolish mission. Imagine being told to fly just in back of our lines and not be permitted to fight. The doughboys call me yellow-streak because the Nieuport's painted such a rotten color and because I run every time a Fokker or a Rumpler gets within shouting distance. Every German on the front knows me and gets a laugh seeing me run. Ground me, then, and I'll ask for a transfer to some other outfit."

Larrabee shook his head. "No other outfit would have you, lad. When it gets noised around that a man's a sky-jinx he's finished. A man that washes out ten ships is an A-1 sky-jinx. And furthermore, you've got to fly tomorrow at dawn back to Rebaux—in that crate," he pointed to the sadly battered Nieuport around which mechanics were already swarming. Although it looked bad, the injuries were superficial and it could be repaired in the night.

"But why?" demanded Chris. The two were, by now, walking through the gloom toward the commanding officer's orderly room. "I'm wise to that goofy stuff. Here I've been thinking I was carrying valuable dispatches and come to find out I carry nothing but a lot of blank paper that might be good for certain purposes but not worth flying a hundred miles a day for."

He fretted on, talking about the mystery and inclined to think he was being made a fool of. Larrabee listened without comment.

"I graduated aces from Issoudun," the boy was saying. "And I didn't crack up any more ships than the next fellow. And those I washed out up here were bad luck. Take that damned canary colored Nieuport. I set her down pretty—and hit a stone. I get my prop shot off and have to land in No-Man's Land. Out of all the million Archies that the Germans fire that hit nothing, I had to have one knock off a wing."

He paused and still Larrabee said nothing.

"And now," he concluded miserably, "I've got a name for a sky-jinx; you tell me I'm a pair of worthless wings, and they put me on fool's errands carrying blank paper from Souilly to Rebaux. I don't get it at all."

"That errand," said Larrabee, pausing before the orderly room door, "is not such a foolish one as you think. Come on in, lad, you've got to stand some more tough luck and bad news."

Chris looked at him in surprise. But Larrabee merely motioned for the lad to enter.

INSIDE was unfolded the singular sight of a brigadier general sitting on a desk top smoking a huge cigar; a colonel, sitting with crossed legs, inhaling deeply on a scented cigaret.

"Wow, brass hats!" breathed Chris.

The Ninety-eighth Pursuit Group's airdrome was fifteen kilometers behind the

lines and reasonably safe, but brass hats didn't usually get even this close to where the war was at.

"Is this the man, Larrabee?" asked the brigadier general.

"Yes, General MacMahon," replied Larrabee, and presented Chris. "General MacMahon is chief of the air service section of G-2-D. Colonel Havers is divisional G-2."

Chris came rigidly to attention. "At ease, lad," said General Ronny MacMahon. "Have a cigar. Sit down."

Chris sat down but refused the cigar. Bewildered though he was by this strange series of events, he did not let his mental confusion show on his fresh young face. But he was not long held in mystery. MacMahon, brusque, hard-boiled, yet beloved throughout the A.E.F., got right down to what he called brass tacks.

"We've picked you, lad," said he impressively, "for the most vital and important mission in the A.E.F. We've been grooming you for a week for just that. The time has come for you to carry it out. We're here to give you the final orders."

Larrabee, who knew all about this, again felt the sensation of pity. They were rubbing up the lad, making him feel important, and hiding the fact that he was deliberately sacrificed for a military advantage, and had only been picked for the sacrifice because he was the least important pilot on the front, the most worthless pair of wings. MacMahon had insisted that the least valuable pilot be chosen when the grand idea was first broached. "The man will probably be killed," he had said, "and we don't want to lose a good one."

"Yes, sir," said Chris.

"You've been flying each day close back of our lines to Rebaux," said MacMahon. "You've been seen by every Jerry balloon observer and every observation plane, haven't you?"

"I should say so," retorted Chris vigorously. "They sent some Fokkers after me one day, but I remembered orders and ran. From somewhere came a flight of the Ninety-sixth and drove them off."

Larrabee nodded to himself. Chris, of course, did not know that the flight of the Ninety-sixth had been planted there for that particular purpose. The Germans were to see, but not know. MacMahon was interested only in arousing their curiosity in the orange plane.

"You'd say the Germans were curious about you, wouldn't you?" MacMahon was saying. His cigar jutted aggressively on an angle, his grim mustached mouth was closed tighter than a trap.

"Yes, sir."

"Well, to-day we're going to satisfy their curiosity."

Chris looked startled; Larrabee placed a gentle restraining hand on his arm.

"Tomorrow," said MacMahon slowly, "shortly after dawn, you will start on your regular trip to Rebaux. You will fly between our first and second lines. You will be attacked by enemy ships, and none of ours will be handy to drive them off. You will pretend to try to escape, but you will be cut off, fly onto the German side of the lines, be forced down and surrender yourself as a prisoner of war."

For a split-second the room was as silent as the grave. Far away like the muffled beat of tom-toms came the baying of the eternal gun fire.

"Wha-what did you say, sir?" he cried.

Crunching out every word, MacMahon repeated his orders.

"But that means," said Chris helplessly, "that I'll be a prisoner for the duration—locked in a prison pen inside Germany. Unable to fight—finished!"

"It means exactly that, Lieutenant Haines," said the general. "And I'm sorry that I can't explain the military necessity for this order. But I can tell you that by your act of surrender, you will save thousands of American lives. I personally shall recommend you for the D.S.C. if you pull off the stunt, and live."

To himself he added, "which you probably won't," but Chris did not hear that part.

"But think of my people, of my friends," cried Chris desperately. "What will they think of me, surrendering as a prisoner of war?"

"Let them think what they will—now," said MacMahon. "Later when they know the truth—why, well, they'll understand then."

Chris got to his feet despite the restraining hand of Captain Larrabee. "I won't do it," he cried. "Damned, if I will. I've been made a goat in this man's army long enough. You can't force a man to surrender." He stopped short as a thought struck him. "And you can't force a man to go out there and try to fight off a flight of Fokkers in an old Nieuport without help. The chances are a hundred to one that instead of being forced down to surrender, I'll be shot down. What then?"

The general and the colonel exchanged glances. Well they knew that no man could be forced into such peril. But they had not expected to find in Chris such a keen, intelligent person. They had been told he was worthless, a silly, sensitive lad that would not question their orders. And now he had refused.

Yet MacMahon was an old soldier and knew what to do. He stood up, frowned and said: "We're wasting our time here, Havers. I thought we had a brave man to deal with. That's why he was picked. If a man is so yellow that he values his own life above that of thousands of soldiers and a military victory for our armies, why we'll have to seek elsewhere, and leave this coward to be benzined."

Havers took his cue. "Of course. But at the same time, General, you know we haven't the time to look far. That stunt must be done tomorrow at dawn if we're to cash in on it."

"We'll get one now. There are plenty of pilots up here not so scared of their own skins."

Larrabee, understanding their old army game, looked steadily at Chris. But stood silent. For he understood better than Chris that the chances of getting down alive were one in a thousand, and he felt pity for the harassed boy. On Chris's young face he saw the redness of rage grow. The eyes narrowed in anger, gleamed with fury. The body twitched and the hands clenched until the nails dug half-moons in the palms.

"They've got him," thought Larrabee. "And I'm sorry he's got to die."

Finally Chris spoke. "You're my superior officers," he said stiffly. "And I cannot do as I would do elsewhere to answer the charge of cowardice. You are both mistaken. I've changed my mind, and I'll take that job."

Perhaps pity softened MacMahon's heart for a second. At all events his right hand patted Chris on the back. "It's necessary for the war, boy, or I'd not let you go. Good lad! I wish you luck. Now here are your final instructions."

He began to speak earnestly and softly while Chris, the colonel and Larrabee listened. Again the latter felt pity as he listened. The boy was doomed.

DAWN slowly streaked the far eastern horizon with soft gray that gradually brightened. The damp night wind blew wetly against Chris Haines' face as he took the last sweet inhale of his cigaret. On the tarmac of the Ninety-eighth, there was the usual bustle that precedes an active day. From out of the brightly camouflaged canvas hangars that bellied and flapped in the cold breeze, multi-colored planes were being wheeled to the warm-up line. Spads, they were, beautiful little dragon flies with Hispano-Suiza motors, that darted through the skies for the kill, and shrieked upon the enemy like thrown javelins.

Chris watched them, despair in his heart. For days on end he had prayed that he might win a vacancy in B flight and himself handle those magnificent fighting ships. It was the one ambition of his life. But that was all behind him now. He would soon be dead or a prisoner.

He saw Bert Carlyle, swaggering across the tarmac, the coal of his cigaret sparking in the half-darkness. Chris and Bert came from the same town, had trained together at Issoudun. But Bert was lucky and Chris was not. So Bert became an eagle who coursed the sky in a Spad and Chris became a pair of worthless wings that were now to be sacrificed.

Bert saw Chris and veered in his stride. No love had ever been lost between them, for youngsters are a competitive lot, and he who wins will bully him who loses. Besides, Bert and Chris had always been rivals—bitter rivals.

"Well, old chauffeur," said Bert jocularly, "going to take your aerial flivver and perambulate to Rebaux as usual? Winning the war, doing that, I suppose."

"I'm going to Rebaux," replied Chris stiffly. "You're in luck having a combat flight, Carlyle."

"Luck, my eye!" scoffed Bert. "They know a good man when they get him up here. I'm deputy leader already. I'll be a skipper of a squadron before this guerre closes down. I'm good and they know it."

"You can't fly any better than me," snorted Chris, with fine disregard for grammar. "You're just lucky."

Bert snorted, dropped his cigaret, and ground his boot-heel on it.

"That's bunk," he said, deliberately insulting, "weak men without guts and brains to match combat pilots always blame their failure on luck. You're one of them."

"And that," said Chris hotly, "is a damn lie."

Bert started forward, and with a quickness that brooked no interference, slapped Chris's face.

"Take it back," he yelled, "or I'll drive your teeth into your tonsils. No man can call me a liar and—"

In a second they were clinching and smashing blindly at one another. But it was not to go far. At this minute, Larrabee, followed by the kiwi adjutant, rushed over and pried them apart.

"Stop this," Larrabee thundered angrily. "Carlyle, your flight is first off. Go to your ship at once. Haines, knowing your mission, I'm amazed at such actions."

"He called me yellow," muttered Chris.

"He called me a damn liar," this from Carlyle.

"Settle it tomorrow then," cried Larrabee without thinking. "The way we always settle arguments, like gentlemen. You can—" he broke off blankly, suddenly remembering that Chris could never be there.

But Carlyle, knowing nothing of Chris's mission, cried out: "O. K. with me. I'll take the dirty little rat apart and see what makes him click. Will you be there?" He said this tauntingly to Chris.

"Yes, by God, I'll be there," flashed Chris. And then he, too, stopped short and remembered that he could be no place but in a German prison pen or dead this time tomorrow.

"If you've got the guts you'd better be there," taunted Carlyle, and before either Chris or Larrabee could say a word, turned sharply and trotted to the deadline, where the greaseballs were warming up his crate.

A spatter of ripping crashes, the bright lurid flick of exhausts indicated that the mechanics were blipping the ships preparatory to the getaway. Larrabee raised his voice to compete with this din.

"I'm sorry, Haines, damned sorry that I put you in that position. I spoke before I thought. But when Carlyle gets back I'll explain everything."

Chris shook his head bitterly. "Carlyle will never understand. You see, we came from the same town. He'll see that the story spreads—to his advantage."

Of a sudden like a juicy ripe orange the sun plopped over the horizon. A faint mist, like the gossamer strands of a spider's web hung over the damp countryside, gleaming on the splendid wings of the Spads.

"I'm sorry," said Larrabee simply. "I'll do what I can. It's time for you to go. Here's the dispatch case. Now don't forget your instructions."

Chris drew himself up, extended a stiff arm for the tiny locked dispatch case. "I won't, sir. I promised—and I'll keep my word if I get down alive."

A moment later he was legging up into the luridly painted Nieuport that had been repaired during the night. The prop turned tick-tock. The mech standing by the wing yelled: "She's O. K., sir. But watch the mixture on that manette."

Chris nodded and called thanks; then he settled himself on the cushion, buckled

the safety strap and pulled the goggles over his eyes. He felt to see the flare pistol was in place, examined the belt feeding into the Vickers. He shoved forward on the manettes and the motor blatted with a terrific roar and the Nieuport strained at the chocks. All was in readiness.

"Pull the chocks," he called, closing her down.

Again he goosed the motor, angled the rudder so as to throw the nose into the wind. The ship trundled out, headed straight west, and Chris cut her wide open with a vicious shove of his hand

The Nieuport sped down the field with fiery exhausts, leaving behind a swirl of grass bits, and the rank smell of burnt castor oil. At the take-off line, he lifted her off the ground, zoomed a hundred feet and settled for a climb to five thousand meters. He looked back just once over the right side of the cockpit to the airdrome below where the dawn patrol would presently take off. He was looking at it for the last time, and since the quarrel with Bert Carlyle, he never in his life wanted to get back so badly. That almost broke his heart.

And now he centered his gaze in the whirling prop and headed the Nieuport for the front. A pair of worthless wings were washing out for good.

ALONE Nieuport, painted an ugly orange, winged swift passage north and east over the sodden, shell-battered ground of the Woerve plains that passed beneath the gossamer wings. It flew a steady course between the two irregular lines that were scrawled across the ground below. These lines, connected by other irregular lines, seemed the mad drawing of some mighty pencil wielded by a giant. Around and among them puffs of smoke occasionally bloomed like mushrooms to blow slowly away on the wind. And periodically, one looking down saw the bright flash of a gun and could see seconds later a rose bloom of black smoke on the northeast side. An American gun firing.

Against the horizon near the Meuse heights a great sausage balloon, or *drachen,* tugged sullenly at its holding cable like an irritated elephant wanting to escape. In this balloon was a dapper young officer with a pair of field glasses. The keen eyes picked out the Nieuport five miles away and recognized its singular contours.

His voice spoke into the telephone attached to his breast.

"Notify Von Manteuffel that the orange Nieuport is flying on the front for Rebaux," he called, and listened as the *feldwebel* below repeated the message. And then a telephone to the airdrome of the Twenty-sixth Jagstaeffel carried the news to a group of enemy aces that the mysterious Nieuport was again flying the front.

Von Manteuffel himself gave the order. Short, with jet black hair and swarthy features, with a nose flattened by several crashes which had scarred his cheeks, he ran to the warm-up line where a flight of Fokkers were being groomed.

"No mistake this time," he called sharply. "That plane must not escape. That is the order of General Von Genister. Bring it down at all costs."

He wet his finger and held it into the air. The wind from the south and west blew against it. "Our wind," he cried in satisfaction. "Herd him to our side so that he crashes back of our lines."

The motors roared; the pilots, still in pajamas, leaped to the controls. And in perfect formation the flight roared down the field and took off simultaneously. That was a trick Von Manteuffel had taught them.

The brightly checked tripes spiralled upward to eight thousand meters, and levelled off, hanging just below the cloud formation. And there Chris saw them just as he wheeled to the left, crossing the Nancy Verdun railroad tracks, now rusted from four years of disuse.

"Tripes," he muttered. "That'll be Von Manteuffel!"

Von Manteuffel! The killer. The *rittmeister* who had a special circus of shock planes to gain control of this front. This was going to be tough. Five planes against one was bad at any time, but worse than ever now that Chris must act out his role in this strange game of MacMahon's.

He nosed the Nieuport in the general direction of the German lines and fired a short burst to test the twin Vickers and warm the oil. One thing they *hadn't* told him to do was to avoid a fight. And he realized that the better fight he put up the better chance he had of getting down alive and not being forced to leap from a flaming coffin. So fight he would.

He watched the German flight come closer, five hawks silhouetted against a canopy of clouds, and gradually gained altitude himself. Yet he never veered from his course. He searched the sky to the right to see if any helping planes were near. Of course, there were none. MacMahon had seen to that. Aside from some photographic busses down Mont Sec way, the sky was empty. Carlyle's flight must have gone toward Rheims.

He adjusted the manette that controlled the gasoline mixture so that the leaned mixture gave maximum power. Then he waited, watched, saw the tripes circle boldly to get between him and home. He felt then like a fox who boldly risks the trap.

Quickly now the tripes closed in, five hundred meters above him. He kept climbing, making sure, however, that they maintained their advantage. They hovered, banked in unison. Soon they would come screaming down the sky and would loose a rain of smoking incendiaries. One chance bullet in the gas tank, one fistful of slugs that marched up the fuselage and crashed into his back and....

Now! Like five kites tied to the same string the flight of tripes dipped to the dive. Like meteors they howled down the sky in a power dive. They spread and Von Manteuffel was in the lead. Leaden wisps of smoke came from his Spandaus. He was testing the range. He was to take this prize himself while his flight watched for mis-chance.

And then, acting like a novice who has just spotted the enemy, Chris piqued in an angling dive. Deliberately he let the dive swing toward the German lines.

The dive spoiled Von Manteuffel's intention of holding his tail on the dive. With a shrieking roar, audible even above the crash of Chris' engine, Von Manteuffel shot past him like a streak. Chris glanced over the cockpit edge. Von Manteuffel had flattened, was zooming, climbing the sky like an express train and his twin Spandaus sent forth smoky tracers that marched up the sky space to thud into Chris's floor-boards.

Whee-e-e-e-e-e-e-e!

Another Fokker tripe angled ahead of him. A third screamed onto his tail. The air of a sudden became filled with long threads of gray smoke that vanished into Chris's Nieuport. With an eye that was strangely calm Chris watched them, waiting for an opportunity to make one kill before he was shot or forced down. Suddenly it came. One of the tripes, overanxious to cover Von Manteuffel's miss, dove straight down at Chris.

VON MANTEUFFEL, his zoom of no avail, climbed the sky for another attempt and was now circling well out of range. Chris was still in his vertical dive. Suddenly Chris pulled the stick knob back into his stomach. The Nieuport's wings sagged at the strain, but held. In an instant he had flattened and a split-second later was nosing up the sky, his motor howling with a human note. It looked as if he were going to make a loop, or possibly an Immelman, and the Fokker on his tail zoomed, ready to flop into a reversement or pull over into the loop so as to keep his position of Chris's tail. Chris chuckled, his hard-luck mission forgotten in the sudden lust for the kill. He had his Boche now—had him cold. Up the sky pounded the Nieuport. She was almost ready to hang by her prop.

Chris yanked the controls—and rolled out of the loop at the top.

The trick surprised the tripe, which still zoomed. Before the German pilot could gain control, Chris was on his tail. The German had hardly enough flying speed to stunt, and nosed frantically over to pick it up and escape this dreadful trap. But too late. Chris was on his tail.

As Chris ripped after him the man's head came into the ringsights. The Yank

closed in. Twenty-five yards. Splendid! Perfect target. He pressed the stick-trigger.

Rat-tat-tat-tat-tat-tat!

The Vickers coughed with a hard bitter sound. The golden tracers, like flying bits of yellow snow, shot across the intervening space. And like a string of woodpeckers they marched up the gaily checkered fuselage of the tripe and thudded into the back of the knobbed head that sat in the cockpit.

It was a kill, no doubt of that. The man threw up his hands. He half rose, then flopped sideways, half-hanging out of the cockpit. And the wide open tripe, with no hand at the joy-stick, remained in her nose dive and shot like a meteor down the sky-lane of death.

Chris yelled with joy.

"Now," he howled, into the crash of his motor. "I don't care. You can't take that from me—knock me off."

He cast a quick look toward the Yank lines. Yes, there were three American balloons up, one down Biercy way where the observer could not help but see what Chris had done. They'd have to give him credit for a kill and a fight. He might be a pair of worthless wings but they could never call him yellow.

But his happiness was short-lived. In forgetting the rest of the German flight to make his kill, he had exposed himself to a trap, and the tripes closed in like buzzards on carrion. One was on his tail—that would be Von Manteuffel from the markings—two others dove at him from the left, and the fourth hovered to the right, ready to pounce if Chris rolled to shake off Von Manteuffel. It was a position from which Chris could not escape by any stunt. Already Von Manteuffel's tracers were pecking at his left wing with inquisitive steel fingers, and the fabric ripped in the man-made gale. It was a ranging burst, for a second later the German ace corrected it, the slugs marched up the fuselage, tore through Chris' flying jacket and smashed his instrument board. The oil gauge smashed and a deluge of hot oil splashed back in his face, momentarily blinding him. He smeared it away, cringed to the side and saw the slugs smash into his center section, carom with a flash of fire off the cocking handles of his Vickers.

Chris knew then he was lost—he could never shake Von Manteuffel. Now was the time to carry out his mission.

There was but one thing to do—and do it quickly. He thrust the stick forward and to the right as far as it would go. His right foot kicked the rudder bar viciously.

Like a startled faun the Nieuport dropped down the sky in a fast spin. Indeed, it rotated so rapidly that Chris had cause to worry about the wings. Now he must be an actor and play his role to the bitter end. Suddenly he flung up his hand and slumped sideways in the cockpit, keeping the stick in place with his knee. The tripe pilots would think him knocked out.

Nose earthward the Nieuport twirled in a power dive and turned and turned until the earth was a giddy brown whirlpool, resembling churning molasses.

Although the spinning ship seemed a hard target to hit, Chris knew he was in great peril. A plane in spinning, turns on its own axis and a diving enemy above has almost the stationary target that flying on a plane's tail offers. The only thing that would save Chris was the fact that the position above could be held but a few seconds and in spinning the way he was, a chance bullet was all he had to fear.

Yet they constituted a terrible menace. As the plane screamed downward through the air, slugs slammed into it almost from every direction. Chris, watching through his arms saw the black silhouettes of the Fokkers wheel into sight for a second; their Spandau guns became red-lipped and a furrow of holes appeared in the doomed Nieuport. And every few seconds from above steel jacketed bullets would rip and thud into the tail assembly and crash on to the cockpit. His goggles smashed, and the splinters cut his forehead. The blood trickled warmly down. Twice red hot irons seemed drawn across his back. His coat leaped as if invisible fingers plucked at it. A bullet ripped through the fold of flesh over his stomach and drenched his legs with blood.

The earth seemed ages, centuries, aeons in coming up to him.

Always there thudded in his ears the horrible *"rat-tat-tat-tat-tat"* of the attacking planes. Always even above the din of his own engine he could hear the wild shriek of the Fokkers screaming around him like hawks.

His altimeter was gone, so was his tachometer! Even the bank and turn instrument was no more. He had only his half-blinded eyes with which to gauge the upward surge of the earth which, like a great round cup, seemed about to close around him and catch him in its hollow.

And now—the earth was no longer a swirling pot of molasses with a black hole in the center at which his prop was aimed. It was filled with gyrating trees, checkered fields, irregular lines. It was close. Less than a thousand feet. Now less than that. He had barely time to flatten out. And he knew that the first sign that the falling Nieuport was under control would bring the tripes howling upon him. Yet that was the risk he must run.

With his right hand he centered the stick, released the rudder to neutral. He was careful not to over-control, for these Nieuports were nearly as sensitive as Spads and not as easy to handle. The ship continued to spin. One turn, two turns, Chris eased the stick slightly to the left. The earth seemed about to smash him in the face.

TWO turns and a half more and he straightened out. The long stretches of the Woerve plain were three hundred or so feet below and he was still in a vertical power dive. He eased back on the stick, felt the Nieuport sag. Eagerly he sought below him for some place to pancake. The crate plunged downward with sagging wings. He would crash hard.

Whe-e-e-e-e-e-e-e-e!

A black tripe shrieked past. Another pounced on his tail.

Ta-tat-tat-tat-tat-tat!

The stuffing of the left shoulder of his coat came out, picked away by the burst. The earth lunged upward.

Wham!

The wheels hit, the Nieuport bounded fifty feet in the air like a wounded deer. Desperately Chris gave the motor the gun to keep her nose up. She settled again.

Whe-e-e-e-e-e-e!

A Fokker went over him, a gun cracking, and red flashes coming from the cockpit.

Once again the Nieuport slammed the ground. Her running gear smashed to bits. She slid like a toboggan on her floorboards, then nosed over, crumpled and just as Chris cut the switch, slammed over on her back and broke in two. In magnificent ruin it lay there—washed out for good.

Chris was down—and still alive, but hardly conscious of it all. He had been badly mauled in the crash; and his flesh wounds stung. He hung motionless for minutes against his safety belt. His first intimation that he had no time to spare came when, with a shriek of wire bracing and the grinding dig of the tail skid, a Fokker tripe set down within fifty yards of him. He straightened up groggily. Then with a shrug and a shake Chris flung off the coma, summoned his strength for the ordeal ahead. Upon his acting now thousands of lives hung.

He had been hanging against his safety belt. This he now undid and lowered himself to the ground. He took the dispatch bag and the flare pistol, and crawled from under the ruins.

He looked around and realized at once that he was well inside the German lines, for now in the intermittent silence, the roar of the guns came from the south in dulled fashion to his ears. From a thicket across the stretch of fields, a dozen or more German infantry ran toward him, shouting and brandishing their weapons.

From the triplane that rested some fifty yards away, a man ran full tilt, holding a Luger automatic in his hand. He was less than forty feet away. Chris recognized the crate as Von Manteuffel's. Faintly, then growing stronger, came the roar of the three remaining Fokker tripes; they, too, were spiralling downward to land.

Everything had worked out as the grim-mouthed General MacMahon had prophe-

sied. So now Chris began to act. He reeled in a dazed fashion as if still half-stunned. He pretended to be surprised at seeing the German pilot. He gave a shout of alarm.

With a sudden movement he tossed the dispatch bag toward the smashed Nieuport; but made sure it did not land within three or four yards. Then reeling and staggering he moved toward the Nieuport's leaking gas tank. A press of the finger and a flare ball crashed into it.

Whoof!

With a terrific roar the soaked ground and fuselage burst into flame. The gasoline tank exploded and tossed the debris for yards, singeing Chris badly, for he had not expected such quick results. He turned to run.

"Halte!" shouted Von Manteuffel. And then in broken English, "Halte, or I will you shoot."

"The hell with you," shouted Chris.

Von Manteuffel was within twenty feet now, running madly for the dispatch bag that was lying just on the rim of the fire circle, but not yet afire. The plane was blazing white hot, the heat terrific, yet he did not hesitate.

Chris pretended to see now what the man was after. With a shout of alarm, he, too, ran into the scorching heat and reached for the bag, his obvious intention to toss it into the roaring mass of flame, and make sure of its destruction.

Both hands reached it simultaneously. Chris frantically wrested at it. They staggered back from the fire. Von Manteuffel kept shouting, "Let loose or I shoot."

But Chris hung on, and because he was a big strong youth and Von Manteuffel smaller, he won. With a yank he tore the bag free, wrenched it open and seized the two top papers. One gesture stuffed them into his mouth and he pretended to chew, but made sure his teeth did not touch the papers.

With a series of guttural curses, Von Manteuffel flung himself at Chris, slapped him alongside the head with the Luger, and then seeing this would be of no avail, dropped the automatic pistol and grabbed Chris around the throat.

"Gah," thus Chris as he found himself without wind.

The steely fingers of the German ace bit deeply. Chris dropped to the ground, sparks gleaming before his eyes, his head reeling.

"Sehr schnell!" Von Manteuffel kept howling at the running German soldiers.

At this second the first of the German infantrymen arrived. Von Manteuffel spat out an order. A *feldwebel* grabbed a Mauser rifle with a blade bayonet, took the gleaming steel off the locking ring and forced the point of the bayonet between Chris's gritted teeth. Promptly Chris opened. A farce was a farce, but that bayonet would smash his teeth.

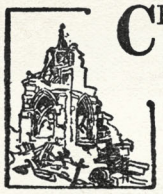
From off his tongue the *feldwebel* took the saliva-sopped paper, and carefully held it in his palm. Thereupon Von Manteuffel released his grip. Chris, now half-fainting in earnest, drew in deep breaths and relaxed. He was happy that the plan had worked perfectly so far, but knew that the game was but half-played. He had lots more to face than this. The two men talked rapidly for a few minutes.

Then Von Manteuffel administered a strong slug of *schnapps*, the German whisky, and this brought Chris around perfectly.

"Ah," grinned Von Manteuffel. "You are all right, Ja? Gut! You make a brave fight. You shoot down Ludwig, a fine man. You try to destroy papers. Ah, there you fail. But no fault of yours. I am a smart man and we know ways of getting papers when we need them."

He barked an order to the infantrymen who promptly spread an overcoat on two rifles and on this improvised stretcher, they carried Chris to the road beyond the bushes. A billet headquarters must have been near, because it was less than ten minutes later that a Minerva car, with solid rubber tires instead of pneumatics, roared to a halt near them.

"In with you," cried Von Manteuffel. *"Zum kommandatur der General Genister sehr schnell."*



CHRIS HAINES lay back against the cushioned seat during the fast ride across the back areas of the German armies. A new ordeal faced him when Von Genister's intelligence officers asked him acute questions. But he was not thinking of that. No, poor lad, he would carry out the mission as given him, but none could prevent him from dwelling on the miserable fact that he was a prisoner of war. Soon he would be a caged animal pacing restlessly behind barbed wire enclosures, barbed wire charged with ten thousand volts of electricity. For him the war was over. And Bert Carlyle would think him a coward, and back home they would raise their eyebrows and look down their noses when the name of Chris Haines was mentioned.

The headquarters of Herr General Otto Karl Wilhelm Von Genister, commandant of the Sixth German army *groupement* were in the *mairie* of a small French town called LeCatelet. He maintained his *kommandatur* here because he was far enough back from the front—thirty kilometers—that he could get a perspective on the sector he held, but was close enough both to his mass of maneuver and his front line to meet any emergency. And emergencies, in September of 1918 were coming thick and fast.

Indeed, Von Genister was worried. Ludendorff had failed to widen the breech in the French lines made by the Marne salient. In fact, the battle of Soissons had forced a withdrawal to the Vesle. The British were attacking vigorously. The French were pushing in the Champagne, and now the *verdamnt Amerikaners,* of whom it had been said they could not fight and if they could, not enough would reach France until 1919 to affect the issue of war, were planning an attack.

Oh yes, his spies and intelligence officers knew that. He had wired Von Ludendorff at Spa less than a fortnight ago that the Americans were going to attack.

And Von Genister, like all generals holding an active front, felt sure he was to bear the brunt of the thrust. His duty was to guard the region east of the Meuse, keep the threat on Verdun and protect any flank thrust toward Metz.

"The Americans have said," he observed to his monocled aide, "that Metz is where they will thrust. And it is logical, *mein freund,* because if Metz is threatened, our whole line of retreat out of France is cut off."

"You are right, as usual, Herr General," said the diplomatic aide, screwing his monocle deeper. "But here is news that will soon give you the truth. Von Manteuffel has carried out your orders about the strange orange-colored plane seen flying daily to Rebaux. He shot down the pilot, and not only captured him, but a dispatch case as well, that the man carried. Better yet, he was just in time to prevent the pilot from chewing up and swallowing valuable dispatches. They are on their way here now."

Von Genister idly twisted the paper cutter with which he had been drawing diagrams on the polished surface of a splendid old French desk.

"That is news. Now Ludendorff will understand why I refuse to surrender half of my reserves. *Zeit!* I shall need three more divisions if my opinion is borne out by facts."

"Again you are right, Herr General. I am glad you told Kretzlinger to attend to his own affairs. Imagine him believing that the Americans would thrust through the Argonne Forest. Why, our position there is impregnable. We have spent four years strengthening it, and without such fortifications it could withstand any direct assault. No army since Attila's time has ever made headway there. We would slaughter the Americans."

"That is right." Von Genister bent the paper cutter until with a sudden snap it broke in his fingers. "East of the Meuse we are weak. Armies strike at weakness, not at strength. So——"

He stopped shortly, for the door to his office opened and into the room was thrust a somewhat blackened American officer, dressed in scorched remnants of flying 'jamas, and behind him came the lean, swarthy Von Manteuffel. Von Genister's

eyes glittered, and his smile was positively wolfish as he regarded the prisoner just brought in.

Yet Chris, whose eyes had instantly transferred to the plump man with the *Pour le merite* pinned to his breast, saw only a middle-aged man, with snow-white hair, pink cheeks and a well-kept white mustache. Von Genister could have been a broker, the father of a family, instead of the leader of some two hundred thousand first quality German troops.

Chris listened without curiosity to the staccato explanation that the famous Von Manteuffel offered to the *groupement* commander, and girded himself for the careful falsehoods which he must now make convincing.

Von Genister listened intently and then summoned his intelligence chief who at once fell eagerly upon the doughy mass of paper, and then took it to a sand table to work upon it. When the German ace had finished, Von Genister courteously waved Chris to a chair.

"Your name, please?" he asked in passable English.

Chris told him.

"And your organization?"

"Unassigned," replied Chris promptly.

Von Genister looked at him suspiciously, but then smiled benevolently.

"The fortunes of war, *mein Leutnant,* have made you a prisoner. You are a gentleman, and, of course, will answer no incriminating questions, yet it is my duty to ask them. Have a cigaret? No? Well, they are not so good, I loathe Russian cigarets myself, but they are the best obtainable."

He lit a long fat cigaret. "Now, *mein Leutnant,* for what reason did you fly each day from Souilly to Rebaux? Ah, you see, we have watched you. Come. Why?"

"I cannot answer," said Chris carefully, "because I do not know. My duty was to take a dispatch case each day from Souilly to Rebaux. I did it."

He made a wry face and then as if half-talking to himself added: "My orders were to stay far enough back of the front to avoid capture. Ah, I was a fool to come so close." An expression of despair crossed his face, that was not lost on those present.

Von Genister remained bland. "You young men are reckless. Come, *mein Leutnant,* we know the Americans contemplate an attack. Our intelligence advices reveal that this attack will fall either east of the Meuse—*near Rebaux*—or between the Argonne Forest and the Meuse. Quite naturally we are interested to know which has been chosen. Perhaps you can tell us."

"I cannot," said Chris firmly. "And if I did know, which I do not, I should refuse to answer."

"Not even if we offered you freedom?"

"Not even then."

Von Genister nodded kindly. "You are a fine brave man, and a credit to your country. I shall dismiss all this questioning now, for we have your papers. And moreover, the Americans have no great quantity of troops in France. We know that. You Americans will never affect the war issue at all—"

Chris's cue! He drew himself up, made his eyes flash. "That is not so," he cried indignantly. "America has a half million troops on the line. Why, I saw east of Rebaux ten divisions that—My God!" he broke off, "what have I done?"

Von Genister leaped out of his chair. His eyes sparkled with triumph. "Ah, thank you, *mein leutnant,* thank you. That is what I wished to know." He turned smiling to his aide. "You see, Steuffel, I was right. Rebaux and the sector east of the Meuse is the place of assault. Ten divisions, the Americans have there. You heard. You all heard. That means an assault in force. Ah, Ludendorff will be surprised to know that."

"I was mistaken," yelled Chris. "I didn't see that many, I saw them north of St. Menehould and Verdun. I was lying to trick you. I didn't—"

"Never mind, never mind," consoled Von Genister, delightedly. "You cannot throw us off the scent now." He smiled benignly. "And do not curse yourself, *mein leutnant,* for falling into the trap I so neatly laid for you. Cleverer men

than you have told me what I wanted to know. We...."

An ejaculation from the intelligence officer cut in on the German's self-congratulation. The man had the moist paper carefully spread out, and reading through a magnifying glass now rapidly translated what he found. Von Genister listened, and listening, flung out his chest, nodded delightedly many times and interjected a self-satisfied *ja,* or *jahwohl.*

WHEN the intelligence officer had done, the general turned to Von Manteuffel. "Take the *leutnant* away and see that he is comfortably cared for, pending transportation to the prisoner-of-war detention camp." And then to Chris, "The papers bear out the facts you inadvertently gave me, *mein leutnant.* Ten divisions concentrated east of the Meuse presages an attack in force and depth against my positions. I shall be amply prepared to defend them. Take him away."

Chris put on his last bit of acting. Throwing up his arms in despair, he cried, "It's a lie. The papers are wrong. I am wrong. Oh, God, why wasn't I killed in the crash? I have betrayed my country."

He gave a very convincing exhibition of a man sobbing in despair, when Von Manteuffel gently led him from the room. And twenty minutes later he was alone in a small barrack room near the airdrome, awaiting transportation to the German prison camp at Karlsruhe.

Chris Haines sat on the edge of the plain wooden bunk, his legs apart, his elbows on his knees and his face cupped in the palms of his hands. He had completed his mission. The ruse to keep the Germans from reinforcing the Meuse-Argonne area had succeeded, even beyond MacMahon's calculations. But that did Chris no good now. He was a prisoner, and even now Bert Carlyle was probably telling others that the yellow dog chose to be a prisoner rather than fight. And that thought was so harrowing that Chris almost cried.

It was pitch black outside. The guard who had brought Chris's meager supper of bean soup, black bread, and vile coffee had long since gone. Chris got up and began pacing the earthen floor, already prey to the nauseating pangs of captivity. A prisoner in a cage. He remembered as a boy feeling pity for the tawny tiger who ceaselessly day and night paced the small iron cage until nostalgia brought on welcome death.

With aeons of time, Chris had examined every nook of his cage. It was but an old officer's kitchen, now changed by the addition of bars to door and window to a temporary prison pen for captured officers. He had examined the bars; they were stout and newly bolted and weeks of stealthy labor would be required to remove them. And Chris had but a few hours. At dawn he would be removed to a railhead and thence, by escort, to Karlsruhe.

Before the single door a sentry paced. The night was chill in September, and the man wore a heavy overcoat, combat pack and the deep coal-scuttle helmet. He was humming a snatch from a Wagnerian opera, and Chris could locate him instantly by the strength of the nasal notes. Softly to ear like the muffled beat of kettle drums came the dull thunder of fired guns. Yet despite this note of war, insects of summer, crickets and the like, made soft night noises. And a bird chirped uneasily from its tree perch.

Occasionally came the faint sound of men's voices. That would be the mechanics grooming the dawn patrols of the Fokkers, at Von Manteuffel's airdrome. Later, with the deep bell-like ringing roar of motors that was so unusual as to be instantly familiar, a squadron of Gothas soared overhead, enroute to bomb American positions, thirty kilometers away.

Thirty kilometers. Possibly twenty-four American miles. A man could walk it in a night. Yet it was an impassable gap to Chris Haines, who now needed so much to be free. They had called him a pair of worthless wings. They had refused him a chance to make good. They had forced him to become a prisoner to carry out a military trick. He had done

just that, as he had promised. But—he sucked in his breath—he had not promised to *remain* a prisoner. He must escape. But how to get back? How to cross that gap of thirty kilos? Indeed, how to get out of this prison pen?

He tortured his mind to conceive a way. He remembered all the hair-raising exploits of his boyhood reading, and saw that such breathless escapes were the figment of an author's imagination and would never work in real life.

He had no tools to help him. He had been thoroughly searched; and owned nothing save a khaki handkerchief.

Nervously he paced to the door to look out at the faintly silhouetted form of the sentry. As he strode back, a noise struck upon his ear. A noise so familiar that he had heard it for weeks, yes months, and never gave it attention. A jingling merry little sound. He took another step. Yes, there it was again.

His spurs!

He had been one of those who had laughed loudly and raucously at the idea of a pilot wearing spurs. But with boots, military regulations made it compulsory and he had bought a pair and grown accustomed to their jingling at his heels. Rapidly he visualized them. A two-inch bit of steel on a polished steel "U", that was held to his boots by a strap. In the end of the steel projection was a rowel, an inch in diameter, and saw-edged. Quickly he bent down and unstrapped one, having at the moment no clear idea of what he would do with it, but subconsciously realizing it might help his escape.

He ran his finger over the edge of the rowel. The sharp points gouged the flesh and drew blood. Sharp! And as a vague, desperate plan began to form in his mind, he measured with his thumb nail the clearance of the rowel from the little axis that held it. Nearly a half inch! Plenty! He smiled grimly and went again to the barred door.

And now, the "U" of the spur held tightly in his hand, he leaned against the bars and gazed out. His plan rapidly took form. It had but a desperate chance of success, yet unhesitatingly, he took it.

Clop! Clop!

The methodical tread of the heavy German boots thumped steadily toward him. The sentry was humming a chorus from "Siegfried." Now he was squarely in front of the door. Chris girded himself for the ordeal.

"Hoh, sentry," he called softly.

"Huh!" the man was startled. He stopped and swung suspiciously, taking his Mauser from his shoulder and holding it in the port position. *"Was ist los?"*

Chris struggled with the vague memories of college German.

"Komst du hier, bitte," he said, striving to make his voice pleasant. *"Ich habe ein brief fur eueren offizer."*

The man muttered something which Chris did not understand. Nonetheless, he came closer, rifle still ready for instant use.

CHRIS with his left hand held out the khaki handkerchief. In the darkness it might pass for a folded missive. In atrocious German, he tried to explain that it was a message that had information important for the Germans to know. That he succeeded was evidenced by the sentry coming close to the door. Chris drew back the hand holding the handkerchief until it barely protruded through the bars.

"Take it," he said in German, "and hurry."

The man could not see the roweled spur in the other hand. He relaxed somewhat, held his rifle in the crook of his right arm, and extended his left for the alleged missive.

"Lady luck," breathed Chris. "Stand by."

The man's hand came to the bars. Chris, summoning all his strength, seized it, gave it a terrific jerk that yanked the man flat against the bars. His accoutrements clanged against the bars. Like a striking snake Chris's right hand went out. The man had thrown back his head to yell. He was straining to draw back his body from the bars.

"Helfen—" he started to scream.

As a man draws a violin bow across the strings, so did Chris draw that roweled spur across the man's throat. He pressed hard, the jagged edge dug deep. The scream for help suddenly became a hic-coughing gurgle. Blood spouted out like a fountain and drenched Chris's hands and the front of his blouse. The jugular vein had been cut.

Chris cursed his slowness in striking. That single cry on a still stark night would be heard for a long distance and would bring help quickly. Yet he did not let panic destroy him. Working swiftly and efficiently, he braced the dying German against the bars, and with frantic fingers sought for the key to the door.

He found it in the left pocket of the overcoat. Having it, he tore the rifle loose from the man's weak clutch, thrust the body away and then, reaching outside, inserted the great key and turned it. The door opened noiselessly.

But hardly had Chris stepped through than there came to him the sounds of running feet. A hoarse shout shattered the silence. A cry for the corporal of the guard! A yell for the *feldwebel.*

The feet pounded madly. Closer! Closer!

Chris had no idea where he was, or where to hide. He turned and ran swiftly away from the approaching shouts. Then he cursed as he remembered he had forgotten to take off the dead sentry's leather cartridge cases. He had but a single clip of five in the rifle that he had carried away with him.

"Yah," howled a voice close behind.

The echo of it was drowned by the sharp crack of a Luger pistol. A lance of orange flame speared the darkness, a slug whanged over Chris's head. It was close —too close.

He halted for a second, swung and threw the cocking bolt on the Mauser. A dim figure was twenty yards behind.

Another explosion. This time the slug creased the fleshy part of Chris' thigh. He was staggered, but caught himself, and before the pursuer could fire again, Chris squeezed the trigger on the Mauser.

It jumped and roared. A frightful scream came from behind, and the pursuer was knocked flat by the terrific hitting power of the steel bullet.

Chris ran on. He dodged through the remnants of the town, tore out on a path to the right, swung into fields. His breath came in sobs, the warm blood ran down his leg and made his clothing sticky. His eyes bulged, his heaving lungs could not get breath. Yet somehow, blindly, madly, he coursed on. And then outlined blackly against the lighter darkness of the field ahead he saw a wood. Into this he plunged full tilt, tearing through brush, tripping, falling, getting up and pushing on.

At last human flesh could stand no more. He tripped, plunged headlong and fell, nearly spearing himself on the bayonet of the Mauser. He lay for five minutes unable to move, and then, hearing shouts behind, he crawled as quietly as tortured body would permit, burrowed under a bush and relaxed, utterly spent.

He had no idea how much time elapsed before he was once again breathing normally. But it had been long—too long. Many times in that interval he had heard the sounds of pursuit. Men shouting to one another, the heavy crash of a fired rifle as some man thought he saw the pursued. German soldiers even penetrated the thick plush blackness of the woods, but were turned back, baffled and afraid, knowing that the American was armed and fearing an ambush.

Some of these men talked among each other, and Chris, despite his lack of a "German ear," understood that the woods that concealed him covered no great area and could be surrounded that night and well beaten for the fugitive at dawn.

This stirred Chris to new peril. He must get clear before the cordon was drawn, else he was lost.

His first flush of joy at escaping the pen vanished. He had thirty kilos of German-infested territory to cover. It seemed an impossible task, yet he was not daunted. He lapped some dew from the brush to moisten his dried mouth, and then, invigorated by the rest, began a stealthy march through the woods. He had but one guide, the tin-panny sound of the guns to

the south and west. There lay the lines! Somehow he must reach them.

But the prodigiousness of the undertaking soon forced itself home. To his amazement, this stretch of woods was less than a half-mile in length. A half an hour later he stood on the edge of them, concealed behind a tree, looking out at an endless span of plain. Worse yet, his way was barred by the airdrome of Von Manteuffel's circus. A stretch of railroad track came in from the west and on this were wagon-lits sleeping cars where the pilots of the shock squadron slept. To the right were the canvas hangars, and dimmed lights reflecting on the canvas sides indicated that men were still at work there. He could circle this obstacle but in doing so would have to remain in the woods, and be caught in the net that was already closing. Indeed, as he debated his next move, he heard voices up a path to the left and the faint clank of equipment.

Even his retreat was cut off. And to remain where he was meant instant discovery.

HE COULD neither go ahead, nor back up, yet he must do one or the other. He chose to go ahead. Yet he went as a snake moves, on his belly and making less sound than a ghost. He made directly for the end hangar, with some idea of concealing himself in its canvas. It was slow work, he advanced about a yard a minute, but at length his outstretched hands, pushing the Mauser rifle before him, felt the rough surface of the canvas. There were men inside, men who talked and others who ordered. And a lift of the edge of the canvas revealed a machine shop, with engines on chain hoists and men working on them by a Hindenberg light.

Gradually he circled the hangar, advanced fifty yards—and came without warning upon a sentry!

The man had been standing there silently puffing on his pipe but the night wind blew the fumes the other way. And Chris, not knowing, had pushed out the rifle and struck the man's legs.

"Der teufel!" cried the sentry nervously, and turned, his rifle raising to the ready.

There was no time to curse; no time to do anything but act. Chris sprang like a catapult, and lunged at the man, the bayonet of his rifle shoved in front. One startled scream tore the night silence to shreds. And the bayonet, buried to the locking ring in the sentry's stomach, silenced the man forever.

But the scream had been heard. Men cried out in surprise and again Chris heard that ominous thud of running feet. Shouts came from within the hangar. The point of the bayonet had lodged in the sentry's backbone. Chris, finally, in desperation, placed his foot on the man's chest and gave an upward heave. On the third yank, the weapon came clear. And Chris, without stopping, coursed across the field. Observation planes stood on the dead-line. Smaller Fokkers, prim Albatrosses, the gnat-like Pfalz, they were all there awaiting the dawn patrol. Chris reached them without being seen. And as he did so he suddenly shifted his plan.

He could never traverse that thirty kilometers now without being seen and captured. A wild idea to seize a plane and fly back to his lines flashed through his mind. But that was impossible. Fiction to the contrary, airplane motors will not run fast enough to lift a crate off the ground unless they are warmed up. And these ships stood here cold. Indeed, several of them had canvas jerkins drawn over the motors to protect them against the dew. It would take ten minutes to get any of them ready to take-off, and Chris now had less than ten seconds.

Indeed, he did not even have time to cross the field to the taller wheat in the distance. Without stopping to think of the consequences, he hurled himself on to the wing of a Rumpler two seater, slid like a snake along the fuselage and crawled into the rear cockpit.

He instantly saw that it was an artillery observation bus. There was a wireless set to the right. And the observer's seat instead of being built in as in a pursuit plane, let down from the side on hinges

and could be folded up out of the way when the observer wished to stand up and see the result of some salvo.

Yet this was an advantage, for the rear of the fuselage was not partitioned off. In an instant Chris pushed up the seat and burrowed feet first through the wire bracing until he was firmly wedged in the rear of the fuselage. If he had been seen he was nicely trapped; otherwise, he had respite to dawn when his next problem would have to be considered.

Fortune favored him in that none had seen his mad dash to the Rumpler. And there, cramped and aching from his wound and exhaustion, he managed to spend the night dozing uncomfortably.

The tocsin of peril bonged in Chris' tired brain. Voices sounded quite near, he could hear men climbing around the crate. He had schooled himself before dozing off not to make a sound. He had said, "I'm in the tail of a Rumpler, my face is toward the observer's cockpit. I must make no move if startled."

The subconscious brain had remembered the instructions, so now he came silently, acutely alert. The Mauser rifle lay cramped at his side, bayonet forward. Light gleamed on the blade where bloodstains had not dulled it. Day had come, and as Chris listened, he knew this ship was being groomed for a flight.

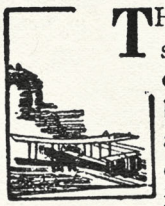
The thought did not dismay him. He had realized when he climbed in that there was no escape at this field. And what was to happen now was so uncertain as to prevent him making a plan. He shrugged and relaxed. From now on circumstances would dictate his actions, so he lay quiet, heard the mechanic climb into the front cockpit and presently heard the coughing backfire of a cold motor.

Presently the Mercedes revved up until the whole crate trembled and a gust of man-made wind swept back and blew Chris' hair from off his haggard, bloodshot eyes. He was aware of a terrible thirst, his stomach rolled and ached and he knew wolfish hunger. His leg was so stiff from the wound that it seemed paralyzed. Yet he did not despair.

Men came and stood near the ship, as the motor turned tick-tock. They talked about many things Chris could not understand, but presently when the word *Amerikaner* figured so frequently he knew they were discussing his escape.

Then he heard a salutation: *Get trinken!* the German equivalent to the Allied air farewell, "happy landings".

Booted feet climbed over the rear cockpit and the folding seat came down with a creak. The light was partly blotted out by a heavy form that settled down in the seat. A few sharply barked orders from the pilot in the cockpit ahead, and then, of a sudden the motor boomed, the ship quivered and began to move. It jounced over the field and then became suddenly motionless, apparently, and Chris knew it had taken off.



THE motor roared a steady song of power. And presently the observation crate began to dip and lift to the air currents. Chris wondered where they were going, he wondered what he should do. And because he must keep his attention fixed he began to study the legs and waist of the seated German in the observation cockpit ahead of him. The man's feet were scarcely a foot from his head.

He saw a pair of binoculars dangling from a strap. And to the right thigh was strapped a black holster out of which the butt of a Luger automatic appeared. He saw a pair of hairy hands come into view as the observer hooked up his wireless. Then the aerial was dumped over and the hands tinkered with the little tray bearing the power tubes, and sending key. Twice the bus banked sharply so that Chris' body was thrown to the right. Then the Rumpler straightened and droned eternally onward. Chris could tell from his quickened breathing that the crate had reached a high altitude—ten thousand feet at least.

After approximately an hour had passed, the motor suddenly died to the idle and a voice roared. *"Recht?"*

"Recht," retorted the observer. *"Gehst du."*

The motor throbbed again, and presently the hairy right hand fumbled with the wireless key, the thumb and forefinger sending out the message.

The observer was reporting. Perhaps calling for fire, perhaps rectifying range. But at all events the German was "spotting", and the Rumpler must be over the American lines somewhere close enough to spot some target. As if to prove this point, the observer now stood up, leaning against the slip stream and reached down but once to touch the key. His binoculars came out of the case, and Chris knew he was watching fire results.

From the extra rarity of the air, Chris also knew that the Rumpler was even higher. Thirteen thousand feet or more. He could visualize this, for he knew that German spotting planes always hung as high as possible to avoid an attack from above. Sunshine slanted into the cockpit. And now the Rumpler banked regularly, circling the target that had been found. Minutes passed monotonously.

It was time for Chris to act.

He looked at those booted legs. The German wore a safety belt, but loosely arranged so that he could stand up. Chris nodded grimly. There was but one thing to do, and he prepared for it

Silently the bayonet came off the locking ring into his hands. He hitched himself ahead until his head nearly touched the motionless boots. Here he stretched his arms and legs, getting out the kinks, for he would have need of all his strength in a few minutes. Time passed. The motor droned on. The plane banked, the hairy left hand reached down again to the wireless key. A voice shouted, likely the pilot's, and the observer straightened and leaned far out over the fuselage edge. He was apparently watching something. It was the supreme moment, made for Chris.

A wave of nausea swept him at what he was about to do, for it seemed brutal, cold-blooded. Yet war was like that, and he was desperate.

In a second he had crept through the brace wires. He partly straightened behind the observer who was gazing through binoculars at something on the earth beneath. The Rumpler passed through a cloud. Dank, damp mist enshrouded them.

Chris placed the bayonet where he could reach it. Then his strong arms clasped the observer's legs. A single hoist, a flip, a hoarse, terrified yell—and the observer dangled over the side in space, held from dropping only by his safety belt. Again Chris felt nausea. Yet he dare not stop. Already the observer, a huge, mustached man, with wide, bulging blue eyes, was groping frantically for his automatic. His lips moved, yet the voice was swept away by the motor's roar. In his eyes was stark horror, agonizing fear. The Luger automatic in his hands swept up.

He was about to fire.

Chris seized the bayonet. With one forthright stroke he swept it down against the web belt. It sheered clear through to a ragged edge, and the weight of the observer finished the grim task.

A bullet spatted past Chris' head. He had one fleeting vision of a man, insane with fear, staring at him with eyes that he would never forget. Then the observer vanished. Chris, horrified at his own deed, peered over the side. Down through space catapulted a black manikin that turned over and over, with arms and legs working like those of a small insect. Rapidly it became so small that the kicking legs and arms were no longer seen. Then it was a black dot. And presently it was lost in the neutral brown colors of the checkered earth below. And Chris knew a man had died.

He turned back, aware that his fascination might have cost him dear if the pilot had heard the sounds of struggle. But he had not; the man's eyes were straight ahead. And Chris saw why. A flight of Allied Spads, flying almost on a level with the Rumpler, filled the sky about a mile or so ahead.

The pilot of the Rumpler was watching them to decide whether to turn for home or seek higher altitude, or ask for help. Chris' eyes rapidly searched the sky. A couple of Albatrosses hung far to the west,

also doing gun spotting. There were no German fighting crates nearby.

Hastily Chris now switched his glance to the checkered carpet below. The white smoke seeping like steam from patches of wood and field told him this was the front. And then he saw the irregular lines of trenches that drew themselves blackly across the landscape. There was No-man's land. That tremendously wide road far to the left was the famous Viz Sacre that led to Verdun. Souilly must lay there to the right. Chris knew that even with a dead stick, he could reach safety.

A lump came into Chris' throat. There, within sight, lay freedom, renewed self-respect, and a chance to prove he was not a pair of worthless wings. The single obstacle was this pilot. So Chris dismissed the flight of Allied planes, rolling and banking so that their cocards gleamed in the sun, and prepared for his last desperate attack.

He gripped the bayonet with his left hand. Of a sudden his right encircled the pilot's neck and tightened, pulling the man's head back. The bayonet, stained with blood, glittered before the German's eyes. Into his ear Chris screamed: "Land. Land over there and you'll not be hurt." He pointed with the bayonet toward Allied territory.

His words, doubtless, meant nothing to the man. But his desperate, ash-colored face, his blazing eyes and finally the bayonet conveyed the message clearly enough. And the pilot must know if this American was here, then his observer was gone—dead.

Yet to him Chris met a man who valued his life less than he did his honor. At that second the Rumpler lifted to a gust of wind and dropped suddenly in a pocket, nearly throwing Chris out, and so disarranging his balance that his hold on the German pilot's neck slipped. In an instant the man wrested loose. One shove of the German's hand flung the stick as far forward as it would go. One shove of the rudder bar cocked the "comma" tail assembly and flung the Rumpler into a wildly gyrating dive that resolved itself quickly into a tight spin. His intention was obvious. He was trying to throw Chris loose from the plane. And Chris, having no safety belt, suddenly found death gibbering into his face.

IN A split-second the centrifugal force of the violent spin flung him crashing against the cockpit edge. Here he balanced like a see-saw—and lost. His feet swept out of the cockpit. His bayonet dropped. With a mad clutch he grasped the cockpit edge with one hand, his right still clinging with the tenacity of a bulldog to the pilot's coat. Madly the Rumpler spun like a top.

Chris was now as a man who clings tightly to the madly revolving sail of a windmill that turns round and round, each violent whirl lessening his strength, each spin seeking to toss him off into space.

The German pilot sensed the situation without seeing it. He knew his advantage and sought to make fatal use of it. With one knee braced against the stick to hold the crate in the spin, his two hands came up and tore viciously at Chris' grimly clutching right hand. The man's nails tore off the skin. Then his gouging fingers got under Chris' thumb and forefinger and bent them back until Chris either had to let go or have his fingers broken.

A man with death staring him in the face, holding his life in the balance of a split-second, is possessed of an almost superhuman strength. And Chris had it then. He could feel his left hand loosening as the bucking crate tried to fling him outward. The pilot, securely held, would take but seconds to loosen the right hand.

And in that second Chris risked all. Deliberately he loosened the already numb fingers of the left hand that clutched the cockpit edge. With a surge of strength he bent the right arm and pulled himself inward. Madly he flung the left arm around the pilot's neck. The outward pull of the bucking plane caused his arm to tighten like a strangling rope against the German's throat.

In an instant the man's head came back, his mouth opened, his eyes bulged under the goggles. He was without air. He was dying.

Now clawing with knee, and yanking with both arms, Chris managed to get a knee into the cockpit. The German, giving up his futile effort to loosen the tightly crooked arm that cut off his wind, sought to find his automatic and use it. Failing this, with strength that was running from him like water, he grasped the flare pistol in the cockpit beside him. He was going out fast as his bloated tongue, protruding through his teeth indicated. But he was a man and he fought to the end.

The flare pistol came feebly up, crooked over his left shoulder. Chris, half in and half out of the spinning crate, saw the danger. A flare ball, striking him at a point blank range would either kill him or smash him loose and cause him to be flung out into space.

He himself was nearly at the end of his resources. Yet he never lost his head. He banged his knee with all his strength against the leather upholstered edge of the cockpit, flung himself madly forward on the smooth fuselage that lay between the pilot and observer's seat. This flattened him out, yet did not cause him to lose his strangle-hold.

Crash!

A jet of orange and red shot from the big old-fashioned muzzle of the flare pistol. The fiery ball passed so close to Chris' head that his hair caught on fire and singed down to burn him cruelly.

It was the last act of a brave man, the firing of that flare pistol. The German's glazing eyes bulged out of his head. His tongue was blackened and now his body went limp. He became a man of putty—dead clay.

But even in dying he brought about Chris' doom. For as his body slumped downward, the knee pressed more firmly against the joy-stick, the single booted leg held the cocked rudder immovably. And the Rumpler, her motor roaring wide open, pulled the crate in a madly spinning power dive down the air lane to the carpet and death below.

Chris was too worn out to do more than cling to the cockpit edge and panel like a fly to a rotating ball. He was facing forward on his belly, and, looking through the whirl of light that was the flailing prop, he could see the brown whirlpool of earth come up to gather him in an embrace of death. The dead German pilot slumped sideways, arms extended, the arms flopping this way and that as the slip stream tore at them. And now Chris became aware of a terrible peril. Screaming ships with Allied cocards on them howled around the doomed Rumpler. They were firing short bursts, but none of the slugs hit home. Chris thought, coolly enough, that they were gleefully gathered to kill a piece of "white meat". If he got down, they'd likely be surprised to find a Yank in the crate, if the crash didn't mash him into unrecognizability. He watched them circle, his subconscious brain calling on his muscles for one more effort, to stop this spin.

Life is sweet, and the instinct to preserve it dominates all else. And Chris wanted to live. He knew what he had to do, yet doubted if his body could stand the new drain of strength demanded. He looked at the whirling ground below, filled with circular lines, as circular lines of fire are seen in a spouting pinwheel.

Ten thousand meters is some twelve thousand feet in height, and even a power spin takes some minutes to reach the earth. But for Chris the dive was going too swiftly. The earth lunged up at him.

He could wait no longer. He had less than two thousand feet in which to act.

HIS teeth clenched; his muscles tensed, and clinging like a squirrel to a rotating wheel, he inched himself along the panel. Now his hands reached the pilot's slumped body. His steely fingers dug deep into the man's leather flying coat. He hauled himself past, grabbed the connecting web of the safety belt and slid headforemost down into the cockpit. From here he could reach the throttle. A yank pulled it closed. He felt upward to the instrument board and cut the switch. Then groping in the bottom, he got an arm locked around the dead German pilot's legs and hauled by

main strength his own legs down. It took too many precious seconds for him to get upright. And when he looked over the side, the swirling earth seemed to rush up to caress him. He appeared to be falling into the center of a huge brown bowl.

Yet he did not lose his head—else he were lost. He crooked his right foot onto the rudder bar, and thus braced, quickly snapped loose the buckle of the German's safety belt. Holding onto the cockpit edge with his left hand, he placed his right under the hams of the dead man. One terrific hoist he gave and the swirling ship did the rest. For one split-second a huddled blackened form hung level with the cockpit. Then as if swept with invisible hands, it vanished to the rear, and turning over and over slowly like a great ball, dropped to the earth. Yet so fast was the Rumpler diving that the body did not gain much. It was as if the two were engaging in a race to meet oblivion below.

Chris even now took time to set himself in the cockpit and fasten the safety belt. And these precious seconds lost brought him to the verge of death. Less than a thousand feet separated him from the earth. Trees had depth. He knew those circular lines were trenches. A balloon, like a huge gray bulb, whisked into view and then vanished like the ball on a roulette wheel.

And a further peril awaited him in the wings of the Rumpler. They had been loosened by the terrific rotation they had withstood in the power spin. Fabric and steel were not meant for such pressure. And as Chris centered the stick, neutraled the rudder, and sought with sensitive fingers to bring the crate out of the spin, he saw brace wire after brace wire dangling in the slip stream. And the wings themselves seemed to flap against the pressure, only the still intact struts and a few main braces holding them to the fuselage.

Chris had had no experience whatever with a German plane, and he had less than seconds to feel her out. And he found she did not answer as readily as would a Nieuport or a Spad.

"Hot dog!" he muttered through blood-flecked lips. "She won't make it."

Boldly he crossed the stick to the right and cocked the rudder slightly. On the second full turn she came shrieking out of the spin, but before he could catch her, she over-controlled and began a left spin. He had but one chance left. He turned on the switch and goosed the motor wide open and crossed the stick again. The sagging Rumpler came out in a turn and a half, but by now the earth sprang upon him. Ahead rushing at him like an infuriated green mass was a wood. He could not clear it. He banked her with the motor wide on to keep her from side-slipping into the ground.

The Rumpler held what altitude he had, some fifty feet, but as he neutraled the controls, he saw directly ahead the Rupt de Mad. He knew what that narrow creek meant. On the other side was No-man's land. A shell-pocked ruin. Machine guns. Artillery. To land out there was sure death.

Like a wild thing the Rumpler shot ahead. Chris pulled back the stick and zoomed her. Like a runaway elevator the German crate shot up the sky-trail. He leveled off, held her so, preparatory to banking for home—and the motor gave three gasps and died.

"Well for crysake," howled Chris.

He took one glance below. He would barely cross the Rupt de Mad and beyond it lay shell-torn fields that would crack him up.

"My number's up," he muttered fatalistically, and then, picking what appeared to be a smooth spot, nosed her down sufficiently to keep the controls sensitive. It was going to be a terrific crash.

Rapidly the field spun under him, a field gouged with shells until it had the appearance of a piece of hammered brass. The sagging wings let her drop swiftly, and Chris had no gun to keep her nose up. He watched in resignation his approaching death. Thirty feet! Twenty feet! Ten feet! Back came the stick until the knob struck him in the stomach. He locked it there, pinning it between his legs.

Crump——wham!

The wheels struck and she bounced forty feet into the air quickly. Chris folded his arms on the cockpit edge and buried his face into them. Madly the Rumpler dove to destruction.

With a rending crash of tortured wood and metal, the Rumpler struck again. The landing gear was swept away. The left wing buckled, hooked the ground, spun the doomed crate around. Then, rearing like a broken eagle, the nose dug in, the tail came up and the whole ship collapsed into a wreckage of broken wood and twisted fabric. It came to a stop in crumpled pieces. And from the broken fuselage that leaked gas and crimson drops, a motionless broken figure hung limply against the safety belt.

EVACUATION Hospital Four lay, in early October, just below Souilly, rapidly filling with casualties from the first phase of the Meuse-Argonne drive. It was close enough to the front that the eternal thud of gunfire came distinctly to the patients there being prepared for the hospital trains that ran to more permanent base hospitals at Vittel, Savenay and Tours.

In a private room that was part of the commanding officer's quarters lay a bandaged officer, who had not been evacuated to base hospitals. There he had lain for weeks on the brink of death. And on this early crisp morning certain officers, including Major General Ronny MacMahon, Major Larrabee and a Colonel of Intelligence, came to the hospital and asked for Lieutenant Haines. It might be added that this was the first day the said officer in the special quarters had been permitted to receive visitors.

They entered and Chris Haines laid aside his cigaret and book and wondered what the hell was up now.

He did not notice another officer, wearing wings on his left breast, who hung shyly in the rear and did not enter the room.

MacMahon, a dead cigar grimly clenched in his teeth, came over and shook hands.

"Glad to hear you're among the living," he said gruffly. "From the reports, I expected you'd be pushing daisies."

"I'll be out of here in ten days," said Chris.

Larrabee also shook hands, as did the said Colonel of Intelligence.

"We've just come to say hello and leave this," said MacMahon. "I personally raised a private hell until it came through. You've deserved it."

He handed Chris a typewritten paper. It merely said that the above-mentioned officer for certain services rendered above and beyond the call of duty had been recommended for the Medal of Honor. Pershing's name was attached in endorsement.

"By the time you've raised a few children," resumed MacMahon, "you ought to have the medal. I hear they're issuing them once in a while. And since I'm at it, I might just as well thank you for the swell job you made of the fake orders."

"The trick worked, then," said Chris.

He felt no emotion about this citation, nor did he make any comment when the colonel shook his hands. These were mere baubles. He already had what the French called the Croix de Guerre. Some Frog general assaying twelve pounds of gold lace to the square inch had pinned it to his bed when he lay hovering close to death.

That bronze cross was the first thing he saw when he came out of a fortnight's insensibility to find that he had four busted ribs, internal injuries, a fractured arm and a damaged skull.

"Worked like the clock," MacMahon permitted his grim face to lighten. "The whole First Army jumped off between the Meuse and the Argonne on September 26th and knocked the Jerries for a five kilometer loss. The resistance is stiffening now, because Von Genister had his reserves pooled pretty close, and they're throwing them in, four divisions at a time. But our trick permitted us to bust through Montfaucon and the first and second lines, and we're battering at Jerry's last line of defense, the Kriemhild Stellung, right now. There are a lot of birds breathing and eating who'd be pushing daisies now

but for that trick—and you. Thanks."

"Yes," said Chris simply. "I'm glad you could use a pair of worthless wings."

MacMahon looked at him sharply, seeking for a sign of bitterness. But there was none in Chris' face. He had meant it. To him the extraordinary adventures in escaping from the Germans only finally to crash in the Yank front line trenches meant that his tough luck still pursued him. He had cracked up two more crates —washed out twelve.

It was Larrabee who now advanced quietly and laid a gentle hand on Chris' shoulder.

"Forget that lousy phrase, lad." His voice was soft. "I made it up; I named you worthless wings. And I'm damned sorry. I, who am always preaching about high morale, damn near wrecked a youngster like you who has more guts in his little finger than I have in my whole body. It was my flight, lad, that saw you make that wonderful escape and bring that Rumpler down when we thought your number was up. We shot at you until you tumbled the pilot overside, then we knew something strange was happening. It was a damn fine job—and I've got another for you. You can fly at number five as deputy leader of C-Flight whenever you think you can hold a stick. The army would be a hell of an organization without kids like you."

He broke off sharply, and Chris, who had felt only numb before, now found a thick lump in his throat, and his eyes burning as they had never burned before.

"Thanks," he said simply.

But that was not all. MacMahon had to go places and he shook hands as did the silent colonel of Intelligence who had planned the fake papers and the fake surrender to trick the Germans as to the time and place of the Yank attack. To the colonel, even as he left the room, Chris had been only a first class tool who had carried out the colonel's will. It was no part of the colonel's plan that Chris should escape and return. The colonel was glad the boy had not been killed in carrying out the ruse but beyond that, he did not venture. War was war with him, and officers and men expendable machines to carry out an ultimate aim.

"I've brought some one with me," he said after a while. "Somebody that owes you an apology."

He went to the door and called. The next instant Bert Carlyle came into the room, his overseas cap in his hand, a strange expression on his lean face.

Chris felt himself stiffen. Yet his face remained impassive. He said nothing and waited for Bert to speak.

And Bert was all man about it.

"I'm sorry, Chris," he announced frankly. "If I'd known what was up, I'd never have said what I did. And, furthermore, I've written home and told them exactly what happened. By the time it's printed, the information won't do the Germans any good, and it'll square you—with you know whom. You were a square-shooter and I wouldn't blame you a bit if you knocked my block off when you get your strength back."

Chris felt his head spin. Judgment day was certainly here.

Bert was still speaking. "I'll always be rivals with you, Chris, because it's my nature to make a game out of everything. I've a competitive nature and I like competition. And I'll say this: When you get back to the squadron, you'll offer plenty of competition, but we'll play on the square."

He paused and very shyly extended his hand.

"If you would," he muttered, blushing, "I'd like to shake hands."

Chris felt he was about to slobber or do some boyish thing. So he shoved out a white, bleached hand and muttered, "Well, why the hell not?"

There came a silence then, a long peaceful silence that Larrabee finally broke.

"In my report," he said quietly, "I'm calling you worthy wings, lad. So forget that other line."

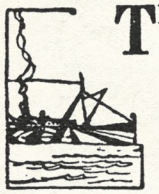
"Worthy wings is right," said Carlyle vigorously, "The best of us all—now."

And Chris, his soul at peace, his mind happy, leaned back in utter contentment.

He was qualified as worthy wings for a Spad Flight, and life was good once more.

FAMOUS FIRSTS

IN THE WORLD WAR



THE First Division, which later distinguished itself in the Meuse-Argonne and St. Mihiel offensives, was the first expedition of American troops to leave the United States for France. Sailing June 14, 1917, it arrived in France twelve days later. Some aviators and medical units had landed on French soil previously, but this division was the first combat outfit to be sent overseas.

* * *

The first American shot of the World war was fired at 6:05 a. m., October 23, 1917. Located in the Luneville sector, about 400 meters east of Bathelemont, this gun was manned by a section of Battery C, 6th Field Artillery, 1st Division.

* * *

The first German ship to arrive overseas under the American flag was the U.S.S. *Houston,* formerly the North German Lloyd S.S. *Liebenfelds.* This ship was scuttled in Charleston harbor when America declared war on April 6, 1917. It was promptly raised, commissioned in the U. S. Navy, and entered the war zone as an American transport August 16, 1917.

* * *

The U-58 was the first German undersea craft to fall victim to the American navy. She was captured by the U. S. destroyer *Fanning* off Queenstown, November 17, 1917.

* * *

"Here lie the first soldiers of the United States to fall on the soil of France for liberty and justice." This is the inscription on the graves of Corporal James D. Gresham and Privates Thomas F. Enright and Merle D. Hay of the 16th Infantry, 1st Division. They were killed in action on the night of November 3, 1917, during a German trench raid near Bures.

* * *

The first organized American offensive was at Cantigny, May 28, 1918. This was the engagement that won undying fame for the 28th Infantry, 1st Division, and proved to the Allies the fighting mettle of their American comrades.

* * *

The first Marine to win the Congressional Medal of Honor was Gunnery Sergeant Charles F. Hoffman, 49th Company, 5th Regiment, U.S.M.C. In the hectic struggle attendant upon the taking of Hill 142 near Chateau Thierry, June 6, 1918, Sergeant Hoffman routed twelve of the enemy who had set up five light machine guns on an enfilading slope. Hoffman bayoneted two of the Germans and forced the others to flee, abandoning their guns.

Krauts for the Captain

by HAROLD BRADLEY SAY

A prisoner was wanted and to the captor of the highest ranking Hun would go a furlough---what a battle of wits ensued when Stone met Corgan in No-man's land, both after the same Heinie.

THE blood red of the rifted clouds turned to a purplish black as the last rays of the September sun, a half hour down, faded and died. The jagged lines of upturned chalk clay that marked lines of trenches on the crest of a rolling hillside vanished. On the left a ragged wood, whose trees by day held up their maimed limbs in supplication, became but a shadow in the thickening darkness. A strained unnatural peace descended on the torn hills and thicket-studded ravines of the Argonne country.

A faint snapping of twigs, the swish-swish of cloth against cloth, a creaking of straps and buckles. A line of shadows moved out of the woods and across a half mile of open ground, shell torn and spotted here and there with clumps of drying grass.

"All right. Take it easy. No loud talking."

Silently the shadowy forms settled down on the ground.

"Say, Sarg—ain't this a hell of a place to pull a raid?" came a grating whisper. "Half a mile of open ground, enough barbed wire to fence all of Texas in forty acre fields and a cockeyed mountain decorated with ten machine guns to the yard."

The man addressed as Sarge spat viciously. "Ain't worrying me none," said he

in undertone. "The Boche won't be looking for a raid here. That's why Division picked this layout. What burns me up is that of all the six million shavetails in this man's army, they pick this bird Corgan. Damn his soul! If I'd a known he was going to run this party I wouldn't a volunteered for the job."

Blom—Blom. Two distant flashes. Two sharp rumbles that echoed over the world like miniature peals of thunder. From out of the night came the roar of an elevated train traveling miles a minute. Instantly men's voices froze. Figures hugged tight the ground. With a hurtling shriek two high velocity shells sped over ahead and burst with a crumpling rattle far to the rear.

"Cross roads," grunted Sergeant Stone. "Ain't after us. No, sir, as I was saying—I wouldn't a gone into this if I'd a known this Corgan louse was to head the job."

"But, Sarge, you got as good a chance as anybody for grabbing a Boche officer. It's a furlough for the guy that does it. Believe me, there ain't many of them things handed out in this man's army. Man—a trip to Paris—Bordeaux—anywhere a guy wants to go for ten days! Judas Priest, but they must want an officer bad."

Blom—Blom. Two more shells ripped overhead. From somewhere over the hills an American battery started handing back a handful and the German fire ceased.

From the top of the ridge ahead a rocket floated upward into the night; blossomed out into a brilliant white light that sank earthward with a mystic slowness. Forty pairs of eyes watched it nervously. But the lone light winked out and no more followed for a half hour.

"You and Corgan was in the same outfit in the regs before the war, weren't you?" asked the corporal, a volunteer from another company than Sergeant Stone's.

"Two hitches before this war. Damn his hide. I had a chance to let him rot under a Mexican sun and didn't. I always was a fool." There was a deep bitterness in his words.

Most of Stone's outfit knew that he and Lieutenant Corgan were about as brotherly as a pair of Spanish fighting cocks. Each secretly admired the other as a soldier and no further. Over a girl in Panama City, it started, so rumor had it in the squads. Even a man new to the outfit could detect the cold, underlying animosity existent between the two in line of duty. Corgan always addressed Stone in the most approved casual, impersonal tone of officer to enlisted personnel; yet behind his eyes there always lingered a mocking, taunting smile.

And Stone's answer was to look right through the lieutenant as if he were not there; to speak with a deference and smartness that carried a challenge in its very correctness.

These things the men knew. Yet, save for the tendency for enlisted men to cast their sympathy with their rank on basic principle, they held each in high respect. In those who lacked respect, fear substituted; for both Corgan and Stone were natural leaders of men. Hard, driving, fearless and asking for odds from none.

True, the whole outfit had sided with Stone on the occasion of a dance given by a group of society mademoiselles of Limoges two months before when the regiment was still in the training area.

Marie Croillet was the dark-haired, vivacious daughter of the prefect of police, and Sergeant Stone with gifts of canned pineapple, chocolate and chewing gum had won her favor. It had cost three other enlisted men bruised countenances trying to cut in on the sergeant and two others had found themselves getting an overdose of fatigue duty as a penalty for their pains.

Sergeant Stone had things his own way with the prefect's daughter. He had told her of his estate in America, explaining that most enlisted men in the American army were wealthy gentlemen and that virtually all officers were scoundrels and thieves. In fact, the prefect and his wife had decided to announce in the newspaper of Limoges that their daughter had become engaged to a wealthy landowner who temporarily was fighting for the honor of his own country and the glory

of France. "Engaged" carries a real significance in the parlance of the French, and Sergeant Stone was quite satisfied with the world. Then Lieutenant Corgan plunged in and muddied up the water. It was on a Sunday down along the Vienne River. The lieutenant was out promenading with Mademoiselle Croillet, having explained that Sergeant Stone was unable to leave and had asked him to take Marie for a walk that day. The sergeant later barged up boldly and before the eyes of a half hundred enlisted men walked away with Marie.

Corgan only smiled.

THEN came the dance. Officers and enlisted personnel were both scheduled to receive invitation. Then on the eve of the affair, a notice was posted:

ONLY ENLISTED PERSONNEL WITH BARRACKS SHOES MAY ATTEND AS HOBNAILS WILL RUIN THE FLOORS

Corgan smiled broadly at Stone when he found him glaring at the sign. But that night, Stone was there, the only enlisted man. On his feet were a pair of black oxfords. They were not army issue shoes.

Marie Croillet rushed up to him. They waltzed off together.

Five minutes later, Corgan beckoned Stone to one side.

"Sergeant, I believe you're out of regulation. You will take off those civilian shoes. I'm confiscating them."

And before the assembled crowd, Sergeant Stone was forced to remove his shoes and walk home barefoot and humiliated.

"That was a lousy trick," growled the corporal. "Use his rank on you after you'd packed them shoes all over France."

"That's the kind of a guy he is—a louse."

"But he's got guts, Sarge."

"I ain't saying he hasn't. That's all he is, guts and a roughneck sergeant with a commission. Wait till this war's over and he gets hash marks back on his sleeve. Man, what I'm going to do to that hairy ape."

"Say, Sarge, why didn't you hook a commission?"

"Why didn't I? I'll tell you why—on account of Corgan, the snake. My name was sent in an' Corgan tips 'em off that Stone wasn't my real name. That it used to be Steinmacher—that my folks were Germans."

"Were they?"

"Yes, and what of it? Ain't there a lot of guys with German names in this man's army? I had it changed when I was a kid. My mother and father are dead—have been for a long time. They used to call me Dutchy in school, so when I went out on my own selling papers and shagging messages for the Western Union, I changed it to Stone. Corgan tips some of the high mucks off that I've got German leanings. They held my name up for investigation and by the time they got to it—if they ever did—I was in France."

"That was another lousy trick."

A pause.

"You sure were stuck on that girl in Limoges, weren't you, Sarge?"

"And she was a real, honest to God girl, I ain't kidding you, Corporal...If I ever get out of this damn war I'm going to take that baby back to the States with me. She ain't one of these...."

"Sergeant Stone, some of your men are doing too much talking. This isn't a camp meeting, you know."

The voice came from a bulky shadow that had loomed up alongside the sergeant and corporal. It came biting and full of meaning.

"I think the lieutenant must be mistaken. Perhaps he heard some Germans. They're not very far from here."

"Maybe so, if I hear *THOSE* Germans again, I'll stuff a dirty sock in one of their mouths."

The shadow thereupon drifted away.

"The only reason he volunteered to lead the detail was to get a chance to get a leave," hissed Stone. "He'd give his right leg to get back to Limoges a couple of days while I'm not there. Say, he'd tell Marie anything—that I was killed...sent home to the States...courtmartialed... married some other French girl. He's

dirty, Corgan is—dirtier than a mudhole in the dark."

"All right, men, let's go." It was Corgan, terse and devoid of even a hint of excitement.

"Corporal Anderson, you have the rockets? O. K.! If Anderson's hit, one of you men pick up the rockets. Don't fire the reds till I give the signal. Hell's going to pop as soon as that goes up. We want to be on the way back when it goes." He paused.

"Knives and butts if we meet a patrol.. no shooting till we're on top of their trench...freeze if there's a flare. Forward."

BACK in the battalion post of command, a tall, gray-haired person with two stars upon his shoulders sat on a box and regarded the minute hand of his wristwatch. A brigadier, two majors, a captain, a sergeant and two runners stood in the dugout's candle glow.

Out in the darkness of the trenches men's hands tightened on rifle butts and grenades. Machine gunners passed reassuring caresses over the working parts of their weapons. No telling what would happen after the raiders struck their goal. Further to the rear, cannoneers hovered tense around their guns. Men with headsets sat with straining ears ready to bark out commands that might come snapping over the wires. From the battery positions, eyes bore out through the blackness waiting for a rocket to streak skyward, then shower out its tell-tale stars.

Under the mask of desultory firing of three nights before, artillery with skillful precision had cut channels through the wire close up to the German trenches. A detail of engineers immediately after sundown had preceded the raiding party to clear the wire nearest the American positions. The raiding party itself carried shears and bangalores for emergency. Its arms were bayonet, pistol, grenade and dagger.

Stealthily the big patrol crept forward, Lieutenant Corgan close in the lead. Stakes and bands of interwoven barbed wire rose between them and the trench. The last wire was solid. The patrol stopped. Men wiggling along like worms tested the wire for a break. But taut strands, metallically smooth between the barbs, met their touch. Fresh wire. Put up that night. A whisper passed along the foremost row of men, lying tense and prone upon the ground. Then a muffled *clup*. Soldiers with cutters severed the strands and other men held fast the wire on each side of the nippers to forestall any zinging whangs as the pliers bit through. *Clup-clup*—a pause, then repeated. One by one the strands were cut and in close cramped knots the patrol pushed forward.

Pling! With a musical twang of a tight guitar string, a strand let go. Some one had erred—held the wrong wire.

"Wer da!" Quick and sharp came the words.

Pling! Plingety-pling! Pling! All caution gone, the wire cutters feverishly plied their shears.

Bang! A rifle crashed out in the blackness.

Rac-atac- tac-tac! Blindly, viciously, a Maxim rattled into life.

Swoosh! A rocket streaked skyward. It broke into a ball of ghostly white and floating overhead lighted up the earth with its deadly pallor.

"At 'em, men! Quick!" Corgan's command rang out above the turmoil.

Cries and shouts. A surge of shapes bounding forward to the German trench.

Rat-atac-tac!

Blong. Blong. Hand grenades. The machine gun stopped.

Pflop! A Very pistol sent its little balls of fire high into the night.

Over the parapet, down into the trench hurtled the raiders. They struck with the force and fury of a tornado. Pistols cracked. Grenades tore the night with jagged flashes. Rifle butts whipped right and left, up and down. Bayonets did their deadly work. But seconds of opposition, then came the cries: *Kamerad! Mercee! Bitte! Bitte!*

A babble of voices, German and English. Curses, groans, screams, faint sounds

lost in the roar of the barrage overwhelming of all minor notes like storm high breakers thundering against the cliffs.

"Go on you—!" Wildly, triumphantly Sergeant Stone shouted. Around a traverse in a trench he propelled a tall, bareheaded German whose hands reached skyward. The sergeant had a pistol rammed against his back.

In a trench bay where other dazed and frightened German soldiers cowered under the threat of bayonets and gun muzzles pressed close against them, Stone stopped with his captive.

A fresh calcium blossomed out straight overhead. It cast its glow on a cluster of terror-stricken German faces—faces of young boys and old men with beards. Blood trickled down the face of one. But in the knot of prisoners, was one tall, hard-visaged person coolly surveying the situation. His uniform was slightly different than the rest, and one cheek carried an ugly scar.

INTO the bay dashed Corgan. He shoved his way through the knot. He grabbed the German with the scar.

"Your rank!" he shouted into the German's ear.

"Feldwebel!" the German spoke defiantly.

Then Corgan noticed that Sergeant Stone had a hand on the German's sleeve and a gun against his back.

"Sergeant Stone!" he shouted. "Run back down that trench. See if any of our men are back there."

"But my prisoner!" cried Stone. "He's the rankingest one we've got. He's mine."

"Go on. Do as I order. I'll watch your prisoner."

The calcium faded. Some glared into the darkness toward the shadow that was Corgan's.

"Hurry, Stone. Damn your hide... hurry! We've got to start pronto!"

Something told Sergeant Stone that all was not right. A vague foreboding filled his mind as he stumbled and bumped along the trench.

By damn! That was his prisoner Corgan was holding. His! And the only one that looked like any kind of an officer, commissioned or non-commissioned. But minutes now and they'd be racing back across No-man's land. Be tough going... German retaliatory fire. Hope they don't hit my prisoner. Tomorrow! Tomorrow—maybe he'd be on the way back to Limoges with a ten day leave to flash in the mug of the M. P.'s. A furlough—a furlough and Marie Crcillet. A horse on Corgan, the bum.

And so thinking, he pushed along the trench. "Hey! Hey!" he shouted.

No answer from any straggling American. He paused. From the mouth of a dugout off the side of the trench came a ray of light from around the edge of a burlap curtain. Stone stopped, started to go down, then retrieved his step. Better not investigate. Time to get back. He charged along the trench. Twice he went down in the darkness. He leaped to his feet and hurried on faster.

Corgan! Corgan! No answer.

He tripped over an assortment of rifles and equipage. The mass lay in a bay—a widened spot in the trench.

Damn! That's where he'd left Corgan—left Corgan and the prisoner he had taken.

Corgan—the low-down louse. Corgan had gypped him again...gone to the rear with the prisoner that belonged to him—left him behind to shift for himself.

Out between the German and American lines, a rocket arched skyward, broke into a cluster of colored balls. Its feeble plop was lost in the storm of bursting shrapnel and H. E. still raining down on the German secondary positions and communication trenches.

The anger that flared up within the soul of Sergeant Stone drowned out all other thoughts. He forgot that he was standing alone in a German trench.

Corgan! The black-hearted thief! Robbed him of his prisoner! Of his leave! Damn his hide, officer or not, Corgan would pay for this.

Back over the rolling hills, sharp-eyed artillerymen straining at the bits had seen the tell-tale signal rocket cut the night.

The raid was over. The infantry was on the way home.

A pause in the hurricane of American fire. For an instant, the earth seemed deadly still even with the clatter of German machine guns on the right and left and German batteries in the rear.

Whoie-blam! It came down like forty brick buildings right on the German front line. Jagged flashes. Hurtling, screeching chunks of shell. Dirt vomited skyward, then rained back to earth. The trench began to disintegrate.

Sergeant Stone went down on his belly. The next instant he was all but buried under an avalanche of trench. He leaped to his feet. A chunk of shell whistled past his ear.

Got to get out of this—quick! What the hell! Where'll I go!

The dugout! The dugout with the light shining up from below!

With a bushman's crouch, he charged along the trench. There! Down he jumped. Through the curtain he shot.

Kamerad! Mercee! Bitte!

So intent was Stone on reaching the protection beneath the earth, that for an instant his eyes and ears failed to function. Then he beheld the owner of the voice. A round, wide-eyed face stared at him. Its owner was a man of perhaps thirty-five. He wore only trousers and undershirt, and the expression of his face was quite unwarlike. His hands were touching the ceiling and trembling. Stone stared at him, then at something else he saw. The dugout was lighted with a coal oil lamp. At one end was built a very comfortable-looking bed. There was a box alongside it covered with books. But these were not the objects that held his eye.

On top of a rude table fashioned from a wide board nailed on stakes was spread a cloth and on top of it lay a clean, freshly-pressed suit of feld-grau. Other parts of the uniform hung on a post near the bunk and on the floor beneath them stood a pair of officer's boots brightly polished.

"Yours?" shouted Sergeant Stone.

"Nicht sprecht."

THEN Stone called upon the German of his childhood. The soldier's face brightened.

"Ja! Ja! I am a private soldier...orderly for Major Brunicher. Tonight when the attack comes, I am pressing his uniform. Tomorrow he goes on furlough."

"Where is the major?" Stone shot at him in German.

The soldier shrugged his shoulder and waved his arms.

"He ran out when the fight started. He has not come back. I was afraid a grenade would come down."

Stone stared at the frightened German with widening eyes. "Say!" cried he, "did the major have on a uniform like this?"

"Nein! Nein! Up in the line he dresses as a *feldwebel* so his rank will not be known."

Stone started excitedly. "Does he have a scar on his face?"

"Ja! Ja!" nodded the German eagerly.

Stone darted a glance up the dugout stairway. The shells still rained down but with less intensity.

"Listen!" he cried. "You're my prisoner. If you do what I say I'll give you ten francs and some cigarettes...you'll need 'em if we get back. Jerk on that uniform!"

The German soldier stared at him dismayed, unbelieving of the sacrilege that had been spoken.

"Hurry, damn it! Get it or I'll plug you. I'm taking you back. And you're going to do just what I say. Quick!"

And into the German's ear, Sergeant Stone shot terse and simple directions.

"Up—out of it!"

Pistol in hand, and head bent forward as if to ward off the hail of unseen flying demons, Sergeant Stone followed the German up the dugout steps. They tarried not, but scrambled over the edge of the parapet. Crouching low, they streaked through the crashing world of shell fire. Above the howl and clattering crash of

bursting projectile, there were other sounds and movements in the air. Thicker than bees and a thousand times more angrily the Maxim bullets droned their song.

Hot and fast the Boche slammed it down on the American front lines, on battery positions, communication trenches, suspected outposts. Calciums bloomed all along the front. The German was taking no chances on another raid or the possibility of a general attack. From shell hole to shell hole Stone and his prisoner jumped and dived. With each fresh light, the American froze and made his prisoner do likewise.

DOWN in the depths of the Battalion P. C. Major General Hornsby stood regarding Lieutenant Rex Corgan and a sulky German *feldwebel.* Around the three were grouped a half dozen other eager-faced officers and a handful of enlisted men.

"And so you landed him, Lieutenant?"

"Yes, sir, General." Corgan spoke in modest tone. "I grabbed him just as he was trying to get away."

"Excellent," spoke the general. "I was hoping you'd bring back a commissioned officer—a lieutenant or captain. However, he may serve the purpose. Search him, Captain Brown."

The captain went through the German's clothing. He found little. Save for his uniform markings, the search produced nothing of significance.

"Belongs to the Fiftieth Division," commented General Hornsby. "We were quite sure they were opposite us." He turned to the German. "You won't talk—eh?"

"Nicht sprecht."

"So? Well, well, we'll take you back to Intelligence and let them talk politics with you." He turned to one of the captains in the dugout. "Hold him here until fire slackens somewhat. Ought to be able to leave soon."

The general turned back to Corgan.

"Well, Lieutenant," said he, "I guess you rate the leave...thought you or some of your crowd would do better than a sergeant major though."

"We tried, sir."

"How many men were lost?"

"Five missing, sir. Brought back two wounded."

"Let's have the men's names. They were a volunteer patrol and deserve recognition for their bravery."

"Here they are, sir," spoke up a lieutenant who had just completed checking in the raiders. "Privates Smith, Eggers, and McNutt, Corporal Bender and Sergeant Stone."

"Stone?" echoed the general. "I say, Corgan, is that the Stone who was sergeant with you in the Ninth back in 1913?"

"Yes, sir."

The general smiled. "I remember you and he got along like a couple of sore boils. I had you both in the guard house for a week for one row—I remember."

Corgan flushed under the dirt and grime on his face. "That was a long time ago, General."

"Poor Stone. How'd you lose him tonight?"

"Well, sir, it was like this. I gave the signal for retirement and told him to start back, but he disregarded my order... insisted on going back and looking for some German beer. We had to go without him. When we started, we let go the rocket for the barrage to cover our retirement." He paused. "Stone had lots of nerve, General." There was a peculiar emphasis on the "nerve".

"Poor Stone," remarked the general casually, "I had lost track of him. He was up for a commission as I remember and didn't get recommended for some reason. I always intended to look into it."

Corgan said nothing, and had he spoken he would have been rudely interrupted.

Down into the dugout dived two men, panting and agitated.

"A major! He's got a major, General!" The words shrilled out from an excited corporal who dived in after the first two. Those in the dugout whirled around astounded.

Right before the general's eyes stood

a quaking, wide-eyed German in freshly-pressed though somewhat dirt smirched uniform. Polish glistened out from his boots, though they were scuffed and smeared. A vizored cap clung to his head at a rakish angle. A smear of blood marked the path of a bullet that had grazed his cheek.

BEHIND the German, automatic clutched in his hand, stood Sergeant Stone, grim of face and breathing hard.

"A major! A major!" every one exclaimed at once.

"Pipe down!" snapped General Hornsby.

"Where'd you get him, Sergeant? Does he speak English?"

"Hell and gone down a dugout," jerked Stone. "No, he can't parley."

The general regarded the prisoner triumphantly, eagerly.

"He's more scared than this sergeant major Corgan brought in," exclaimed the two-starred person.

"He's got a right to be...never figured I'd get him here. Man, but the hardware's flying!"

The *feldwebel* darted a glance at the newly arrived prisoner. No one except Stone saw the grim flicker behind those eyes—the flash of satisfaction that crossed the face of the officer in *feldwebel's* uniform. But Stone saw and he smiled himself. So the Kraut was thinking that his disguise was still good. That his orderly and not himself would receive the grilling from Intelligence.

"Never mind, me buck," thought Stone. "I'll be takin' you back with me and what I tell Intelligence about your rank will be nothing but the truth. You're goin' through the wringer and no mistake. That third degree outfit at G-2 will take the starch from your backbone."

All were crowding around Stone and eyes were turned on him admiringly, enviously. All were noisy in their ejaculations of congratulation except Corgan. Darkly and skeptically he glowered at Stone.

"Oh, hello, Lieutenant," exclaimed Stone. "You got back all right with your prisoner." There was no little biting sarcasm in his voice.

"A major," broke in General Hornsby. "Fine stuff, Stone! I'm proud of you, proud that I used to be your company commander back in the Old Ninth. And I promised a ten days' leave for the man who brought in the highest ranking officer. Where do you want to go?"

"Limoges, if it's all the same to the general."

"Ha! A man that picks out that sleepy town has something staked out."

"I have," grinned Stone, turning toward Corgan as he spoke.

"As I thought. Well, grab up your shaving brush. You can go back to Division tonight with your prisoner."

"Okay," replied Stone. "Just slip some bracelets on both the Krauts and I'll give 'em a joy ride to the rear. Intelligence wants prisoners and we might as well ship both of them." There was a gleam of joyous satisfaction in the sergeant's eye as he saw the dark look of hatred that flashed from the German who wore the *feldwebel* uniform.

"Can you handle them?" queried the major general.

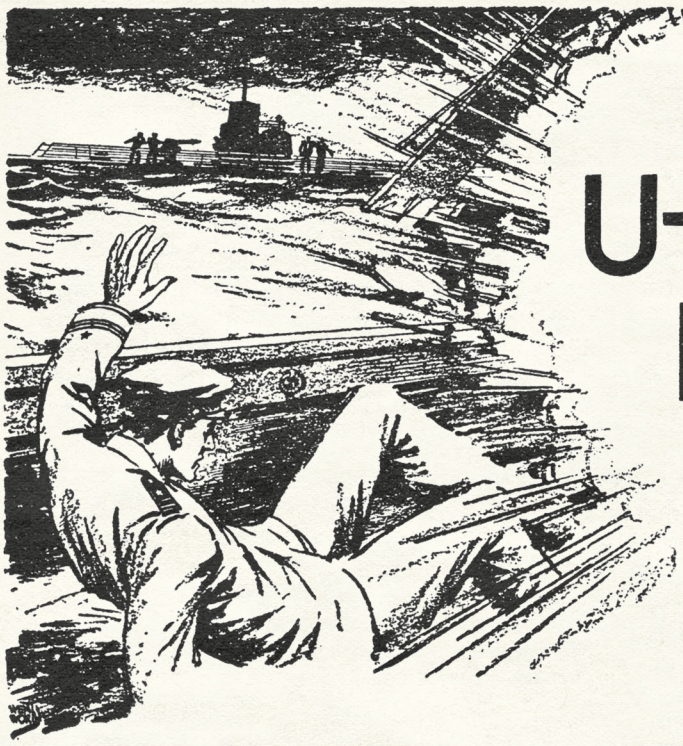
"I can sure do that," was the smiling reply. "If necessary I can furnish references," and Stone turned his smile on Corgan.

Stone darted off for the few possessions that he needed. He was back in five minutes.

"Take a good look at Sergeant Stone, gentlemen," spoke Major General Hornsby by the way of adieu to the officers in the dugout. "The next time you see him, he'll be wearing a pair of bars like his old side-kick Corgan here. I'm going to see that he goes up to school when he comes back from leave. That'll be pretty fine—eh, Corgan?"

If Corgan answered, his words were lost in the stir of getting the prisoners out of the dugout.

"So long, Lieutenant," called Stone quietly. "I'll drop you a line about her just for old time's sake."



U-BOAT BAIT

by JAMES L. HILL

Pitted against the U-91, pride of the Kaiser's undersea fleet and ravisher of Yank troop ships, Skipper Bill Dawson stakes his life on one last desperate chance to prove his right to command.

ADMIRAL SIMPSON banged his fist on the highly polished desk. Short, fat, and irascible, the admiral believed that he alone knew how the naval end of the war should be run.

"The Q-ship's job, Commander," he shouted, his face purple with rage, "is to sink U-boats—not to take ocean voyages for the commanding officer's health."

Commander "Navy" Bill Dawson, skipper of the U.S.S. Q-ship *Tern,* flushed angrily. Young for his rank, Navy Bill was tall, straight-shouldered, slim-waisted, and alert. His steel-blue eyes snapped as he replied.

"That is quite true, sir. But neither of the submarines came to the surface. The Q-ships are no longer a mystery to the Germans. The U-boat captains have become wary, and it's getting more difficult every day for a Q-ship to operate successfully. However, I—"

"Bah!" cut in the admiral. "I'm not interested in alibis. I want submarines and I want them sunk."

Suppressing a wild desire to turn the admiral across his knee, Bill said:

"I did my best, sir. Perhaps on this next trip, I shall be able to do better."

"Next trip?" stormed the admiral. "Who the blankety-blank told you that there would be a next trip? I'm transfering you back to battleship duty!"

The admiral's words were like a saber thrust to Bill. He hated battleship duty—with its ceaseless grind of drills and routine. Not only that, the big ships had not fired a shot at an enemy, and he felt certain they never would. The German Grand Fleet would never come out.

"But I've my sailing orders—signed by the admiral himself," protested Bill. "Besides is it not your boast, sir, that you always give a man two chances?"

The admiral puffed out his cheeks angrily. Bill's sailing orders had been prepared by one of his aides, and he had signed them without noticing what they were, but he didn't care to tell Bill that. And then too, he was known as "Square-Guy" Simpson—a brass hat who always gave a man two chances to prove himself.

"Hump!" he grumbled, "guess you've got me there. But blast it, you'd better come back with a U-boat's scalp. If you don't—"

A respectful knock at the door interrupted him and, at his bellowed command, a marine orderly entered with a radio despatch.

The admiral turned the color of musty paper as he read it, and the orderly backed hastily out of the room.

"Sweet essence of bilgewater," roared the admiral, banging the desk with both hands. "He's out again! He's sunk another American ship! Blast his rotten hide. I'd like to keel-haul him! I'd like to string him to a yard-arm! Something's got to be done about him, Commander. I tell you, he's driving me crazy!"

Bill checked a laugh just in time. An officer had so forgotten himself once as to laugh at the admiral when he was in one of his tantrums. The mistake had never been made again.

"Is Hans Siefert out again, sir?" he asked.

"Yes, blast him!" yelled the admiral. "In the Bay of Biscay—his favorite hunting place. And he has just sunk another one of our supply ships on its way to the Mediterranean. He never attacks anything but American ships. It isn't right. He's making the war a personal matter!"

Bill nodded sympathetically. Kapitan Hans Siefert, commander of the *U-91*, for some unknown reason attacked only American ships, and it was the ambition of the American navy to lay the wily German by the heels.

Admiral Simpson, the veins in his neck standing out like mooring lines, leaned back in his swivel chair, and swore until he had to pause for breath. Bill waited for the admiral to recover his wind, then leaned across the desk.

"My orders, sir, direct me to sail toward the Bay of Biscay. It's quite possible, that I may have a chance to get this German."

"And it's quite possible that I'll be the next King of Siam," snapped the admiral. "A Q-ship hasn't a chance against him. The blankety-blank scoundrel never uses a torpedo. Prefers his deck gun—at long range!"

BILL pursed his lips thoughtfully. A gun fire attack at long range was not a method of warfare relished by Q-ships. The ship was a big target for the submarine, and the submarine was a small target for the ship. Also a lucky shot might touch off any of the ready-to-use ammunition at the guns; and a still more lucky shot might get one or more of the magazines. And too, the submarine could quit the battle at any time by diving below the surface.

Being torpedoed, on the other hand, while itself a big gamble gave more promise of success. The principle of the Q-ships, although daring, was simple. Disguised as ordinary tramp schooners, they sailed the regular commercial ship lanes. Immediately one of them was torpedoed all the crew apparently became panic stricken and abandoned ship. But as they were invariably loaded with a cargo of lumber, a Q-ship did not sink quickly.

Not wishing to use another expensive torpedo to finish her, the submarine would emerge with the intention of going alongside to plant an inexpensive bomb in her vitals, and also to get her log and papers as proof of her sinking. But when the U-boat came within a hundred yards of the supposedly abandoned ship, those who had remained hidden on board would spring to action. The concealed guns would be unmasked—and before the submarine could submerge, she would be literally blown out of the water.

"It's true that the chances would be against us, sir," admitted Bill. Yet I think we can outwit him."

"If you were anything like your father, or your grandfather," growled the admiral, "you might. But you're too chicken-hearted. Take your first cruise for in-

stance. A submarine had been fooled and was about to emerge. But a seaman lay groaning from his wounds. You left your hiding place and carried him to the sickbay.

"Bah! The Germans were on the alert. They saw you through the periscope, realized that they had tangled with a Q-ship, and went away—quick!"

"The man was dying, sir. Bleeding to death! I got him to the doctor just in time!"

"Pretty—very pretty," barked the admiral. "You saved one man's life, and let a U-boat which has probably since accounted for dozens of lives, escape. That, Commander, was false economy!"

"The Dawsons have made naval history since there was a navy," continued the admiral. "But you're a disgrace to the line. War is cold-blooded business. A captain who values the lives of his men more than he does vanquishing the enemy can never hope to succeed."

"Have you ever seen a man die, sir?" inquired Bill quietly, knowing full well that the admiral had never smelled powder.

The admiral's face purpled again, and he banged his fists angrily.

"You're impertinent! What I've seen or not seen is beside the question. Now return to your ship, and prepare to get under way. But remember this, if you don't get a sub this trip it's back to the battle wagons for you."

Bill got up.

"I'll get one, sir," he promised, "and I'm hoping that it'll be the *U-91.*"

"Hump!" The admiral shot him a doubting look. "A fat chance! You'll be too busy protecting your men!" Then his eyes kindled hopefully. "But if you do, you can stay in the Q-service for the duration of the war!"

In the corridor outside of the office, Bill met Commander "Skinny" Wilbur, a human bean pole of a man. Skinny was the commanding officer of the destroyer *Franklin Jones.* He and Bill had been bitter rivals since Annapolis days.

Bill nodded a greeting, and attempted to pass on, but Skinny caught his arm.

"You didn't salute me, Commander," he rasped. "Must I always remind you that I'm your senior?"

"You're only senior by two numbers," flamed Bill.

"Nevertheless, I'm senior. Please salute me!"

Bill grinned. This was one time that he had it on Skinny.

"Sorry, old thing, but it's impossible. You see, officially, I'm the skipper of the S. S. *Tern,* an American tramp schooner. Understand? I'm not even supposed to be a naval officer, and my instructions clearly state that under no circumstances shall I salute."

Skinny glowered, suddenly becoming aware that Bill was attired in a disreputable-looking merchant master's outfit.

"I'd forgotten," he growled. "But you won't be a Q-ship captain much longer. This will be your last trip. That's why I'm here to see the admiral. He's promised me your command."

Bill's smile vanished.

"You won't get my ship," he vowed. "I'm out to dispose of Hans Siefert. And if I do, the admiral has promised to keep me in the Q-service."

"You get Hans Siefert?" jeered Skinny. "Say, that's funny."

"For two pins," Bill cried, "I'd dim your running lights. You—"

The door of the admiral's office was suddenly flung open, and Admiral Simpson stood on the threshold regarding the two young officers.

"What the blazes is the meaning of this, gentlemen?" he demanded.

"Commander Dawson almost forgot himself, sir," simpered Skinny. "Fortunately, the admiral opened the door just in time to prevent him from striking me."

The admiral gave Bill a sour look.

"So, so," he exploded. "You can thank your lucky stars, that this is war time and that we need every available officer. Otherwise, I would court martial you. However, in the future, please confine your fighting to the enemy. They, I believe, can satisfy you in that line."

"If the admiral will allow me to ex-

plain," flared Bill. "Commander Wilbur insulted me—"

"Enough!" snapped the admiral. "I do not care to hear your explanations. Return to your ship. Commander Wilbur, step in please, I wish to talk to you relative to your new command."

JUST after sunset four days later, the *Tern* was butting her nose into the turquoise swell of the Bay of Biscay. Outwardly, she differed in no way from the thousands of tramp schooners that ply these waters. But she was different—vastly so!

From seaward only one gun was visible —an ineffectual two-and-a-half pounder mounted on the poop deck. But she carried five additional guns, one 4-inch and four 12-pounders. These were adroitly concealed by hatches, hen-coops, and false cabins, fitted with collapsible sides so that with one shift of a lever the guns would be exposed, and ready to spit out a leaden destruction on any U-boat that might be decoyed to the surface.

Navy Bill was pacing the bridge, sniffing the salt air. The sea tang always seemed stronger to him at night. Since putting to sea, they had received almost continual reports that Hans Siefert was busy in the Bay, and that he was invariably using his deck gun in preference to the more expensive torpedo. But the *Tern* had not been molested.

"Drat him," grumbled Bill, staring balefully out across the dark water. "Where is he? Why doesn't he take a crack at us? Maybe some spy has tipped off our identity to him."

This last was a disturbing thought, and the radio shack voice tube cried out.

"On the bridge!"

Bill reached the maze of voice tubes in two quick strides, and answered.

"Bridge, aye, aye!"

"The *U-91* just sank another American freighter with her deck guns. Position, latitude 48 degrees north, and longitude seven degrees, and thirty-seven minutes, west. That's about 200 knots to our stern. Destroyer *Franklin Jones* picked up survivors and is hunting for submarine, but has found no trace of her as yet."

"So," mumbled Bill. "Skinny is on the job, huh. That makes it all the sweeter."

He wheeled to Lieutenant Witham, his executive officer, who stood at his side.

"Mr. Witham, plot a course that will bring us to that position before noon tomorrow at 12 knots. The chief engineer says he can't get anymore than that out of her. I've a hunch that our German friend is still hanging around that vicinity. He does that sometimes. I'm turning ship, now."

THE night passed and sunrise threw flaming red ribbons across the pounding sea. Bill braced himself against the weather cloth and searched the wind swept water with his glasses. To the west there was a smoke smudge—nothing else.

A worried look crept into Bill's eyes. Somehow he had expected the sunrise to disclose the *U-91* off his bows. He called the radio shack.

"Are you certain that you heard the *U-91* using her wireless last night?" he asked.

"Yes, sir. And I heard her just a few minutes ago, sir. Very close."

The morning wore on, and the sun rose higher in the sky. Bill's face was glum with disappointment. He had done his best, but that did not seem to have been enough. The ship's bell struck four times —ten o'clock.

"The submarine has all the advantage, sir," spoke up Mr. Witham. "She can either attack or not, as she chooses. Then if it gets too hot she can dive to safety—"

"Submarine, ahoy, sir!" called a lookout suddenly.

"Whereaway?"

"Two points off starboard beam, sir. About five miles distant."

Bill searched the area indicated with a leaping heart. He sucked in his breath sharply as his glasses caught the dim, rakish outline of the submarine. It was the *U-91*.

"Pass the word to proceed as though we had not sighted her, Mr. Witham," Bill directed, lowering the binoculars. "Tramp schooners are noted for the slackness of their lookouts."

Ten minutes passed, the two vessels keeping their relative positions. Bill knew the Germans were studying them, trying to decide whether they were the helpless easy prey they looked—or a dreaded submarine trap.

Then the submarine dived.

Bill pressed an alarm gong, and the gun crews scurried to their stations. Down on the well deck, however, was the usual gathering of untidy seamen and grimy firemen. Bill was flat on his stomach at a peep-hole in the weather cloth on the starboard side. Mr. Witham, who had exchanged caps with Bill, was the only officer in sight on the bridge.

Bill consulted his watch nervously. It had been fifteen minutes since the submarine had submerged, and he knew that if Hans Siefert even so much as suspected that the *Tern* was a Q-ship, he would not break the surface.

Then there came a cry from a lookout.

"Submarine's emergin', sir! Dead astern! Range about 5,000 yards. Got a big gun f'rd! A 4.1-incher, I think!"

Bill wiggled to a peep-hole that gave him a stern view. The submarine was completely emerged now, and the forward deck gun was being manned. He spoke to Mr. Witham.

"Start the show! But make it good! We've got to fool them!"

Bill spoke to the engine room. "Fog her up, Mr. Draper! Make a lot of smoke! We want them to think we're trying to escape!"

Black smoke began to pour from the funnel. The ship zig-zagged, and gave every impression of trying to escape. But in reality, in accordance with Bill's previous instructions, Mr. Draper had actually lowered the speed a couple of knots.

Consequently, the Germans began to close the range.

"Sub's firin', sir!" sang out a lookout. "Saw her gun flare!"

A PIERCING, moaning cry came to their ears. It sounded like an express train rushing down a grade. The roar grew louder, turned into a shrill whine. A faint boom echoed across the sea.

S'wish! S'wish! The shell screamed over them, whining ominously. A hundred yards dead ahead, a sinister column of water spouted skyward.

The two-and-a-half pounder crew trained the little gun upon the sub. Bill gave the order to commence firing.

"But keep your shots short," he warned through the voice tube. "They've got to be encouraged to close the range. Have a lot of misfires—and delays. Act like a bunch of dubs. Maybe we can make them think we're as easy as we look!"

B'wham!

The two-and-a-half pounder spoke. The shell fell a thousand yards short. The submarine evidently heartened at the poor marksmanship, began to fire rapidly. But all the shots had too much range, falling over the bow. The Germans, however, because of their dead astern position, could not see the splashes, and no doubt thought their shots were hitting.

For twenty minutes, the running fight continued. Then the submarine, evidently became satisfied that the *Tern* didn't have any guns except the two-and-a-half pounder, ceased firing and closed the range. At about 2,000 yards, she turned broadside and re-opened fire. Bill smiled grimly. Hans Siefert was being lured to his doom.

Suddenly there was a deafening crash, a blinding flash of flame, and the *Tern* rocked like a boxer who had just been hit on the chin. A shell had hit her just above the water line.

Bill pulled a lever, and steam began to escape through a perforated pipe that had been installed around the upper works. Immediately the ship was enveloped in a cloud of steam. To the Germans, it would appear as if the shell had exploded in the boiler room. The time had arrived for Bill to play his second card.

"Stop ship!" he ordered. "Quartermas-

ter, put your helm to starboard. That'll bring our port beam toward the submarine. I want them to get a good view of our panic party."

The ship stopped, swung slightly, and blew off steam. Mr. Witham yelled through his megaphone in a voice Bill hoped would be loud enough to reach the submarine.

"All hands abandon ship!"

The two-and-a-half pounder ceased to fire. Black gang men came pouring up through stokehole hatches. Deck hands tumbled out of the forecastle. All rushed to the boats. Everything was pandemonium.

Bill waited until they were well away, then pressed a buzzer. Immediately, George Dewey Brown, the colored cook, came rushing out of the galley. He ran to the rail, his arm loaded with a comical assortment of personal belongings. He jumped up and down in the throes of fear—all of which was perhaps not simulated, and yelled.

"Cappen, suh, cappen! Yo-all done forgot me! An' I cain't swim a stroke! Cappen, fo' de love of heben—"

One of the boats returned for the darky, and he jumped down into it, purposely spilling most of the stuff he carried into the water. The boat then rowed away again. Bill sighed regretfully. He would have liked for Admiral Simpson to have seen that. Perhaps then he would not think him such a dub.

Then he smiled. Things were going just as he had planned them. It did not seem possible that he could fail now.

He called softly down a voice tube to Lieutenant Murphy, who was in charge of the concealed guns, and was stationed below.

"Are the gun crews ready?"

"Yes, sir," came the answer. "The men can hardly wait to open fire."

"Well, stand by. She's closing now. Going to board us to take off our papers, and to finish the job with a bomb—"

B'room!

A swish, a whine, a roar, and then a terrific explosion, followed by a dazzling flash of flame, and the *Tern* staggered like a stricken thing. The Germans had fired this last shot as they steamed toward the supposedly deserted ship, and the luck that had been with Bill now abandoned him. The shell had landed on the poop, completely demolishing the two-and-a-half pounder and setting the poop on fire.

The wind whipped the flames and in a moment the poop was ablaze. Sweat drops popped out on Bill's head, and he cursed grimly. At no other part of the ship could a fire do as much damage. Below the poop was the 4-inch magazine and shell room. Also there was the ready-to-use ammunition piled around the gun, as well as a supply of depth bombs that had been stored there. Any of it would cause a dangerous explosion.

THE submarine now ceased firing altogether and steered toward the ship to pass under the stern. But black smoke was pouring out of the poop and going straight over the U-boat, effectually screening it from the fire of the concealed guns.

The submarine was barely visible, and each second was becoming more obscured by the smoke. If he opened fire, he would save the men at the 4-inch gun, but he would lose his chance of getting the submarine. For the moment the men revealed themselves, the U-boat would dive to safety. If he waited the submarine would soon be through the smoke on the *Tern's* lee side, within a hundred yards range of the two starboard 12-pounders and the 4-inch gun on the poop.

Bill knew that he should not order the men away from the gun. It was his duty to sink the submarine—no matter what the cost. He remembered the admiral's biting sarcasm. Grimly he realized that his future as a naval officer probably depended upon his decision. Failure to get the submarine now might possibly call for a court-martial—at the very least he would be sent back to battleship duty.

Nevertheless, he knew he could not let those men stay there and face certain death. To be killed in action was different. But to wait calmly for a magazine

to explode beneath your feet was asking too much. The admiral had said that he was chicken-hearted. But then the admiral fought the war from a swivel chair.

Bill pressed the buzzer of the voice tube leading to the 4-inch gun. The steady voice of the gun captain, Coxswain Danton, answered him.

"Leave your stations at once, Danton," ordered Bill. "That poop is due to explode any moment."

"The fire isn't near the magazine yet, sir," objected Danton without excitement. "And it will give the show away if we leave the gun now."

"But how about the ready-to-use ammunition?" cried Bill. "And the depth charges?"

"Likely to explode any minute, sir. But it's all right. Sinkin' that sub is more important than savin' our lives, sir!"

Bill's heart thrilled with pride. To stand there on that burning deck, knowing that at any moment they were liable to be blown up, yet refusing to move because it would spoil the show. That took guts!

He cast a swift glance at the submarine. She was exactly dead astern again. In a moment, the starboard 12-pounders would bear. But the poop was a mass of flames. The ready-to-use ammunition was likely to explode at any second. He cried frantically into the voice tube.

"Get away from that gun! At once! I command you!" But there was no reply. The gun crew was ignoring orders.

Then into Bill's mind flashed the motto of the Dawson family. It was: "Never allow your men to face danger alone!"

He leaped to his feet, and dashed down the bridge ladder. Ducking low, and hoping that the Germans would not spot him, he raced aft—to the poop.

Just as he reached the ladder that led up to the 4-inch gun, the submarine's nose rounded the stern. Bill turned his head and shouted an order to the crews of the concealed guns.

"Open fire the moment she bears! Fire rapidly, but make every shot count. Don't miss—"

Boom!

The poop blew up with a terrific explosion that shook the entire ship. Bill was flung from the ladder and landed in an unconscious heap on the deck.

WHEN he came to Lieutenant Murphy was bending over him. He struggled to his feet. The concealed guns were now exposed, and smoke was curling from the muzzles of the starboard battery. There was no sign of the submarine.

"Did we get her?" cried Bill.

Mr. Murphy shook his head.

"No, sir. The moment the explosion occurred, and the 4-inch crew were blown into the air, the U-boat made a crash dive. We opened up on her, but she got below safely."

There was a silence.

"How about the 4-inch gun crew?"

"Gone, sir. All of them! It's lucky you didn't reach the poop, or you would have gone with them."

Bill beat his fist into his palm, a feeling of impotency creeping over him. Their identity had been revealed now, and there was slight hope of decoying the submarine to the surface again. Yet he was determined to make one more try. The death of the 4-inch crew must be avenged.

"Rig the fire hose, and try to get the fire under control, Mr. Murphy. We're not beaten yet."

"But, Captain," exclaimed Mr. Murphy in astonishment. "We can't stay aboard now. That wasn't the magazine that exploded. Only the ready-to-use ammunition and the depth charges. If the magazine goes, it will blow the entire ship to kindling wood."

"Even so," ground out Bill, "I'm staying. If you don't want to—well, there's the life boats."

Mr. Murphy drew himself up.

"You misunderstood me, sir. I'm not afraid to stay. It's only that I don't see what we can gain by it."

"The Germans have never sunk a Q-ship," Bill explained, "and Hans Siefert will be anxious to be the first to do it.

But he'll have to have our log in order to prove his claim. The German Admiralty does not hand out decorations without proof. The submarine is probably at periscope depth now, studying us. In a moment there will be a torpedo. Then we'll have a Q-Abandon Ship. That is, half of us will then leave the vessel, the other half will remain in concealment. But Hans Siefert will not know that. He will think the ship absolutely deserted, and when he comes up to get his proof as to our identity—"

Mr. Murphy slapped his hip.

"Excellent, sir, excellent!"

Then he wheeled away barking orders. And in a few moments the fire hose was rigged, and the deck force began to fight the fire on the poop.

In spite of the heroic fight that was being made, the fire continued to spread. Bill set his lips grimly. To wait aboard a ship, with engines stopped, and a fire raging around a big magazine, for a torpedo to be fired at you was certainly asking for trouble. But it was a fight to the death now. And from the comments he overheard, he knew that all hands were with him. The four-inch crew had stayed at their stations—they would do the same.

Suddenly there was a cry. "Torpedo track!" Then it hit, just abaft of the engineroom, and exploded with a rending crash, opening a large hole in the ship. The *Tern* was now doomed. Five, ten, perhaps thirty minutes, but no longer, would she stay afloat. And then there was the fire on the poop. It was slowly eating its way to the magazine.

It was time for Bill to play his last card —Q-Abandon-Ship. He gave the order quietly, and a new panic party was started.

The lifeboats came back and took aboard as many more men as could be crowded into them. Those that were left, hurriedly constructed a raft out of barrels and spars, on which they left the ship. Remaining aboard the *Tern* were two 12-pounder gun crews, one on either side, a wireless operator, Bill and his two lookouts on the bridge—twenty men in all.

Immediately the second panic party had shoved off, the periscope of the submarine was sighted off the starboard beam less than fifty yards away. The periscope circled the ship cautiously, the great, ominous eye turning and twisting.

"He's plenty suspicious," muttered Bill. "But he wants our log and papers, and he'll come up for them. If only that magazine doesn't blow up!"

Finally the submarine emerged, but dead astern, where none of the remaining guns could bear. Bill clinched his hands desperately. Hans Siefert evidently had not been fooled by the "Q-Abandon Ship" order.

ONCE again the Germans manned their forward deck gun, and for five minutes raked the *Tern* with a murderous, point-blank fire. But if they hoped to frighten out any of the men still remaining aboard, they were disappointed. For although two men were killed out-right by shell splinters and a half dozen more were wounded, the gun crews remained stolidly in their places of concealment.

Bill cursed with despair. That such bravery should go unrewarded seemed impossible to believe. But the poop was a red holocaust, and the ship was beginning to settle dangerously. There appeared to be no hope. They had fought a good fight—but lost.

Then the U-boat ceased its fire, and an officer, evidently Hans Siefert himself, studied the battered and blazing *Tern* through his glasses.

Bill held his breath. Would they sink the *Tern* or board her for the precious log that would prove the kill? After another close scrutiny the German commander laid down his glasses and turned to the officer behind him. Slowly, the submarine turned and headed toward the ship.

Bill barely suppressed a shout of joy. He tensed himself and whispered softly down the tube to Mr. Murphy.

"Stand by, they are coming—"

He broke off in dismay. Unnoticed by all in the excitement, a destroyer, American by her lines, had appeared over the horizon. The Germans had just seen her and were gesticulating and talking excitedly.

Bill groaned. If the destroyer had only stayed away three minutes longer. But evidently she had heard the gun fire and had come at full speed. Nothing remained now but for the Americans to leave the doomed vessel. The submarine would dive before the destroyer got within gun range.

But as he started to give the command, he saw the submarine swerve sharply toward the life boats. The Hun commander would take a prisoner from the life boats to substantiate his claim for victory.

Again, Bill could barely suppress a shout. In less than a minute the starboard gun would be able to bear. Then he cursed anew. The boats would be in the way—would mask the fire.

Leaping to his feet, Bill signaled frantically by semaphore to Mr. Witham to get the boats out of the way.

Mr. Witham acknowledged the signal with a wave of his hand, and barked orders. The sailors plied their oars furiously, and the boats leaped forward. Bill dropped back below the weather cloth, without having been seen by the Germans.

The U-boat was around the stern now. Hans Siefert was bellowing for the lifeboats to halt. German sailors ran up from below with Maxims with which they opened fire upon the fleeing boats. Black smoke poured from the funnels of the distant destroyer as she sliced through the sea at full speed.

Then Mr. Murphy shouted up through the tube. "Submarine bearing now, sir. Lifeboats out of line of fire."

Bill took a deep breath and yelled: "Commence firing!" Then leaped to his feet, for concealment was no longer necessary.

W'ham!

The 12-pounder spoke. Firing at less than a hundred yards range, they could not miss, and the first shot hit the submarine just above the water line, keeling her over. Again and again, as fast as the shells could be rammed home, the gun fired, practically every shot being a hit.

The submarine never recovered from her surprise. Less than three minutes from the time the first shot had been fired, she sank, her conning tower shattered and open, the crew pouring out as fast as they could.

The gun ceased to fire and a great cheer went up. But Bill cut it short. The fire on the poop! The magazine explosion was long past due!

"Over the side—all hands!" he shouted. "Look alive! Your lives depend upon it!"

Just as Bill, who had been the last to leave the doomed ship, was being pulled aboard a lifeboat, the *Tern* blew up in a crimson cloud.

A few minutes later Bill was studying the onrushing destroyer through a pair of binoculars Mr. Witham had handed him. He lowered them with a chuckle.

"She's the Franklin Jones," he announced. "Skinny Wilbur's ship. Won't he be pleased?"

LATER, while sitting in the wardroom of the destroyer, dressed in dry clothing, and drinking a cup of steaming coffee, Bill was handed a radio message from Admiral Simpson.

> Congratulations! You are a credit to your name. A real Dawson. Don't worry about losing the *Tern* as I will have another Q-ship ready for you by the time you arrive at Marwich.

Bill rose and crossed to the open porthole, through which streamed the afternoon sun. The voice of Skinny Wilbur drifted down from the deck above.

"Can you imagine luck like that?" Skinny was complaining to some one. "That magazine should have blown up long before it did!"

But Bill did not seem to hear. He was thinking of the four-inch gun crew. Their sacrifice had made the victory possible. He looked out across the water. In his mind's eye, he saw Coxswain Danton and his gallant crew. Bill saluted.

"To have commanded men like that," he said aloud, "is a greater honor than the empty praises of a swivel chair brass hat, who has never seen men die."

Slowly he tore the radio message from the admiral into small pieces and dropped them into the sea.

Bad actors? Well, maybe—but these four vaudeville singers carried the code of the stage to the Front, earned a title, "The Death Quartette" and staged a glorious final act and curtain call in the biggest show the world has ever known.

"The show goes on!" yelled Chick. "Come on, Company K!" and the rest of the quartette, without weapons, with nothing but courage, breasted into the raking German fire. They'd show Company K how to bring down the house.

THE DEATH

THE 213th Infantry, its training finished, was moving, by slow degrees, up the line. The regiment occupied billets in a small town, through which ran one of the main military arteries.

Colonel Fitch, the regimental commander, sent for his adjutant.

"Sit down, Ashley," he said, when that officer had appeared. "I want to talk with you about K Company, which just came from machine gun school. What is wrong with the outfit? When I inspected them I never saw such a collection of sullen, morose, disagreeable men in all my military experience. There was not one, not excepting officers and non-coms, but had a black scowl on his face. Their drill was sloppy, listless, and ragged. It seemed that every order was received, and executed, with a brow-beaten defiance that only needed a spark to break out in open mutiny."

"I believe the company commander, Captain Bagley, is responsible, sir. Before being commissioned he was assistant warden at Joliet. He handles soldiers the same as he handled criminals in the penitentiary."

"I see. Anything else?"

"His first sergeant was on his staff in Joliet. He is a hard-boiled bruiser. The

A COMPLETE NOVELET BY

ARTHUR GUY EMPEY

QUARTETTE

men call him 'Knuckle' Bates, and Captain Bagley is known among them as 'Flint' Bagley. It is a deplorable situation, sir."

"A little heart-to-heart talk with Bagley might do some good. Send for him, please."

A short space later, Captain "Flint" Bagley, a big, stern-faced physical brute of a man, stood before his regimental commander. The colonel smiled genially and waved him into a chair.

"Captain Bagley," he said, "at inspection your outfit didn't seem to be quite up to the standard expected of troops of their long training. There was an indefinable something in their attitude which spoke strongly of discontent. They appeared to be quite unhappy. In fact, rather resentful of military discipline, and defiant."

"I have had all kinds of trouble with them since mobilization, sir, but I'll break their stubborn spirit before I am through. In Joliet it didn't take me long to bend the hardest, and toughest criminals to my will."

"That's just it, Captain," reproved the colonel, gently. "Soldiers are not criminals, and must not be treated as such."

"True enough, Colonel, true enough. Still, spoil soldiers with too much kind-

ness and you have devils. I can place a finger on one of the main causes. We have experienced a run of hard luck with our cooks. The grub is awful. I can hardly stomach it myself."

"But you had an excellent cook, Bagley," protested the colcnel, mildly. "What became of him? He was the envy of the regiment."

"I had to try him for insubordination. He got five years, while we were on detached training at machine gun school. Since then I have tried many cooks, detailed from the company, but to no avail."

"Captain Bagley, I should very much like to see a marked change in the deportment of your men. Now, merely as a suggestion, why not forget Joliet and spread around some sunshine? Just as an experiment. That is all, thank you, Captain."

Flint Bagley nodded, rose, and left the room. The adjutant came in.

"I tried mildness, Ashley," informed the colonel, "but if there is not a decided improvement, I shall use vinegar. He is a hard man, but down deep, there might be a drop of human kindness in him."

"I doubt it, sir. He is cordially hated by every officer and man in the regiment."

"We shall see, Ashley, we shall see."

Entering the orderly room of Company K, Captain Flint Bagley sat down at his desk, a black scowl on his face.

"Come here, Sergeant Bates!" he rasped to his top cutter, a beetle-browed, ugly-dispositioned bully.

"Knuckle" Bates, with an air of insolent defiance, went to the captain. "That fool in headquarters, that soldier-babying excuse for a colonel doesn't like the way I run the company."

"Well, what of it?" was the impudent reply. "It's your company. Are you going to issue sugar-sticks at retreat?"

"I'm going to break their backs with more fatigue. I'll make soldiers of them, or I'll kill them."

"Better start in right away then. The new cook just went to the hospital."

"What's the trouble now?"

"The dinner was only half done, so the company ganged the cook and broke a couple of ribs. They refuse to squeal on the ones responsible."

"Have them fall in." The habitual scowl on Flint's face deepened. "I'll talk to them."

Just then 1st Lieutenant Davis, a conscientious, soft-hearted youngster out of Plattsburgh, came into the orderly room. Knuckle flashed him a disdainful look and winked wisely at the captain.

"Well, what do you want?" demanded Flint, harshly. It was apparent that he had little, if any, respect for his subordinate. "Get it off your chest."

"The men are on the verge of mutiny, sir," replied Davis, fearlessly facing his angry superior. "And I don't blame them, sir. They are worked to death, and are half-starved."

"You don't blame them, don't you? I've a mind to courtmartial you, Davis. It's mostly your fault, pampering them the way you do. Have a care, or I'll railroad you so fast you'll think you slipped on a banana peel. Get the company together, Sergeant Bates."

GRUMBLING and muttering, the company took its own sweet time about falling in. The men knew they were in for a tongue-lashing and extra fatigue, which did not add much comfort to hungry stomachs and soured dispositions.

"You had better start soldiering," said Flint to them, glaring up and down the line, and meeting with naught but sullen, black looks. "If you don't I'll run you ragged. You don't like the chow, huh? Neither do I, but you'll eat it, and continue to eat it, and you'll like it. Beat up the cook, did you? And won't tell who is guilty. Great! Today is Sunday, your day of rest." He addressed the glowering first sergeant. "Sergeant Bates, issue picks and shovels and put them to digging. Keep them at it until retreat. We'll repeat the dose every day."

Captain Bagley returned to the orderly room.

"I warn you non-coms to keep them

sweating," snapped Knuckle evilly. "I'll take no more nonsense from any of you."

"What'll I do for a cook, Sergeant?" asked Sergeant Rose, in charge of the mess. "There won't be any supper."

"Let the cook's police get supper."

"But—"

"Shut up! You heard me."

Amid an angry hum of whispered threats and imprecations, the men were marched away, a feeling akin to murder in their hearts.

"Hey, Mike," said a mounted corporal of military police to an Irish private riding beside him, "pipe those four bums sitting on the roadside up there. Cripes, look at 'em, will you! Half-soldier, half-civilian."

"Be gob, they're the advance guard of Coxey's army. Shure, and I'll give 'em the once over, Corp."

"If they can't come clean with their dog-tags, turn 'em in. I'm going down to the cross-roads to see how Tim's making out."

Mike got out a bag of Bull and papers, rolled a cigaret, lighted it, and leisurely walked his horse toward the men in question. He was in no hurry, figuring that the first seven years of the war would be the longest and the hardest.

The quartette referred to by the corporal was an odd mixture. All were long past the age for soldiering. In the States one would have instinctively branded them as stranded actors beating their way to the next one-night stand, two jumps ahead of the sheriff.

"Here we are, boys," laughed Jerry Sweet, a thin, emaciated looking individual of perhaps fifty. He placed a hand over his mouth, coughed, then looked at his palm. It was flecked with blood. "My dogs hurt so much they're barking right out loud."

"Isn't it the truth, Jerry?" Andy Melody, about the same age as Jerry, but much stouter and more robust-looking, fished out a blackened stub of pipe and tamped down the tobacco with a finger. "Our patriotism is beginning to pinch. We must have hiked ten kilos since daylight. Some walk for old fogies like us. My joints are crying for oil."

"But we're getting nearer the front with each step," encouraged Chick Lane, short, stubby and bow-legged. "That means a lot."

"Dawggone it!" ejaculated Jud Foster, a dead ringer for Santa Claus, minus that worthy's white whiskers and silver locks. "Here comes another M. P."

"I guess we'll have to put on the act again," sighed Jerry, wearily. "It'll make the sixth show today."

"The more rehearsals, the better we'll be in the Big Show," consoled Jud.

"If we ever get in it," said Andy, wistfully. "Get ready. Curtain!"

The four brought their heads together and, in really fine voices, broke into song, swaying back and forth in rhythm with the music. Mike, the Irish M. P., reined in his horse and listened skeptically. Jud, with a furtive glance, took in the nationality of the policeman.

"He's Irish," he ad libbed to his pals as he sang. "Follow me."

Without a perceptible break, Jud led off in solo with, "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling", and the others joined in the chorus. Mike's feet kept time by tapping his stirrup hoods. He didn't speak until they had finished.

"Shure, and ye make me think of the old country, byes," he said, softly. "It's a grand tune."

"Brings tears to my eyes every time I sing it." Jud wiped a hand across his optics. "Just a bit o' heaven, stranger."

"Seein' how we both agrees," replied Mike, in sterner tones, "we'll git down to the business in hand. Out with yer dog-tags, fellers, and show me what part o' the war ye're connected with. Ye birds looks kinda suspicious in them fifty-fifty duds. Shure, and I bet ye robbed one of them army and navy stores."

"How about McCormick's, 'A Little Love, a Little Kiss'?" suggested Andy, in an attempt to evade the issue. "There's a great Irishman for you! He and Chauncey Olcott."

Following the cue, the quartette burst

into song again, but Mike was not to be side-tracked.

"That's enough singin' fer today," he said. "Air yer dog-tags, or I'll turn ye in. Ye birds ain't kiddin' Mike Maloney."

"Did you ever hear of Sweet, Melody, Lane and Foster in the act, 'Much Ado About Something'?" asked Jud. "We always played the Palace in New York."

"Strike me dead!" exploded Mike, slapping a thigh. "I shure have! Thought yer mugs was sorta familiar. And them foine voices. Didn't recognize ye without yer paint and whiskers. What ye doin' bummin' it in France?"

"This might sound cuckoo to you," replied Jud, earnestly, "but it's God's honest truth. I swear it." He elevated his right hand. "When America declared war, the act cancelled a forty-week contract, at $3,500 per, and tried to enlist. Jerry, there, was turned down on account of weak lungs. Andy has bad eyesight. Chick's heart doesn't pump as it should and all my machinery is rusty. Besides, we were all too old."

"Go on," said Mike soberly. "I'm beginnin' to like ye guys."

"Thanks a lot. For more than a year we entertained the boys in the camps, then tried to get overseas to carry on with our act. But it was no go because of our age. Finally, desperate, we stowed away on a transport and landed in France, where we have been trying to cheer the gang ever since."

"Ye're a grand bunch," complimented Mike, "but how come ye're so far up here? Ye're way past the dead-line."

"We want to get into the mix-up. Make-up and singing are all right on Broadway, but not with your country at war. If they won't let us actually fight, where we're trying to go, perhaps they'll let us cheer the gang under fire. That's when they need it most, we figure, when facing death."

"George Washin'ton ain't got nothin' on ye patriots. Ye're the salt of the earth. But ye ain't got a chance, fellers. They'll send ye back, kitin'."

"Jud is a marvelous cook," informed Jerry, earnestly. "He can make army rations beat the Waldorf menu. If we only could cook for some outfit, now?"

"I can't hold a candle to you in the culinary line, Jerry," protested Jud. "You're a magician, with nothing to work on, either except canned Willie, beans and goldfish."

"I'll tell ye what, fellers," announced Mike, after some thought. "I ain't gonna take ye in. I'll leave that to the next lousy M. P. ye meet. I'm achin' to fight too," he added, wistfully. "If ye kin cook like ye says, and I believe ye, there ain't no use hikin' further. I hate to do this to fine guys like ye—shure an' it's a dirty trick—but there's a outfit in this town what needs a cook, and how! It's the lousiest, crummiest, meanest, stinkin'est bunch of goldbrickin' doughs in the A. E. F. It's Company K, machine gun company of the 213th Infantry. They all hates each other, and none of 'em ain't ever smiled. The old man, Flint Bagley, is a slave-driver from Joliet, and the top cutter is worse'n him. Cheer that gang up, and ye'll beat Hermann, the Great."

"Sounds interesting, boys," said Chick, enthusiastically. "Looks like those poor fellows need us."

"We'll apply for the job of cooking and cheer-making," came even more enthusiastically from Andy. "You talk to the captain, Jud."

"Hold on there," warned Mike. "Don't run ag'in that buzz-saw. Jest slip in quiet, if we kin, cook a meal first, and then do yer job-askin'. The company cook shack's jest a little ways down the road. Ye can't miss it. Keep yer ears open fer grousin' and cussin', then turn in. Good luck to ye, now, and fergit I ever seen ye, if ye're pinched."

Mike mounted and trotted away. The delighted quartette brought their heads together and sang, "He's a Jolly Good Fellow". The Irishman turned in saddle and waved a farewell salute.

"Gee, isn't life great!" Jud slipped his make-shift pack over a shoulder and smiled warmly at his companions. "When things look blackest, we always get a break. We'll try to bring a bit of sunshine into this Company K."

"Perhaps they'll take us into the Big Show with them," said Jerry.

ARM in arm and singing merrily, the four weary old troupers, bent on doing their bit as best they could, swung along, eyes and ears alert for Flint Bagley's outfit. They came to a company digging a ditch, an ugly-looking first sergeant continually bawling them out.

"Poor fellows," observed Chick, sympathetically, "having to work on Sunday."

"Look at their faces," said Andy. "Did you ever see such pictures of discontent and homesickness? We'll come back later and sing them a funny song."

"I'd give a thousand dollars to make that bunch laugh," volunteered Jud. "Yes, boys, I can see we are needed badly up here."

In silence they trudged along. The gloomy and disheartened expressions on the faces of the diggers had made a deep impression on their kindly souls. Presently Andy stopped to listen.

"Get them gee dee spuds washed!" snapped an irritable voice. "Hop to it!"

"Ain'tcha gonna peel 'em first, Sergeant?"

"Peel hell! They'll eat 'em with the jackets on, or go hungry."

"What's fer supper, anyhow?" asked a complaining voice. "Cripes, I'm so hungry I could eat a dead whale."

"Spuds, bread and coffee. What the hell is it to you?"

"Spuds, bread and coffee for guys what's been diggin' all afternoon? Gee, ain't you got no heart a-tall? There's a hindquarter of beef rottin' under them sacks there. And canned corn, tomatoes, and that bag o' flapjack flour we swiped three days ago. Why not give them poor devils a square feed, just fer onct?"

"Who's going to cook it? Me? Not so's you can notice it! You?"

"I sure would, Sergeant, but I can't cook water without burnin' it. It's a crime to waste good food like that, and the outfit starvin'."

"Shut your bazoo and wash them spuds. You've sounded off plenty."

"We've reached the promised land, boys," said Jud, with no attempt at humor. "As I mentioned before, we are sadly needed hereabouts."

They turned a corner into a narrow street and came upon a company kitchen, a large tent fly in the courtyard of a shell-battered house. Jud shook his head in disapproval as he took in the scene. Although the kitchen was clean enough, still everything seemed to be out of place, and at odds and ends. A disgruntled-looking private, one of the cook's police, was struggling with a heavy boiler of potatoes near a pump, while the other cook's police was slicing bread into huge, uneven, jagged slices. Slicing the bread, thought Jud, and supper hours away. It would be pretty dry and stale by that time.

Under the fly a sour-faced sergeant sat on a box, his feet on a wheel of the rolling kitchen. A cigaret dangled from his lower lip, as though he didn't give a fiddler's hoot if school kept or not.

Jud sighed and turned to his mates.

"Let's give 'em a snappy song first," he suggested. "We'll keep back so they can't see us. It might pave the way."

They put all their professional skill into the song; no other than the doughboy favorite, "Mademoiselle from Armentieres". Comedy variations of their own composition added much to the little lady's red-hot reputation.

The sergeant dropped his feet from the wheel and listened in comic amazement. The two cook's police stiffened into statues. Had the earth turned upside down? Such merriment in the street of Company K. Impossible! And how those bozos could sing.

Before the sergeant knew it he was whistling in accompaniment. Finally, he came to himself and wheeled upon the privates.

"What the hell you loafing for?" he demanded, angrily. "Get going!"

"Cripes," protested the smaller of the

two, "can't a guy even listen in this lousy outfit?"

" 'Tain't often we hear anythin' like that," put in the other, wistfully. "Them birds can warble."

"I'll warble you, if you don't wash them spuds."

THE song ended and the four good Samaritans strolled into sight. The sergeant scowled menacingly at them. Jud stepped forward, smiling genially.

"Howdy, Sergeant," he said, pleasantly. "Fine day for a war!"

"What's that to you?" snarled Sergeant Rose. "On your way, bums!"

"An awful lot to me, Sergeant. Hello, boys!" he said to the cook's police. "How you making it?"

"Aw, lemme alone," growled the one wrestling with the spuds, his dog-tag reading Private John Akers, but dubbed "Shore Acres" by his buddies. "Can't you see I'm busy?"

"Let me help you, buddy." Andy sprang forward and helped him lift the heavy boiler. "Mighty fine spuds, son. Go great, if French fried, or perhaps au gratin. You know, a little cheese added."

"Don't make me laff," scoffed the other cook's police, one Private "Dumpy" Scott. "Ain't that a joke? Spuds, aw grattin in this crummy outfit."

"Take the air, you guys!" ordered Sergeant Rose. "We got work to do."

"No offense, Sarge, no offense," assured Chick, good humoredly. "Jud and Andy, my two good friends, are excellent cooks. We haven't anything to do for a while, so thought we'd stop to see if you needed any assistance."

"Cooks, are you?" rasped Sergeant Rose. "You look more like tramps. Blow, now, I'm busy."

"Let me see," mused Jud, aloud. "If I were cooking supper for the company, and had some beef—say, for instance, a hindquarter that wasn't too fresh, some canned corn, a few canned tomatoes, a little cheese, plenty of peeled spuds, some white flour, sugar, a little bacon grease or a dab of butter, I would—" He paused. "Oh, what's the use?" he said. "There isn't anything like that in the army. Nevertheless," he added, smacking his lips in anticipation, "it would be a meal fit for a king."

"Yes, the way you and I would cook it, Jud," supported Andy, with a side glance at the sergeant to note the effect of Jud's words on him. "Boy! how I love to cook for soldiers!"

"Hey, cut that out," snapped Sergeant Rose. "You wanna start a mutiny around here?"

"On the contrary," put in Jerry, with an engaging smile, "we wish to establish goodfellowship and harmony." He coughed till tears came into his eyes.

"I said for you tramps to blow!"

"All right, Sarge." Jud took a cigar from his pocket. "Good luck to you, and smoke this on me. I guarantee it."

"Don't mind if I do. Thanks."

"Here, have a light, Sarge." Jerry offered a burning match. "Pure Havana."

"Smoke cigars, boys?" Jud held out two cigars to the cook's police, who eagerly accepted them, but rather shamefacedly. "Straight from Cuba."

"What was them things you said you needed for that feed, feller?" Sergeant Rose puffed on the cigar and then smelled the smoke. It was a pippin.

"Take off your packs, boys," ordered Jud, quickly. "Andy, get out that hindquarter and cut it into juicy steaks. Chick, grab a knife and get busy peeling those spuds. I don't know whether to have mashed potatoes, with milk, or au gratin. What'll it be, fellows?" This to the staring cook's police.

"Aw grattin!" gulped Dumpy.

"Naw, with cheese," said Shore Acres. "To hell with aw grattin!"

"Great! The cheese has it. Jerry, you lazy bean pole, break out some canned corn and tomatoes. Now, while we're working, let's have a little song to speed the passing hours. First, though, Sergeant—I didn't get your last name—Rose—thanks. Sergeant Rose, make yourself comfortable on this box and enjoy your cigar. It's a beaut, isn't it?"

"To the king's taste, Mister—Mister—"

"Just call me plain Jud, at your service." Jud then introduced his three pals. "You boys, there," to the cook's police, "take it easy, we're the hired help around here for a while. Now, all together, let's sing, 'Pack Up Your Troubles'."

The quartette sang while they expertly put things ship-shape and prepared the evening meal. Sergeant Rose and the two privates fidgeted uneasily, looked at one another in sheepish embarrassment, then Shore Acres burst into a merry laugh.

"Cripes!" he said. "This man's army ain't so bad, after all!"

"It's the best ever," supported Jerry.

"I'm gonna tear up a letter I just wrote home," grinned Dumpy. "Things is changed a lot since then."

"You fellows can go knock off some shut-eye, if you wanna," said Sergeant Rose to them. "Come back when supper is ready to dish out."

"What?" gasped Shore Acres, unable to credit his ears. "You lettin' us off from cook's police?"

"Why not!" snapped the mess sergeant. "You gotta live and let live in this army, ain't you?"

"Shore Acres," intoned Dumpy, solemnly, "git hold of that broom and let's clean up around the shack. Cripes, it needs it." It was Sergeant Rose's turn to stare. "Our buddies is gotta have a clean place to eat."

"Righto, kid! And some good hot water to wash their mess-kits in. But I reckin they'll be licked clean enough after the feed they're gettin'."

"Hell's angels! I can smell it already." Dumpy licked his chops.

"Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag, and smile—smile—smile," sang the quartette, happily. At last they were doing their bit in a way that appealed to them.

Knuckle Bates kept the company digging until a few minutes before retreat.

"You've got just ten minutes to get ready for retreat," he announced. "If any of you are late or dirty, I'll find some real work for you to do. I'm through with wet-nursing you. From now on you're going to soldier."

He turned on heel and left a sergeant to march them back with their picks and shovels. It was a tired and disgusted crew that stood retreat, and a famished one.

"Get your mess kits and fall in," ordered Knuckle, then to the ranking duty sergeant. "The captain wants his chow sent to the orderly room, and I'll eat mine there too. The cook's police can bring it over."

Sullenly the men got their kits and lined up to be marched to the kitchen. As they waited, from the cook shack floated sounds of singing. Our quartette had gone into action again. Despondent chins lifted all along the line and astonishment crept into weary eyes as the words of the merry drinking song drummed on ears.

"Down, down, down where the Wurtzburger flows, flows, flows. It's down, down, down, and nobody knows—where —it—goes. The Rhine may be fine, but a big stein for mine. Up with the sale of it, down with a pail of it—"

"Come and get it! Come and get it!" accompanied by a resounding tattoo on a dish pan, drowned out the singing.

And there was jubilation, plus a fierce joy, in that unusual call to chow. Never before had the company swung along in such perfect step and cadence.

AT THE cook shack the hungry men shook their heads to clear their foggy visions. Jud, Andy, Chick and Jerry, immaculately clean, stood like statues, each with a big iron ladle at Present Sabre. Near them, grinning, yes, grinning, was Rose, the heartless and muchly-disliked mess sergeant. Beside him were Dumpy and Shore Acres, the two worst goldbricks in the company, and they were grinning too, grinning while on cook's police. It was unheard of! But what was that delicious, appetizing aroma exuding from those covered

pans? Cripes, were they actually going to eat?

"Howdy, gentlemen!" cried Jud, cordially. "Line up and fill your tummies till they bust. And, gentlemen, there are seconds and thirds; as much as can cram down. Careful, though, lest your buttons fly off."

There was a mad rush to be first in line. A big, fat juicy steak, done to a turn, was slapped on a mess kit.

"That ain't fer me, is it?" eagerly queried a lanky, hungry-looking buck.

"You don't hafta eat it," kidded Sergeant Rose, a twinkle in his eye. "Hold it still! Or perhaps you don't like spuds, au gratin."

"Keep movin'," ordered Dumpy to the bugle-eyed private. "Corn on top of the —the—how do you pernounce it, Jud?"

"Filet mignon to you, Dumpy."

"Yeah, spread it on," replied the delighted buck. "Thick."

"Termatoes?" asked Shore Acres, importantly. "Save yer lid fer the pie."

"Pie? Gee!"

"Fill 'er up with Java?" Andy poured a stream of aromatic coffee into the outheld tin cup, coffee with plenty of sugar and evaporated cream in it. "Better put this buttered toast on top of the works. Don't drop it, now."

"I'm sunk," sighed the buck. "There is some justice, after all."

By the time the last man had been served, the first was back again for seconds, and got a generous portion.

"Skip over to the orderly room with the two gorillas' chuck, you kitchen mechanics," instructed Sergeant Rose, his mouth crammed with pie. "And don't poison it on the way."

"What in the jumped-up-hell is this?" Captain Bagley stared at the luscious repast set before him on his desk. "Where did it come from?"

"Pie!" Knuckle Bates swore roundly, in his customary manner of expressing joyful amazement. "Steak! Corn! Tomatoes! And buttered toast! Hell, smell that coffee!"

"Four guys blowed in from nowhere, Capt'in," informed Dumpy, timidly.

"The best guys you ever seen, and—and—" He stopped for lack of wind.

"And cooked supper," supplied Shore Acres. "They's princes, sir. Kin sing like nightingales. And funny? They'd make a horse laff. The whole company is pullin' a sing-song. Jest *listen* at 'em."

From the kitchen sounded a roaring chorus of, *"Pack Up Your Troubles."*

"Get out!" snapped Flint Bagley. "Outside!"

Dumpy and Shore Acres took the air, toots sweet, and raced back to the cook shack. They didn't want to miss anything. The quartette, using ladles for batons, were leading the singing. Then followed, "Over There", in a rendition that would have delighted its composer, George M. Cohan. This finished, a buck rose to his feet, rubbed his stomach significantly, and brandished his mess kit aloft.

"Three rousin' cheers fer the best cooks in the world! The guys what ironed the wrinkles outta our neglected bellies! Hip! Hip! Hooray!"

The cheers were so lusty and sincere, that Colonel Fitch, in headquarters, looked over at his adjutant in pleased astonishment.

"Aren't those cheers coming from the machine gun company?" he asked. "It seems that my talk with Captain Bagley has accomplished wonders."

"K Company?" The adjutant laughed derisively. "From K Company, sir? Not a chance."

"Speech! Speech!" clamored the joyous privates. "Up on that box and give us a speech!"

"Thanks, boys," replied Jud, in husky voice. "It certainly does our four hearts good to know that we were able to—"

There came a distressing interruption. Captain Flint Bagley, Knuckle Bates on his heels, strode into sight and glared wrathfully at the company.

"Attention!" feebly called a non-com.

Dark looks replacing the merriment and goodfellowship on their countenances, the company sullenly stood up.

"What in hell does this disgraceful exhibition mean?" demanded Flint Bagley of the mess sergeant. "Who are those men? And where did they come from?"

Before Sergeant Rose could reply, Jud came forward.

"Sergeant Rose is not to blame, Captain," he declared. "If there is any wrong-doing, the fault lies with us. We were just putting on a little show for the boys."

Jud then told the history of the four, including their desire to do their bit in the Big Show.

"Have you finished?" asked the captain, coldly, when Jud had ceased speaking.

"Yes, sir. We certainly would appreciate it, sir, if you would let us trail along with the company in our humble way, doing the cooking and any other jobs that might arise."

"The Big Show, eh?" sneered Flint Bagley. "I'll Big Show you! I'll allow you just five minutes in which to clear out. You have one hell of a nerve, coming here and pampering these would-be soldiers with your fancy and wasteful cooking, and your Y.M.C.A. sing-songs. The place for broken-down, over-aged vaudevillians is in an actors' home, not in France destroying the morale with idiotic antics." Flint Bagley faced the company. "Get back to your quarters, on the double!"

With the top kicker, the captain returned to the orderly room.

"It wouldn't take much fer me to shoot the son of a bishop," growled Dumpy. "A cryin' shame, I call it, orderin' good guys like you to take air."

"Shoot him!" burst from Shore Acres. "You mean boil in vinegar."

"It's a damn outrage," consoled Sergeant Rose to the despondent quartette, "but I wouldn't linger too long. Flint Bagley is bad."

"We certainly are sorry to leave you boys," said Jud, trying to smile.

"You ain't half as sorry as us, to see you go. You fellows could make an outfit of us in no time. Phew! How we need blokes like you."

PACKS on shoulders, like wandering minstrels, the four trudged off. Out of sight of the company street, Jud called a halt.

"Fellow Thespians," he announced, "I have a motion to make."

"We were waiting for it," Andy smiled hopefully.

"In fact, we know what it is." Jud challenged him with a look. "You think that it is our bounden duty to stick with that company. Gentlemen," he said to Chick and Jerry, "the motion has been duly made and seconded."

"The ayes have it, Andy," grinned Chick. "The rest is up to the Ways and Means Committee."

"Seeing that I am called upon," said Jud, "I recommend, after due investigation and deliberation, that we seek an obscure spot where we can hold secret conclave."

"Now, will you look at that!" Chick pointed excitedly to two heavily laden doughboys hurrying toward them. "Emissaries from the King!"

"Hey, Jud!" called one. "Andy! Chick! Jerry! Wait a minit!"

Dumpy and Shore Acres joined them.

"The gang sorta got together, fellers," announced Shore Acres, in awkward embarrassment, "and chipped in. We noticed you guys didn't have no blankets, and seein' that our lousy capt'in give you the air, it meant you'd hafta flop cold. And it's gonna rain hard. Jerry's got a bad cough, and rain won't do it no good. Here's four O. D. blankets, some cigarets, four mess kits, and twenty-seven francs, what might help tide you over till you kin j'ine up with a decent outfit."

"And the gang said thanks a lot fer that swell supper," put in Dumpy.

"That ain't all of it, you Dumbo. You mess everythin' up. The bunch hopes you ain't sore at 'em fer the skipper givin' you the gate, and hopes they'll see you soon again."

Without waiting for a reply, the two doughs dumped their offerings down and darted into a side street.

"Bless their hearts," choked Jud. "Now, did you ever?"

"From now on, Gentlemen of Broadway," said Jerry, huskily, "we belong to Company K."

"I feel like bawling," declared Andy. "What a wonderful tribute to four, old decrepit songsters like us."

"You said it, Jerry," came thickly from Chick. "We'll keep up with that bunch, and stick to them, if it costs us our worthless lives."

"Aye, to the end," said Jud solemnly. "On with the show!"

When darkness fell, it found four old actors huddled together for warmth in a damp, mildewed cellar, which had been inspected and found unfit for habitation by the regimental doctor. Each was wrapped in an O.D. army blanket, the consumptive Jerry stoutly refusing to use more than one. They shivered and shook and their weary bones ached from their long hike, but their eyes shone brightly with that fire that comes only from a day well spent and duty done. Outside the rain fell in torrents.

"I feel fine," lied Jerry, stifling a cough. "Aren't these blankets the works?"

"Ta-ta-ta-tat-tat-tata-ta-tat-ta!" the notes of an infantry trumpet echoed and re-echoed in streets above. All four sat up and listened, pulses throbbing.

"What is it?" gasped Chick. "Do you think that—" His voice shook so that it failed him.

"It means the Big Show, at last," replied Jerry, in awed tones.

A medley of shouting, intermixed with thudding feet, floated down the cellar steps. The rain beat down.

"Everybody outside!" thundered a raucous voice near the cellar. "We're going up!"

Laughing and chattering away like schoolboys getting ready for a picnic, the four doughty old men hurriedly rolled their blankets, slung on packs, and scrambled up the steps into the cold, driving rain. Lanterns flashed all around them like monstrous fireflies darting hither and yon. Trucks rolled up, motors chugging, and brakes grinded to a halt. Doughboys, some finishing their dressing as they shot by, ran to fall in. A rifle clattered on the stones. Curses! Hysterical laughter! Snapped out orders! Soldiers calling to their buddies! Seeming confusion everywhere.

"Another lousy night march!" sang a disgusted voice near the drenched actors.

Jerry coughed and spat flecks of blood. Jud squeezed his arm, knowing that a rainy night like that was cutting days from his pal's life.

"Night march hell!" rang out another voice in tones that carried convincing authority. "The Germans have broken through, and we've got to stop them."

A truck thundered up, and under applied brakes skidded dangerously on the wet stones, its tail almost side-swiping the actors.

"You doodle-berries know where K Company's kitchen is?" demanded the driver, sourly.

"Straight up the street," informed Jud. "We were waiting for you."

"Git in, then, bums! I ain't got all night. Hell's to pay!"

Did they clamber in? I'll say so. Nothing ventured, nothing gained. And for them it was the Front, or bust. The driver released his brakes, shifted gears, and the truck jerked forward.

"What's all the excitement, Buddy?" Chick's voice shook.

"Rush order to move up. And *I* gotta haul your lousy rations up. Kin you beat it? Hookin' a rollin' kitchen to my truck? I wisht I was runnin' this gare. I'd show 'em how."

At the cook shack a dripping tin hat rose over the tailboard and an electric torch revealed the four pals.

"I knowed it! I knowed it!" Dumpy's wet face split into a grin. "Okeh by me, fellers. There's plenty o' room fer princes like you, but lay low, lay low!"

"You gone nuts, talkin' to yerself?" demanded Shore Acres.

The actors heard a whispered consultation at the rear of the truck and then a loud chuckling.

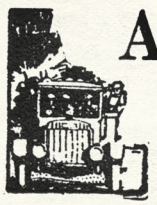
"I reckin K Company's gonna eat now!" Shore Acres climbed into the truck and shook hands all around. "Flint Bagley's done made me and Dumpy cooks," he informed. "Can you feature that? The company's gonna move too fast fer a rollin' kitchen to keep up. Pretty soon it'll be in action. Sergeant Rose is busted fer lettin' you guys cook, and he's sore as hell at Bagley. He's still in charge of the mess, though. That's Flint's way of rubbin' it in. Now, if you fellers will do the cookin', me and Dumpy and Rose'll run it up to the company, and you kin stay back and hide until we return, and so on. The boys'll git good eats, and you kin do your bit, like you wanna."

"Sounds fine!" approved Jud. "However, they'll get wise that you're not cooking the meals. What then?"

"Me and Dumpy is good liars, and Rose can't be beat at stretchin' the truth. Anyhow, Flint and Knuckle is gonna be too damn busy duckin' bullets and shells to come back and see. Is it a go?"

"Let me see," mused Andy, aloud. Shore Acres watched him anxiously in the rays of his flashlight. "Flapjacks, bacon, French toast and coffee for breakfast. For dinner, I think—"

"It's all set, Dumpy, it's all set!" cried Shore Acres, joyously. "They came through noble!"



ALL night a seemingly unending string of G. M. trucks, filled to capacity with American doughs, raced up through the inky blackness and pelting rain. Soon, above the whirring crunch of wheels and splashing of water, sounded an ominous muttering and rumbling of guns, which grew louder and louder as the kilos slipped behind. Then a German shell screeched over and burst, and another, and still another. The doughs were receiving their baptism of fire.

K Company was assigned to a hot spot. Under cover of darkness it relieved a company holding a tiny hamlet, consisting of an even dozen heaps of ruins, which once had been brick and stone buildings.

As Flint Bagley listened to the orders turned over by the retiring company commander, his hard face paled slightly and his jaws tightened. Colonel Fitch had selected K Company for a sacrifice unit, it appeared.

Knuckle Bates was button-holed by the top cutter of the outfit being relieved.

"You're in for it, old man," informed the top, sympathetically. "We have lost more than sixty percent in killed and wounded. And the machine gun company before us was wiped out. This damned place has changed hands no less than eleven times in the last ten days. It's quiet here now, but it won't be for long. They'll shell hell out of you for hours, then they'll attack. Beat 'em back, and you get more shelling, then another rush, and so on, day and night, until you are relieved, or go west."

"Tell it to the marines," sneered Knuckle. "Do I look like a rook? Trying to put the wind up in me, huh?"

"No, I'm not," replied the first sergeant, earnestly. "Down the street farther is a big chateau—only the cellar and bits of the ground floor walls remaining—we call it the Morgue. It's a regular charnel house, and it has to be held. Brigade orders. One platoon lasted in it just two hours. Every so often reinforcements from the company, which will hold the houses to the south of the Morgue, have to be sent forward to replace the casualties."

"Yeah? Go on, Mr. Funny Man, I'm laughing."

"I advise you to go sparingly with your iron rations, because it's ten to one none will be able to come up when the music begins again. Good luck! You'll need some."

Captain Bagley, his conference with the company commander concluded, rejoined his officers and first sergeant.

"Lieutenant Davis," he said, "you and the 1st Section will occupy the chateau on the north edge of the village. Post your guns to advantage. I'll be frank

with you. It's a tough job, but you must stick."

"Very well, sir," replied the young officer, quietly.

Led by a guide, Lieutenant Davis marched his men to the Morgue and took over. Hardly had the other company retired than the German shelling recommenced. Knuckle soon learned that the first sergeant had not exaggerated. Calls for first aid resounded on all sides of him and stretcher-bearers, with their bleeding, gruesome burdens, could be seen in the dancing, red flashes struggling to the rear over piles of bricks and broken stone.

The men of K Company, their morale already at a dangerously low ebb due to the ill-treatment and hardships imposed upon them by a ruthless captain and a bullying first sergeant, cowered in cellars and behind shattered walls, terrified by the blasting hail. It was only the presence of Flint Bagley and Knuckle Bates that kept them from stampeding to safety. Long since, every vestige of a soldier's responsibility and duty had been crushed in their hearts. The winning of the War meant nothing to them. Forgotten was that hot patriotism with which they had first joined the colors.

Throughout the night the bombardment was maintained. Dawn broke, the rain had stopped, but the shelling had increased in intensity. Hot, round eyes stared dully from cover across a bleak open space toward the German lines, a distance of about half a mile. Finally those hot, round eyes fixed their gaze in horror on the chateau occupied by the 1st Section. It was the target of a scathing, merciless fire from innumerable hidden machine guns. The Morgue! It was well named.

Flint Bagley, automatic in hand, went among his men.

"Buck up, you yellow rats!" he snarled. "Show some guts! I'll shoot the first one who makes a move to the rear."

Low, ominous mutterings rose from the nerve-racked soldiers and the dull stare in their haggard eyes turned to a look of hate. Had Flint Bagley but known it, his life hung by a thread. American doughboys will stand most anything in the service of Uncle Sam, except bullying and inhuman treatment.

The day dragged through, but the Germans made no attempt to attack, apparently satisfied with the havoc their artillery and machine gun fire was wreaking among the defenders of the hamlet. The American artillery was not idle. Their shells screamed over continuously, taking a heavy toll of enemy lives.

It neared seven o'clock and no food had come up for the harassed, hungry men; and Flint Bagley had given strict orders that no iron rations were to be used, orders backed up by that menacing automatic.

Eight o'clock. The stars shone bright and cold. The doughboys, wet by the rain and their uniforms still damp, shivered and shook and their teeth chattered as they tightened belts to relieve the gnawing in their undernourished stomachs. The shells still coughed and scattered death.

Captain Bagley personally led a detachment of reinforcements to the Morgue, taking with him 2nd Lieutenant Hill, who was to relieve Lieutenant Davis. When he returned to the company P. C. he called Knuckle Bates aside.

"It's a slaughter house," he confided, in strained, jerky voice. "Six men left alive. Davis is gone, poor kid. Almost cut in two."

"Better not let it get around, sir," advised Knuckle. "These canaries are about ready to pull their freight."

"I know it. We've got to keep the reins tight. Any news of our chow?"

"Not a sign of it. You don't expect a busted mess sergeant to risk his neck bringing up grub through that shelling, do you?" It was spoken with biting sarcasm. "Rose isn't in love with the outfit."

"Mind that tongue of yours," snarled Flint. "You know how I handle loose-mouthed prisoners in Joliet."

"We're a long way from Joliet."

Insolently Knuckle turned his back on the company commander and walked away. A suspicion was mounting in his breast that doughboys were vastly differ-

ent from convicts. Also, the strain was beginning to tell on him. Black scowls and mumbled imprecations from men facing death were gradually undermining his iron nerve. No telling when one of them would let him have it in the back. And there were no steel bars between him and them, as there had been in Joliet.

NINE o'clock! Ten! Eleven! And nothing to eat. Water couldn't take the place of food in empty bellies. On the verge of nervous collapse, a doughboy in the P. C. cellar voiced his feelings.

"I'm gee dee sick and tired of this whole gee dee business!" he cried wild-eyed. "What are we here for? Why do we stay? Just because a gee dee convict slave driver says to stay. To hell with the army! To hell with everything!"

An iron fist crashed against his jaw and he toppled over, unconscious. "Who's the next to belly-ache?" demanded Flint Bagley. "Let's hear from him. Our orders are to hold this village and, by gawd, we'll hold it, if we all rot to do it."

"That isn't the point, Captain," spoke up Corporal White, "If we were only treated like human beings, we wouldn't give a damn if the entire German army was against us. You can't expect soldiers to take it on the chin from their officers and then fight for them. We've had one decent meal since leaving machine gun school, and we've been bullied and browbeaten until our spirits are broken."

"I've a damned good mind to shoot you in your tracks!" roared Flint. "You, a non-commissioned officer, setting such an example."

"That's why I spoke, sir, because I am a non-com. The book says a non-com should look after the interests of the men under him and—"

"Shut up!"

"All right!" The corporal sat down. "But I'm still alive," he added, defiantly. "Why don't you shoot?"

A heavy silence settled in the cellar; a silence charged with dynamite, which only needed a spark to set it off.

Flint Bagley realized that he was in a tight spot, but to give the devil his due, he was not thinking of his own safety, but of holding the hamlet. A hot wave of rage surged over him. The corporal had called his hand, and he must win the showdown, then and there. His lips tightened and the cords in his neck swelled. With his thumb he snapped down the safety latch on his automatic.

"Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag, and smile—smile—smile—"

A bursting German shell drowned out the approaching song. When the rumble had died, again rose the refrain, now much nearer and louder.

"What's the use of worrying? It never was worth while.

So pack up your troubles in your old kit bag, and smile—smile—smile."

"Grub! Grub!" cried a private, grabbing for his mess kit. "And our old friends again!"

Flint Bagley shoved the safety latch back into place. The welcome interruption had prevented bloodshed and perhaps open mutiny. But the scowl on his face grew blacker. These newcomers brought with them another crisis. He had ordered them from the company, and here they were back again, in defiance of that order. To save his face, he must deal with them severely.

He pushed his way through the eager soldiers crowding the cellar steps and up into the village street. In the bright moonlight, disregarding the occasional machine gun bursts that swept back and forth, he saw the rolling kitchen, drawn by a dirty, mud-spattered gray mule, clanking awkwardly over the uneven cobblestones.

As the kitchen got nearer he recognized the four actors. They were a sorry looking sight. Jerry, his left arm in a blood-stained sling, held to the kitchen with his good hand while Jud, his forehead bandaged, assisted him along. Jerry coughed and coughed as he stumbled forward. Andy and Chick, unhurt but covered with mud, led the mule.

Cheers welled from hoarse doughboy throats on each side of the street, but not a soldier dared leave his post without or-

ders from the company commander. Flint Bagley crossed to the middle of the street in front of the kitchen and halted it.

"What in damnation do you men mean coming up this way?" he demanded, harshly. "You're making enough noise to draw all the fire in the sector. Didn't I tell you to keep away from the company? What's the answer?"

"Captain Bagley, I am to blame." Jud, his face blood-smeared and suffering in his feverish eyes, went up to the Captain and saluted with his left hand. He knew no better. "We hid in the mess truck, at my suggestion, and cooked breakfast for you. Sergeant Rose and Dumpy, and Shore Acres, poor fellows, tried to bring up the meal but were killed in the shelling. We waited for them to come back, then set out to see what was the matter. The kitchen was overturned and they lay near it, mangled horribly. The horse was killed. There was nothing else to do, so we stole a mule, went back, cooked another meal and came up with it. The shelling was pretty hot, sir, but we managed to struggle through. I am sorry we are so late for the Big Show."

A lump rose in the captain's throat, but he swallowed it. Discipline must be maintained. These old broken down actors were heroes, but they had wilfully disobeyed his orders. He must show no weakening before the company.

"Sergeant Bates," he bellowed, "when the meal is dished out, put these men under sentry. I'll send them back for trial at the first opportunity for disobedience of orders."

"You dirty skunk," muttered Knuckle, but under his breath. "They're worth ten of you." Then aloud, "Very well, sir." Discipline must be maintained.

The captain ordered the kitchen into cover, where squads darted across the open from the various positions and carried back chow to their buddies.

"It isn't what we planned for you, soldiers," apologized Jerry, between racking coughs, "so please excuse us this time. We had to cook under difficulties."

"Just plain stew, mates," put in Andy, "but I think you'll like it. Jud is a wizard at making stew."

Just plain stew? The hungry doughs lapped it up like famished animals, and clamored for more, and got it. It was delicious. The best they had ever eaten, even at home. And the coffee? Fit for the gods.

"Volunteers to take chow up to the Morgue?" called Flint Bagley, mess kit in hand and spoon working overtime. "Step out, six of you canaries."

"Take it up yourself!" shouted a hidden dough. "You're so damn military and hard!"

"Yeah, show your Joliet stuff!" "Send Knuckle Bates up, he ain't afraid of nothin'." "You ain't behind the lines now!" rang an angry, unseen chorus.

FLINT BAGLEY stiffened and his eyes darted in all directions to locate the offenders, but without success. He was licked, and knew it. It was a situation with which even he couldn't cope, despite his Joliet training. If he went up with the chow, or sent the first sergeant up, it meant defeat. His authority would be broken.

Jud instantly grasped the situation.

"It's mutiny, boys," he whispered to his pals. "We can't let an American company so far forget itself under fire. The poor boys don't know what they are doing. It's up to us!"

"You fellows have done enough!" cried Chick to the doughs. "Handling the grub is our job. Where is this Morgue, Captain?"

"I'll be damned if I'll let you lousy actors show me up!" Knuckle Bates, in his rough, unknowing way was trying to make amends in the eyes of the men he had bullied so long. At last he was a soldier. "Step out, you gee dee hat-rack!" he yelled at the mule, pulling on its bridle. "Move your stumps!"

"Get away from that mule!" ordered Flint Bagley, fiercely. "I'm not calling

for volunteers now, I'm ordering those rations up."

And having suddenly become a soldier, there was naught left for Knuckle to do but obey the order of his superior. Sullenly he stepped back.

"Giddy up!" clucked Chick, to the mule. The kitchen moved forward.

"Hey, gang!" shouted a deep bass voice from behind a shattered wall. "You gone bugs, or somethin'? Gonna let them four life-savers git bumped off after bringin' us this good chow? Who wants to foller me?"

Into the moonlight he sprang and raced up to the kitchen. A mob, shouting and cheering, darted from cover and joined him. The pot of slum was jerked from its place, then followed the coffee and bread. Before Captain Bagley could interfere, if he wanted to interfere, the food was going up to the Morgue on the double.

"Thanks," said Flint Bagley gruffly to Chick. "You actors are soldiers, every damned out of you."

Hot pride surged through the veins of the weary, suffering four. They had been thanked by a company commander, and under fire too, for their puny efforts. Their eyes flashed and their shoulders went back. The curtain had gone up on the Big Show. They must not disappoint their expectant audience.

"How about it, doughboys?" shouted Jud, his voice burning with a fierce joy. "We'll speed them on their way with a song you all know. Let's have 'Over There', with all the trimmings!"

The quartette led off. Immediately was the martial refrain taken up by the company. The inspiring song boomed and roared from lusty throats. Knuckle joined in. Even Flint Bagley, although he fought hard against it, finally kept time with his foot throughout the chorus.

Machine gun bullets chipped bricks and stones and ricocheted to the rear with soul-distressing whines, but the song thundered on. Soldiers were being reborn on that cold, star-lit night under the muzzles of German guns. Four Broadway songsters, well past the prime of life and unfit for military service, were breathing renewed life and hope into hearts long dead.

The welcome rations reached the Morgue, but three of the volunteers paid with their lives.

When the song had died out, Captain Bagley returned to the company P. C. in the cellar across the street.

"Better come along," he said, shortly, to the actors. "I'll see what I can do for your wounds. And you," he snapped to Jerry, leaning weakly against Jud, "get in where it's warmer. A jolt of cognac will do that cough good."

Perhaps it was the singing, or the noise made by the kitchen coming up, for a strong wind was blowing toward the German lines, or it might have been just according to a laid out schedule, for a terrific bombardment fell out of the sky on the hamlet. The men in the P. C. huddled together, but gone was that look of despair.

"We'll get a crack at the lousy Krauts yet!" burst from a private, "and then we'll show 'em what Company K kin do."

"Did you hear that?" whispered Knuckle to Flint Bagley. "Growing proud of the company."

"You see what Joliet treatment is doing," whispered back the captain, but he knew he was lying. "Making soldiers out of yellow rats."

"You mean it was making yellow rats out of soldiers. They're coming through despite it. Don't kid yourself, you're not in command of the company, those vaudeville singers relieved you."

"Damn you, I'll soon show you who's in command!"

A signal corps corporal and two privates stumbled down the cellar steps, dragging a wire behind them.

"Where do you want it, sir?" puffed the corporal. "Line from regimental P. C. Five times we tried to get it through, but the shelling—"

"It's about time," rasped Flint, the words of Knuckle still rankling. "Put it here. Stand by it, Sergeant Bates, and do something."

The signal men connected up and hurriedly departed. The buzzer sounded and Knuckle went in on the wire.

"Colonel Fitch says the Germans are preparing to attack us in force," he called to Flint. "No relief can come up until sometime in the morning. He wants to know if the company can hold out. If not, he advises that it retire immediately."

A HUSH fell on those in the cellar and eyes were turned to the captain for his answer. All realized that an attack in force meant but the one thing, total destruction of the company. It would be wiped out as had the outfits before it. The relieved privates had talked, and the men of Company K had listened. It doesn't take doughboys long to find out what's what when taking over a new position.

Flint hesitated. Could he rely on these disloyal men to stand by him? The silence grew painful. Jud fidgeted uneasily, as did his pals. The show must go on, for the honor of the A. E. F.

"We'll sing while you fight, Captain Bagley," Jud said. "It's the best we can do. We don't know anything else."

"Sir!" Corporal White, whom Flint had threatened to shoot, sprang erect. "Tell the colonel we'll stick till the cows come home."

"Shut up! When I want your advice, I'll ask for it." Flint faced the waiting first sergeant. "I'll answer the colonel." He strode over to the telephone and snatched it from Knuckle. "Captain Bagley speaking," he spat into the mouthpiece. "Company K will stick till the cows come home—I—I mean," he stammered, "that we'll stick like—like glue." He disconnected without waiting for the colonel's reply and wheeled upon the non-com. "Corporal White," he snarled, "you're a damned good soldier, but your mouth is too damned big." The buzzer sounded loudly. "Thinks we can't do it, huh! Wants to order us to retreat." He caught hold of the wire and yanked it from its fastening, disconnecting the telephone. "You had better spray your throats," he said to Jud, "because you're sure going to use them."

"It's the Big Show, sir," replied Jud, quietly.

The cellar resounded with cheers.

"Stop that damned nonsense," ordered Flint, angrily. "This isn't a football game."

"You're not fooling anybody," said Knuckle from the corner of his mouth, so the others couldn't hear. "Not even yourself." The first sergeant chuckled. The captain was a hard loser.

A sergeant, his blouse blood-soaked and his left arm dangling helplessly, half-slid, half-tumbled into the cellar. Knuckle sprang to his assistance, but the wounded man, with a muttered curse spurned his help. He staggered over to Flint Bagley and feebly shook a grimy, blackened fist in his face, the while swaying unsteadily.

"They're dead—all dead up there—died waiting for the relief—for the relief that never came." A gasping sob. "Gave their lives—one by one—while you were back here—in a cellar—cursing and damning men—men that would have been soldiers—only for you and Joliet." The sergeant choked and spat blood. "I'm telling you to your face, Flint Bagley, that you are—a yellow—cur dog."

The sergeant's knees gave way and he would have pitched to the floor, but Jud and Andy sprang forward and caught him in their arms and laid him gently down, his head resting in Jud's lap. Flint Bagley went white and his lips were seen to quiver. He made a move as though to kneel beside the wounded non-com, but turned and walked away instead. Indeed was he a hard loser.

"There, there, Sergeant," soothed Jud, tenderly stroking the damp forehead. "Quiet now, like a good fellow, and I'll fix you up as good as new." The sergeant's lids lifted wearily.

"Fix—me—up?" A bitter smile played on bloody lips. "I'm—full of—holes." His eyes opened wider and he recognized Jud and Andy. "Cripes—but you are—great—guys—bringing up good chow—to bums—like us." A tear from Jud's

welling eyes splashed on the dirt-streaked face. "Hell," choked the dying man, "don't cry—over—me. I don't—count—"

A convulsive shudder and sightless orbs stared vacantly into space. Jud wiped a hand across his eyes, uncovered and murmured a prayer for the soul of the departed.

A German five-nine crummpped into the street and exploded, the concussion rocking the cellar. An avalanche of earth and cobblestones almost blocked the entrance.

"Dig those steps clear!" cried Knuckle. "Jump to it!"

There was a rush to obey, and trench spades rose and fell with a will. In the presence of the Grim Reaper a death is soon forgotten. Flint Bagley paced back and forth, head down as if thinking hard. From the dark corners of the cellar the doughboys watched his every move. And strange to say, there was sympathy, if not forgiveness written across their grim countenances. At last Flint Bagley stopped. Heavy sighs of relief were heard. The tension had been nerve-destroying.

"Sergeant Bates," he said, "I am going to the Morgue with any men who will volunteer to go with me. Inform Lieutenant Eilers to take charge of the company and, under no circumstances, to retire. I have pledged my word, and the word of K Company, to hold this position until the cows come home." He flashed a significant look at Corporal White. "Tell him that this is the Big Show, and that every mother's son among us must act his part." Jud and his pals were the recipients of another meaning glance. "Lieutenants Davis and Hill are both dead and—"

"Lieutenant Eilers was killed a few minutes ago," informed Knuckle. "That shell got him. I saw him fall. He's lying out there in the street."

"God rest his soul, the poor kid." Flint Bagley tensed. "Then you take charge of the company, Sergeant." The captain gazed searchingly around him. "Men," he said, in tones charged with emotion, "I know you hate my guts, and have a right to. France is not Joliet, and American soldiers are not criminals, I can say no more. I want fifteen volunteers for the Morgue. Most likely none of us will come back. You don't have to go."

"Sir," said Corporal White, "an hour ago I was planning to shoot you. But now, I would consider it a big favor to go up there with you, and I know a lot of the boys feel the same way about it. With a few words you have undone a helluva lot of dirty hazing and I am for you, strong."

"Thanks, Corporal White, but you are a married man. I have censored many of your letters to your wife and kids. For their sake, I won't take you. And White, if you live to go back, tell little Dandy, the red-haired one with the freckles, that I hope he grows up to be the man his father is."

"Now, what'n hell do you think of that, fellows?" Corporal White blubbered it out. "He remembers little Dandy."

"Jupiter Judas!" exclaimed a voice from the dark. "Flint Bagley is human!"

"Which makes me volunteer!" sang a buck, slipping on his pack and grabbing up his rifle. "Tell little Dandy, Corp, that Slug McInnes sends him his dad fer a Christmas present."

"Thanks, Slug."

IT WAS not long before thirteen privates and two noncoms had volunteered and had been accepted by Flint Bagley. Jud timidly touched the captain on an arm to attract his attention.

"Sir," he said, bashful as a kid, but with glowing eyes, "century plants like us are not much good where able-bodied soldiers are required, but you said this was to be the Big Show. Can't you please find a spot on the bill for our act? It's only a musical one, I know, but—"

"You can't go," replied Flint Bagley, huskily. "There is too much blood on my hands now. Fall in!" he ordered to the volunteers. They lined up in front of him. "Men, I thank you. Right—

face, forward—march." The detail filed from the cellar. On the top step Bagley turned around. "If K Company succeeds in holding the village until relieved, Sergeant Bates, tell Colonel Fitch, with my compliments, that four lousy vaudeville actors made it possible. Detail! Double—time—march!" And he was gone.

The quartette burst into song, but at the start their voices were uncertain and shaky. However, they steadied and gathered volume, Flint Bagley and his volunteers marching to the Morgue spurred on by!

"For he's a jolly good fellow, for he's a jolly good fellow, for he's a jolly good fellow, which nobody can deny, which nobody can deny, which nobody can deny—"

The words were blotted out by a terrific detonation and a wall of the house across the street crashed in a cloud of dust and smoke.

All night the enemy guns thundered and roared, intermixed with the staccato drumming of Maxims. Every now and then a short burst from a Vickers in the Morgue gave evidence that Flint and his men were still alive and on the job.

At times, it seemed to the doughboys huddled in the cellars and crouching behind the piles of ruins, that each minute was to be their last, the shelling was so intense. The streets were ripped up by heavies, hurtling cobblestones in all directions, and great smoking craters yawned everywhere. Twice those in the cellar of the company P. C. were nearly buried alive, and only saved themselves by frantic digging.

Eventually dawn streaked the sky in the east. Then there came one of those strange and unaccountable lulls in battle so common on the Western Front.

The rest of K Company, not having witnessed the transformation in Flint Bagley, had stuck through the rain of steel only because it was no safer to run. They had hugged cover instinctively, as even an old war-tried veteran will spring under a flimsy canvas, or waterproof covering, in a trench to protect himself from a sudden bombardment. But now, with the shells not coming over, it was their great and only chance.

A soldier, flinging away his rifle, darted from cover and sped down the street, running madly to the rear. Another followed, then a squad.

Knuckle Bates, standing on the cellar steps, saw and realized what was happening. In a few minutes more the entire company would stampede, if something weren't done, and immediately. He shouted for the terrified soldiers to come back, but only wasted breath.

"God help us!" he cried. "They're running like rabbits, and the Krauts will be coming over any minute now. Outside, in the cellar down there! Form a line across the street and bayonet anybody that tries to pass you."

But American bayonets were not made to bayonet American soldiers. Not a man in the cellar moved. Knuckle whipped out his automatic and covered them from the steps.

"Outside!" he yelled. "Outside, or I'll empty my gat into you!"

"Fellows," coughed Jerry, his lips flecked with blood, "it's the call for our Act in the Big Show. Are you ready? We'll open with the Star Spangled Banner. Curtain!"

Past the raging first sergeant flashed four old men. In to the middle of the plowed up street they ran and, climbing upon the brim of a huge crater, resolutely faced to the front. Farther along the street men were climbing out of cellars and others were deserting their posts among the ruins and heading straight for the quartette. All would have to pass them in their retreat.

"Oh, say can you see, by the dawn's early light, what so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming—"

The inspired words, sung by these men looking into the jaws of death, welled into the very heavens.

"Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous night o'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming—"

Three running doughboys, a big, lanky

fellow far in the lead, came nearer and nearer to the crater's brim. The lanky one slowed up, eyes on the singers, stopped, hesitated a moment, then started forward again. Of a sudden he leaped into the crater and brandished his rifle aloft in the path of his racing companions.

"Stop, damn you, stop!" he cried. "We ain't travelin' no further." He pointed wildly with his free hand to the quartette. "You ever hear that tune before?"

The three terror-stricken doughs tumbled into the crater and stared, open-mouthed, at the singers and listened.

"It's the Star Spangled Banner!" gasped one. "What'n hell them damn fools singin' that fer?"

"They ain't runnin', are they?" demanded the first dough. "If they kin stand up there and sing, I reckin we kin lay down here and fight. Git them lousy barndooks ready."

"I'll say so!"

And four doughboys had come into their own. By twos and threes they came, only to be halted by those in the shell hole. And stopping, they listened. And listening, their manhood returned. Then the others followed in a mad rush, to be met by a solid wall of doughboys barring their way; doughboys with their faces to the front.

THE four heroic figures, heads up, shoulders back and bodies braced, still bravely sang, silhouetted against a smoky, spitting skyline of vicious flashes, for the shelling had started again.

Stopped was that stampede to the rear. Doughboys melted magically into shell holes or dashed for cover, rifles gripped and eyes toward the enemy. There was no cheering, or shouting, or theatric hysteria, just a grim determination to do or die.

Knuckle Bates, his hard, cruel face transformed, sprang from the cellar steps and rushed to the crater where, perched on the brim beside the singing quartette, he took command.

"We'll show 'em, K Company!" he shouted. "Good old K Company!"

The German shelling suddenly lifted, ranging for the American batteries farther back.

"Stick, K Company, stick!" cried Knuckle. "Here they come!"

An overhead barrage of machine gun fire split the air, chipping stones, kicking up spurts of mud and, in many instances, shattering bones and tearing through flesh.

Out of the swirling wall of smoke to the front appeared a long line of field-gray and flashing steel. The German infantry was advancing to the attack, stolidly, methodically, but surely.

From the Morgue, now nothing but a few jagged sections of shattered brick walls jutting skyward like monstrous dragon's teeth, darted three, fiery, licking tongues. The Vickers guns had gone into action. *Tac-tac-tac-tac!* they hammered and pounded away.

A husky, broad-shouldered captain climbed into full view on a section of wall and heedlessly exposed himself to the withering German fire. He faced to the rear and swung an arm aloft, rapidly circling it over his head.

"He's signaling for us to open with machine guns." Knuckle gazed hopelessly around him. "And the guns are there, a couple hundred yards, where the company deserted them." His arm stiffened erect and came half-way down with a sweeping motion, where it stopped, rigid, pointing forward. It was the signal for the company to advance. "Follow me!" Gallantly Knuckle pushed on, shouting over his shoulder. "K Company! Forward!"

Not a man moved. Advancing under that hail of steel was certain death. A few yards beyond the crater Knuckle faltered, staggered, clapped a hand to his side, swayed dizzily, then doggedly pushed on. Still the company refused to move.

Pup-pup-pup-pup! from a Maxim and Knuckle Bates spun in a circle and dropped in his tracks, his automatic flying from nerveless grip. Those near enough could see the blood gushing from his neck.

The four songsters, hugging closely together like cattle breasting a blizzard, steel-jackets cracking all about them, but eyes aglow with a strange fire, finished the last verse of the national anthem. They had seen the first sergeant fall and they still saw Flint Bagley on the wall signaling for the company to advance. They didn't understand the military significance of it all, but a sixth sense told them he wanted the men to move forward.

Crack! Jerry Sweet coughed and spat blood, then sank to his knees, despite the effort of Chick to hold him up. His chin touched his breast. More coughing and more blood, and up came his chin again.

"I'm—going—boys," he choked. "Carry—on—with—the—Big—Show."

And he died, face toward the enemy. He had done his bit; passed away like a trouper, giving his all to the greatest audience of his career.

Tears sprang into Jud's blood-shot eyes. Andy ground his teeth and his vision blurred. Chick emitted a gasping sob, tensed, and blurted out:

"On with the Big Show, for Jerry's sake!"

"On with the Big Show!" cried Jud, hoarsely. "For good old Jerry!"

"On with the Big Show!" came thickly from Andy. "For God, country, and Jerry!"

Jud swung an arm on high, imitating the still signaling captain, and stepped out, Andy and Chick abreast of him. With heads back and steady stride, they sang "Over There", not once glancing behind. Somehow or other, they knew that the company would follow them. Into the blast of death they forged, lustily singing the great war song.

Five! Ten! Twenty yards they advanced, and not a doughboy followed. But they kept bravely on.

"Company K—forward—march!" Corporal White ran from cover into the bullet-swept street and, with rifle athwart his chest, tagged behind the singing trio.

It was the spark to the powder! A line of doughboys sprang from nowhere and trailed in the corporal's wake. Then another line farther back. K Company was advancing.

Machine gun fire tore gaps in the two lines, but the men closed in, filling them, and strained forward, unflinchingly.

Reaching their former positions the lines broke and disappeared into cover, but Jud, Andy and Chick kept on. Their objective was the Morgue. Their place was beside the company commander who was still on the wall. Behind them Yankee machine guns commenced to drum, but on they kept, the words of "Over There" mingling with the din of the battle.

Chick staggered and fell, his hip broken by a ricochet. Andy and Jud did not stop. The show must go on.

"Carry on!" cried Chick, stretched full length over a heap of churned-up earth.

"On with the Big Show!" He then picked up the song and joined in with the two advancing actors.

Nearer and nearer they drew to the Morgue. Captain Bagley had disappeared from the wall. The wounding of Chick had momentarily distracted their attention, and they had not seen the officer topple backward. And now there was but one Vickers firing from the Morgue. The others had been silenced.

TO THE firing doughboys in the rear, it seemed that the two intrepid actors would gain their objective. But it was not to be. Less than thirty feet from the jagged bits of walls, Andy fell, rolled over, and tried to rise, but he couldn't make it. He cupped a hand to his mouth and shouted something to Jud, who had kept on, but the words were drowned in the hellish racket.

A few paces from the Morgue, Jud stumbled, righted himself, then floundered awkwardly and sagged to the ground. Horrified groans rose from the doughboys. But Jud wasn't killed, for he started to pull himself over the heaped-up piles of broken bricks and debris, a leg, stiff and unnatural, dragging behind him. Throaty cheers urged him on; cheers intermingling with the crack of rifles and the murderous *tac-tac-tac-tac!*

of Vickers machine guns. Into the Morgue Jud crawled. He had made it. More cheers!

Flint Bagley, blood dying his blouse crimson, was propped against a pile of empty ammo boxes, encouraging his men. His men? Three were left of the fifteen who had volunteered. The place was littered with mangled corpses and moaning wounded clustered about three disabled machine guns. The three surviviors, faces drawn and haggard and eyes hot and staring, stuck manfully to their lone gun, which was spitting steam, red hot.

"God!" Flint Bagley stared at the bloody apparition painfully crawling toward him. "You made it!"

"On—with—the—Big—Show—Captain." Poor Jud, summoning all his remaining strength, gallantly saluted with his left hand. "On—with—the—Big—" His voice died, his head sank down and his eyes closed wearily.

"Keep her pounding!" cried Flint Bagley, fiercely, to his dog-tired machine gunners. "We've got to win—for him!"

Closer and closer came the German first wave. The Vickers jammed. It was too hot. The gunners whipped out automatics and sinking to knees, fired point-blank at the field-gray forms leaping down upon them. Bayonets rose and fell, and the German wave passed on, leaving three squirming bodies behind it. But Flint Bagley went untouched. There is sportsmanship among Germans. To most of them a wounded enemy is sacred, and not to be harmed.

Into the vomiting Vickers and rifles of the doughs farther back, advanced the Germans. The village would soon be theirs, for the dozenth time. They were now almost upon the thin line of Yankee khaki. Potato mashers left their hands, bursting with blinding flashes among the ruins. Back came well-aimed Mills bombs, killing and maiming; bombs ably supported by sweeping machine guns, death-spewing automatics and rifles. God, how those Yankees could shoot!

Ach! There they were! Now for the steel! Up they climbed, bayonets drawn back to lunge down into the hated khaki.

But the bayonets did not lunge. Instead, Mausers clattered amongst the bricks and stones, their wielders pitching forward, or tumbling backwards, under a withering, well-directed fire.

The 213th Infantry had come up under the screening shell fire of the American guns and was showing its stuff. Colonel Fitch had tried to tell the commander of Company K that the regiment would support him shortly after daylight, but the wire had gone dead. Most likely cut by an exploding shell, had surmised the colonel.

It was a fierce fight while it lasted, but it is now history that no German infantry, no matter how brave and determined, ever withstood the expert marksmanship of American doughs firing from cover.

The first wave went under, but on came the second, only to break in face of the merciless fire to retire pell-mell, throwing the third into confusion. By noon, the hamlet was held by the Americans, undisputed. The front had been advanced more than a mile.

An ambulance chugged impatiently to merge with the long stream of its kind going south. Finally it rolled out, amid rousing cheers and shouted "good lucks" from a group of grimy, battered doughs, all that were left of K Company.

"Jud," said Andy, speaking from an upper litter in the ambulance, "do you suppose poor Jerry can hear?"

"Jerry is with us," answered Jud, solemnly. "Always will Jerry be with us."

"Then on with the show," came from Chick, in the litter opposite Jud. "We'll sing his favorite song."

As the ambulance skidded and lurched through the heavy going, three voices of extraordinary quality and sweetness sang, "He's My Pal".

"Cripes, what a quartette them doughs would make," observed the driver to a medical corps man on the seat with him. "If they only had a tenor, I bet they could go on the stage."

THE ONE - MAN

Between two fires stood Tommy Neibaur, one man against the German army. There was no wavering now. His range-steeled nerves were taut, his aim steady. First he must blast out the machine gun, then the charging Boche.

THAT Alabama gang comprising the 167th Infantry of the Rainbow Division (Forty-second) was tough! Individually they were fighting fools, collectively they made a tornado!

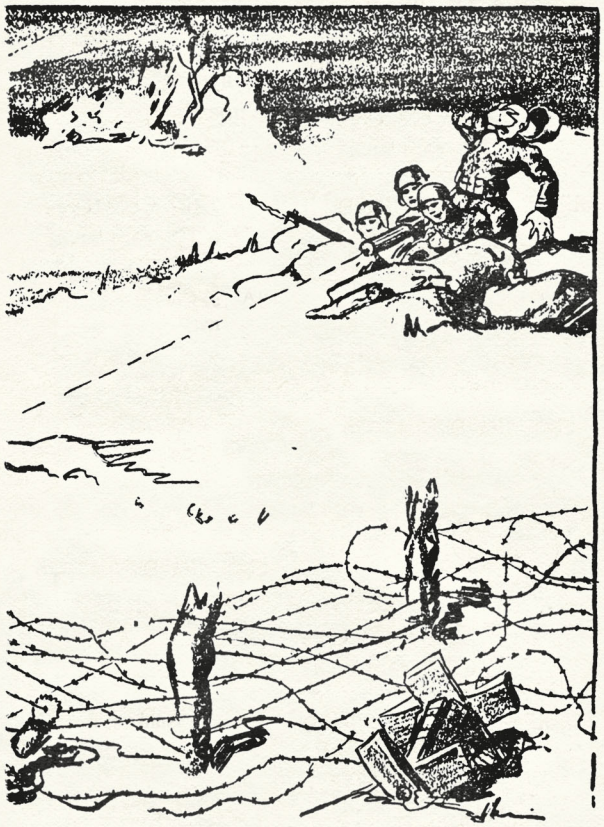
Wallowing in the cold, slimy mud of the Lorraine sector wasn't softening that outfit either. In the raging flames of war they were being forged into a piercing steel blade of the division.

A stray among these soft-spoken hard boys of the south was Thomas C. Neibaur, native son of Idaho, from near the Jackson Hole country, where men are men and weaklings are buried. He had been transferred from his state national guard outfit to the Forty-fifth and then to the fighting Alabama regiment with which he was being given a Boche welcome to the front.

Neibaur was a clean cut young westerner, well able to take care of himself among the southerners. Young? He had three years to wait before he could go to the polls and vote. But as for that, there were scarcely enough voters in the outfit to swing a small town ward election. The 167th was simply an outfit of boys

Another Great True Story of

ARMY from IDAHO



Out of the Jackson Hole country—where men are men and weaklings are buried — came Tommy Neibaur to trade his six-guns for a Chauchat and teach the Germans that men of our West are two-legged grizzly bears, hungry and craving fast action.

by

MALCOLM DOUGLAS

who hated the cooties, hated the mud of Lorraine, despised the rain, cursed the mess sergeant, and, most of all, hated inaction; a regiment of healthy, courageous boys, well trained, spoiling for battle. And they were to get it!

Pulled out of the mud of Lorraine, the 167th was incorporated in General Gouraud's French army for the Champagne defensive where a third terrible German attack was certain to come in mid-July of 1918. Twice the Boche hordes had attacked there, virtually destroying the British army and bending the Chateau Thierry salient back to within some fifty miles of Paris.

It was in the second line that Tommy Neibaur was to have his first bitter taste of war.

Prepared, ready for the great hour, Neibaur crouched with his two loaders in a dugout. Meticulously he oiled his Chauchat, one of the two automatic rifles in his platoon. He glanced at his loaders. There were no smiles on their faces—young faces, quickly aging.

"Ready for the racket?" he inquired, forcing a grin to break his drawn cheeks.

"Yeh," his right loader muttered, "but I wish I knew what it was all about." He was in the quandary that gripped most enlisted men in the trenches.

Neibaur knew something of what it was all about. "Nothing complicated," he ex-

One of Pershing's 100 Heroes

plained tersely. "There's a sacrifice line up ahead. The Boche'll come over headed for Paris. They'll get hell from our artillery. That first line of ours'll wilt. Some of the boys may get back. Heinie'll come on and when he gets out front it's up to us to let him have it."

"Just like that!" grunted the loader.

"Just like that," Neibaur agreed.

IT WAS evening. The front was comparatively quiet. Big guns were silent. Only the steady sloshing of men filing into Gouraud's second line, the bringing up of ammunition, disturbed the peace. Up in front the sacrifice infantrymen and machine gunners were tense at their posts, waiting and knowing they hadn't a chance, that they were only a pitifully weak stumbling block for the Boche. In Tommy Neibaur's trenches some of the men dozed, snatching a few moments repose before action.

Then midnight of July 14. Hell broke loose.

Almost simultaneously the artillery of the Boche and that of the Allies opened up with a thundering, deafening, maddening roar. The Boche were coming over. Gouraud's artillery was set to rake the broad expanse over which the enemy must pass to reach that first sacrifice line. Hub to hub the Allied guns belched death and destruction. The first Boche wave melted into nothing. The second wave came, and some made it through. The German horde pressed ahead, many falling, many advancing to that sacrifice trench.

One hour passed. Still the enemy did not come through. Still the uproar of the artillery duel persisted, unabated. The din was terrific. The losses terrible. The world had gone mad with war. Another hour passed. But still the Boche were held by artillery and a thin line.

Neibaur gripped his Chauchat until his knuckles were white, his fingers weary of the strain. Then his clutch relaxed, but not his vigilance. His loaders crouched beside him. There was little talk; that only in monosyllables.

Weird lights pierced the graying sky. Ghostly Very lights, the flash of exploding shells. Varicolored signal lights directing Boche and Allied artillery units. Slowly dawn streaked the sky. Up ahead Tommy Neibaur saw a slight movement. He watched closely. Were the Boche coming? No. He made out the silhouette of a trench helmet. It wasn't a coal scuttle. A few survivors of that sacrifice line were straggling back to the main defenses.

In the clearing light Tommy saw a Yank staggering toward him; a doughboy with one arm hanging limply at his side, scarlet draining from his finger tips, his face painted crimson from a head wound. Staggering, crawling, the Yank reached the Chauchat emplacement and was dragged to cover.

He lay panting for a moment. Then: "They's a billion Boches comin'. Nothin' can stop them Krauts. They wiped out me buddies. I couldn't do nothin' more so I beats it back here. Gotta cigaret?"

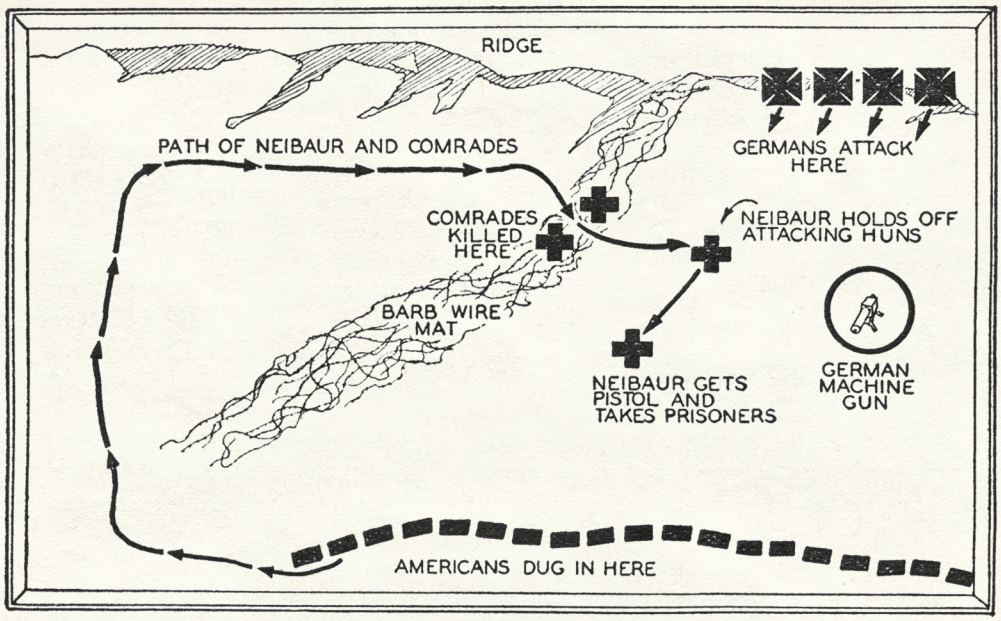
One of the loaders held a lighted tailormade to the wounded man's lips. The lad inhaled a deep wheezing drag, gave a racking cough that stained the cigaret red, and passed out.

"Stretcher bearer!" rose the cry. "Stretcher bearer!" And in a minute the lad from the sacrifice line was being lugged to the rear.

Tommy Neibaur adjusted his twelve-pound automatic. He shoved down the rod that supported the barrel, as a cameraman might adjust one leg of his tripod.

An officer passed along, rallying his men. "Ready with that Chauchat, men?" he asked, and Tommy Neibaur nodded. He was ready. "They'll be coming soon," said the officer. "Mow 'em down. Stay with your gun to the last clip."

Tommy nodded again. Dawn had passed. Day had come. A haze hung over the scene of warfare. The drumming of the artillery continued unabated, unnoticed now that eardrums were accustomed to the roar. Then up ahead Tommy sighted three Boche who ran from cover and threw themselves flat. He waited. He couldn't be sure of them at that particular moment. Others came. The Boche



Above is the map which shows Neibaur's plan of attack, the execution of which earned him the title, "The One-Man Army From Idaho". Deploying far to the left, Neibaur and two comrades approached the machine gun that was holding up the Yank advance. Leaving his two comrades dead on the wire from machine gun bullets, Neibaur continued alone and received the full force of a German surprise attack. The rest of the story is told dramatically in Malcolm Douglas' story.

first wave was charging the Rainbow Division in Gouraud's line.

Charging bayonetmen are supposed to keep separated a few paces but in the heat of battle there is a human tendency for men to close in, huddle together. The first charging Boche bunched up and with a hissing sigh, Tommy Neibaur expelled the air from his lungs and tensed his trigger finger. The Boche wilted and went down. One shrieked and in falling threw his saw-tooth bayonetted rifle into the air.

Another clip and Tommy was spraying more of the enemy. His comrades down the line were opening up but still the Boche came on.

White-lipped, grim, Neibaur and his loaders worked that Chauchat. They were boys making a valiant stand against the best trained forces in the world, stopping those forces with whistling lead from an automatic rifle.

Neibaur's trigger hand became cramped. He flexed the muscles and resumed fire. The barrel of his gun grew hot as clip after clip of cartridges was fed to the weapon. The gray-clad figures dotted the far edge of the clearing. Then there came a pause. For the moment the attack was halted.

A welcome cigaret during that lull in the battle. Then the Boche, whipped into fury by their officers, advanced again.

Firing as fast as his loaders could feed the clips into the gun Tommy Neibaur stood his ground. Company after company of the Germans charged. The first sweeping fire of the gun would thin them out. Then others came on to dwindle and drop.

Furious was the charge of the enemy. Terrible was the sacrifice ordered by the German officers, frantic at being blocked. Terrible was the fire from the Rainbow Division, nobly meeting the test. Attack followed attack. But always the Boche were mowed down. Neibaur's hands became numb but not so numb they couldn't feel the scorching barrel. Clip after clip of ammo, steady crackling of fire, Germans falling, and slowly the barrel of that Chauchat changed color, turning brown,

and finally red—red-hot, scorching Neibaur's hands. And gradually the ferocity of the attacks lessened, fewer men faced the Rainbow Division fire, until the German army had shot its last bolt. The advance on Paris was halted.

AFTER his battle baptism Tommy Neibaur experienced steady front line service that was building the nervy youth who was to become one of the war's greatest heroes, one of Pershing's selection of one hundred typical heroes of the American Expeditionary Forces. Neibaur was at his Chauchat in the terrible battle of Ourcq where the famous Irish infantry, the 165th, was decimated. He was pouring lead into the Boche at Ourcq when Corporal Sidney E. Manning of Flomaton, Alabama, one of his comrades in the 167th, won his Medal of Honor and a place as one of Pershing's Hundred. Private Tommy Neibaur was with his outfit in reserve at St. Mihiel and was ripe for the famous battle of the Argonne where he rose to a high peak of courage and made his name immortal among those of warring men.

At dawn on September 26 of 1918 the Americans had launched their greatest battle of all time, a battle which was to include a million Yanks and continue until the Armistice. It was the battle of the Argonne, the famous assault on the Hindenburg Line, the noted and formidable *Kreimhilde Stellung.*

The Forty-second was rushed into the sector facing the *Kreimhilde Stellung* on the night of October 11, to relieve the First. If the Alabama boys had been tough in training areas they were tougher than tough now. They were seasoned front-line fighters, a hard outfit to stop, an outfit that couldn't be taken. And Tommy Neibaur, the one man army from Idaho, was among them.

Boche generals believed that the *Kreimhilde Stellung* was impregnable. Three separate lines of defense, trenches, barbed wire in an intricate entanglement, sometimes waist-high, sometimes high as a bungalow, a terrible bramble bush of death.

Behind these entrenchments were carefully located machine guns bearing on openings through the wire, machine guns with line of fire criss-crossed, and machine guns placed to protect the other guns. It was this dreadful defensive line that had wrecked the Thirty-fifth and the fighting First. It was this field of death that the Rainbow Division faced, not with a plea, not with a command, but simply to go through, no matter what the cost.

Tommy Neibaur and his Alabama comrades were assigned to a position more than a mile from the first of the three formidable lines of defense, beyond which lay a brush and tree covered hill known as the Cote de Chatillon. This cote overlooked the field between the Boche and the hard boys from Alabama, and from it machine guns could enfilade troops to the right and to the left.

It was imperative that the Cote de Chatillon be wrested from the confidently entrenched enemy, that slaughter might be checked. The Alabama boys sharpened their already keen trench knives, polished bayonets, filled their pockets with grenades, and Tommy fondled his deadly Chauchat. They were ready for the supreme test which came in the gray mist of the morning of October 14.

At the order to advance Tommy and his comrades forged ahead in the mud, slipping and crawling ever forward, drenched by a cold drizzle. Ahead of them was the terrible barbed wire and the hundreds of machine guns. All morning they forged ahead. Then all afternoon, with bellies empty. Grim. Determined. Ready for death.

There was a sodden night of misery in slimy shell holes, water filled trenches. There was no escaping the mud and the rain and the cold. Food from cans. Hard rations. Gold fish. Monkey meat. Hard biscuit. Rotten food and a general had said that an army fights on its stomach! The Alabama gang was to fight not on its stomach but on its guts!

There came a second day of that plodding advance. No chance here for fictional mad dashes against the enemy. Simply hour after hour of slogging ahead through the mud under fire, unable to do much in the way of retaliation.

There was no safety in the open. The machine guns raked the Alabama gang. There was no safety in shell holes. High explosives blew them out. But on they went, drawing ever closer to the Cote de Chatillon which might better have been called the Knoll of Slaughter.

Two solid days and two fearful nights of this. Still it rained water and hailed lead. Still the gas shells added their death and misery. Still the Cote de Chatillon was in the hands of the enemy. Still the Alabama hard boys tested their trench knives. Still Tommy Neibaur cradled his Chauchat in his arms, protecting its mechanism from the water.

At dawn of the third day the surviving officers crawled about, merging the shattered remnants of companies to give them working strength. The first wire and trenches were ahead. And on that morning Tommy Neibaur from Idaho and his comrades from Alabama made the Germans delivery partial payment.

With guttural cries and savage growls the Alabama boys staggered up that machine gun hill. By dint of terrible sacrifice of life and terrific fighting they gained the top of the wooded knoll driving forward to wipe out the Boche, stop the deadly enfilading of their comrade forces to right and left. The Alabama boys had gone through, taken the Cote de Chatillon. But once more they had to accomplish what seemed impossible if they were to deliver the goods. They must withstand the counter attack that was certain to come.

WEARY, hungry, miserably decimated, the tattered remnants of the Alabama outfit hugged the earth. Venomous machine guns kept them on their bellies eating mud. Tommy Neibaur wallowed in a muddy hole but had his Chauchat ahead of him, aimed at the ridge over which the reinforced Boche would come in the counter attack. Suddenly above the whistling of lead, the sharp crackling of rifles, he heard a cry and turned his head like a turtle, raising it only ever so slightly.

Dashing toward him, Tommy Neibaur saw a lieutenant. The officer was crying out, daring death with every dive from hole to hole.

"Where in hell is a Chauchat?" the officer bellowed. "We need an automatic rifle. We gotta wipe out that machine gun that's got us enfiladed."

"Yeah, bo," cried Tommy, "this way, Lieutenant."

The lieutenant made the dash and burrowed down beside the private.

"What you makin' all the noise for?" inquired the private. "I've got my Chauchat, but I can't do anything with it right now."

"You sure can," the lieutenant disputed him. "I'm looking for a Chauchat man with a loader and a scout to go after that blasted Maxim. The Boche will chop us up for mulligan if we don't silence that gun."

The lieutenant twisted his steel covered head and looked squarely at the private. "There's death up ahead—death here too for that matter, Tommy. I can't order any man into anything like that." The officer paused. "I'm looking for volunteers."

"Okay, Lieutenant," said Neibaur quietly, "I'm on my way. Where's the loader and the scout?"

In a moment a husky Italian lad whom the Alabamans called Bosco crawled over followed by an abbreviated edition of a stalwart.

"I'll do the loadin' stunt," said the Italian doughboy. "The runt here'll do the scoutin'. Let's go."

And away the three went, crawling with infinite pains to the left *away* from the Maxim. Tommy Neibaur lugged his gun and the big fellow and the little fellow carted the ammunition clips, enough to wipe out a regiment.

Crawling to the left with the utmost caution, the Chauchat crew slithered down into a hollow. Carefully Private Neibaur scanned the terrain ahead, then ahead he dashed. The huge Italian lumbered in his wake, followed by the little chap. Straight for the ridge they went.

Taking advantage of every bit of shelter offered by brush, tree or boulder, they crept out a hundred yards ahead of their comrades. Following the ridge, just below the skyline, the three volunteers began cutting over to the right.

From over the ridge came the guttural orders of German noncoms, mustering their squads for the charge over the crest. Between the volunteers and their comrades was the carefully hidden machine gun, still farther over to the right. Yard by yard the Yankee rifle team made its way ever closer to the vicious Maxim.

Within stones' throw of the enemy and their own comrades the valiant three suddenly dashed from cover in their relentless stalking of that deadly machine gun. Together, as one man, they dove headlong into a bit of protective brush on the other side of the small clearing, and out of sight of their comrades.

Panting from the exertion and stretched flat on the ground the three surveyed the terrain ahead. A long stretch of barbed wire entanglement and an abandoned fortification were all they could see. There was no enemy in sight. That entanglement would have to be crossed. If the Yanks were discovered while crossing they would go down under a withering blast of steel-jacketed slugs.

Closer and closer to the entanglement crept the three men. The low wire was too broadly spread to be leaped. It would be impossible to race across without tripping and becoming entangled; still, that machine gun was barking and the Yanks had to cross.

"Nothing for it, boys," Private Neibaur muttered. "We've got to get over that wire. If we take it fast we go down and we're outta luck. Take it slow and we may make it without being seen."

"About as much chance as the toes of a celluloid monkey in hell," opined the big Italian, "but I'm game for a try; let's go!"

"You've said it, Bosco," agreed the little fellow, drawing his knees up under him.

"And here we go," Neibaur barked. "Come on."

RISING to their feet the three started forward, moving as rapidly as they could and keep their balance. Step by step. Up went hobnailed brogans. Down they came on the wire. Step by step they waded across the wire, tramping it down as they went, avoiding the grasping tendrils that reached out to entangle their uniforms.

For suspenseful moments it seemed that they would make it without being detected. But the Boche had planted their guns too skillfully. The three brave lads from the Alabama outfit had nearly reached the opposite edge of the patch of wire when they were stopped in their tracks.

Bra-tat-ta-tat-ta-tat. Like a riveter an enemy machine gun rattled. Burst followed burst from a gun set to protect the stalked Maxim. The Yanks wilted, sprawled in the wire. The little private was riddled with lead. Dead. Bosco was a little ahead, drawing gasping breaths. The big Italian had stopped enough slugs to halt a squad. He was unconscious, dying. Tommy Neibaur was down. Three slugs had torn their way through his right thigh. His khaki breeches began to change color. An exploring hand found them sopping wet. His mind ordered his right toes to wiggle. They stirred in his heavy boots. Cautiously he tried to bend his knee and it bent.

Discovered by the enemy! The counter attack due at any moment, Private Neibaur was in a most perilous position. He was alone and in enemy territory directly in the line of the anticipated attack. His buddies were done for if he didn't do his job.

Even as he lay wounded in the enemy barbed wire Tommy Neibaur was able to sight the goal which they had sought to reach. The enfilading gun was not far be-

low him, down the slope, hidden from his comrades but not far from him.

Crawling to Bosco, Neibaur saw that he was done for; he relieved him of his ammo clips and tore his way through the wire, holding low, dreading another burst from that stuttering gun that had wounded him and taken his two comrades to a hero's end.

Dragging his gun and his wounded leg he crawled to a bit of cover from which he could fire into that deadly nest from which a gun swept his company. Working with feverish haste he set up his Chauchat, swung it down, aiming at the crouching Boche. He was inserting a clip of twenty shots when he heard cries at the ridge a few yards above him.

"Hoch!" came the cry. "Hoch!" And over the ridge dashed field-gray uniformed figures topped by coal scuttle helmets.

The counter attack had come. It had trapped Private Neibaur. The first wave of the Boche charged at him with leveled bayonets, lead belching from the muzzles. And it was now that Neibaur became that one-man army from Idaho.

Fifty enemy bayonets were lowered as the Boche ran toward the lone Yank a hundred yards in front of his comrades. Rifles cracked as the enemy fired at the solitary olive drab clad figure. The slugs nicked his clothing, sent little bits of dirt flying up at his feet. And staunchly Tommy Neibaur stood his ground. Coolly the one-man army from Idaho swung his Chauchat about to bear on the charging enemy. The clip of twenty cartridges was inserted. His trigger finger clenched and sent a stream of lead at the field-gray figures racing down the slope.

One clip exhausted, Tommy Neibaur saw several figures sprawled in the mud, some groaning, some shrieking so that their cries carried above the sound of rifle fire and hoarse cries of enraged Boche who still came on. Another clip and more of the enemy fell, mowed down. Private Neibaur couldn't move his gun to advantage. He stood his ground and slipped another clip into the weapon. The survivors of that first fifty kept coming on, intent on avenging their fallen comrades.

Down the slope Private Neibaur's comrades were going into action. They were firing at the enemy but with indifferent success. It was Neibaur's Chauchat that was slowing up the first mad rush of the enemy. Scores of bayonet tips showed above the ridge; more Boche were coming.

Frenziedly Private Neibaur fired his deadly Chauchat. The Boche faltered and more went down. There were others though to carry on. Their rifles belched lead but they seemed unnerved by the deadly fire of the solitary Yank, sturdily crouched there and blazing away at them. Three Boche slowed up, halted, raised rifles for more careful aim. Neibaur swung the muzzle of his Chauchat to cover them, pressed the trigger, involuntarily cried out when there was no answering quiver from the gun. It had jammed! And the Boche were only a few yards away. He hadn't a chance! Frantically Tommy Neibaur fought with his gun. He slapped it, beat it with his fists, tried to work the mechanism, with death at stake, trying to clear it of the jam. His efforts were futile. He was sure to die. The Boche could not in a few flashing seconds forget that this man had sent many of their comrades to death.

Realizing the futility of staying with his useless gun, Private Thomas Neibaur threw it on the ground and started running toward his comrades, crouching, leaping from cover to cover, while scores of the enemy fired at him, seeking desperately the life of the Yank who had mowed down their comrades.

As he leaped from one depression in an endeavor to reach a bit of brush, Neibaur was caught by an enemy bullet, a bullet that thudded home in his right hip, the limb that had been shot through three times only a few minutes earlier. The leaden slug dug home to the joint, pressed nerves of the spine, and rendered the one-man army unconscious.

OUT of the picture, Private Neibaur lay there half way between his bud-

dies and the enemy. On the Germans came. One stooped down and snatched Neibaur's automatic pistol from its holster, looked at it with the eyes of the souvenir hunter, tossed it away when he didn't want to be hampered with a strange weapon.

Sluggishly Private Neibaur stirred some time later—a few minutes after the shot knocked him down and out. He opened his eyes slightly, dimly made out the figures of many Boche on all sides of him, figures dashing down the slope toward his buddies. Again Neibaur tested that right leg to determine whether it still functioned. It did.

Slowly pulling himself up Neibaur crawled on his one good knee and two good hands, toward that Colt automatic pistol.

Just as Tommy Neibaur reached his automatic, eight big Boche infantrymen ran out of the brush, straight toward him with leveled bayonets. Neibaur had held back fifty and more with his Chauchat but how could the wounded private hope to outmatch eight sound Boche with eight rifles and eight bayonets? He held an automatic in which there were but five shells. Five bullets and eight of the enemy in front of him.

Rapid fire thinking that threw back to tales of prowess of gunmen in the Jackson Hole country back in Idaho came to Tommy Neibaur's rescue. He fired once, and a Boche went down. Twice and another German sank to his knees, dead. Thrice and a third Boche went west. The fourth shot killed a fourth German. One slug left with which to hold back four! Would it serve?

Remarkably accurate with his pistol, Neibaur was certain that he could bring down a fifth German. But it was at this point that his wits saved him. If he fired that last shot he would have an empty pistol and there would still be three bayonets thirsting for his blood. He held the last shot, grimly facing the surviving quartet of Boche.

Having witnessed the deadly marksmanship of the Yank the other four hesitated, dug their heels into the mud and slowed to a halt.

Crouching there, one leg badly wounded, partially paralyzed for a few moments, Private Neibaur held his automatic on the four Boche. Terrorized, fearing that their surrender wouldn't save their lives the Germans tossed their helmets to the earth and stood dejectedly at the mercy of the Yank.

With every moment Neibaur's strength was returning. Despite that fourth bullet that had lodged in his hip he found that he could use that numbed and bullet-riddled leg. Shouting and waving his automatic with its one remaining bullet, Neibaur herded his prisoners toward his own lines. On the way back he scared up seven more Boche, all heavily armed but thoroughly awed by this wild looking Yank who already had four of their comrades in his power.

Slowly, painstakingly, still under fire and still in full view of his fighting Alabama comrades, Tommy Neibaur forced his eleven prisoners to lead the way into a shell hole behind his own lines. There he held them while the tough Alabama gang fought back that counter attack; the counter attack which Neibaur's Medal of Honor citation credited with having been halted mainly by his solitary and valiant stand with a Chauchat that jammed and an automatic pistol that held only one cartridge.

Four months later, the war over, Private Thomas Neibaur, the one-man army from Idaho, was able to reach the door of his hospital and stand erect while General Black Jack Pershing pinned the Congressional Medal of Honor to his breast. And to Tommy Neibaur France presented the Legion of Honor decoration and the Croix de Guerre with palm, Italy the Merito di Guerra, and Montenegro the War Cross.

And when General Pershing made his selection of One Hundred typical heroes of the World war, Private Neibaur was one of the most distinguished of the heroes in that immortal group.

"Trapped!" rasped Mike between teeth clenched in pain from his imprisoned leg. "All right, Fritzie. You win, but make it a clean job."

The Boche Buster

The champion trouble-spotter of his regiment, Corporal Mike volunteered to silence the mystery gun but ran up against the most amazing adventure of his battle career.

by

CAPT. HARRY HOWARD BAIRD

OUT there in No-man's land between rusty bands of barbed wire lay Altkirch, a dead Alsatian village on the crest of a gentle hill. War's first deadly barrage had crushed it almost flat—as one would bash down a toy paper village with a heavy fist. Here and there a stark wall stood out like a battered monument over which shells of both sides wailed a dirge of hate.

By some miracle the church tower alone had defied these withering blasts of steel. It remained almost intact, a protest to the profanity of Mars. The French had not bothered it wondering, no doubt, how long it would balance upright.

Nobody—least of all the French—seemed to have guessed that the mysterious Boche machine gun which raked their trenches on certain dark nights was hidden away among these weathered timbers, until the first raw—and curious— Americans took over the sector and the French went to the rear.

"I'm steppin' out right after we go on shift tonight," said Mike at an advance

machine gun post. "Wish me luck, ol' kid."

"Mickey, I'm goin' with you...."

"Nothing doing." Mike was firm. "I'm counting on you, Lefty, to give me help in another way. Here, help me lay this gun on that aimin' stake and then we're goin' in."

Mike's indeed would be a hazardous mission. The village had formerly been French and the French cannoneers balked at further destruction of what they still considered their property. It had been Captain Howard, Mike's C. O., who felt the full weight of responsibility for that mysterious gun. This same responsibility had slithered from his shoulders to Mike's broad ones when the impulsive Irisher volunteered to investigate the tower.

MIKE and Lefty went on shift again at midnight. The gun in the tower had apparently spotted their position during daylight. As they groped their way up through the dank air of their dugout a savage burst of lead tore into the parapet nearby. They emerged into a stifling night air still heavy and choking with clay dust.

Clouds had obscured a bright moon, and Mike lost no time getting under way.

"If I'm not back in two hours," he admonished Lefty in a hushed voice, "fire a couple of five shot bursts and repeat in minute, will yuh, kid? I know the bark an' rattle of this old gat anywhere. It may help me get my bearings." Rifle in hand Mike snaked over the parapet.

The first band of wire ran parallel to his own trenches and hindered him little. But it was dark. Almost black, and the creeping mystery of this land of unknown sights and sounds made going slow. He hit the second band of wire at an angle. It took him a half hour to worm his way through this labyrinth of criss-cross entanglements.

Once free he felt relieved and stretched upright. After making out the barely-discernible outline of the tower three hundred yards away against the horizon, he abandoned caution and struck boldly toward it.

Anticipating Boche prowlers over this very area some time before the French had strung tangles of knee-high wire through the tall grass patches. To these they attached tin cans with a stone or two inside each. In this trap the cocksure Mike barged full speed ahead. A devilish screech of wire accompanied the first surge of his sturdy legs. Tin cans rattled an unholy tattoo like a drum roll calling to arms.

Instantly the dozing sector awoke and flamed into activity. On the German side a single rocket spewed orange sparks into a rising arc which peaked with a brilliant burst. Its white flare rocket floated in the dead air, then drifted slowly down toward Mike.

He plowed headlong down among low wires, and crushed his face against the ground till his steel helmet lay over one ear. He wondered why the gun in the tower did not shoot. He knew he was plainly visible for he could roll his eyes and look directly at the belfry windows. But the tower was silent, ominous, and ghostly gray as it loomed among the weaving shadows of roofless and battered walls. He finally decided that the Boche gunner did not wish to disclose his position in the bright light. Reassured with this thought he edged over into a mossy shell hole and lay still while the flare burned itself out. Then, rising cautiously, he began to feel his way toward the ruins.

Scarcely had he moved when the earth trembled. The rear horizon back of his own lines was lit up with irregular flashes like heat lightning. From a silent expanse of black it became a cracking, booming inferno. Then an American barrage dropped, sharp and unexpected as a sudden thunder storm on a hot, quiet night.

The Americans, just arrived, were taking no chances on a Boche raid. The tin cans had done their work well.

Frantically Mike turned back and raced for his own lines. Dirt stung his face and showered down on his shoulders. He dodged and turned; then, throwing a hand up before his face as if to ward off howl-

ing shell fragments, he tried to peer through the churning blackness and orient himself.

It was useless. He was trapped—and lost.

A crimson flare shot up. Through the dusty haze and smoke he caught sight of the tower. It was his only landmark. He dared not stand still, so toward it he plunged—dodging geysers of loam—tripping over snag wires—diving headfirst into shell craters—to rise and struggle onward toward the church tower, now as ever a symbol of shelter for oppressed mankind.

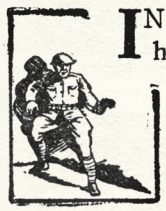
Finally he fell at its base, badly spent and still under shell fire, but with the comforting feel of solid stone between himself and that awful rain of steel.

Other sounds became plainer now as the barrage died away. A desultory crackle of rifle shots came from both lines. A horn wailed a gas alarm somewhere way off down the front.

But above these new sounds he became aware of another, a rythmatic *clish—click—clish—*

He gripped his rifle, leaped to his feet, and stood poised with one foot on the battered church steps, listening intently. Then he knew.

The noise came down from the hollow silence of the belfry. It was the rasping of hobnails on stone.



INSTANTLY Mike flattened himself against the wall, thought better of it, and darted through the arched doorway into the gloom far enough so that his enemy would loom against the sky on his way from the stairs to the door.

Closer and closer came the steps through a blackness that could be felt. When almost upon him they seemed to come from his left. But sounds and echoes were deceiving in the vault-like entrance.

Mike whirled and crouched low. At his first move his foot struck some tin object sitting on the bottom stair step. It fell with a resounding bang.

"Wer ist da? Wer sind sie?

The voice was startled, and guttural.

"Move and I'll shoot!" challenged Mike.

"Amerikaner!" gasped the voice in German. *"A-mer-i-kan-er!"* The Boche repeated it as if he could not believe his ears.

Mike raised the point of his bayonet, crouched an instant, and pulled the trigger.

Simultaneously with his rifle's roar a terrific blow crashed down on his helmet. The latter's tough, padded steel was all that saved his head from being crushed like an egg shell.

Mike's bull-like neck was tough. The blow would have crushed the vertebra of an ordinary man. With all his fast returning energy he reeled to his feet, hurtled at the retreating form, and slapped a forearm under the Boche's chin. With a knee at his back Mike snapped the man's head and shoulders sharply backward. The rifle carried by the German fell to the flagstones.

The combatants hit the floor gouging and slugging desperately. The German was active and strong. In less than a minute the American was thrown on his back.

He reached for the other's throat just as a hairy wrist crushed against his face. With a smothered curse Mike clamped his teeth into the sinewy flesh.

"Ach! Ach!"

The German gasped with pain, jerked his arm free and smashed a fist savagely into the American's face. Mike's hand jabbed up against the other's throat, his fingers touching the loose tunic collar. Quick as a flash the fingers slid between neck and cloth. Then, with a lightning twist of his fist, Mike clamped a throttle hold with his thumb against his enemy's windpipe, and straight-armed him off.

Above the choking rasp of his enemy's garroted breathing and the occasional *Whammm!* of a shell came two short flashes of machine gun fire. Lefty! His two hours were up. But before the signal was repeated the wrenching bark of a one-pounder tore across the front and an instant later its shell slapped against the

tower. Fragments yowled off into space with a murderous *POWWWWW!*

The tremors of the explosion were transmitted to the two on the floor. With a startled gurgle the German redoubled his efforts. His coarse boots thudded and scraped violently on the stones as he strove to break the American's death grip.

"Nev-er—mind—kid!" gritted Mike. "Yuh—gotta—take it!"

But he glanced apprehensively upward into the throbbing blackness as if to determine the effect of the new bombardment.

Somewhere back in the rear areas a lone howitzer bellowed its final challenge. Its booming tones of vengeance echoed back and forth between silent forests on both sides of a now-quieting front.

The shell whispered and sighed from cloud to cloud in its ever rising arc, seemed to pause an instant in mid-flight, and then, descending with a menacing, ever-rising snarl.

Both combatants on the tower floor instinctively sensed its import. A hollow crash echoed through the tower as the shell bit away a twenty foot section of corner masonry. The tower shuddered, cracked from top to bottom. Then it began to disintegrate with a grinding rumble.

The two battlers leaped to their feet, terrified, and shot through the doorway out where a torrent of brick and tile showered on the cobblestones. But their dash for safety came too late. They were swallowed up as completely as Samson in the falling temple of old.

THE smouldering spark which animates a human being is, after all, hard to extinguish. But it was ten minutes before the sturdy will of Corporal Mike Harrigan brought him back to a full realization of his position.

One leg felt dead and useless. Only his head and shoulders protruded from the bottom edge of a rubbish heap of lath, plaster, and masonry. It took some minutes of work and struggle to roll and toss aside mortar-encrusted stones to where a jagged, two hundred pound section of masonry gripped him like a vise. It ground his foot against the paving. He struggled fearfully; even placed his good foot against the trap and pulled. But the pain threw him writhing, his fingers—talon-like—grasping thin air. He ran them despairingly through matted hair, dashed cold perspiration from his face, and lay back breathing heavily.

A raid, another barrage—anything. Death itself he would have welcomed to replace his hopeless fix. Finally he thought of his former antagonist. Craning his neck he looked about.

"Heinie?" he called. Taking heart at sound of his own voice he called again.

"Heinie! Hey, Dutch. How'd you make out?"

No answer.

The street was choked with piles of litter, bricks, plaster, timber. He knew his late enemy could not have escaped that fearful rain of death, and was not far off. Valiantly he fought down a rising feeling of complete disaster, and a strong urge to scream out against his helplessness.

Lefty would be waiting back there, still at his gun, and staring anxiously out into a land of mysterious sounds—waiting for a buddy who would never come.

The front, with that deathly silence which follows a short thunder storm, had dropped back into after-midnight lethargy.

And outside this village ruins on all that vast front where millions struggled not a soul knew that two puny beings called men had tried to murder each other on the doorstep of a church tower, a tower which—defying war's ravages for four long years—had struggled against chaos to point heavenward, a symbol of undying hope. Puny man had scoffed at that symbol; and the tower, falling by man's own hand, had taken vengeance. Retribution satisfied, it rested—content.

A sudden cough, the clink of plaster, and snap of a breaking lath brought Mike, startled up on an elbow.

Fifty feet away small avalanches of litter sliding down a rubbish heap told the story of a companion in misery, apparently recovering.

"Ach! Dies ist furchterlich. Ich bin bald todt!"

The sound of a strange voice restored some of Mike's courage.

"Hullo, kid," he called. "How you feelin'?"

"Amerikaner?" The German ceased his struggles for a moment. Then, haltingly, *"Wie sind sie?"*

"Same to you," returned Mike, not understanding a word.

THE German recommenced his efforts, and Mike's hopes rose. If the Boche had only been stunned and was not badly injured it meant help. But would it? From an enemy? A bitter enemy who, a short time before he had attempted to blow into eternity?

A full realization of the affair as it stood, its possibilities, and the menace of a sworn enemy restored to full power of revenge, caused Mike to force himself to a sitting position despite the pain.

A steady sound of sawing and hacking came from the rubbish heap. It drove a cold chill down Mike's back, his nerves tingled for an instant, and his eyes dilated wide. He knew the meaning of those sounds.

His own rifle lay buried; somewhere beyond recovery. But his enemy still had a bayonet. And he was cutting his way out with it! When he was free....

It was after three o'clock when the German's tall figure slid down the junk heap. He passed the bayonet into his left hand and brushed lustily at sleeve and tunic, as though he would present the best possible appearance for the job now ahead of him.

He towered over the prostrate American, regarding him in stony silence. The dull glint of cold steel protruded from his right fist as he stood like a Chinese executioner taking a moment's respite from the strenuous task of dispatching trussed up victims.

From his attitude Mike knew it was Taps for himself. The corporal dropped back on an elbow and looking up at his enemy with a steady gaze, flapped his free hand in a gesture of resignation.

"Whaddyuh say, Dutch? It's your fight, kid, I guess."

The German did not answer.

Morning and daylight were not far off. The German glanced hastily back toward his own lines. As he looked he uttered a cry, half surprise, almost awe.

Mike turned pain-racked eyes to search vainly for the cause of the other's rapt attention. In the bright moonlight a starry sky showed through roofless ruins. The spectacle of stark and ghostly walls, and of splintered tree skeletons reaching heavenward as though in supplication, and protest against the desolate scene of judgment below, had the effect of driving Mike's last ray of hope from his heart.

"Das Kreutz!" repeated the German, pointing back into the ruins. *"Das Kreutz!"*

Inside a crumbling half section of cloister a moonbeam, like the ray of a flashlight, lit up a battered crucifix. One arm of the cross had been shot away by a shell. The Figure, symbol of eternal life, had dropped sideways and hung pendulum-like, barely suspended by a single rusty nail through its right hand. It dangled precariously in the light night wind ready to crash down where its shattered stump of an arm pointed—down into wreckage and chaos.

"Sie sind mein feind," You are my enemy, muttered the German, half to himself. *"Dies ist ein grosser kreig,"* this is a big war, *"und wir zwei allein konnen night gewinnen,"* and we two alone can not win it.

"Whatever you say is jake with me," said Mike looking upward again and not understanding a word. A ray of anxiety would come into those eyes he strove so hard to keep steady.

Corporal Mike Harrigan had not seen four years of such desolation. He was more practical minded. Besides, his plight permitted no sentiment. But not so, the German.

Mike never knew that night how close the thread of his fate hung to the breaking point as the battered crucifix balanced to and fro in the night wind.

The bayonet slithered into its scabbard.

It was but a few minutes' work to pry the American free with a piece of timber.

The Boche caught Mike as he staggered free and almost collapsed on a mortar heap. Then, *"Kommen sie—schnell—es kommt morgan."* Come, quick, morning approaches.

Half-carrying the battered American the German covered a good two thirds of the distance to Mike's own lines.

"Sehen sie, Amerikaner—ein Andenken!" Look, a souvenir.

"Auf wiedersehen!"

A thump on the back and he was gone.

Mike looked wonderingly at the ugly pioneer's bayonet in his hands. Then, rising to one knee, he hurled the thing so far off to his left into No-man's land that he could barely hear its clattering fall.

"And that," he muttered grimly, "about concludes this evenin's performance."

JUST before the dawn shift manned their trench Lefty dragged a badly spent Mike across the parapet. He was grimy, bleeding; his uniform was in shreds.

"Where's the Ol' Man?" panted Mike.

"Dunno," grinned a delighted Lefty. "When that Yank barrage went off he like to lost his mind. Didja get 'at Boche gun?"

"Naw," said Mike with well feigned disgust, "Some lousy red hat cannoneer shot down the tower before I could nail the gunner and get away with it."

Lefty pulled out his cuff and chuckled into it tantalizingly. "Heh, heh! Jest another little doughboy tryin' to git along...."

"Listen here, sonny,"

Mike cut him off short.

"You don't hear that Boche gun doin' any shootin', do yuh. Huh? Then *lay off!*"

Which was all Lefty—or anyone else—ever got from Corporal Mike about the gun in the tower.

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Joseph von Dwucet, German spy and naval officer, tells his amazing adventures while on the "Leipzig", the Black Raider that plowed a crimson path of death and destruction across the North Atlantic.

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Who tells you the true story of his flight-mate, Chuck Kerwood, Wild Man of the Air; how he was captured by the Boche and proved too hot to hold.

***In The* SEPTEMBER ISSUE---*on Sale* AUG. 10**

and

Another PERSHING 100 HERO STORY

by

MALCOLM DOUGLAS

BATTLE STORIES --- *At All Newsstands*

The GIRL HERO of LOOS

Doing a man's work in routing the Hun, 17-year-old Emilienne Moreau won the coveted Croix de Guerre.

"TWO STREETS away—in a cellar—a deep one, with many passages. There they are, the Germans, with much ammunition," whispered a young girl to a British officer.

The officer nodded curtly and would have gone, but the girl detained him. "I am going with you," she said. "So that there will be no mistake."

The officer, amazed, shook his head. But the girl was determined. "For months we have tolerated the Germans—now they must go. There must be no mistake."

Then, at the side of the British officer, the French girl, Emilienne Moreau, only seventeen years old, plunged forward into the hail of bullets in the streets of Loos, which the Germans had occupied for months. She led them from one hideaway to another, exposing herself to death countless times, always being miraculously preserved from injury.

Many months before, the Germans had appeared suddenly before Loos, and had shelled the town unmercifully. Through it all watched Emilienne Moreau, who, though only seventeen, was already teaching school, and felt it her duty to stand guard over the children in her care.

Finally the town fell, and the Germans occupied Loos. In despair, but still courageous, Emilienne Moreau marched up to the commanding officer and extracted from him a promise of safety for herself and for her children. On several occasions she saved her father's life.

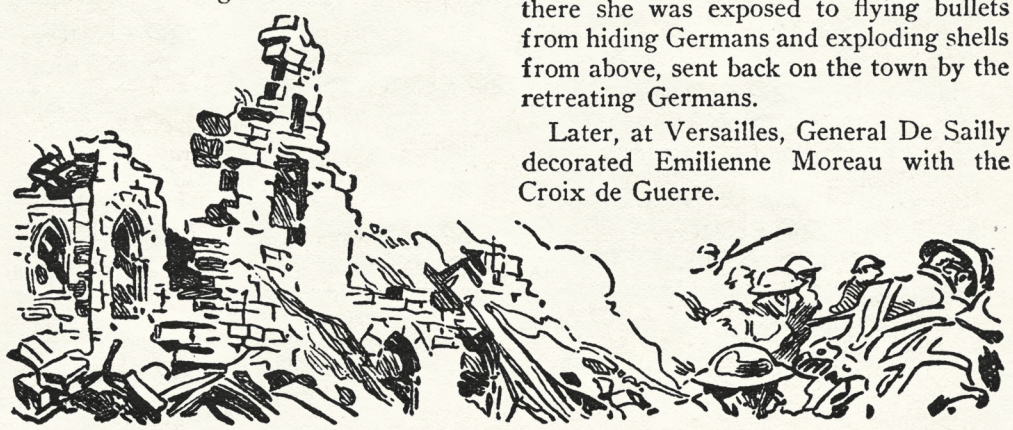
Then, after months under the heel of Germany, she heard of the coming of the British. At the same time French were approaching the town. The British came first, and it was to them that this heroine pointed out the secret hiding places of German forces, food, and ammunition.

Creeping boldly up to the ominously silent cellars, the British were met suddenly by sharp fire from the Germans guarding their supplies. Heedless of flying bullets, Emilienne Moreau plunged on, from one cellar to another, victory trailing in her wake. Not once was she struck. Behind her she left Germans caught like rats in traps, some of them filing out in sullen surrender.

At one moment, when it seemed that the Germans must overwhelm the attacking forces, Emilienne Moreau herself took up a weapon and shot down five Germans before she was satisfied that the German cause for that day at least was lost.

Around Loos on all sides Germans were retreating, in headlong flight before combined British and French forces. Only when Emilienne Moreau was sure of victory did she relinquish her task to take care of the wounded in the streets. Even there she was exposed to flying bullets from hiding Germans and exploding shells from above, sent back on the town by the retreating Germans.

Later, at Versailles, General De Sailly decorated Emilienne Moreau with the Croix de Guerre.



COSSACKS of

Intrigue, thrills and suspense in this greatest of all novels of the doughboys in Red Russia. Get in on it now by starting with the glamorous second instalment.

by

Major Malcolm Wheeler-Nicholson

who commanded the Third Battalion of the 27th U. S. Infantry during the invasion of Siberia.

SYNOPSIS OF PART I.

SERGEANT DUGGAN, commanding a small detachment of Yanks sent out from the main body of American troops to guard a Russian railroad in Siberia, watches with growing alarm the undisputable evidence that the Bolsheviki forces are stirring the peasants and laborers of the community to revolt. Duggan's suspicions are shared by two other of the Yanks in his command, Daniels, a bluff, good natured, fighting American and Dobell, a rather mysterious individual, born in the United States but of Russian extraction.

From their position in front of the Yank barracks the three Americans watch a fiery Russian orator stir the peasants into a dangerous killing insanity. With growls of animal rage the mob starts for the Yanks and are stopped when Dobell advances against them with only a *balalaika,* a lute-like musical instrument. Singing to the peasants in their own tongue, Dobell turns their anger for the minute.

The three Yanks are certain that the relief is only temporary. The Russian orator had promised the peasants that the Cossacks will overthrow their officers

the RED CZAR

¶ *"At 'em, gang!" shrilled Dobell; and the Yanks turned on their captors with bare hands, wresting what weapons they could from the Bolsheviki and laying about like madmen.*

and join them in the revolution by attacking the large body of Americans at the railhead. Dobell takes command of the situation and sends a messenger to warn the Yanks but the messenger is captured so the three set out to carry it themselves. Dobell intercepts a messenger with a note for Kangoi, the supreme head of the Bolsheviki movement in Siberia. The note contains positive proof that the Cossacks are prepared to revolt.

After a brush with the Bolsheviki, the three Yanks reach the Cossack headquarters or *stanitza* and find it deserted with the exception of a few wounded soldiers and some women. Dobell and Duggan note with alarm that the Bolsheviki have followed them and lay in hiding around the *stanitza.*

Dobell investigates the *stanitza* and finds a beautiful girl, Tanya, sister of Dimitri, commander of the Cossacks. The girl evidently knows Dobell and treats him coldly.

The Cossacks return from their foray into the surrounding country and the other Yanks are much surprised to hear the Cossacks call Dobell, "High Born," and

to see them pay him many attentions. Dobell attempts to tell Dimitri of the coming revolt but Dimitri won't believe his Cossacks guilty of mutiny until too late. The revolting Cossacks and Bolsheviki capture Dobell, Duggan and Daniels but Dimitri and Tanya escape.

The three Yanks are cast into prison to await what fate may be handed them by Kangoi. The prisoners find *vodka,* get their captors drunk and are about to escape when they hear footsteps.

CHAPTER XI

THE KNOCKING AT THE GATE

AS THE sound of those cautious footsteps fell on Dobell's ears he quickly struck a series of loud chords on the *balalaika* in an effort to drown it out. But the music came a fraction of a second too late for the burly Cossack non-commissioned officer had evidently heard it at the same time.

He paused, his bottle half way to his lips. Then he swiftly set the bottle down and grasped his rifle, turning towards the porch. Casting aside the *balalaika,* Dobell thrust out his foot and snaked the rifle across the floor. Leaning down swiftly, he grasped it by the muzzle and leaped to his feet.

A deep-voiced shout from the doorway and the non-commissioned officer gave back before a sudden press of men who thrust through the opening like a wedge.

In a second the festive air of good fellowship vanished and a deadly grimness took its place. The half drunken Cossacks staggered to their feet, grasping their weapons. They were suddenly sobered to the realization of what their fate would be, should they be overcome. The American soldiers were quick to leap into the fray, arming themselves with empty bottles, chairs, billets or fire wood or anything else that bore the semblance of a weapon.

Dobell swung his rifle, bringing it down on the head of the nearest Cossack. The fellow collapsed, sagging backwards, but so thick was the press that he was supported by the struggling bodies of the men around him.

The Cossack non-com was rapidly clearing a space about himself with his clubbed rifle. So many half drunken Cossacks were milling between him and Dobell that the latter could not get at him but had to content himself with smashing into the Cossacks. At his right and left the other Americans heaved and fought.

The Cossacks were now penned in between the mass of freed prisoners from the barracks, struggling to break in the doorway, and the Americans led by Dobell. So strong was the thrust of the men outside that the Cossacks gave back step by step, crowding the American soldiers back into the room by sheer weight of numbers.

The press was so thick that it was impossible to use the rifle and Dobell fought with his fists, driving again and again at the heads and faces before him. Crashing his full weight into one blow, he staggered one of the Cossacks and dragged him out, thrusting him to the rear where Simmons completed the knockout by tapping him briskly with a stick of stove wood.

Another Cossack went down under Dobell's blows and he was now within one man of the formidable non-commissioned officer who struck and shouted in berserker rage. More and more of the freed Cossack prisoners had edged into the room and were seeping around the edges, fighting in bare-handed savagery with their recent captors.

The Cossack non-commissioned officer leaped and struck at a man in the doorway. The man went down. The Cossack charged over him in an endeavor to cut his way out. Dobell had freed himself at last and sprang for the escaping Cossack, just as the burly non-commissioned officer turned at bay and leveled a terrific blow with his gun butt.

The thing started to descend. Dobell, again caught in the press, saw it coming and made desperate efforts to avoid it. Just then there was a determined shout from beside him and Simmons thrust forward a captured rifle, deflecting the blow.

Before the Cossack non-commissioned officer could recover, Dobell was on him like a tiger, his hands at the fellow's

throat, his knees driving into the Cossack's body. The heavy non-commissioned officer collapsed and the remaining men outside swept in. With them was Sergeant Duggan, wielding a pistol butt. Following him came Daniels, using a captured rifle as a club and hitting friend and foe alike in his enthusiasm.

The fight was over in a second. Such guards as were not groaning on the floor were quickly seized and disarmed. Outside, still more prisoners clamored to get in. The room was an inferno of talking, shouting men when Dobell fought out of the mess, mounted upon a chair, cupped his hands to his lips and roared forth a single word.

"Attention!" the command, in Russian, blared forth like a trumpet call.

Its effect was magical. Every Russian there became still as a statue, while the Americans followed their example almost as quickly.

"Cossacks!" Dobell's voice filled the silence, "we have won our freedom. Now we must take measures to keep that freedom! At any moment other parties of the enemy may enter. Here, you....and you!" he pointed out the two nearest men. "Get to the gates, close them and stand guard until you are relieved. The rest of you arm yourselves, find weapons anywhere and ammunition and report back here immediately. Hurry out of here! Delay means death!"

A cheer went up from the freed Cossacks. They hurried out to the sound of the loud stamping of heavy boots.

Dobell turned to Daniels.

"Go down and count the horses and see how many saddles and sets of equipment there are. Report back as quickly as God will let you!"

Daniels, impelled by the urgency of Dobell's tone wasted not a second but hurried forth.

"You, Simmons, take charge of these prisoners. Tie them up, hurry. A couple of you men help him!" He turned to the other Americans.

The room suddenly bustled with activity. The prisoners were lined up, such of them as could stand, and searched for weapons while their hands were bound behind them. Dobell turned to Duggan.

"Get this mob collected together in some sort of order, Duggan," he directed. "Line them up as soon as they appear. Find a couple of good horses for you and me. Scare up a sword and a pistol apiece if you can find them."

"Sure," agreed Duggan and hurried out in his turn.

IN A few seconds Daniels returned.

"There's about sixteen Cossacks, as near as I can figure who ain't Bolsheviki, an' they got all the horses an' guns they need. The Bolsheviki sure left everything in a mess."

"Good!" returned Dobell, glancing at his watch, "but we've got to hurry. Help Duggan get these men lined up and ready to move out."

Everyone was busy and Dobell decided to utilize the time in searching for Tanya and her brother Dimitri. He hurried to the back of the house and called their names, listening for response. None came and he sought in the dark shadows of the houses for some sign of their presence, but without success. He even ranged down towards the stables, hurrying up the Cossacks as he met them, finally enlisting aid from men who were ready and waiting, and sending them to search various quarters of the *stanitza*. But it was as though the earth had swallowed up the two for there was no sign of them anywhere.

At last Dobell gave it up, returning to the place where Duggan was assembling the Cossacks. The men were appearing singly and in groups, leading their saddled horses. Dobell relieved the Americans who were guarding the prisoners and sent them at a run towards the stables to seek for horses. He set Cossack guards over the men in the room and it was Pavlo Stephanovitch who put up a pathetic plea to be allowed to join the force.

"It will be certain death for us, Your Excellency, if we are found here by Kangoi and our prisoners have escaped. Let us go with you. We will be loyal!"

"Have you ever seen Kangoi?" asked Dobell quickly.

"No, Your Honor, but the tales they tell of him are enough to make your hair curl. Your Honor will let us go?" Other men added their pleas. After a moment's study Dobell acceded to their request having them all released except the Cossack non-commissioned officer who was bound and left in a locked room.

Duggan reported with two mounts and a revolver and sword that he had found for Dobell.

The Cossacks were forming up now while the released prisoners were hurrying to join them. Dobell glanced at his watch again, counting the precious minutes. The American soldiers had supplied themselves with horses and were busy trying to adjust the unfamiliar Cossack saddle.

The men originally sent to the gate had been relieved and their places taken by two mounted men. One of these came galloping up and pulled his horse down to a halt in front of Dobell.

Saluting, he pointed to the gate.

"Come quickly! Kangoi has appeared with his force. He has captured Essaoul Dimitri and his sister!" he reported in great excitement.

He had scarcely finished speaking when a rifle shot cracked out from the direction of the gate.

CHAPTER XII

PURSUIT!

"How do you know it is Kangoi?" asked Dobell sharply. "Did he announce himself as Kangoi?"

"No, not exactly, *Vashe Blagorodie,*" returned the Cossack, "but it must be Kangoi—who else could it be?"

"How many men are with the fellow?" Dobell went on. The Cossack rolled his eyes and threw up his hands.

"The whole meadow is covered with them, there must be all of five hundred!" he answered.

"Impossible!" grunted Dobell, and glanced over his own force. The loyal Cossacks, some sixteen men, were now being joined by the released renegades, bringing up the total force to some twenty-six men. They were lined up very correctly in double rank, their lances at the carry. On their right, sitting uncomfortably in the unfamiliar Cossack saddles, carrying their rifles across the pommels, were the American soldiers, Sergeant Duggan and his five men, making altogether a force of thirty-one men.

Discounting the usual soldier exaggeration of the numbers of enemy forces, Dobell reasoned that there were probably from one hundred and fifty to two hundred Bolsheviki outside demanding admission. The enemy was evidently getting very impatient for loud voices shouted angrily outside the gate and someone was hammering lustily at the small door.

There was little time to lose. Even now the mixed force of Bolsheviki and mutinous Cossacks under Platoff and Vesselloff were marching steadily on their objective, the lone American camp on the railroad. There was a new worry added to his other troubles now, for Tanya and her brother, Dimitri, were captured by the enemy and he had no illusions as to what would be their fate. There was little time for him to plan an escape with his forces.

As the shouting and the clamor at the gate increased in volume, Dobell idly fingered the handle of the Cossack whip hanging from his saddle. It was the terrible Cossack *nagaika,* the many thonged, leaden weighted weapon of the savage horsemen against the mobs, rightly feared and dreaded by the Russians who were its victims.

With the feel of that whip in his hand he suddenly made up his mind as to what course of action he would pursue. Turning, he swiftly explained his plan to the men behind him. The Cossacks immediately slung their lances through the elbow loops and took up their *nagaikas* while the Americans followed suit, lifting the unfamiliar weapons, from their saddle bows.

At a low voiced command from Dobell, the mounted men surged forward towards the gate, filing out in column with the Americans in the rear. When they had

approached fifteen or twenty yards from the gate, Dobell halted them and rode to the tower. Here he dismounted and hurried up the stairs.

Below him he sensed the presence of many men crowded about in disorder outside the walls. At the gate itself there was a small clump, standing behind a tall leader whose voice rose in demands for admission.

Dobell called to them and silence fell on the men below.

"Who are you and what do you want?" he demanded.

The tall man strode nearer the tower and looked up with folded arms, his head borne to one side arrogantly.

"Who am I and what do I want?" he roared, "I am Commissar Urevitsky, commanding the third section, Inner Communist Defense Group. I have been sent here by the Chief, to take over this captured *stanitza.* And when I arrive to take it over, what happens?" his voice boomed forth indignantly, "I am greeted by a rifle shot from your sentry and I am kept waiting here, like a beggar at the gates. Depend upon it, the Chief shall hear of this! I demand admission immediately!" The man's voice roared angrily and he turned back towards the gate. Under cover of the sound of his voice the mounted Cossacks on the inside had pushed their horses nearer and nearer until now they were right under the towers.

"Greetings, *Tovarische Kommissar,*" returned Dobell, his voice placating, "but you understand that in these troublous times we cannot be too careful. I am sorry if you have been delayed. But I must delay you a little more and ask you what proof you have of your rank and mission."

"Proof! Proof!" stormed the Bolsheviki leader, "I have proof enough, the authorization of the Central Soviet itself, seated at Ekaterinberg...."

"It will be necessary to see that document and to assure myself of your status before admitting you, *Tovarishe Kommissar,*" interrupted Dobell suavely, and with the proper amount of official regret in his voice. "Is it true, Tovarishe Kommissar, that you have captured two of our escaped prisoners?"

"Of course it's true," stormed the Bolsheviki, "I have the Boorjoi swine with me," and he pointed back in the darkness where Dobell could dimly make out the forms of several mounted figures. They were grouped around two others whom he took to be Tanya and Dimitri, bound in the saddles.

"Very good, Tovarische Kommissar," Dobell went on, his voice respectful and then he raised his tone to a fuller note, "tell your prisoners, the woman, Tanya Pavlovna and the man, Dimitri Pavlovich, that I have not forgotten them!" his voice roared out in an assumption of great rage; "and tell them to be surprised at nothing I shall do when I face them once again!" his words carried out to where the small group of mounted figures stood in the meadow but there came no response, naturally enough. Hoping that his message would be understood by the two for whom it was intended, Dobell went on:

"Tovarische Kommissar, I am very sorry to delay you but my zeal in the holy cause of Communism makes me exercise exceeding care. If you will thrust your papers through the gates I will examine them and all will be well."

THE Bolshevist leader grumbled loudly but prepared to do as he was bade, bringing forth some papers that showed dim white in the half light. Dobell quickly hurried down the steps, beckoning the remaining men who were on duty at the tower to mount their horses. Seizing the papers, which the Bolshevist leader had thrust through the gate, he thrust them into his blouse and designated one of the Cossacks to fling open the portals while he mounted his horse. The column of mounted men waited there tensely in the darkness as the great gate slowly swung back. The Bolshevist leader stepped boldly within, followed by several of his men. Behind them, straggling across the narrow bridge, pressed more of the enemy force.

Some suspicion must have seized the Bolshevist commander at the unexpected sight of these threatening horsemen drawn up across the entrance, for he came to a halt and started to make inquiry in an uncertain voice.

But his inquiry was never finished for Dobell's voice broke in in a deep-lunged command and he drove his spurs into his horse, leaping at the Bolsheviki and slashing down at them with the cruel *nagaika*. His men boiled after him, launching themselves like a torrent on the horrified enemy, the *nagaikas* rising and falling like flails, their leaden tipped thongs whistling through the air, leaving great bloody welts wherever they touched human flesh.

The Bolsheviki screamed in agony and terror as the vicious whips plied about their heads and shoulders. They ran pell-mell over the bridge or were shoved into the ditch by the press of Cossack horses. Once across the bridge, the Cossacks extended out in line, galloping through the mob on the far side, their *nagaikas* hissing through the air like a multitude of snakes as they curled and bit and stung.

Dobell in the lead charged straight at that little clump of mounted Bolsheviki, his Cossacks close behind him. There were five or six mounted men here who fled from before this onset. It was Dobell himself who grasped the reins of Tanya's horse and one of the Cossacks who rescued Dimitri.

So sudden was the onset of the Cossacks and so overwhelming the surprise that scarcely a shot was fired. The dismounted Bolsheviki rushed pell-mell in the darkness, falling over each other in their endeavors to escape the lash of the whips.

Like an irresistible wave the line of Cossacks and American soldiers swept through the disordered enemy. Tanya and Dimitri still bound in their saddles, were led along with them. As the line arrived on the far side of the Cossack mob, Dobell heard shouted commands behind and a few ineffectual shots were fired at random at the rapidly disappearing Cossack force.

At a shout from Dobell, willing Cossacks galloped forward and cut the ropes which bound Dimitri and Tanya.

The Cossacks were laughing gleefully as they closed up at Dobell's command on the far side of the meadow, close to the entrance to the forest. He sternly commanded silence and sent a patrol of three men ahead to protect the advance.

Scarcely had the small patrol entered the edge of the woods when there arose a shouting and trampling and a clash of steel.

Dobell set spurs to his horse and, drawing his sword, galloped into the darkness with his men streaming along behind him in column once more. Before him was a confused blur of struggling forms. Shouting, he drove into the press, being scarcely able to tell friend from foe in the darkness. It was a good sized detachment of mounted Bolsheviki whom he encountered but the force and unexpectedness of his attack drove him into the center of the mass. The forest resounded to the ring of steel on steel. He thrust again and again with his sword, finally rising in his stirrups and sweeping it about until he had formed a space around him. The Bolsheviki gave back. Behind him the long lances thrust forward out of the darkness, stabbing at the remnants of the enemy. The vigor with which the Cossack attack was pressed home discouraged the Bolsheviki and they broke and fled into the trees as Dobell galloped on through with his force following the road as it wound and twisted through the forest.

After ten minutes' galloping, Dobell slowed down to a trot and finally to a halt, demanding report of any casualties. One of the men of the small patrol was missing, whether killed or wounded or a prisoner, no one knew. He quickly reformed a small advance guard and turning saw Dimitri and Tanya riding close behind him.

In the darkness he could scarcely make out Tanya's features but he spoke to her, nevertheless.

"You are not hurt?" he asked solicitously.

Her voice came back to him, its tone very cold and very haughty.

"No," she said stiffly.

An exultant clatter of conversation rose from the men in rear as they marvelled at their easy escape. Dobell quickly silenced the voices. Standing in his stirrups he listened for sounds of pursuit. Nothing could he hear except the sighing of the wind through the tree tops above, the breathing of the horses, and an occasional jingle of bit and spur and clink of sword as some nervous animal stamped and shifted on the road. Dimitri sat in his saddle, silent and impassive and gave no sign as Dobell's eye ranged over him.

At last Dobell dismounted and placed his ear to the ground. He rose very quickly and vaulted into the saddle again. His ear had detected the earth borne tremor of many galloping hoofs following along behind.

"We are being pursued," he called, "Close up, keep silent and listen for my commands!"

Sergeant Duggan rode up from the rear and fell in on his left side as Dobell once more set the column in motion.

"Do you figger we're goin' to get there on time?" asked Duggan.

Dobell cast a worried glance at the tree tops. The faint radiance of early dawn was already beginning to silver the highest trees.

"We've got to hurry if we do!" he admitted, and listened again towards the rear for sounds of that pursuing force which was following them so relentlessly. As yet, however, he could hear nothing above the creak and jingle of the column flowing along behind him.

"Looks to me like we jest about get there in time to be caught between two fires," grumbled Duggan, whose eyes were heavy with lack of sleep, and whose morale was low at this pregnant hour just before daylight.

"Perhaps," returned Dobell, non-committally, and gave the command for gallop. Again the column gathered speed, flowing along the winding road to the rhythmic beat of iron shod hoofs on the soft earth, the Cossacks carrying their lances low with the pennons streaming out behind them, to avoid the overhanging limbs.

The road sped swiftly beneath them, Dobell's horse, a shaggy, Cossack animal flew tirelessly along on muscles of steel, its head thrust forward questingly, its ears erect and alert. Dobell sat back easily in the saddle, giving to the motion of the gallop as his mount stretched out beneath him. Occasionally he glanced back to see the column, looking past the silent and impassive figures of Tanya and Dimitri to where the Cossacks rode, dark, formless shapes in the darkness before the dawn, riding three by three, silently and steadily.

It lacked half an hour yet of the time set for the Bolsheviki attack against the American camp. By strenuous galloping he believed that he could make it, providing he met with no more enemy troops on the road. What he was going to do once he arrived there, he had not planned as yet. It was certain that he could no more than arrive there about the time the attack started. It might be, he hoped, that he could swing the tide of battle with his small reinforcements, at least it was worth trying. He set his jaw grimly and settled more firmly into the saddle, loosening his sword in its scabbard and his revolver in its holster.

CHAPTER XIII

SHADOWS AT DAWN

A BROODING silence rested over the American camp down near the junction of the two railroad tracks. Not fifty yards from the village, which stretched back in a clutter of log *izbas,* lay the double row of tents, their khaki damp with dew in the early dawn. From the camp a road led away through the village, a typical Siberian road, deep in muds and rain and equally deep in heavy dust in the dry periods.

A lone sentinel stood disconsolately near the cook shack and shivered in the chill of early dawn. Yawning dispiritedly, he glanced down at the silent houses of the village, his eyes registering nothing except the outlines of the log cabins dimly seen in the gloom of early morning. Back of the village lay the fields with the forest edge crowding close upon them.

Had the sentinel been more alert he

might have seen an occasional shadow flit out from the forest edge, cross the open field and lose itself among the houses. One flitting shadow was followed by another and another, but still the sentry saw nothing, his attention being concentrated on the cook shack close at hand where the cook's police had appeared and were now engaged in building a fire.

The fire promised warmth and the comfort of fragrant, hot coffee. The sentry, being human, shivered and drew nearer the welcome source of all this, thereby missing the sight of a group of shadowy figures which crossed rapidly from the forest edge and flung themselves down in rear of the row of log cabins.

"When are you guys goin' to quit foolin' around in there and turn out some hot chow?" he called to the inmates of the cook shack.

"Lissen to that guy!" growled a far-from-friendly voice inside, "Wot the blazes does he think we do, carry hot chow around in our pants pockets?" and a saturnine looking soldier, his eyes peevish and his hair awry, came to the door and stared out. The pearl gray mists of early dawn were eddying and billowing over the houses and fields. A few birds were practicing their scales in preparation for their early morning chorus. Nature was preparing to set about her day's work. The saturnine man in the doorway gazed upon it all with a jaundiced and far from appreciative eye. His glance swept over the fields behind the village and he stared for a second, wrinkling his forehead in an effort to see.

"Them Ruskys is headin' out early," he commented at last, thus explaining satisfactorily to himself at least, the unusual sight of several peasants who had moved across the field and disappeared behind the houses. The sentinel followed the direction of his glance indifferently. Like most men, prone to allow others to do their thinking for them, he saw nothing amiss in the presence of the Russian peasants in the fields at that hour.

"How 'bout some hot cawffee?" asked the sentinel, hopefully.

"Hot cawffee! Hot cawffee!" returned the cook indignantly. "Ain't you got any idea in the world but hot cawffee? How do you suppose we're goin' to make hot coffee without no fire? You guys gimme a pain in the neck. You're either all hollerin' for chow to oncet or bellyachin' cause it ain't cooked to suit you when you do get it! I never see such a outfit! An' me with a high rankin' colonel from headquarters at Vladyvostock to feed today and to clean up for!"

"You got a colonel from Vlady to feed today? How come?"

"You're blame tootin' I got a colonel to feed and believe me, he's *some* colonel, wot I mean! He blows in here off the train late last night an' I'm routed out to fix him up some supper. He's got Captain Hamilton sayin' 'yes sir' and 'no sir,' like a buck private out of the rear rank."

"What's he doin' here?"

"Search me," the cook shrugged his shoulders. "The old buzzard claims he's goin' to inspect the camp today, which means I got a day's work ahead of me, polishin' up."

By now the fire inside the cook shack was beginning to get in its work for a dim fragrance faintly reminiscent of coffee began to steal upon the chill air of morning. The sentry sniffed it and immediately looked more hopeful. The cook gave another puzzled look at a straggling group of three or four peasants who were coming out of the woods across the fields.

"Them bozos is sure up an' about early this morning," he commented as he turned back into his own domain.

THE sentry wasted no time and not even a glance at the Russian peasants but hitched up his belt and followed the cook inside.

Scarcely had he set foot within the door when a sudden roaring voice boomed through the camp. It filled the confines of the tented area, roused out Captain Hamilton, the stoop-shouldered, studious looking company commander, and brought the sentinel hastily out of the cook shack, wiping his

mouth furtively as he seized his rifle and stared about him.

"What kind of a blankety-blank boy scout outfit is this?" roared the voice, "where in blue blazes is that eternally to be condemned sentry?" and there exploded upon the serenity of the morning a flow of richly purple language, as a large, stockily built officer appeared from behind the cook shack, his shock of iron gray hair standing erect on his head and his face red with anger.

"Where the blazes have you been? Manicuring your lily white fingers?" he roared at the sentry, as he came upon that luckless individual suddenly. "Don't try to explain! Don't try to explain! You were off your post with the lives of a hundred men depending upon you!" The gray haired officer wore the silver eagles of a colonel on his broad shoulders and a look of righteous indignation in his frosty blue eyes.

The cook and his assistants were suddenly afflicted with an immense activity. The tall, stoop-shouldered Captain Hamilton stumbled out of his tent, sleepily buttoning his blouse, the first sergeant appeared from somewhere and the corporal of the guard put in a belated appearance, endeavoring to look as inconspicuous as possible as the colonel continued to storm.

Phrases such as "enemy country," "danger every minute," "unprotected camp," fell from the colonel's lips until, as his eyes angrily swept about the village and fields and woods, his torrent of words came to a sudden halt. There was a silence for a second or two as he stared at something and then he spoke again, this time to Captain Hamilton.

"What are those Russian peasants coming out of the woods for at this hour of the morning? They've got no business in the woods!"

"I don't know, sir," returned the captain.

"Well, you'd better by a blame sight find out!" snorted the colonel, "here, I'll go down myself and have a look," he added impatiently and turned away.

The colonel strode along confidently, grumbling to himself over this new war time army. Captain Hamilton, left alone, gave something akin to a sigh of relief and returned to his tent. The sentry resumed walking his post. From the cook shack came forth sounds and odors containing a promise of breakfast. It lacked twenty minutes until reveille. The gray mist of early dawn was thinning out gradually, trees and stumps and houses and tents were losing their vague outlines and becoming more sharply defined.

The sentry paced his post, glancing occasionally down to where the colonel had disappeared between two log *izbas* at the edge of the village. No movement nor any sound came from that place. Minute after minute passed and the sentry began to wonder what had become of the irascible, gray-headed officer.

Captain Hamilton came out of his tent, clad in a sheepskin coat and stared about for a sign of the elderly officer.

"Has Colonel Beach returned yet?" he asked the sentry. Before replying the sentry went through the prescribed ritual of "present arms," followed by "port arms."

"No, sir, I ain't seen him come back, he went out of sight behind them buildin's down there..." The man jerked his head in the direction of the two log *izbas* at the edge of the village.

"That's queer!" commented the captain. "Guess we'd better take a look-see, Sergeant." He turned to the non-commissioned officer who had reappeared in the meantime, and fell in beside him. The two went down the one street of the village towards those silent log huts on its edge.

CHAPTER XIV

THE WATCHERS AT THE FOREST EDGE

DOBELL glanced anxiously at the tree tops as the darkness began to dissipate into the grayness of dawn and dim light began to filter through the forest trees. Alternately galloping and trotting his long column of Cossacks, he had covered nearly three-quarters of the distance to the American camp, when one of his men on the advance patrol galloped back.

"There are many Bolsheviki just ahead of us!" the Cossack pointed forward on the road.

Dobell quickly slowed his column of horsemen down to a walk. Leaving them under charge of Sergeant Duggan, he rode forward, accompanying the messenger. Their road led them through the forest and they came at last to the edge of a meadow. On the far side of this open space the rear end of a straggling column of armed men could be seen just disappearing into the trees. Some were mounted and some dismounted. Among the former there flashed a sudden quick glimpse of scarlet pennons of Cossack lances.

It was undoubtedly none other than the mixed mob of Bolsheviki and renegade Cossacks led by Platoff, the stout Bolshevist orator, and Vesselloff, the renegade officer.

Another ten minutes would bring the force ahead to the American camp where it would combine with the Bolsheviki already on the ground and attack the unsuspecting doughboys. There was only one thing to do, which was to get there first. Swinging his horse about, Dobell galloped back towards his own column.

Expecting to meet them en route, he was considerably puzzled to find that his men had not advanced much beyond the point where he had left them. As he rode up, he was even more surprised to find that they had halted.

Galloping up with anger in his eyes, he soon found the cause. The young Cossack officer, Dimitri, Tanya's brother, was haranguing the Cossacks. Sergeant Duggan, speaking little Russian and understanding even less, was sitting his horse to one side, fidgeting impatiently. He looked up, obviously relieved as Dobell appeared.

Dimitri's back was to the newcomer as he continued to talk to the Cossacks, his voice ringing loudly through the trees:

"....and so, Cossacki, I warn you that this man is a traitor, a renegade, who will only lead you treacherously to your death!"

Dobell's face was white as he rode into Dimitri, shoving his horse aside and addressing the men himself:

"Who was it permitted you to be captured by the Bolsheviki?" he shouted. "Was it me or was it your *khorunjy?*" he paused a second, while the Cossacks looked at him, some of their faces sullen, others merely curious, "who was it rescued you from your imprisonment at the *stanitza,* was it me or was it the *khorunjy?* You are men, not children—refuse longer to listen to this child's talk of traitors!" His voice rose authoritatively. Tanya, sitting her horse on the side of the road stared at him with disdain and anger showing on her face.

Dobell continued, "You are men, not children, and man's work awaits us! Even now Platoff and Vesselloff march to join forces with the other Bolsheviki! Our only chance is to get there first and smash in like a horde of wolves—Out Lances! Draw Sabers! Forward March!" his voice rang with the assured note of the officer accustomed to obedience. The Cossacks blinked uncertainly for a second, then the foremost men began to obey. Down the column the others followed their example; in a few seconds more, the whole force was moving forward. Dimitri glowered from the side of the road as the Cossack horses broke into a trot and then into a gallop. As Dobell led the force along the road, Dimitri and Tanya fell in rear of the column, following along with poor grace.

Galloping along with Duggan at his side, Dobell came again to the meadow where he had seen the tail end of Platoff's column disappear. Here he turned sharply to the right, leaving the road and entering the woods at a point several hundred yards distant from where he had last seen the Bolsheviki.

From this point he led his force through the trees, the Cossack horses threading their way skilfully through the brush and heavy timber until at last they came out on the edge of the woods where he halted his Cossacks. Across the fields lay the town and the American camp.

Far to his left he heard the sounds of

the progress of Platoff's column of Bolsheviki and Cossacks, still coming along at a snail's pace on the road. By taking up the gallop he had gained several minutes on them. Examining the American camp again he saw nothing amiss about it. Smoke was coming from the cook shack and one or two men were idling about. Near at hand were the log *izbas* on the edge of the village. Peering intently, his eye caught some movement in their shadows. Duggan saw it at the same instant.

The eyes of both men took in the sight of many Bolsheviki concealed along the village edge, behind sheds and log huts. There was a force of some fifty or sixty men dressed in nondescript attire but alike in one thing, that they were well armed and carried many extra bandoliers of ammunition, criss-crossed over their shoulders.

IT WAS Sergeant Duggan who grew puzzled as he stared more intently.

"They've got Americans with 'em!" he announced. Following the direction of his pointing finger, Dobell picked out the greenish-brown tinge of three American uniforms amongst the group across the field. Studying these more closely, Dobell suddenly sat bolt upright in his saddle.

"They are prisoners!" he announced grimly, and then cast a quick look at the American camp. The smoke was still coming from the cook shack. The same two or three men idled about in seeming unconcern. One man was undoubtedly a sentry for he was armed with rifle and cartridge belt. Only this one man seemed at all perturbed, for he stood at the edge of the camp and stared at the village, with something suspicious and watchful about his bearing discernible even at that distance.

Again Dobell glanced at the Bolsheviki, hidden behind the log huts. With the exception of a small group who guarded the three American prisoners, they were all intent on watching the American camp.

Another soldier appeared in the camp, carrying some dull, brass object which he rubbed against his shirt as he walked to the center of the company street. Here he halted and placed the dull brass object to his lips. The clear, musical notes of a bugle rang out.

He was blowing first call for reveille.

Scarcely had the last note died away when a single shot barked forth from the edge of the village.

CHAPTER XV

THE FIGHT IN THE FOREST

The single shot suddenly multiplied itself into an angry roar as the Bolsheviki hiding behind the log buildings began firing into the American camp. The khaki tents awoke to sudden alarmed activity as half-clad men came running out, rifles in hand. One of the bullets flying through the camp found an immediate target and a soldier crumpled to the ground. Duggan swore and turned to Dobell.

The latter shouted forth a quick command. In instant response the Cossacks came galloping out of the woods behind, forming line. Drawing his sabre, Dobell put his horse to the gallop and with the Cossacks and the little group of American soldiers hard at his heels, galloped straight across the field.

So intent were the Bolsheviki upon the American camp that they did not see the line of Cossacks coming at their rear until the newcomers were nearly two-thirds of the way over. The thunder of their approaching hoof beats attracted the attention of some of the Bolsheviki who shouted warningly to their fellows.

The Cossack *sotnia* rushed across the field like a scarlet tipped tidal wave, the lean, savage faces of the men bending low over the shaggy necks of their horses, the long lances stretched out hungrily in an even row as the gray coated horsemen thundered down upon the now thoroughly alarmed Bolsheviki.

Some few of these attempted to hold their ground and fired a desultory shot or two but the most of them began quickly to scatter. The Cossack line broke as the

horsemen pursued, their long lances dipped and stabbed, to rise and dip and stab again as men went down beneath their onset.

The sudden appearance of the vengeful Cossacks in the rear had the immediate effect of relieving the American camp from its unexpected hail of bullets. While Dobell's Cossacks hacked and stabbed and thrust, the soldiers in camp began firing individually upon the Bolsheviki who were fleeing through the village. Duggan had ridden hard for the little group of three American prisoners and was joined there by Daniels and Simmons and the others, who quickly rescued Colonel Beach, the captain and the first sergeant, all of whom had blundered into the Bolsheviki trap behind the two log *izbas*. Once the safety of the prisoners was assured, Duggan and his men went quickly into action with their rifles, keeping up a harassing fire on the retreating Bolsheviki as Dobell and the Cossacks hunted the survivors through the village. Once during the fight Dobell glanced up to find Dimitri charging with his sword at a group of dismounted Bolsheviki who were about to open fire upon him. Galloping to Dimitri's assistance, his arrival effectively broke up the group. Dimitri bowed stiffly from the saddle and left the fight, riding over to where Tanya, white faced and frightened, watched the scene from in rear of one of the log houses.

But Dobell had other things on his mind for the moment, than worry over Dimitri. That mixed column of Bolsheviki and renegade Cossacks under Platoff and Vesselloff was about due to appear on the scene. Glancing toward the American camp he saw that the unknown colonel and Captain Hamilton were on their way to take charge, reinforced by Duggan and the other soldiers who had been with the Cossacks.

Hastily assembling his men again, Dobell swung the line about and galloped for the road at the point where it issued from the forest. As the Cossack force neared the forest edge, Dobell caught his first glimpse of the enemy column advancing rapidly towards him. Platoff was in the lead, mounted on a raw-boned gray horse. Without a second's hesitation Dobell drew his sword and drove straight for the paunchy commissar.

Platoff turned pale and, being more accustomed to orating than to fighting, he quickly dropped back out of sight, meanwhile exhorting his men to go forward.

THE sudden apparition of Dobell and his Cossack force was too much for the untrained Bolsheviki in the forefront. As the Cossacks thundered down upon them they scurried for cover like a flock of frightened chickens under the swooping shadow of hawks.

Such Bolsheviki as were nimble enough, escaped the play of lance and sabres by dodging in amongst the trees, but the majority streamed back along the road whence they had come. These fugitives found their retreat suddenly cut off by the column of renegade Cossacks under Vesselloff. The white-faced Cossack officer drew his sword.

"Drive the cowards back!" he screamed, and began belaboring the nearest fugitives with the flat of his saber. The Cossacks never need much encouragement to fight. Seeing Vesselloff's sword in action, as they thought, against these tattered Bolsheviki they immediately took the offensive against their erstwhile friends and cheerfully began butchering them.

"No, no!" screamed Vesselloff as he saw the fury that he had unleashed, but the Cossacks, beyond control and mad with blood lust, paid no heed to him. Dobell's force suddenly appeared at this moment and Vesselloff, after one startled look, jerked his horse out of the melee and fled out, past his own Cossacks, down the road.

Thus it was that as Dobell's Cossacks speared and hacked their way through the fleeing enemy they came up and found the renegade Cossacks busily slaughtering that same enemy. A cheer went up from the former renegades as they saw their ancient comrades and they waved joyful greetings

between lance thrusts and saber strokes.

Suddenly the rancor that had heretofore existed between the two sets of Cossacks dissolved in thin air and was instantly forgotten in their mutual joy in battle. Dobell's men wasted no time in mixing themselves with the men who had followed Vesselloff. The united Cossack force turned its full energies upon slaughtering the Bolsheviki. As they were engaged upon this task Dimitri rode up from behind the column somewhere and gazed sourly upon his former men.

The Cossacks were steadily pressing the fugitives before them down the road when there came of a sudden the crack of rifles through the woods. Bullets whined and smacked overhead and leaves and bits of branches began to float down from above.

Puzzled by the sudden resistance, Dobell suddenly remembered that second body of Bolsheviki who had pursued him from the *stanitza.* This body had undoubtedly arrived to reinforce the hard-pressed men of Vesselloff's command.

The necessity of getting his own Cossacks in hand was very evident and he galloped forward swiftly, jamming in amongst his men and shouting the rallying cry. The first few began to obey and he drove them back, gathering in more and more as he rode forward until at last he had almost the entire *sotnia* in its original strength formed in column of threes. Quickly reorganizing them, he shouted out another command just as he spied Vesselloff, off to the right, leading a body of mounted Bolsheviki towards him through the trees.

The Cossacks, once more under control, swiftly obeyed his command like the well trained soldiers they were. In a second nearly two-thirds of them had flung themselves out of the saddle, rifles in hand and at another sharp command were deployed along the edge of the road.

Without necessity of another order they commenced firing at the mounted Bolsheviki, checking the advance of that force by a hail of heavy rifle fire. Vesselloff, to give him credit, sought to rally his forces, but there was no arguing with the undisciplined Bolsheviki. They broke and fled backward through the trees, pursued by the pitiless bullets as long as any of them could be seen, leaving behind fallen men and horses.

The Cossack rifles ceased their clamor one by one until finally the forest road became silent except for the crash of Bolsheviki fleeing through the timber, sounds that were rapidly dying away. Dobell remounted his men and straightened them out in column once more. Except for the dead scattered about on the road and amongst the trees there was no sign of the Bolsheviki force. The victory was complete and overwhelming.

Facing them to the rear once more, Dobell galloped up to the head of the column and led them back towards the village. The Cossacks were exultant and laughed and talked loudly behind him, until suddenly one of them broke forth in song. Another and another took up the shouted chorus until nearly a hundred voices were singing:

"Make haste, Grey Wolves from out the North!" their voices crashed and echoed and re-echoed amongst the forest timber.

"Make haste ere foes be gone
The Scarlet Lances call us forth
To ride with Wolves at dawn!"

The stirring words of the Cossack song rose like a chant of victory as the column cleared the edge of the forest and came out into the open fields once more. Here Dobell raised his hand, commanding silence, and giving the signal to form line, he called the senior non-commissioned officer and ordered him to call the roll. The victory had been practically bloodless. With the exception of two Cossacks slightly wounded and a horse lost, the Cossack force had come off unscathed.

As he was engaged in checking up the state of his force, Dimitri rode up, his eyes sullen and his face grim with resolution. Behind him at a few yards came Tanya, looking like some slim, young man as she sat her horse easily.

"I will take my *sotnia* now, if it is all the same to you!" said Dimitri in a loud, angry voice. The nearest Cossacks paused

and grew silent as the purport of the words fell on their understanding. The silence extended through the whole *sotnia.* The soldiers began to mutter amongst themselves and heads began to shake. Angry murmurs of *"nyet! nyet!* no! no!" went up from the ranks. Taking his cue from the men assembled before him, Dobell spoke up quickly, addressing the Cossacks.

"Cossacki, is it your wish that the *khorunjy* takes command again?"

There was an instant of silence. Then came a thundering response.

"Nyet! No!" they shouted like one man, and then broke into a hubbub of angry cries.

"Silence!" thundered Dobell. His voice dominated the clamor and a deathlike stillness fell on the assembled Cossacks. He turned to Dimitri:

"You have your answer," he said quietly.

Dimitri's face turned white. His mouth opened as though to reproach his men but one look at their angry, unfriendly faces convinced him that it would be useless. Swinging his horse about he rode away, followed by Tanya. But Dobell ceased to watch their departure for he had turned back and was speaking to the Cossacks.

"Cossacki," he addressed them, "the *khorunjy* is no longer your leader. But a leader you must have, whom do you choose?"

Voices broke out all along the front and rear rank, dominated by the tones of the men who had remained loyal originally and the men whom Dobell had released as prisoners, among whom the voice of Pavlo Stephanovitch rang the loudest. Out of the clamor a cry began to be picked up and repeated, more and more voices swinging into its refrain.

"We want you, Your Honor!" they shouted in unison, again and again until the whole *sotnia* was repeating the words. Dobell raised his hand for silence. The clamor died down instantly.

"So be it!" he agreed, "but if I am to be your leader you know well what I will require of you, instant obedience, unswerving loyalty and death as the punishment of traitors."

"Death to traitors!" roared the *sotnia* with one voice.

"Chorashaw! Good!" nodded Dobell, then sat straight in his saddle and came to salute.

"Zdorvo, Cossacki! (Good health to you, Cossacks!)" he called.

The rank stiffened into instant attention. From the right of the line broke a sustained barking roar of voices. It traveled swiftly along the sotnia, front and rear until every man was shouting the long, drawn-out greeting and salute:
(We wish you good health, Your Honor!)

The echoes of their voices had not had time to die away when the long lances dipped their scarlet pennons. A cheer broke out from the *sotnia.*

The cheering died down and Dobell found the eyes of the men fixed on something behind him and turned around to find Sergeant Duggan standing in rear of his horse.

"You sure got these guys eatin' out of your hand, Dobie!" said Duggan, "but, listen, guy, the old Colonel back there wants you to report to him right away!"

CHAPTER XVI

"....NOT AS A SPY!"

DOBELL nodded gravely and turned once more to his Cossacks. Calling the black bearded chief non-commissioned officer he gave him some instructions. The man saluted and turning about to the men barked forth an order. The *sotnia* swung from line into column and headed for the village. With Duggan walking beside him, Dobell rode towards the American camp, with the voices of the Cossacks again raised in song coming to him across the fields.

"Gawd! If it ain't Dobie, all rigged out like a Rusky officer!" yelled a soldier, while others took up the cry, but aside from waving to them, he paid no attention but rode up to the orderly then, dis-

mounted and tethered his horse and strode in.

Seated there behind a table was Captain Hamilton. Beside him was the heavily built colonel with his shock of iron gray hair. The fellow examined Dobell with his harsh blue eyes, as he saluted and stood to attention.

"Hm!" the colonel growled, "so you are the young man who saved the American force here. Very fine, very fine, Private Dobell!" the colonel looked at him quizzically taking in the details of Cossack uniform and weapons, "but now perhaps you'll be kind enough to tell me who you really are!" As the colonel looked him over a faintly puzzled look came into his face. It was as though the older officer was trying to recapture some elusive memory, "haven't I met you somewhere before?" he asked at last.

"Yes, Colonel Beach," responded Dobell, quietly, "the last time I had the pleasure of meeting you was at a reception in the White House. I was with my uncle, Colonel Godolphin, of the 28th United States Cavalry."

The gray haired colonel slapped his knee. His manner underwent an instant change.

"Of course, of course," he cried, "you were staying at the Russian Embassy. I remember exactly. But, you were wearing a different uniform then. How does it happen that you have an American uniform under the Russian coat?"

Dobell shrugged his shoulders.

"Why not?" he asked, "the revolution came. My father and mother disappeared, I knew no other profession than soldiering and I happened to have been born in America which gave me rights as a citizen...."

"Of course, of course," agreed the colonel, drumming thoughtfully on the table. "And you don't know where your father or mother are? No? That is too bad. Didn't you have an older brother also?"

"Yes sir," Dobell replied a little stiffly, "but he disappeared when I was very young. His name is never spoken in my home."

"Yes, yes, I remember now, he got into some sort of trouble didn't he? I'm sorry for mentioning it...." the colonel continued to drum thoughtfully on the table, as though thinking of something else. Presently he turned to Captain Hamilton. "Would you be good enough to excuse us for a moment, Captain?" he asked, "I wish to speak to this young man in private."

The captain was scarcely outside the door when the colonel leaned forward tensely.

"I am very sorry for your misfortunes and all that," he said, "but there may be a future for you in aiding us if you will. You speak Russian perfectly. You have the confidence of these people. We can use your talents in the Intelligence. Supposing I put you on detached service..."

"As a spy?" interrupted Dobell, distastefully.

"No, not a spy, a liaison and intelligence officer to maintain contact with the White Russian forces. Of course, I'll have you commissioned as a captain. Here's the situation. The Americans are very anxious to insure the loyalty of the Siberian Cossacks. There are reports that both the Trans-Baikal and the Ussuri Cossacks are wavering. Reports of mutinies here and there have come to us."

"Yes, sir," Dobell smiled. He had seen one of those mutinies.

"It is first of all essential that the Cossack officers be won over to us. Secondly we have reliable reports that the disaffection amongst the Cossacks has all been caused by the activities of one man. We want that man located and captured!"

"His name is what?" asked Dobell.

"He is known as Kangoi, the Red Czar," stated the colonel and missed the sudden, sharp, penetrating look which the younger man shot at him.

"These two things are of heavy importance to the Allied cause in Siberia. You know the situation here. The Americans are heavily outnumbered by one of the other allies. If this ally switches to the German side, which it is liable to do if any

more bad news comes from the western front, we would still have an ace in the hole if we could count on the loyalty of the thousands of Siberian Cossacks. Do you see how important your help may be?"

"I see it," agreed Dobell gravely.

"You will give us your aid?" pressed the colonel.

"I will give you all the aid within my power," returned Dobell steadily after a moment's pause.

"Good!" exclaimed the colonel heartily.

"What is it that you want me to do first?" asked the younger man.

"First I will telegraph to Vladivostock immediately, directing that you be commissioned as a captain in the American army. The second thing is that you shall join the Ussuri Cossacks who are stationed at a place called Red River, near Khabarovsk. Once you have done all you can with them and their leader, Ataman Kalmikoff, you can go on to Chita and Ekaterinberg and join the Trans-Baikal Cossacks of Ataman Seminoff."

The colonel studied Dobell's figure, trim in the gray, full skirted Cossack coat. "Why don't you wear that uniform? We need say nothing about your being in the American army and you could be a Cossack officer among the Cossacks. It would simplify your task."

"Yes," agreed Dobell, "and I could also continue to command my *sotnia* of Cossacks."

"Your *sotnia* of Cossacks?" the colonel looked startled, "do you mean to say you have a *sotnia* of Cossacks? You certainly are a most surprising person! Where did you pick them up?"

"Oh, I gathered them in. They are Cossacks of the Don, an independent body here in Siberia, owing allegiance to no Siberian ataman. They have elected me their leader." Dobell stated all this as casually as though he were speaking of the weather. The colonel looked at him in amazement.

"Very unusual I must say, very unusual," stated the colonel, an old Regular Army man, quite unaccustomed to having privates of infantry turn up casually in command of a hundred Cossacks or so, "so much the better, so much the better," he said at last, "as the commander of an independent *sotnia* you will be given a royal welcome. But where are these Cossacks now, and who pays for their rations and forage and keeps them equipped?"

"They are in the village, billeted in the houses of the peasants. So far, I should say that they have helped themselves to such rations and forage as they have needed. From now on I will pay for their needs myself."

Again the colonel looked startled.

"You! Where are you going to get the money? Hasn't your family lost all its great wealth in the revolution?"

"Not all, sir," returned Dobell, "if you will be good enough to take this to the Vladivostock branch of the Yokahama Specie Bank for me they will honor it." He drew forth a worn envelope from his pocket, from which he extracted a typewritten letter with many pen and ink notations and several seals upon it.

The colonel glanced over the paper and his eyes grew wide in astonishment.

"Whew!" he whistled, "that is a pretty sizeable letter of credit. How much of this shall I cash and how shall I send it to you?"

Dobell told him, asking that the money be sent in gold by trusted messenger to his new station at Red River. It was plain to be seen that the colonel was very much impressed.

"But there's no need your waiting the arrival of your commission as captain," he said to Dobell, "you can leave tomorrow, if you like and march immediately to Red River. Is there anything else I can do to help you?"

"Yes, sir," said Dobell, "I'd like to have two men from this company accompany me. I know two dependable men, Sergeant Duggan and Private Daniels. May I have them?"

"Certainly. Certainly," returned the colonel, making a note on a pad of paper, "I'll arrange that immediately. Get ready tonight to move out tomorrow. Remember that your main job is to get this fellow,

Kangoi. He must be brought in dead or alive!"

The colonel rose and grasped Dobell's hand, "go on down and get your Cossacks ready, and good-bye and good luck."

Dobell saluted gravely and left the tent. Outside, Sergeant Duggan was waiting for him.

"Listen, Dobie," said Duggan, "I just been down with them Cossacks and they asked me to tell you that there's a guy come in who wants to see you."

"Who is he?" asked Dobell, absently.

"He's some kind of a Russky officer. I seen him sittin' in the room down there. He's all dolled up in a Russky uniform," and Duggan pointed down towards the village.

CHAPTER XVII

THREATS

A RUSSIAN officer waiting to see him? Dobell wracked his mind, trying to reason out who the unknown might be but he could come to no conclusion. As they strode towards the log *izba* indicated by Duggan, Dobell took occasion to inform the sergeant of the projected duty with the Cossacks at Red River, telling him to get horses and weapons ready for himself and Daniels.

Duggan did not look in the least surprised.

"Good enough," he commented, "only I'm hopin' that guy Daniels won't go stubbin' his toe on this vodka they throw around so promiscuous. You know how he is, Dobie, he's gotta be drinkin' up all the hard liquor in sight or he ain't happy."

"Yes?" Dobell grinned, and then with a perfectly grave face, "but, of course, you never touch the stuff, Duggan."

"Only when I got a cold," returned Duggan hastily, but changed the subject without further ado, "how long do you suppose we'll be gone?"

"From a few days to a few months, I don't know," answered the other as they moved towards the log *izba* around which a group of his Cossacks were gathered.

As they arrived within a few yards of the Cossacks a non-commissioned officer barked out some command and every Cossack soldier within earshot leaped to instant attention, standing in the strained and quivering attitude of the Russian soldier paying respect to his officer, while the non-commissioned officer rapidly droned out the words of the required oral greeting. Dobell returned the salute and walked into the *izba,* followed by Duggan.

From the table arose a Russian in officer's uniform. He was a man of about thirty-five or forty, with hair beginning to gray over his temples and exceedingly sharp and penetrating eyes. Over his spare, lean figure was draped a cloak which he threw back, revealing the orders on his blouse, among which shone the orange and black ribbons of the Order of St. George and the gold bordered red of the Order of St. Anne. The gold lace on his collar and cuffs proclaimed him to have been an officer of the Guards, while the dark green blouse faced with yellow and the blue breeches designated his regiment as the crack Preobajenski, that famous regiment of the Imperial Guard of which the Czar himself had been Colonel-in-Chief.

"Greetings, Michael Petrovich," he said respectfully, clicking his spurs together and bowing from the waist.

"Greetings to you, Gregori Fedorovich," returned Dobell, bowing formally in turn and likewise addressing the newcomer by his first name and his father's name, so that in effect he called him, "Gregori, son of Feodor," according to the custom between equals in Russia. But there was noticeable about Dobell's salutation, a decided lack of warmth and a decidedly formal sort of cold courtesy that did not argue much pleasure in the meeting.

The Guards officer shot a sudden look at Sergeant Duggan who had pulled up a chair to the rough board table.

"This is Sergeant Duggan, an American soldier attached to my command," Dobell made the introduction. Duggan, not understanding the words, nevertheless saw that he was being introduced and rose and shook hands with the strange officer.

"Pleased to meetcha," he mumbled and relapsed into his chair and into silence again as Dobell raised his voice and ordered a Cossack orderly at the door to bring a bottle and glasses. The glasses were duly filled and the three men toasted each other. Not until this rite was performed did the Guards officer continue his conversation.

"It is very confidential business that brings me here," he answered at last, then, motioning towards Duggan with his eyebrows, "he does not understand Russian? No? Good! I come to you with an offer."

"An offer? Who from and what?" asked Dobell.

"Well, you see it is like this," said the other, "there are many of us in Siberia who are tired of the allied domination of this beautiful country. We are organizing against the Allies. So far we've had great success and have gathered great strength. But we are desirous of more strength. We want you to join us."

Dobell listened to this in impassive silence.

"Yes?" his voice came inquiringly at last, "and who is to lead this new force?"

The Guards officer stared about him quickly and lowered his voice.

"A leader has already been selected. He is the most powerful individual in Siberia today. He has done more against the Allied cause than anyone east of Lake Baikal. Moreover he has a large following. I say he has been selected but I must say he has not been attached to our cause."

"And who is this wonderful individual?" asked Dobell dryly.

"Kangoi!"

THERE was a silence for a space. From outside the cheerful talk and laughter of the Cossacks floated in through the open door. The orderly silently refilled the glasses. Dobell did not show by any change of expression that the name meant anything to him. At last he shook his head.

"No," he said, "I'm sorry, but I am afraid that I cannot join you."

The other man raised his eyebrows.

"That would be very unfortunate," he answered smoothly, "of course we have to work on the principle that those who are not with us are against us."

"It will have to remain at that, then," Dobell shrugged his shoulders.

"And you would be especially advantageous to us due to your power and name and influence with the Americans," the Guards officer went on, "and especially dangerous to us for the same reason...." the voice of the Guards officer was suavity itself but his eyes had grown hard and bright.

"That is unfortunate but so it will have to remain," returned Dobell quietly. The Guards officer rose and bowed.

"But we will not consider the matter closed entirely yet," he stated, "I am very much afraid that means will be taken to insure you joining our cause....ah, pressure, as it were, will be brought to bear upon you that may lead to a change of heart."

Dobell rose also and bowed the Guards officer out. The two parted with mutual expressions of courtesy but there was a flicker in the eyes of the Guards officer and the growl of a threat in his voice as he took his leave.

"What's it all about?" asked Duggan, twirling his empty glass as the Guards officer mounted his horse outside and clattered away.

"Oh, nothing, except that news travels fast," returned Dobell cryptically, and would give no further information but called the orderly and asked him some questions.

"Yes, Your Honor," answered the Cossack, "they are both here, the *khorunjy* and his sister. They stay at the priest's house by the church but they leave this afternoon for Red River. The *khorunjy* is going to join the forces of Ataman Kalmikoff."

Dobell digested this information in silence. So Dimitri and Tanya would both be at Red River! This was not going

to make his task any easier and he shook his head over the prospect.

As he sat there in thoughtful silence a horse stopped outside the door and someone strode up on the porch. His orderly answered the question of the newcomer and shortly brought in a letter in a small, square envelope.

As Dobell's eyes fell upon him he turned slightly pale.

With trembling fingers he opened the envelope and read the letter. Duggan, engaged in pouring himself another drink, turned as he heard a faint groan, to see Dobell, gripping the table, his knuckles white with the intensity of the pressure and his eyes staring into space with all the haunting hopelessness of the eyes of a lost soul.

CHAPTER XVIII

DANGEROUS ALLIES

DUGGAN paused, his glass half filled and stared in astonishment at Dobell's anguished face.

"What's the matter, Dobie? Bad news?" he asked solicitously.

Shaking his head Dobell made no response but put the letter back in its small square envelope and placed it carefully in the inside pocket of his coat. Silently he continued to stare into space as though unaware of the other's presence.

There followed the necessity of inspecting arms and ammunition and securing wagons, and so busy was Dobell that the day passed swiftly. At about four p. m. a *troika* hauled by three horses drove up with a clatter to the priest's house. As it stopped Dimitri and Tanya came forth.

Dobell was busy examining the weapons of a group of Cossacks just a few paces from the door. He straightened up from this and looked full into Tanya's eyes. The girl threw up her head, staring past and through him as though he did not exist.

"Hurry, Dimitri," she called clearly to her brother, "else we will miss the train and have to spend another night in too close proximity to traitors."

That night a party was given by the American soldiers in honor of Dobell's promotion. A pair of silver captain's bars were loaned by Captain Hamilton for the occasion and were pinned on the shoulders of the olive drab blouse which Dobell wore instead of his usual Cossack uniform.

Beer and vodka were in evidence and Duggan and Daniels were specializing on this part of the feast.

"You sure are gran' ol' guy, jush a fine noble ol' wreck, Duggan," commended Daniels, "but you knowsh blame well tha ya cant'sh carry your likker!"

Duggan snorted disdainfully and turned a cold and frosty eye upon his critic.

But whatever remark Duggan was about to make was interrupted by a burst of music from the porch where the singers of the Cossack *sotnia*, some eight or ten men, had gathered with *balalaikas* and accordions to do honor to their commander with their music. They were hospitably invited inside by the Americans and helped to drinks and food.

Dobell had managed to throw off his depression and as the Cossacks paused for rest he seized a *balalaika*, swept his fingers across the strings and broke into the Song of the Scarlet Lances:

The trumpet blares across the steppes,
Send word to the waiting squadron,
And rise like clouds of falcons gray,
From Russian lands at break of day
And hold the Tartar hordes at bay
To fight the wolves at dawn!

As his powerful baritone rolled out the last words the Cossacks stamped and crashed in on the chorus:

Make haste gray wolves from out the North,
Make haste ere foes be gone
The scarlet lances call us forth
To ride with wolves at dawn!

The song was echoed from outside where the rest of the *sotnia* had gathered and they roared forth the chorus so that the very houses of the village shook.

IT WAS certain that there were many red eyes and headaches on the march the next morning, with Duggan and Daniels leading the mortality list. Duggan rode beside Dobell, the two of them ex-

changing few words as they rode along. From time to time Duggan glanced at Dobell's profile, finding it pale and set with his eyes brooding and sombre, staring straight to the front and the sergeant wondered why his ordinarily cheerful friend was so suddenly downcast and serious.

They passed few people on the road except the dead in the swamps of Spasskoi, still redolent with the rotting flesh of the victims of the machine guns of the Japanese cavalry.

At last they came to the *stanitza* at Red River, arriving after nightfall. A Cossack officer in the gold and blue of the Ussuri met and escorted them to barracks and quarters, inviting Dobell and the two Americans to the officers' mess for a dinner.

"My Gawd!" groaned Duggan to Daniels, "have I gotta watch you get yourself plastered again?"

Daniels stared at him morosely;

"There ain't no need for you to be gettin' plastered again, Duggan," he commented acidly, "you're still carryin' the load you picked up last night!"

They were being ushered into a hall where Cossack orderlies aided them with their coats and hats and were led into a large room filled with the buzz of conversation and clink of glasses and brilliant with the blue and gold of the officers of the Ussuri Cossacks.

A silence fell on the room as Dobell entered and stood for a second, a trim figure in his gray, full skirted uniform of the Cossacks of the Don. Then a joyous shout went up from one of the officers and a tall, fair haired young man hurried forward and threw his arms around Dobell.

"Alexieff!" Dobell's voice was filled with surprise and delight as the two friends greeted each other. Then there came forward a gray haired officer wearing the three small stars of a *pod-polkovnick,* a lieutenant-colonel, who bowed to Dobell and introduced him to the other officers.

The newcomers were quickly led to a great table, heavily laden with plates of red and black caviar, with *tchorni kleb,* the Russian black bread and butter, with all manner of smoked and dried fish and salads and innumerable bottles of vodka and small glasses.

"Some chow!" commented Daniels, looking with a critical eye on the table laden with the traditional Russian *zakuska.* "Ain't they got nothin' substantial to eat?"

"Aw, quit your beefin' and stoke up," advised Duggan, "if they want to call this truck a meal, why that's their business! Believe me, I'm hungry an' I'm goin' to put myself on the outside of a square feed!" He was as good as his word and Daniels followed his example, and the two busily stowed away all they could eat, washing it down with glasses of vodka.

At last they sighed with repletion, accepting the long tubed Russian cigarettes offered them, and lighting them up. Scarcely had they drawn the first puff when the party of officers began to drift towards the hallway and across it to a large banqueting hall.

Entering this, Duggan and Daniels stared at the sight before them. They had eaten so much that there was scarcely room for a mouthful more and here was a great table spread with rich soups and great roasts and heavy meat pastries and all manner of desserts!

"An' you're the orey-eyed nit-wit that tells me to stoke up an' eat hearty!" growled Daniels, staring darkly at Duggan. Duggan shook his head helplessly, uttering not a word in his own defense.

"To think they shot Abraham Lincoln and a guy like you still lives!" growled Daniels, as they pulled out their chairs. But Duggan had turned and was looking back at the doorway.

"If that ain't that guy, Dimitri, the former officer of them Cossacks of ourn, I'll eat my hat!" he exclaimed, and Daniels turned to gaze likewise.

It was undoubtedly Dimitri in the doorway, but he paid no attention to the American soldiers, he was busy pointing out Dobell at the other end of the table, to the man at his side. As Duggan's eyes fell on this man he suddenly remembered him.

For it was none other than the Guards officer, dressed in the green and yellow facings of the Preobajenski Guard regiment, who had interviewed Dobell back in the village.

CHAPTER XIX

ACCUSED!

IF DOBELL saw the arrival of Dimitri and observed his whispered conversation with the Guards officer in the doorway, he gave no sign. He was placed at the right hand of the gray-haired lieutenant-colonel and all of the company seated themselves with a cheerful clattering of chairs. Dimitri and the Guards officer found themselves places at the far end of the table.

The Cossack orderlies passed in and out of the kitchen, bearing steaming dishes. Glasses were filled and refilled. Voices grew louder and cheeks more flushed as the drinks were interspersed with food, heavy soup replaced by rich meat pastries and wine brought on with venison and cold fowl. Duggan and Daniels sat crushed and dispirited before their heaping plates.

It was Dobell who added to their discomfort. He had watched them performing at the table in the other room and had kept an eye on them since. Leaning forward, he spoke to them in English.

"It is considered very insulting to your hosts to leave anything on your plates at a Russian dinner!" he informed them without the trace of a smile. The two stared wild eyed at their plates, looked desperately at each other and slowly began to force down the unwelcome food, turning a sort of pale green in the effort.

When the laughter and talk was at its loudest it was suddenly stilled by the gray haired lieutenant-colonel who rapped loudly for silence. In the succeeding stillness he rose in his place and looked about the table.

"Gentlemen—officers!" he began in musical and flowing Russian. "We are here to welcome into the Ussuri Cossacks a man whose name is known to all of you. I wish to welcome him on behalf of all of us here and on behalf of the glorious Cossack division we represent and to state that we are proud to have him with us. Gentlemen—officers, I propose the health of Michael Petrovich! *Vashe darovia,* Michael Petrovich!" The colonel raised his glass to Dobell.

There was a clatter and rattle as chairs were shoved back and the Cossack officers sprang to their feet, glasses in hand.

Again the lieutenant-colonel rapped for order and in the silence gave a command. There was a stir at the end of the table and three young officers rose and filed out of the dining room. The remaining men sat silent at the table, waiting.

In a moment the door was opened. Every officer there sprang to his feet and stood rigidly at attention. All clatter of dishes and movement of waiters and orderlies stilled itself as if by magic as every eye was fixed on the entrance.

In the doorway gleamed the silver and ebony of the Ussuri *bunchuk,* the Cossack equivalent of a battle standard, a sort of heavy mace carried by the Cossacks in lieu of a battle standard, being indeed the descendant of the nine-tailed yak banner carried by the hordes of Ghengis Khan.

It was carried by one officer and the two others guarded it on either side with drawn swords.

"Here with all officers assembled and the *bunchuk* present," said the lieutenant-colonel solemnly, "we welcome you into the Cossacks of the Ussuri as a blood brother! Gentlemen—officers! your swords!"

There was a sudden dry whir of steel as every saber left its scabbard. The blades glittered in the candle light and a great shout went up from the assembled officers, a long sustained cheer that testified to the genuineness of Dobell's welcome as a brother officer of the Cossacks of the Ussuri.

The *bunchuk* was carried out again. The talk and laughter broke forth once more. A group of Cossack soldiers all shiny with soap and water and neat in

clean shirts and uniforms were led in by a Cossack sergeant of portentous gravity who cleared his throat, gave the key and started them in song.

It was Alexieff who jumped to his feet in a lull of the singing and called on Dobell. The other officers added their entreaties. Taking a *balalaika,* Dobell sang song after song with officers and soldiers moaning melodiously along behind him.

"Them's awful sad songs he's singin' tonight," criticised Daniels.

"They ain't no sadder 'n I feel," grunted Duggan looking at the table and the food on the plates with very much the same enthusiasm as a sea sick man views a piece of salt pork.

Daniels was not the only one who noticed the lack of gaiety in Dobell's songs for Alexieff, his friend, the blonde young giant, remarked upon it to the Guards officer who wore the uniform of the Preobajenski.

This one nodded his head.

"He has good reason to be sad," he remarked cryptically.

"What do you mean by that?" asked Alexieff, puzzled. The Guards officer shook his head. Dimitri standing nearby glared sullenly at Dobell at the other end of the table and spoke up.

"It's plain enough what he means," growled the *khorunjy.*

"Still I do not understand," replied Alexieff.

The wiry, piercing eyed Guards officer laid a warning hand on Dimitri's arm but the young Cossack *khorunjy* flung it off impatiently.

"He means nothing else except that Michael Petrovich is a traitor, and that the whole world will soon know it!" said Dimitri.

Alexieff stiffened and his eyes widened in anger and astonishment. A slow, angry flush began to spread up to the roots of his blonde hair and his hand dropped to his sword hilt.

"I will have to ask you to retract those words," he said coldly. "As an old friend of Michael Petrovich, I cannot allow such a statement to pass unchallenged. Do you retract them?"

"I do not!" came back Dimitri, hotly.

"Then it becomes my painful duty to chastise you," said Alexieff and reached forward to strike Dimitri across the face with his open palm. Someone seized his arm and the others held Dimitri.

IN THE inexplicable manner that is the fashion of such things, everyone in the large dining room became instantly aware of the scene between the two officers. All talk and laughter stilled itself. In the silence Dimitri's words rang forth hotly as he stood there, pale with anger.

"You will afford me satisfaction, Khorunjy Alexieff?" he blazed.

Alexieff bowed coldly.

"The sooner the better," he said.

"Gentlemen, gentlemen," came the voice of the gray haired lieutenant-colonel, "what is the quarrel about?"

"He has insulted my dearest friend," replied Alexieff stiffly, "and has refused to retract his words!"

The lieutenant-colonel turned inquiringly to Dimitri. "I told him the truth," Dimitri's voice was passionate. "I told him his so-called friend is a traitor and I could tell him more . . . ."

"Your language is intemperate, Dimitri Pavlovich," responded the lieutenant-colonel. "Can you not regain control of your temper and assist me in settling this matter amicably?"

"I have no quarrel with Alexieff," growled Dimitri sullenly. "My quarrel is with the so-called friend he attempts to defend. I accuse that man of being a traitor, of trafficking with the Bolsheviki, of being here amongst us as a spy!"

His words rang out through the banqueting hall accusingly. The waiters and orderlies listened wide-eyed, until someone motioned them out of the room. Dobell stood quietly by the fireplace, leaning against the wall, smoking a long tubed Russian cigaret and watching Dimitri with impassive eyes.

Dobell slowly advanced from his posi-

tion by the wall until he stood in front of Dimitri.

"And who is that man?" he asked quietly.

"You know well who it is! Gentlemen, I charge Michael Petrovich with being a traitor!" Dimitri pointed an accusing finger at Dobell. Every eye in the room turned on him.

CHAPTER XX

"THE STEPPES ARE CRUEL"

ALEXIEFF forced a step towards Dimitri.

"You lie!" he shouted and raised his arm as though to strike. It was Dobell who restrained him.

"Quiet, old friend, it is my quarrel," he said and turned on Dimitri.

"It goes without saying that you lie in every word you utter, Dimitri Pavlovich," he said quietly, "but now that your lie has found utterance you must back it up with proof or retract it."

"Proof! Proof! I have no proof except that I have seen you with my own eyes dressed, first as an American soldier, then again as a Cossack officer and once again in company with the Bolsheviki, carousing and singing and on the best of terms with them . . ."

"And upon that slight foundation you dare to call me a traitor!" Dobell's face was set and grim. "Are the Americans our enemies that to wear their uniform is proof of treachery? And did not my carousing and singing with the Bolsheviki result in the release of your captured *sotnia* who were their prisoners! You have not offered proof to support your accusation. There are only two courses open to you, to retract or to suffer the consequences."

"I repeat that you are a traitor, Michael Petrovich!" Dimitri replied hotly.

"That is affirmation and not proof," said Dobell, "but so be it. There is only one thing left to do. You will please have your seconds call upon mine immediately." He turned away but his shoulders sagged a little wearily.

THEY were on the ground early the next morning. Not only Dimitri and his two seconds but two doctors as well were waiting when Dobell arrived with Alexieff and Karkoff. Some time was spent in selecting a level piece of ground, in examining the weapons, which were triangular duelling swords, and in agreeing upon the conditions of the fight. Upon this latter point it was decided that the combat should continue until one or the other of the duelists was seriously wounded.

All was ready at last. The two principals removed their coats and stood forth in breeches, boots and undershirts, shivering a little from the chill of the morning air.

As is the custom, the seconds made a last attempt at reconciliation but both men shook their heads stubbornly.

As Dobell took his position and bent the steel shaft of his weapon to test it, his eye noted a cloaked figure half-concealed on the edge of the fringe of trees which surrounded the clearing. It was the figure of a woman and glancing more intently he saw that it was Tanya, Dimitri's sister, who stood there. At sight of her his jaw set itself into grimmer lines as he stood ready and on guard.

Two of the seconds stood with crossed swords between the waiting duelists.

"Gentlemen, are you ready?" asked the senior of the seconds. Dobell and Dimitri nodded.

"Then God have mercy upon you! Commence!" said the senior of the seconds, and both stepped back as the two swords leaped towards each other with a harsh rasp of steel on steel.

The blades gleamed like silver in the early morning sunlight. After the first lunge, the two swordsmen played cautiously, each feeling out the other's strength and skill. Back and forth the blades slid delicately, along each others length, with Dimitri shifting from *tierce* to *quarte* and back again, and Dobell

meeting each new trial with a faint flick of the wrist in *riposte*.

This Dimitri was no mean swordsman for suddenly he disengaged; then his blade slipped in and out like a living thing, now under, now over Dobell's guard in an effort at a double feint.

Dobell had found what he wanted to know. Having gauged his man he suddenly took the offensive, clearing his blade out of line, and following this up with a steady, remorseless attack driving resistlessly at Dimitri.

The place was silent except for the breathing of the two men, the rasp and whir of the blades and the occasional thud and stamp of a foot as one shifted or gave ground. Dobell could sense rather than see that cloaked figure at the edge of the clearing, a figure that had come nearer in its anxiety until Tanya stood only a few yards away in plain view, anxiously twisting and untwisting her fingers.

Once Dobell slipped on the wet grass and Dimitri's sword came through his guard, stabbing him lightly in the shoulder as he recovered, but he retorted with a swift *riposte* and lunged in *sixte* so viciously that Dimitri only saved himself by leaping backwards.

Following up his advantage, Dobell attacked brilliantly, his sword point darting in again and again, touching Dimitri now on the chest, now on the forearm and again on the neck, drawing blood each time.

Suddenly with a flick of his wrist he caught the tip of Dimitri's blade on his pommel and twisted it out of his opponent's grasp. The sword went flying through the air. The seconds leaped between the two men, crossing their weapons quickly before the unarmed man but Dobell lowered his point as his antagonist stumblingly retrieved his blade.

"Blood has been drawn," said Dobell, "and I for one am content to go no further." The seconds agreed instantly but Dimitri, his blade now recovered, shook his head in stubborn negative and took the position of guard once more.

Dobell sighed a little wearily as the seconds withdrew their blades. Again came the vicious rasp of steel on steel, but now Dobell was transformed into a coldly raging precise machine. His sword point flicked out like a snake's tongue, found an opening in Dimitri's guard and drove home, piercing the muscles of the upper arm until the blade stood out on the far side.

Dimitri's sword dropped to the ground as Dobell withdrew his blade, a regular and steady spurt of bright red blood followed the withdrawn steel and the doctors rushed forward. A half repressed scream came from the side of the small arena as Tanya caught sight of the wound.

Dobell turned away and handed his sword to Alexieff while Karkoff helped him into his coat. As his arms were half in and half out of his sleeves there came a sudden stinging blow across his face. He jerked loose and turned swiftly, blazing with anger and found himself looking into Tanya's eyes.

"You beast! You traitorous beast!" she cried and raised her hand as if to strike again. Dobell folded his arms and, white-faced, looked steadily into her eyes. She dropped her arm, her hand went up to her throat and she swayed for a second as though about to faint, recovering herself as Dobell bowed low and turned away.

BEING under the doctor's care, Dimitri was not at dinner at the officers' mess that night. The gaiety of the Cossack officers was in no whit disturbed by this, but it was a gaiety in which Dobell could take little part. Silent and thoughtful he sat at the table, eating his dinner perfunctorily and scarce tasting the food.

Sitting at the colonel's right he looked up as an orderly came to the door and spoke to one of the waiters. The waiter glanced at him and took from the messenger an envelope, carrying it around the table to Dobell. As his eyes fell on the small square envelope with its familiar handwriting, Dobell's face paled slightly.

Asking the lieutenant-colonel's permission, he opened and read the letter. No

one except the lieutenant-colonel noticed the quick look of anguish that came into his face, a look that was succeeded by a brooding thoughtfulness as Dobell stared into space.

"Is it bad news?" asked the lieutenant-colonel politely.

"Yes," returned Dobell, shortly, and then went on. "It is very bad news!" his eyes were haggard as he rose from his chair. "Colonel," he said steadily, "last night at this board I was accused of being a traitor and fought my accuser. Tonight, I must admit the accusation!"

Something strained and tense about the bearing of the standing officer stilled the buzz of conversation around the table and the room grew silent.

The lieutenant-colonel gazed at him in astonishment.

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"I mean exactly what I said, Colonel. Last night you received me as a blood brother of the Cossacks of the Ussuri. Tonight it becomes my duty to tell you that I leave you . . ."

"But that is easily arranged. You can come back . . ."

"No, Colonel, you do not understand. From this departure there can be no coming back. I leave you and the Cossacks of the Ussuri, to join the Bolsheviki!"

A shocked silence settled like a pall over the table. Every eye was fixed questioningly in startled amazement on Dobell's pale, tense face. The lieutenant-colonel was the first to speak.

"But Michael Petrovich!" he expostulated, "this is really a joke in very poor taste. And you trying to tell me seriously that you are deserting your colors, your caste, your rank and your kinsmen to join the filthy despoilers of Holy Mother Russia?"

"Colonel, I'm afraid that is the case!" came from Dobell's set, tense lips. The lieutenant-colonel's face flushed angrily. He half rose from his chair. There was a stir and mutter from the officers around the table.

Dobell bowed to the lieutenant-colonel and walked around the table, passing by where Alexieff sat, half turned in his chair. The colonel's voice rang out and Dobell halted.

"Stop!" shouted the gray haired officer, "is this decision of yours irrevocable, Michael Petrovich?"

"Irrevocable!" The word came from Dobell's lips like a sentence of doom.

Dobell bowed again and turned about, finding himself looking into Alexieff's face.

A sudden rush of tenderness for this old friend of his youth came over Dobell and he put out his hand in farewell.

Alexieff stared at him and through him as though he no longer existed.

"I do not shake hands with traitors," said the tall blonde young officer through white lips.

It was as though a whip had flicked Dobell. Slowly he turned about and with drooping shoulders and head sunk on his chest, he stumbled to the door.

The Cossack singers sighted him. Their faces lighted up in a smile of recognition. Their leader struck a chord on his *balalaika* and played the opening bars of the song which Dobell had sung the night before.

"Aye, it is true!" said Dobell and caught up the sad words of the song, singing the refrain ironically.

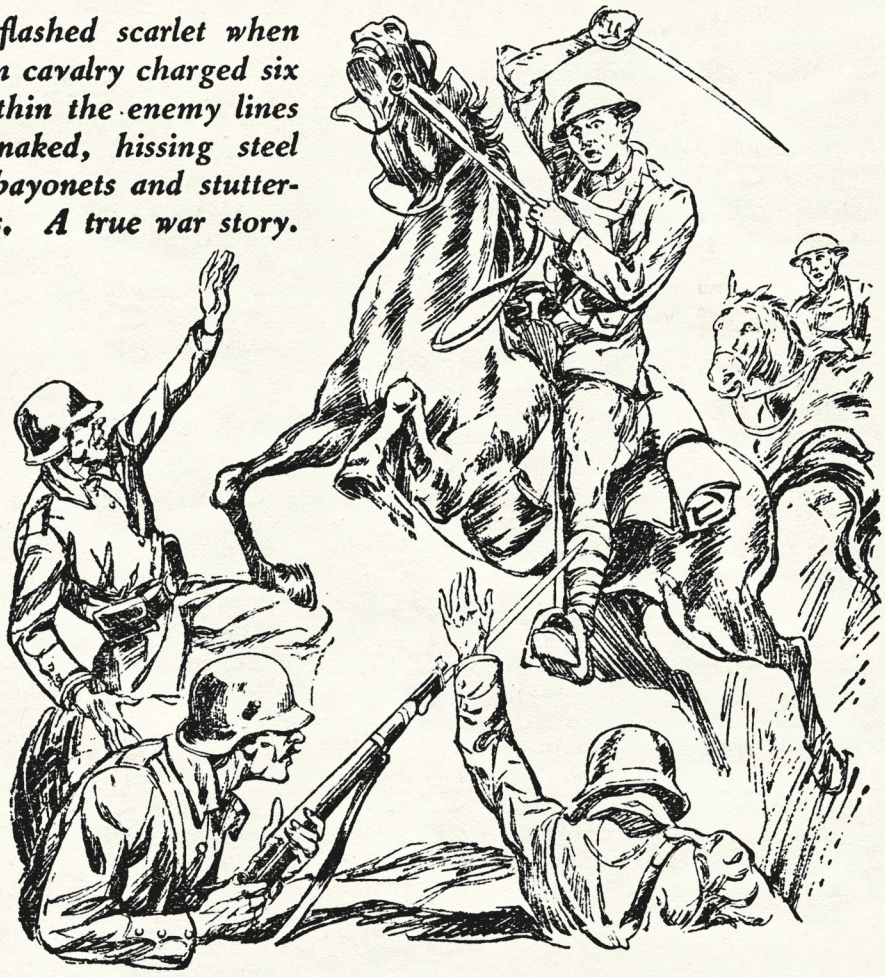
Inside the dining room the group of white-faced officers headed by the lieutenant-colonel sat rigid as Dobell's voice floated back to them:

"The steppes are cruel and heaven is far!"

The outer door closed.

What can be the explanation of Dobell's strange actions? Madman or sane, his actions bewilder and intrigue as he carves a danger path into the heart of Siberia to join the Bolsheviki. New thrills and startling revelations await you in next month's instalment. The further the story unravels the more mystifying the twists, the more entertaining becomes this story of the mysterious Yank who matches wits with Kangoi, the Red Czar of Russia.

Swords flashed scarlet when Canadian cavalry charged six miles within the enemy lines pitting naked, hissing steel against bayonets and stuttering guns. A true war story.



Charge of the

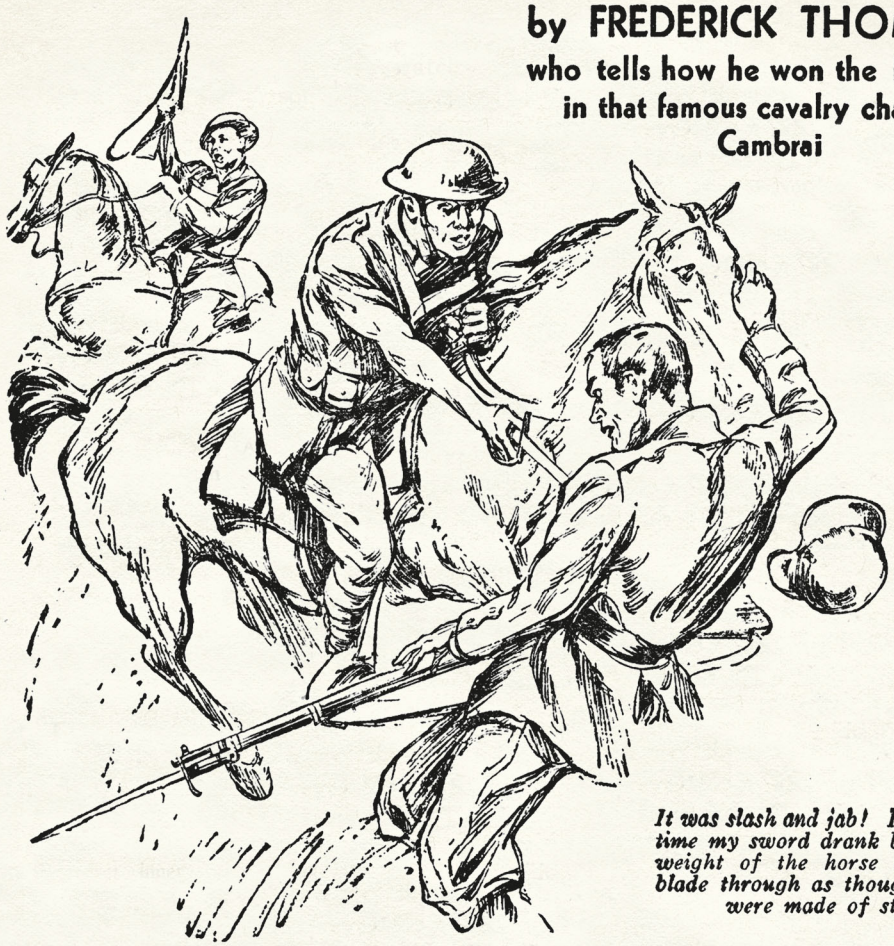
AT LAST, the Canadian cavalry would get a real chance to prove its mettle and staff officers would know for once and all whether the mounted detachments were to be reckoned with as a force in France.

It was the evening of November 19, 1917. Zero hour had been set at 6 a. m. on the following morning. The now famed surprise on Cambrai would be launched in a desperate blow at German morale and German-held territory.

We of the Fort Garry Horse were well primed and there was a heart-felt thrill in reading over and over our orders for the morrow: "To gallop for the German Corps Headquarters, situated somewhere to the east of Cambrai, doing all possible damage to the enemy's lines of communication enroute and, if possible, capture the H. Q. staff or, as an alternative, meet the First Cavalry Division which will circle the town from the north."

That was an order that has been seldom surpassed in the annals of direct combat instructions. It meant a flying

by FREDERICK THOMSON
who tells how he won the D. C. M. in that famous cavalry charge at Cambrai



It was slash and jab! For the first time my sword drank blood. The weight of the horse carried my blade through as though the man were made of straw.

Fort Garry Horse

gallop with swords drawn fifteen miles into enemy territory, provided the infantry would give us the proper co-operation.

Naturally we were excited and practically the whole night was spent in discussing the problems we would meet on the morrow. Several times before in the campaign, gaps had been opened in the enemy ranks with the mounted troops but the rough nature of the terrain had seriously handicapped the horses. The ground that stretched before us was level and free from the shell holes that marked so much of the front. Yes, we would be the center of many eyes on the morrow and the success or failure of our venture would be observed with interest up and down the entire front.

All night long we could hear the tanks being rolled into place for the charge that would take place the next day. There was the clanking of equipment, the curses of drivers and the heavy *putt-putt* of the tank exhaust. Our horses seemed to sense early that something was afoot and there was a restless beating of shod hoofs and

nickering of excited horses along the picket line.

PROMPTLY at 6 a. m. four hundred tanks waddled out into the open—straight for the enemy wire.

There was a slight mist but from our position we could see the tanks charge straight into the entanglements and sweep out huge sections of the wire with especially prepared hooks. Close behind and in long flexible lines came the infantry. We were next.

"Mount, half-sections right," was the order and we were on our way.

As the tanks and infantry were still heavily engaged, our movement forward was rather slow at first. But when Tunnel Trench was taken, and the open country beyond was in sight, we knew that for the day at least, open fighting was the rule.

The battered trenches proved awkward to negotiate mounted, as the broken edges fell from under the horses' hoofs and several of our men found themselves down under. The tanks had made a good job of the wire, and we proceeded fast.

About the middle of the morning, when the mist was rising and giving us good visibility, we passed through the cheering infantry. A clatter of machine gun fire met us as we galloped over the undulating fields towards the remnants of the German defenders. Bullets swished all 'round us but putting spurs into our mounts, we lay low over their necks, and galloped straight ahead.

We made no attempt to capture the Germans who jumped to their feet almost directly in our path, but left them for the infantry who were close behind us at this stage.

Some fast tanks were still on our right front. These were making direct for the only bridge over the St. Quentin canal at the village of Masnieres. As we trotted toward the railway that ran into the town, a large party of the enemy rushed up to reenforce the front line, lined the top of the low bank and poured heavy fire into our close packed ranks.

Without any hesitation, the squadron leader again waved the order 'Charge'.

Right at them we rode, yelling at the top of our voices. For a few minutes the Jerries held their ground, and some of the squadron came down. Men and horses all mixed up. But as we swiftly closed up on the Germans, their nerve gave; and, at the last minute, they broke away. But they left too late. We caught them on the railroad tracks, and treated them to a touch of cold steel.

For a few moments the isolated battle raged fast and furious, and then the enemy were all well accounted for. We did not leave one Jerry to tell the tale.

Mixed with the casualties were several of our own men. Our captain among them. That was the first time I had actually used my sword on a German. I was surprised at the ease with which the weight of the horse forced it through flesh.

Along the bank, one of the sergeants found a number of telephone wires and cut a long piece out of them, making it impossible to mend them again. While he was engaged with that job the wounded were being fixed up as well as possible, and started back over the ground we had won. Then again we got the order, "Mount, and march!"

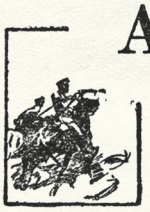
In the meantime, the remainder of the brigade had captured the village named Ribecourt which lay a couple of miles to our left. From there they went for Marcoing, while we headed at the gallop for Masnieres. At Masnieres we expected to find the 'whippit' tanks holding the bridge over the canal. They were holding it all right. One of the heavy machines had attempted to cross and deal with the enemy machine guns, and had broken through the planking.

Hiding our horses in the houses in our half of the village we took up positions along the edge of the canal, and tried to keep the German fire down while the working party mended the bridge. Several French civilians rushed out and lent a willing hand. A few of them were wounded; but for all that they seemed darned glad to see our uniforms after four years of seeing the gray drab of the Hun.

It must have been about noon or after

when we got over the bridge. We had to wait for that means of crossing the canal, because the thick, heavy mud in the bottom was covered with barbed wire, making it impossible to get horses through.

After some heroic work, particularly by two officers, we clattered over, and spurred through the other half of the town. We heard afterward that all Germans in the houses on that side surrendered as soon as they saw that we had won through to the outskirts. Most of the machine gun crews gave in as soon as we crossed the bridge.



AGAIN we had fine open country in front of us and the horses were as excited as the men, breasting the long rise with a swinging stride. Lieutenant Strachen took command of the squadron now and, as a party of the enemy engaged us from the road directly in front, again gave the order to charge. Into them we went, and as before, their nerve gave way as we closed in onto their position.

Had they stuck to their position, we might not have been able to force our horses against the blazing rifles and machine guns.

We were only about one hundred yards from the Germans when they tried to get to their feet, and run. I leaned well over, and caught a Jerry just in the act of pulling the trigger on the man next to me. Again I felt surprised at the ease with which my sword sank into his body. But, on the next try, I struck something hard in my antagonist's equipment; and the jar, coming before I got my arm and sword locked in line, wrenched my shoulder so that for a sick instant I thought it was dislocated. The shock sent the Jerry down under my horse and I don't think he was fit to fight any more. My speed took me well beyond the German position. Once out of the actual fight I tried to use my arm again, and was relieved to find that except for a feeling like a bad attack of the 'pins and needles', it was all right. As I turned to ride into the melee again,

THE AUTHOR

The above picture, drawn from a photograph, shows how Fred Thomson, 776 Nicola Street, Vancouver, B. C., appeared at the time of his adventure with the Fort Garry Horse.

I saw one of our men lift a Jerry's head clean from his shoulders with a single swishing cut. I had no chance to get into it again. The Germans who were not casualties flung down their arms, and yelled "Kamerad! Kamerad!" at the top of their voices.

After this it was necessary that the horses be swapped over. The wounded men took the wounded horses, and also provided the guard for the prisoners. It was the prisoners who carried the more serious cases.

This action held us up so long that we had expected the brigade to catch up with us. We were rather surprised not to see anything of them. However, the officers, after a short council of war, decided to push on and trust to luck that the brigade was coming up somewhere in the rear. It was expedient that some one was keeping our way open, as by this time we were a good four miles in front of the infantry.

Leaving Rumilly on our left we started off again towards Cambrai. Along the top of the hill in front of us, I could see a line of overhead telephone wires. So, without waiting for orders, I pulled off a

bit to the side and operated on them with my wire cutters. As I sat snipping the wires one by one I could see right down into Rumilly. And there, right in front of my eyes, was the one thing that every cavalry man has wished for and dreamed of since the charge of the light brigade. A battery of German artillery was in action, firing in a north-westerly direction.

Swinging my horse around, I spurred madly over the hill and waved the squadron to a halt. Lieutenant Strachen cantered over to see what I was so excited about.

Almost breathless with excitement, I told him about the battery. In a split second he had decided what to do. Keeping well over from the brow of the hill, we circled 'round, crossed two sunken lanes, and eventually came in sight of the enemy directly behind them.

"CHARGE!"

Again our awe inspiring yell echoed over the country; and for the third time that day we rode knee to knee into the enemy's ranks. The Germans were completely surprised. Some of them grabbed rifles and started to pump lead into us, while two crews in a haphazard sort of way attempted to swing their guns 'round to get us with shrapnel. We were too fast for them, however, and although their rifle bullets did fetch some of the squadron down, we galloped right in among the guns. For a few minutes the yells of the Canadians drowned everything else as we closed in.

As I passed the muzzle of one of the guns I leaned over and cut at a Jerry crouching underneath it. As my weight fell to one side, my horse, unable to stand the strain of the pace he was going, stumbled, and hit the wheel with a sickening crash. He threw me right over his head and I landed with a thud that drove all the breath from my body. With a quick twist, I rolled under the trail of the gun.

For a few seconds I lay still; gathering my scattered wits, and trying to get the air back into my lungs. Then, as a pair of heavy black boots came into my line of vision, I rolled out and dived for my sword which had fallen alongside the wheel. Even as I started towards him one of our men crashed into him and he went down under the horse's hoofs. I heard him scream once or twice but that was all.

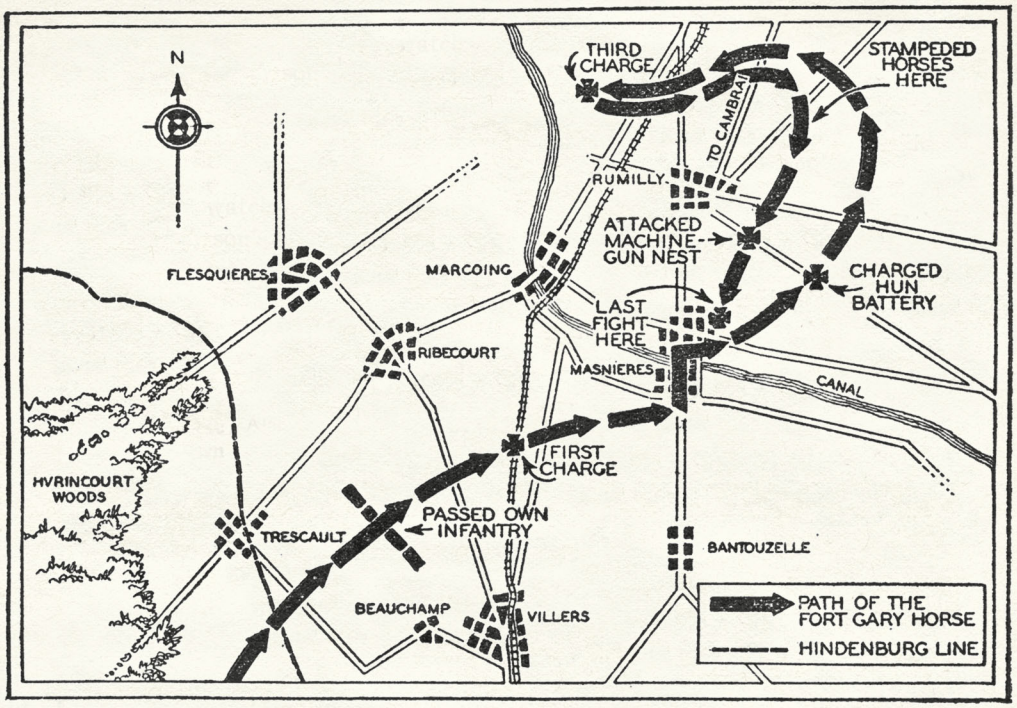
Another Jerry rushed me with a clubbed rifle, and as he swung at my head I lunged with all my weight. My sword point protruded about six inches beyond the back of his neck and he was dead before he reached the grass. But his rifle, thrown with his last bit of strength as he fell, caught me a bang under the ear and I went unconscious.

I CAME to eventually and found one of the men, Jim Graham, trying to force water down my throat with one hand, and holding his wet handkerchief to the side of my head with the other. Feeling a bit groggy I staggered to my feet.

None of the Germans had surrendered, and they had been cut down to the last man. Not one was left to tell the tale.

A man had been sent to the top of the hill to see if there was any sign of the brigade's coming, but on his return had reported that no English or Canadian troops were in sight. This put us in a peculiar position. The trouble at Masnieres, at the bridge, and the action we had been in this side of it, had delayed us considerably and we were far behind schedule time if we were going to meet the other division to the north of Cambrai. There was no use of the advance guard going on if the main body had gone in some other direction and, after some discussion, it was decided that we had better find some good cover and attempt to get definite news of what was happening behind us. Accordingly we started off for one of the sunken lanes that we had crossed while circling the German battery.

Suddenly, away to our right, a couple of horsemen were seen galloping towards us. At first we were not sure if they were friend or enemy. But as they drew closer, we saw that they were men from the Canadian brigade. They had orders for us to get back to our own lines if possible.



The above map portrays graphically the stupendous adventure of the Canadian cavalry. Penetrating the famed Hindenburg line, the Fort Garry Horse swept ahead of their own troops, engaged in five charges, wiped out an artillery emplacement and fought their way back to the delayed infantry on foot.

That 'if possible' sounded rather ominous to me. And so it was. Apparently, the battle to the north of us had not been so successful as our part of it had been. The tanks, and infantry combined had failed to dislodge the Germans from a small place called Flesquieres which was indeed a strong position. Therefore, when the battle did not materialize according to program, the entire cavalry breakthrough had been canceled. Our squadron however, had gotten away too quickly to be stopped.

This bit of news rather dampened our enthusiasm. It was one thing to be the victorious advance guard to a well-mounted and heavily armed brigade, but it was something a bit different to be one lone squadron about six miles inside the German line with no supports around. And of course we were not up to strength now. All told I think we only numbered about fifty-five or sixty men.

Making ourselves as comfortable as the circumstances allowed we fell to discussing our hopes of getting back. After conferring with the other officers, Lieutenant Strachen decided that we would wait until dusk, then stampede our horses farther into the German lines. Under cover of the darkness and mist we would fight our way back to the canal. The two messengers reported that the brigade was waiting at the same place to help us re-cross the bridge. Although the men did not like the idea of losing their horses (no cavalryman ever does) all had to agree that in the dark they would be more of a hindrance than a help because of the noise they would make.

We were nervous at first that we might be attacked as we lay in the sunken lane. But the evening slowly dragged along and gradually it began to get dark.

At last we got the order to get the horses ready to start. Fixing the reins up so that they would not drag on the ground, and shortening the stirrup leathers, we

gave the animals a good start off. Away they galloped into the night with a dull drumming on the short, firm turf.

Carrying drawn swords as well as rifles, we marched back over the ground we had covered so impetuously that afternoon.

For the first several miles we made good time. Then, as we were approaching the road on which we had charged the enemy earlier in the day, we heard somebody talking. Lieutenant Cowan, myself and six others crept up and found about twenty Germans busily digging a machine gun emplacement in the bank of the road.

Stealthily the squadron closed up to us. Then, with a concentrated rush, we closed in on the Huns.

This time there was no shouting as we jumped down the bank almost on their shoulders. Silence was golden, and the Germans were taken so completely by surprise I don't believe any of them even knew what hit them. In a few minutes it was all over. Leaving the bodies there we scrambled up the opposite bank and set off down the slope toward the canal.

ALTHOUGH we saw two or three small scattered parties of the enemy we were not challenged until we got to the road that runs parallel to the canal on the southern side of Masnieres, and about three hundred yards from where we expected to find the brigade.

Lieutenant Cowan who could speak German, answered the Jerry's whispered command to halt by letting out a flood of words about not making a row.

We already had decided what to do if such a case came up, and, as the Germans moved towards us, we advanced towards them as though we had every right in the world. In the darkness they did not suspect that we were not Germans as we pretended. Suddenly, we were right among them. No definite order was given, but by common consent we flung ourselves into their loose ranks and hacked right and left.

They outnumbered us but we had the advantage of a complete surprise. Boring forward, cutting and slashing at every figure that wore a coal-scuttle helmet, I found myself on the outskirts of the fight. I was through the German lines again. Blood was running sluggishly down the channels in my sword; I could feel its wetness when I grasped the blade in my left hand to give the loop an extra twist around my wrist.

Bunches of my buddies were breaking through the enemy ranks to the right and left of me, and, joining together again, we made a rush for the canal. Bearing a little to the right and guided by the shouts from the other side, we found a place where it was possible to cross without getting buried in the thick, slimy mud.

Slipping and staggering, we struggled through while Lewis guns sprayed the Germans and thus kept them from picking us off like flies, as they would have done otherwise because the pace over the canal was necessarily very slow.

In a shell shattered house in our half of Masnieres I joined the remnant of the squadron. About fifty had made it back, but some of them were wounded. My head was throbbing and my shoulder, after the last strain I had given it, had gone numb.

We were safe again, after penetrating about six miles into German territory, successfully putting over three separate charges, and putting a battery of artillery out of action.

The FUNK HOLE

¶ Wherein readers of BATTLE STORIES have an opportunity to sound off. * *
¶ The remarks are by the C.O.'s Dog-robber

LIKES WAR ALBUM

HERE is one of the reasons you bucks are able to lamp the War Album back in her regular spot at the front of the book. It's a letter from a fan. Well satisfied with BATTLE STORIES he wonders what happened to the picture department. A glance at the front of the book will answer his question and we appreciate his letter.

> I have been reading BATTLE STORIES Magazine for over a year and I get a big kick from the stories, especially those by Arthur Guy Empey.
>
> A couple of things bother me, though. Where is the War Album and those page cartoons? The War Album was great. I have all the war pictures you published and am putting them in a book. I hope I see some more soon.
>
> Gilbert Gustin,
> 14 William St.,
> Amsterdam, N. Y.

Letters like that are always welcome in the Funk Hole. Just tell us what you want and we'll do our best to get it. That, of course, was only one of the many letters received requesting the continuation of the War Album. We are taking up the matter of a cartoon page and will have good news for you next month.

DANGEROUS RAID COMING

CONSIDER yourself warned that a dangerous mission is your dish for next month. Get out the old hobnails, blacken your bayonet and prepare to fight for your life.

The excitement will be caused by the All-Star issue of BATTLE STORIES Magazine. It will go on sale August 10 and you'll need a bayonet and plenty of tactics to get through the crowd around your favorite newsstand.

A first person true story by a German spy, Joseph von Dwucet, will lead the book. Dwucet was stationed in San Francisco but managed to get a gunner's berth on the *Leipzig,* Germany's most famous raider. The name of Dwucet's yarn is, "I shipped on Germany's Black Raider" and there is a thrill in every word. Scouring the Atlantic, the *Leipzig* sunk nearly a score of Allied ships and finally engaged in the battle of Falkland Islands.

Arthur Guy Empey has another complete novelet. "Two Doughs in a Dungeon", and you'll agree that it is one of his very best. We might add that the two heroes were tight-wire walkers before they went to France but that didn't keep them from being captured.

Benge Atlee has also done a special story for the All-Star issue. It is a tale of flying on the Asia Minor front. Jay Kalez worked overtime to pound out the best story of his writing career, a masterful tale of former railroad men at the front with the Engineers.

As another special treat for this All-Star issue we have secured two stories by a pair of the best known writers of war fiction in the world. Leonard Nason and Captain John Thomason are the authors. Nason has a full-length novelet, "Two Privates—Very Rank", and Thomason has a yarn of the Devil-Dogs, in "Mickey of the Marines".

Naturally, Edwin C. Parsons will be in with a true yarn of glorious sky adventure. This time it is, "Chuck Kerwood—Wild Man of Aviation". Malcolm Douglas has another true story of one of the "Pershing 100 Heroes" and Harold F. Cruickshank presents a flashing tale of the Highlanders in, "A Yank With the Ladies From Hell". Add the name, Major Malcolm Wheeler-Nichol-

son, who gives you another instalment of that great novel, "Cossacks of the Red Czar", and you'll see the reason we call it, the "All-Star Issue". Fellows, she's a hummer, so go primed for bear when you fight your way to the front ranks around the local newsstand on August 10.

GERMAN RANKING

MAYBE some of you bucks had trouble distinguishing a German major from a private in the rear rank. It is a common difficulty and here's a reader who wants to know how to tell them apart if he should happen to find two good specimens.

> Many are the magazines that come to rest in our house but of them all I prefer BATTLE STORIES. I like stories from the German side and you can't print too many of them to suit me.
>
> Please tell me what rank in the German army corresponds to corporal, major and general in our army. Also, please tell me what designates the rank of officers, non-coms and privates in the German army.
>
> My brother, who is in the cavalry at Monterey, Calif., also enjoys your magazine. My idea of the two best stories you ever published are, "Kamerad" and "A Yank in the Foreign Legion" by John Bowe. I hope you print more true stories.
>
> Nelson Cogswell,
> 508 Earle Ave.
> Covington, Ky.

The closest to the rank of corporal in the German army is the *unteroffizier* and the major goes by the same title as the American major, although the pronunciation is a bit different. The equivalent rank for general is *general feldmarshall.*

Rank badges of the various commissioned grades in the German army are as follows:

General Field Marshal...Two crossed gold battons.
Colonel General ...Three gold stars.
General of Infantry or Cavalry ..Two gold stars.
Lieutenant General ....One gold star.
Major General .....Blank epaulet.
Colonel .....Two gold stars.
Lieutenant Colonel ....One gold star.
Major .....Blank field.
Captain .....Two gold stars.
First Lieutenant .....One gold star.
Second Lieutenant .....Blank field.

Non-commissioned officers displayed the insignia of their rank upon the collar of the coat, the grades being distinguished in the following manner:

Sergeant—A stripe of gold or silver lace extending around the top of the collar and two large buttons, worn one on either side of the collar, directly above the shoulder.

Corporal—A stripe of gold or silver lace, no buttons.

Lance Corporal—Two small buttons worn in the same manner as those of a sergeant, plain collar.

Another insignia of rank was in the form of shoulder knots or epaulets. Shoulder knots were formed of half-moon shaped pieces of gold or silver embroidery (according to the regiment) inclosing a cloth field of the color of the army corps to which the regiment belonged. On the field was displayed the regimental number and the insignia of rank.

Officers below the grade of major wore shoulder knots, all others wore epaulets.

A CANADIAN POEM

AN IRISH Limey hits the Funk Hole with another meaty contribution. Included in the material is an offer of first-hand information on the deadly Ypres Salient and a poem that has achieved great popularity among the Canadians.

> Just finished your June issue and it was sure "Jake". Every yarn was a real thriller and none devoid of interest.
>
> I'm enclosing a trench poem which is treasured by those Canadian buddies who read your fine magazine, especially those who saw action in the Ypres sector. It should also be of interest to many Yanks who saw service in the same sector.
>
> As my last letter to the Funk Hole stated, I'm glad to correspond with any Yank or Canadian veteran who wants to write and exchange experiences. Every one ever in the Ypres sector, and many others too, remember Hill 60; but how many remember the trenches called, "Warrington St.", "Crab Crawl", "St. Peters St.", "Saint Canada St.", and "Hedge St."? Plenty of bitter fighting took place in those places and I will be glad to furnish sketches and other information of that sector. I also have a big collection of trench and army odes.

Just a word about the enclosed poem. It is dedicated to the Canadians who fought and died in the Ypres Salient. The train mentioned was one used to transport relieving battalions from the rail-head to the town of Ypres. About sixteen old French and Belgian coaches composed the train and it was pushed by an armor-protected old locomotive. Many times have I ridden the train as a Canadian infantryman, and many times have I joined in the singing that always marked the trip, no matter which way the train was headed.

James F. Byrne,
439 Miami Street,
East McKeesport, Pa.

THE OLD RELIEVING TRAIN

We are stealing up to Ypres, through the
failing evening light,
The silent engine scarce is puffing as we
crawl into the night,
And together are we singing the home
songs once again,
For we are crawling up to Ypres in the
old relieving train.

Eyes are gleaming brightly, and our
thoughts to sadness blend,
For we know what is waiting at the creeping
journey's end,
Freezing cold, mud and water, falling
showers of nasty rain,
For we are crawling up to Ypres on the
old relieving train.

The engine puffing merrily, we are bandying
song and jest,
All are singing cheerily, for we are going
back to rest;
Not a thought of death or sorrow as we
sing the glad refrain,
For we are rushing back from Ypres in
the old relieving train.

Far behind us in the gloaming we are
leaving many slain,
The boys who sang of home as we crawled
up in the train;
Though many seats are vacant, we sing
with might and main,
For we are rushing back from Ypres in
the old relieving train.

BRITISH MEDALS

IN A recent issue the Dog-robber answered a query of Arthur Davidson, 59 Gatling Place, Brooklyn, N. Y., in regard to a "bit of information on British medals". The reply was that the first three, in order of their ranking are: Victoria Cross, Distinguished Conduct on the Field Medal, and the Military Cross of Great Britain. That is not correct and our readers across the border were not slow to deluge the dugout with a barrage of howls that would have turned the Dog-robber's hair gray, had he not been of sterner stuff.

We can't print all the letters but we do acknowledge the clear and concise letter of Capt. W. L. Banks, 88 Galley Ave., Toronto, Ont., Canada who, by his own admission, has always "appreciated the care given to small details in the stories and departments of BATTLE STORIES Magazine.

Harold Cruickshank, veteran BATTLE STORIES author, was one of the first to give us a well-earned "dressing down" and the complete dope on British medals; but here's his letter:

Permit me to jump on your neck. Or, may I offer some corrections on your British Medals article on page 172 of the Funkhole department of the current issue of BATTLE STORIES Magazine.

You are Okay on your Victoria Cross stuff, but you are quite a bit wet on the Distinguished Conduct medal. What you mean, when you speak of Distinguished Conduct, as second to the V. C., is the Distinguished Service Order, an order decoration granted to officers only, and conferred by the King in person.

Now this is how the medals rank: V. C., D. S. O. (Distinguished Service Order, a decoration for officers only, a field decoration for bravery); next comes the Military Cross, another field decoration granted to officers, and sometimes non-commissioned officers of high rank, or "warrant" rank—What we called Warrant Officers, such as Regimental Sergeant Majors. That disposes of the officers' field awards.

Next come the awards for non-commissioned and private rank. The V. C. again ranks as first. The Victoria Cross is awarded for exceptional acts of valor irrespective of rank or person. Next comes the Distinguished Conduct Medal. This medal is considered a nice little decoration and ranks higher than the Military Medal, the common field medal which, in a joking way, we used to say came up with the rations. An officer is not awarded the D. C. M.; nor the M. M. A private, and ranks below the rank of a warrant officer, do not receive the Military Cross, nor the Distinguished Service Order. There is another medal which was awarded in quite useful quantities to the lesser ranks—The Meritorious Service Medal, very like the Military Medal. This one could be gained for outstanding service outside the battle zone. For example, a hard worker in what the Yanks call the S. O. S. could gain an award of the M. S. M.

There you are, brother. All free of charge. We got us a Distinguished Con-

duct Medal into the Cruickshank family—my kid brother nabbing it after four recommends for bravery on four different occasions. A bonus of a hundred dollars goes with this award, special grant from the Crown, or some such thing.

Cheerio! Sincerely,

Harold F. Cruickshank.

IN MEMORY

MILITARY men and persons watching military news will be interested to learn that the year 1932 will mark the biggest celebration ever tendered the memory of a military man. General George Washington, father of our country and the most heroic of revolutionary figures, is the patriot whose 200th anniversary will be marked by a nine-month program.

The celebration will be world wide, lasting nine months from February 22, 1932 and will be observed wherever Americans reside and humans respond to the inspiration of a great man's career. According to the plans of the George Washington Bicentennial Commission, the whole United States will come alive with pageantry, through which the figure of Washington will move as he was in life. Every school in America is to be hung with his picture. Every home that housed him, every building in which he spent a night, is to be festooned with flags and bunting. The battlefields he won and lost are to echo with oratory and resound to martial music.

Indeed, our heroes do not die. Their memories live beyond the grave and every citizen owes it to his country to halo this great man's memory lest we lose sight of what he fought for and won.

GERMAN-SIDE YARNS

PRESENT arms for a Californian who takes time out to agree with a letter which appeared in the June Funk Hole and which letter praised John Bowe's true story of his life in the Foreign Legion.

Like the contributor in the June Funk Hole, I too would like more stories equal to that of "A Yank in the Foreign Legion". What a remarkable life Bowe had, and the endurance that must have been his to undergo such hardships at his age. I think it is the best story I have ever read in your magazine, so please send him my thanks.

B. Clifford,
1728 Pleasant Valley Ave.,
Oakland, Calif.

P. S. I would like to read some German's account of his experience opposite the American army.

Many were the BATTLE fans who took time out to write a letter of appreciation for Bowe's wonderful story and Clifford can rest assured that his and the other letters will be passed on to the author.

Clifford will be well pleased with the lineup of German-side stories we have scheduled. Next month brings the true story of a German spy who took an officer's berth on Germany's Black Raider, the *Leipzig*. Other early issues will bring you Fritz Boergesen's story of how he escaped from a Siberian prison camp and made his way 1,400 miles to freedom; a German soldier's story of how his regiment was defeated in a bloody encounter with the famous Russian woman's regiment, "The Regiment of Death", and the true story from a German naval officer which tells his experiences in a German submarine. That should go part way towards satisfying Clifford's desires for German-side stories. They are all masterpieces of heroic true adventure.

A KICK AND A BOOST

LAY by, gang, while a former member of the Merchant Marine sounds off. A few words of praise and a kick are his contributions to the Funk Hole.

Keep up the good work but let's have a few yarns about the merchant sailors during the war. Few people seem to know what an important part they played in the Big Fuss; at least I see very few stories about them. In bringing across the food and ammo he indeed played a big part and had experiences a-plenty for stories. Believe me, I know. I made five trips across on the S. S. *Los Angeles,* a tanker.

Ed Belle-Audry,
101 So. Harbor Blvd.,
San Pedro, Calif.

Stories of the Merchant Marine are no strangers to BATTLE STORIES Magazine. There was one in the June issue and there are more coming up. Hats off to the Merchant Marine!

THE TRADING POST

Where the C. O.'s Dog-robber superintends the swapping of war relics. Articles picked up on the battle fields, German and Allied trinkets of all kinds, may be sold or exchanged in these columns. Send in your list of what you want to obtain or swap and it will be printed without charge. Please correspond directly with the party who has articles to trade.

THE only post in the world where you can get in line for a second go—or even a third or fourth—at choice rations, the Trading Post has drawn more mail during its existence than did the girl back home. No promises to bring back the Kaiser on a leash, or propaganda to the effect that the French girls are not what they are painted, clutter up our mail. Instead, bucolic bucks and salty sailors offer you catch-as-catch-can bargains on everything from relics to roosters.

Primarily for the exchange of war relics, or their sale, this department has been expanded at times to include articles no more military than handles on a hair brush. Service is what we give and what you get; but we found ourselves knocked down and trampled under foot when R. E. Petee, Oroville, Calif., came in with a modest little item labeled, "One troop of cavalry mounts."

All right, pipe down there in the rear ranks. That *is* the first item and we can guarantee each critter as halter broke and without spavin or bruise. They won't stampede under fire and the greenest rookie can ride them all day without a saddle sore. Teeth are in good condition, and if they aren't Mr. Petee will put in some new ones.

What's that! Horses don't have false teeth?

Mr., you don't know Mr. Petee's horses.

STAND BY FOR THE STAMPEDE:

If you have room in the Trading Post please insert one Parker merry-go-round. It is a three-abreast, track model in good running order but without a top. It has a new Cushman 15 h. p. gas engine and new cable. Engine and cable alone are worth $800. Will sell entire outfit for $800 or will trade for $1,000 worth of war relics, war pictures, show tent trailer, truck or what have you. The outfit is stored in Oklahoma.

Also have a Brown Bobby greaseless doughnut machine nearly new that cost $55. Will trade it for war relics or photos of any kind to the value of $35.

R. E. Petee,
Oroville, Calif.

* * *

Georg Mastbaum, Route 4, Box 741, Battle Creek, Mich., would like to sell a U. S. trench helmet in perfect condition, $.75; U. S. gas mask and bag, $.75; one U. S. trench knife of 1917, in good condition, $2.50; one U. S. garrison cap, size 7⅛, $1.00; a German General's leather spiked helmet with brass trimmings which is only slightly worn, $10.00; a German cavalry 1915 steel spiked helmet, $6.00; a German artillery Unteroffizier's gray steel spiked helmet in perfect condition, $4.50; a German cartridge belt with two cartridge boxes and bayonet scabbard holder, $5.00; a German infantry gray cloth-covered canteen, $2.00; and one French blue trench helmet with no lining, $2.00.

* * *

Jack Lassier, 84 Dekalb Ave., Jersey City, N. J., has BATTLE STORIES magazines dating from December 1920 to June 1931 which he would like to swap for a Luger in good working order or air-war mags.

* * *

Haywood Robertson, Ahoskie, N. C., would like to purchase German and Allied airplane insignia, aviators wings and airplane pictures.

* * *

Thomas McVicar, 6401 Lexington Ave., Cleveland, Ohio, will trade ten books all best sellers and costing $2.00 or over. Byrd's "Little America" is one of these. Wants any caliber Luger pistol or Colt pistol in good condition though not necessarily in working order.

* * *

Carl Henning, 2844 Louisiana Ave., Dormont, Pittsburgh, Penna., has about 75 war mags which he would like to trade. He is interested in American and foreign coins and postage stamps or what have you!

* * *

Arthur L. Sawin, 18 Myrtle St., Waltham, Mass., has a complete I. C. S. Mechanical Drawing course in excellent condition that he would like to swap for a Luger pistol, German spiked helmet or pot helmet and any three Allied medals, excepting the U. S. Victory medal.

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I Kidnaped a Killer From Court

AND MANY OTHERS

LOOK FOR THIS COVER

If your news dealer is sold out send 25 cents (stamps or coin) to Startling Detective Adventures, 529 South Seventh St., Minneapolis, Minn., and a copy of the August issue will be mailed to you. Or better yet, take advantage of "Special offer to new readers" and get the next 5 issues for one dollar!

Joseph T. Reilly, 160-18 Dale Road, Jamaica, L. I., N. Y., has the following: German airplane Maltese Crosses; a 75 m.m. shell; sixty war photos; two empty hand grenades; fifty victory medals; a Spanish-American war rifle; 100 magazines and some radios. He is interested in a Luger, a Colt .45 automatic, a Lewis machine gun or any other small arms.

* * *

Robert C. Hare, 500 11th Ave., Los Angeles, Cal., has blue prints up to 7"x11" of World war airplanes to trade for war plane photos, Allied wing markings, Maltese airplane cross, or "Pictorial History of the World war". Also will trade plans of five World war planes, Sopwith Camel, Spad, Nieuport, Fokker D V11 and Roland Chaser D 11, for issue of BATTLE STORIES that had two-page sketch of World war planes (Dec. 1929). Pictures must be in good shape for mounting.

* * *

Harold P. Tompkins, 312 Jefferson St., Charleston, W. Va., has a German cavalry saber which he will sell or trade for small side arm in good condition. He also has two *Gott Mit Uns* belt buckles which he will trade for an Iron cross of either the first or second class.

* * *

Arthur Rouff, 170 14th Liberty Ave., Jamaica, N. Y., will trade a French Lebel 8 M.M. eight shots which is in good condition, for a good sporting rifle. Will also trade a Springfield 1860 model (ball and powder) in working order; pair of day and night signal service glasses; a Colt .31 caliber revolver from the Civil war; and a pair of German 8-Power glasses, for any kind of rifle, sword, relic or side arms other than American.

* * *

Mac McDermott, 706 Riverside Dr., New York, N. Y., will trade one U. S. Army helmet, a French gas mask, army revolver case, army hat (not tin), a bayonet, a cartridge belt and 7 magazines. Would swap for Luger, airplane relics, especially German, or worth while relics of the trenches.

* * *

Elmer Boyson Jr., 425 William St., Rome, N. Y., has a Spanish-American rifle which he will trade for a World war bayonet; any kind Fokker insignia and a spiked helmet; or a Fokker insignia; five machine gun shells and a belt. He also has an American trench helmet which he will trade for an Iron cross, a Prussian medal, a French medal, or an English and an American medal.

* * *

Robert Williams, 1645 Fargo Ave., Chicago, Ill., has two old style Springfield rifles; two French bayonets; one German bayonet; two Civil war bayonets; one British bayonet; one U. S. trench knife without scabbard; a trench spade; three cartridge belts; two bullet pouches; a U. S. Navy cutlass; one Russian sword; one German spiked helmet; two Civil war infantry caps; one American gas mask; an Iron Cross; two U. S. helmets and two German pot helmets. He will swap any two of the above for one of the following: a German fatigue cap; a German sawtooth bayonet; a spiked helmet; a Luger or a French, Italian or Belgian helmet.

Bill Garner, 2026 Broad St., Augusta, Ga., will trade one Marshall Stillman Course in boxing (5 books) for drafting set in good condition.

* * *

Robert Bradford, 2125 E. 103rd St., Los Angeles, Cal., will trade a gas mask, a knapsack, a canteen with a cover and a messkit for a .45 Colt or a Luger in good condition. He would like to purchase inexpensive souvenirs, war clippings and newspapers.

* * *

Ralph Nuzzo, 946 State St., New Haven, Conn., will swap the book "Europe At War" for any World war relics and will purchase war relics of all kinds.

* * *

Charlie Akin, 516 Santee Ave., Columbia, S. C., has the following for sale or trade: one German Mauser rifle 8 m.m. which has been plugged after capture, $12.00; one German sawtooth bayonet to fit Mauser, $6.00; one regulation German bayonet with steel hilt, $5.00; one German pot helmet with regimental numbers, $1.00; one French St. Etienne rifle carbine bolt action and fine sights, $15.00; one Civil war cavalry saber and scabbard, $8.00; one Civil war Colt .31 caliber revolver, $12.00; a Remington rim fire revolver 1858, $10.00; one long barreled Belgium dueling pistol with damascus barrel, $10.00; a copper powder flask (initialed)), $6.00; a French poinard bayonet 1875, $7.00; an Algerian stabbing dagger which is very old and has a long thin blade, $8.00; one African stabbing knife with inscribed handle made of shank bone of human, $10.00; a small Malay kris with wavy blade and finely ornamented with silver wire, $8.00; one .410 gauge shot gun (full choke), $10.00; one .22 Remington 12 A repeater rifle (hammerless), $12.00; and one Afganistan armor piercing knife with rib down blade for strength, $10.00.

* * *

Thomas J. Prestley, 103 Cleveland Ave., Everett, Mass., will trade a new pair of six-power French field glasses with leather case and strap for a film pack camera.

* * *

Sidney Feinstein, 597 E. 95th St., Brooklyn, N. Y., has twenty juvenile books and a dozen mags among which are six BATTLE STORIES. All are in good condition. Will swap for a pair of field glasses or some moving picture films.

* * *

K. B. Rannigan, 737 Middle Ave., Wilmerding, Penna., has a complete course in practical aviation by the American School which he will trade for a .45 automatic or what have you?

* * *

Paul Adams, 202 Wood Ave., Tottenville, S. S., N. Y., has the following to trade or sell: one sawtooth bayonet, (German), a Mills hand grenade, a Spanish-American war bayonet, a .32 revolver in good condition, one Civil war bayonet, a U. S. tin hat, a U. S. messkit, one .22 rifle in perfect working order, a German bayonet, an officer's hat and a German rifle not in working order.

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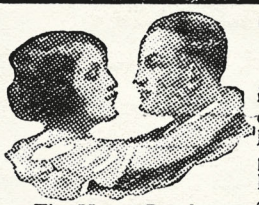

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German Iron Cross, 2nd class, original, with clasp..... 2.50
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Seward Young, 2123 25th Ave., Oakland, Cal., has a German trench helmet, a German sawtooth bayonet, a French bayonet, one American helmet and gas mask. He will sell them or trade for any small arms or a Krag rifle.

* * *

Robert B. Buzzerd, Charleston, Kanawha County, W. Va., would like to purchase a German helmet with eagle standing on the top, a German helmet with spike on top (metal) and a German felt or velvet hat with death head insignia. State price desired in first letter.

* * *

Steve Thomas, 894 E. Broadway, So. Boston, Mass., has all parts of all types of model T Fords and formulas for anything and everything. He would like tattooing outfits, .22 revolvers or what have you.

* * *

E. J. Miller, 431 Main St., Norfolk, Va., has the following: A Battle of Waterloo helmet; a Battle of Shiloh helmet, a Turkish damascus sword; some Civil war bayonets; three French St. Etaine bayonets (in scabbards); a powder horn; a Harper's Ferry musket; a Springfield musket; a pair of cavalry spurs; and a Civil war flute. He would like swords, sword canes, daggers, war medals and war curios except tin hats.

* * *

Norman Gross, 158 Heyward St., Brooklyn, N. Y., will sell or swap a Springfield rifle and a book of 500 official war photos. Wants .22 caliber repeater, helmets and other war relics.

* * *

Charlie Dietz, Seguin, Tex., has all kinds of World war battlefield relics and curios for sale. He will send a list if stamp is enclosed.

* * *

W. E. Magnolia, 423 B. 135th St., Rockaway Beach, L. I., N. Y., has a .22 Stevens single shot rifle, old coins, war magazines and German wound medal. He wants in return some coins and newspaper war clippings.

* * *

Dillon Carrington, Hickory Lane, Closter, N. J., wishes to trade a Krag-Jorgenson rifle in fine condition for a German Luger which is also in good condition. He also has a U. S. gas mask for sale or trade.

* * *

S. Coble, P. O. Box 43, Weatherford, Okla., has about 400 excellent magazines which he would like to trade. What have you?

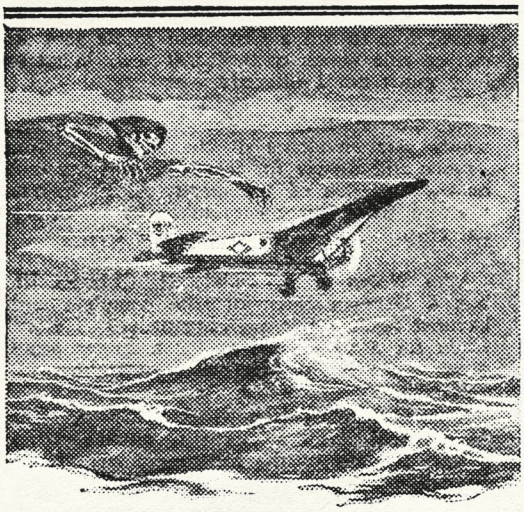
* * *

S. C. Frazier, 753 Flint St., Wilmington, Cal., will pay $1.00 for collar ornament from B Co. of the 28th U. S. Infantry, wants the type worn on the old uniforms.

* * *

Douglas Page, 803 Schumacher Drive, Los Angeles, Cal., has a German 77 shell, a U. S. steel helmet, a U. S. raiding knife, a British bayonet (World war), a U. S. gas mask and a British cavalry saber (World war). Would like any war materials in exchange.

(Turn next page)



HOW MANY WILL DIE Flying the Atlantic This Season?

Half a score of airplanes are being groomed to dash across the Atlantic this summer. How many pilots will outwit the specter of death who rides in the wake of these daring flights for fame? What new purposes are served by these trans-Atlantic flights? Read the answers in the August issue of

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You'll find scores of other big features in this issue—here are a few: "Icy Missiles From the Sky"; "Mechanical Tricks to Play on Golf Fans"; "Timely Tips for Fishermen"; "Marvelous Revolving Stages of the Theater"; "Believe it or Not" by Ripley; "Tricks of Advertising Photography"; "Exploring the Moon by Rocket Ship"; "Speed Secrets of Yankee Clipper Ships"; "Motorcycles of the Air May Give Wings to All"; "Amazing Vacuum Tubes Will Eliminate Motors"; "Training Your Bird Dog"; hundreds of photographs and many how-to-build articles on radio, electricity, motor mechanics, etc.

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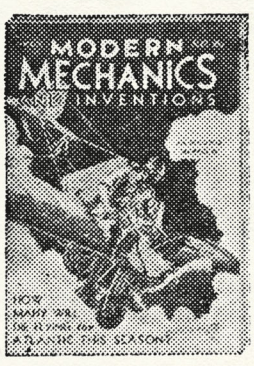

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Dept. 836 Clayton Station St. Louis, Mo.

1931 NEW LOW PRICES
U.S. Firestone GOODYEAR FISK, and other Tires

GUARANTEED

These well known brands only slightly used are taken from cars changing to our New Super Service Custom Built Tires. Carefully selected and guaranteed.

We have such great confidence in these tires that we guarantee them for 15,000 miles against blowouts, bruises and rim cuts. Any tire failing to deliver this mileage will be replaced at half price. This great Company has been satisfying customers all over America for sixteen years. YOU TAKE NO RISK. If any tire you order is not satisfactory upon delivery return to us at once for refund.

15,000 MILES GUARANTEED

DEALERS WANTED

High Pressure Cords			BALLOON CORDS		
Size	Tires	Tubes	Size	Tires	Tubes
30x3	$2.20	$1.00	29x4.40	$2.30	$1.10
30x3½	2.25	1.00	29x4.50	2.40	1.15
31x4	2.95	1.15	30x4.50	2.45	1.20
32x4	2.95	1.15	30x4.95	2.90	1.35
33x4	2.95	1.15	28x5.25	2.95	1.35
34x4	3.50	1.15	30x5.25	2.95	1.85
32x4½	3.20	1.45	31x5.25	3.10	1.35
33x4½	3.20	1.45	32x6.00	3.20	1.40
34x4½	3.45	1.45	33x6.00	3.20	1.45
30x6	3.60	1.75	32x6.50	3.50	1.65
33x6	3.60	1.75	33x6.75	3.75	1.75
36x6	4.45	1.75	All Other Sizes $3.50		

All tubes new—guaranteed first quality. Send only $1.00 deposit for each tire, balance C. O. D. Deduct 5 per cent if you send full price with order.

AMERICAN TIRE COMPANY, Dept. 437-L
1329 South Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois

EARN MONEY AT HOME

YOU can make $15 to $50 weekly in spare or full time at home coloring photographs. No experience needed. No canvassing. We instruct you by our new simple Photo-Color process and supply you with work. Write for particulars and Free Book to-day.

The IRVING-VANCE COMPANY Ltd.
304 Hart Building, Toronto, Can.

James Walker, 802½ 27th St., Moline, Ill., would like to sell a Crossman single shot .22 caliber rifle which costs $12.00 new. What or how much am I offered?

* * *

W. Foster, Box 54, Jamaica Plain, Mass., wants war envelopes of the A. E. F. from France and Russia for which he will pay cash or trade photos of transports, A. E. F. outfits and front line scenes taken by U. S. signal corps. These photos are size 6⅞.

* * *

Wm. Nolan, 3031 Lyndale St., Chicago, Ill., has a German Spandau rifle complete with bayonet (gun not in working order). He will trade for a wood holster for a Luger pistol, other war relics or else sell it outright.

* * *

Tom Gary, 20 Gilson Road, Wellesley Hills, Mass., will swap a German camouflage pot helmet for any of the following: war photos, French aviator's helmet and goggles, unloaded hand grenade, medals, plane markings or photographs of all war planes.

* * *

Geo. C. Plate, 1700 N. Harding Ave., Chicago, Ill., has a German rifle and bayonet (model 1871) and a German cavalry rifle (1894). He would like to have a 30-30 Springfield or anything else of even trading value.

* * *

Leroy Caffey, R. F. D. 10, Box 529, Springfield, Mo., wants to buy as many magazines as possible for $.10 apiece. He will also buy any war relics in good condition. He also has a Canadian Ross rifle bayonet and German cartridge box which he will sell for $2.00 or trade for any of the following: 25 issues of BATTLE STORIES magazine, a German bayonet, 100 war pictures or any other relic offered.

* * *

Robert Grady, 1969 Amsterdam Ave., New York, N. Y., has two books, "Count Luckner, the Sea Devil" and "High Adventure", and two bayonets (one German and one French) which he would like to swap for a .22 rifle. If trade cannot be made, he is willing to pay cash to boot for the rifle.

* * *

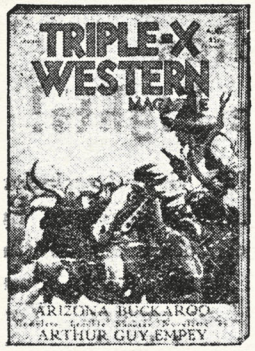
E. C. Stoner, P. O. Box 275, Eagle Point, Oregon, has an American helmet, a German trench helmet, a German spiked helmet, an Iron Cross and an American gas mask. He would like a Luger, a Colt .45 or a .22 automatic with holster.

* * *

Mrs. Frances May, 319 Glendale St., Waterloo, Iowa, has various war, detective, and other mags which she will swap.

* * *

Wilfred F. Ashton Jr., Larchwood, Ia., has the following: a .38 caliber pistol holster with belt and clip pockets; a .380 Ortgies automatic; a .22 L. R. repeating Savage complete with clip and sling (excellent order); one gas mask; and a .45 double action Colt revolver (1914 officer's model). He wants either a .22 Colt automatic woodsman's pistol, a .45 Colt automatic, a .22 Remington automatic rifle or what have you?



Arthur Guy Empey
At His Best!

Ride with Arizona Glenister and Dusty Rhodes, the invincible Trouble Shooters, as they trail down the baffling clues and solve the mystery of the Wyoming chain murders. Empey is at his best as one of the foremost writers of western fiction of the day in

ARIZONA BUCKAROO

The Amazing Adventures of
WILD BILL HICKOK

Thrill to the absorbing true life story of the greatest gunman the West ever knew—Hair-trigger Wild Bill, who, working always on the side of law and order, killed between fifty-three and eighty-nine men, not including Indians!

by JOHN PEERE MILES

BUSHWHACKED!

A fast-moving story of the fearless Texas Rangers, written by a cowboy writer whose virile, vivid stories of the West have won him a great following among readers of western fiction.

by JAY LUCAS

MANY OTHER GREAT STORIES

The above stories are but a few of the many treats awaiting you in August TRIPLE-X WESTERN. Many other celebrated authors, including Jay J. Kalez, L. R. Sherman, George C. Henderson, Murray Leinster, L. E. Andrews, Clive Crosby and William Mahoney, await you to thrill you with their smashing stories of the range, in a variety to be found in no other magazine. Get your copy today!

AUGUST—

TRIPLE-X WESTERN MAGAZINE

NOW ON SALE!

If your newsdealer is sold out send 25c to Triple-X Western Magazine, 529 S. Seventh St., Minneapolis, Minn., and a copy of the August issue will be mailed promptly to you, or, better yet, take advantage of the "Special offer to new readers" and get the next 5 issues for one dollar!

Get Strong!

Eight Improved Muscle Builders

All for $3.75

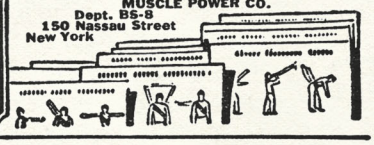
Easily master feats which now seem difficult. If you want physical culture for health this equipment is what you need. **SAVE AT LEAST HALF!** We furnish ten cable chest expander adjustable to 200 lbs. resistance. Made of new live extra strength rubber to give resistance needed for sure muscle development. Pair of patented hand grips develop powerful grip and arm. Wall exercising parts develop back, arms and legs. Head strap permits exercise of neck muscles. Develop leg muscles with foot strap—gives speed, endurance. Illustrated course shows how to develop any part of body.

GUARANTEE Entire satisfaction guaranteed or money back.

Send No Money

Send name and address. We send all by return mail. Pay postman $3.75 plus postage. Foreign countries price $4.50 cash with order.

MUSCLE POWER CO.
Dept. BS-8
150 Nassau Street
New York



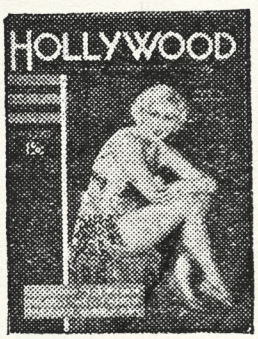
Film Ladies at the Fights!

AN HILARIOUS, vivid description of the enthusiasm displayed by the screen's fairest charmers at the Hollywood fight arena. How those girls go for the fistic carnival! You will also be fascinated by the many other special features and monthly departments in this most delightful of all screen magazines. Read BLONDES VS. BRUNETTES, an account of the latest Hollywood feud; DOLORES DEL RIO GOES MODERN, an expose of the ultra-modern philosophy of life carried into practice by that beautiful star; HARRY CARR'S SHOOTING SCRIPT, the most daring comment ever written about the luminaries of the screen; and the many other interesting stories in

AUGUST

HOLLYWOOD
"THE SMARTLY DIFFERENT SCREEN MAGAZINE"

ON SALE AT ALL NEWSSTANDS JUNE 23



15c The Copy

If your newsdealer is sold out, send 15c in coin or stamps to HOLLYWOOD Magazine, Fawcett Publications, Inc., 529 So. Seventh St., Minneapolis, Minn., and your copy will be mailed directly to you.

LOOK! TIRES NEW LOW PRICES

Why Pay More?

GOODRICH · GOODYEAR · U.S. Firestone *and* OTHER TIRES

Lowest Prices on Earth!

Thousands of satisfied tire users all over the U.S.A. Our 16 years of business speaks for itself. This big responsible company will supply you with reconstructed standard make tires at lowest prices in history—

Guaranteed to give 12 months' service

Don't Delay—Order Today

CORD Tires Size	Tires	Tubes	BALLOON Tires Size	Tires	Tubes
30x3	$2.20	$1.00	29x4.40	$2.30	$1.10
30x3½	2.25	1.00	29x4.50	2.40	1.15
32x3½	2.70	1.15	30x4.50	2.45	1.20
31x4	2.95	1.15	28x4.75	2.45	1.20
32x4	2.95	1.15	29x4.75	2.45	1.20
33x4	2.95	1.15	30x4.95	2.90	1.35
34x4	3.50	1.15	29x5.00	2.95	1.35
32x4½	3.20	1.45	30x5.00	2.95	1.35
33x4½	3.20	1.45	28x5.26	2.95	1.35
34x4½	3.45	1.45	30x5.25	2.95	1.85
30x5	3.60	1.75	31x5.25	3.10	1.35
33x5	3.60	1.75	30x5.77	3.20	1.40
35x5	4.45	1.75	30x6.00	3.20	1.40
All Other Sizes			31x6.00	3.20	1.40
			32x6.00	3.20	1.40
			33x6.00	3.20	1.45
			32x6.20	3.50	1.65

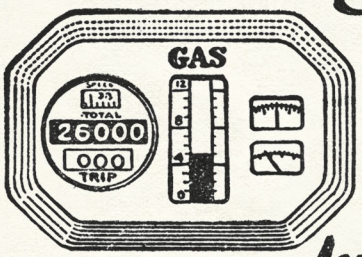
DEALERS WANTED

Send only $1.00 deposit with each tire ordered. We ship balance C.O.D. Deduct 5 percent if cash in full accompanies order.

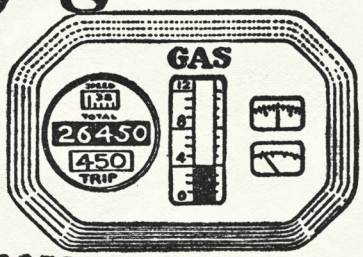
Tires failing to give 12 months service will be replaced at half price.

YORK TIRE & RUBBER CO., Dept. 1307
3855-59 Cottage Grove Ave. Chicago, Ill.

450 MILES
on a gallon of gas



startling statement of famous Automotive Engineers



How to increase gasoline mileage has been a problem that Automotive Engineers have been trying for years to solve Recently a world famous engineer made the statement that the energy produced by burning a gallon of gasoline would run an auto a distance of 450 miles. Other well known authorities go on record as saying that eventually it may be possible to get over four times as much out of gasoline as in the past.

Amazing Whirlwind Device Saving Millions of Gallons of Gas for Auto Owners

The Whirlwind Carbureting device embodies scientific features which conserves part of the gasoline that formerly went to waste.

Whirlwind users, reporting the results of their tests, are amazed at the results they are getting. Letters coming into the office tell of record mileages resulting in a saving of from 25 to 50 per cent in gas bills alone.

Mark H. Estes writes: "I was making 17 miles to the gallon on my Pontiac Coupe. Today, with the Whirlwind, I am making 35 5/10 miles to the gallon. Am I glad I put it on? I'll say so!"

M. J. Blaski: "I have had my Whirlwind for two years now and am getting 30 per cent more mileage. I drove my old Oakland 28,000 miles and did not touch the motor. The plugs are always clean and dry."

R. J. Tulp: "The Whirlwind increased the mileage on our Ford truck from 12 to 26 miles to the gallon and 25 per cent in speed. We placed another on a Willys-Knight and increased from 12 to 17 miles per gallon."

Arthur Grant: "I have an Oakland touring car that has been giving me 15 miles to the gallon average, but I can see a great difference with the Whirlwind, as it climbs the big hills on high and gives me better than 23 miles to the gallon of gas, which is better than 50 per cent saving in gas."

Car owners all over the world are saving money every day with the Whirlwind, besides having better operating motors. Think what this means on your own car. Figure up your savings—enough for a radio—a bank account—added pleasures. Why let the Oil Companies profit by your waste? Find out about this amazing little device that will pay for itself every few weeks in gas saving alone.

FITS ALL CARS

In just a few minutes the Whirlwind can be installed on any make of car, truck or tractor. It's actually less work than changing your oil or putting water in the battery. No drilling, tapping or changes of any kind necessary. It is guaranteed to work perfectly on any make of car, truck or tractor, large or small, new model or old model. The more you drive the more you will save.

SALESMEN AND DISTRIBUTORS WANTED

To Make up to $100.00 a Week and More

Whirlwind men are making big profits supplying this fast-selling device that car owners cannot afford to be without. Good territory is still open. Free sample offer to workers. Full particulars sent on request. Just check the coupon.

WHIRLWIND MANUFACTURING CO.
Dept. 627-A, Station C. Milwaukee, Wis.

GUARANTEE

No matter what kind of a car you have—no matter how big a gas eater it is—the Whirlwind will save you money. We absolutely guarantee that the Whirlwind will more than save its cost in gasoline alone within thirty days, or the trial will cost you nothing. We invite you to test it at our risk and expense. You are to be the sole judge.

FREE OFFER COUPON

Whirlwind Manufacturing Co.,
Dept. 627-A, Sta. C., Milwaukee, Wis.

Gentlemen: You may send me full particulars of your Whirlwind Carbureting device and tell me how I can get one free. This does not obligate me in any way whatever.

Name .....

Address .....

City ..... State.....

( ) Check here if you are interested in full or part time salesmen position.

$1260 TO $3400 A YEAR

MEN—WOMEN 18 TO 50

U. S. Government Positions are steady. Strikes, poor business conditions, lockouts or politics do not affect them. U. S. Government employees get their pay for twelve full months every year. There is no such thing as "HARD TIMES" in the U. S. Government Service.

TRAVEL—SEE YOUR COUNTRY

Railway Postal Clerks get $1,900 the first year, being paid on the first and fifteenth of each month. $79.00 each pay day. Their pay is quickly increased, the maximum being $2,700 a year. $112.50 each 15 days.

PAID VACATION

Railway Postal Clerks, like all Government employees, get a yearly vacation of 15 working days (about 18 days). On runs they usually work 3 days and have 3 days off duty, or in the same proportion. During this off duty and vacation, their pay continues just as though they were working. When away from home they get extra pay for hotel expenses. When they grow old, they are retired with a pension.

CITY MAIL CARRIERS—POST OFFICE CLERKS

Clerks and Carriers commence at $1,700 a year and automatically increase $100 a year to $2,100 with special increase to $2,300. They also have 15 days' paid vacation. City residence is unnecessary.

GENERAL CLERKS—FILE CLERKS

(Open to men and women 18 and over)

Salary $1,260 to $2,500 a year. Pleasant clerical and file work in the various government departments at Washington, D. C., and throughout the country.

WHAT IS YOUR FUTURE?

DO YOU EARN $1,900 TO $2,700 EVERY YEAR? HAVE YOU ANY ASSURANCE THAT A FEW YEARS FROM NOW YOU WILL GET $2,700 OR MORE A YEAR?

YOU CAN GET A POSITION

Country residents and city residents stand equal chance. Experience is unnecessary, and political influence is not used.

GET FREE LIST OF POSITIONS. Fill out the coupon. Tear it off and mail it today—now, at once. This investment of two cents for a postage stamp may result in your getting a Life Time Government Job.

MAIL COUPON TODAY

FRANKLIN INSTITUTE
Dept. E-302,
ROCHESTER, N. Y.

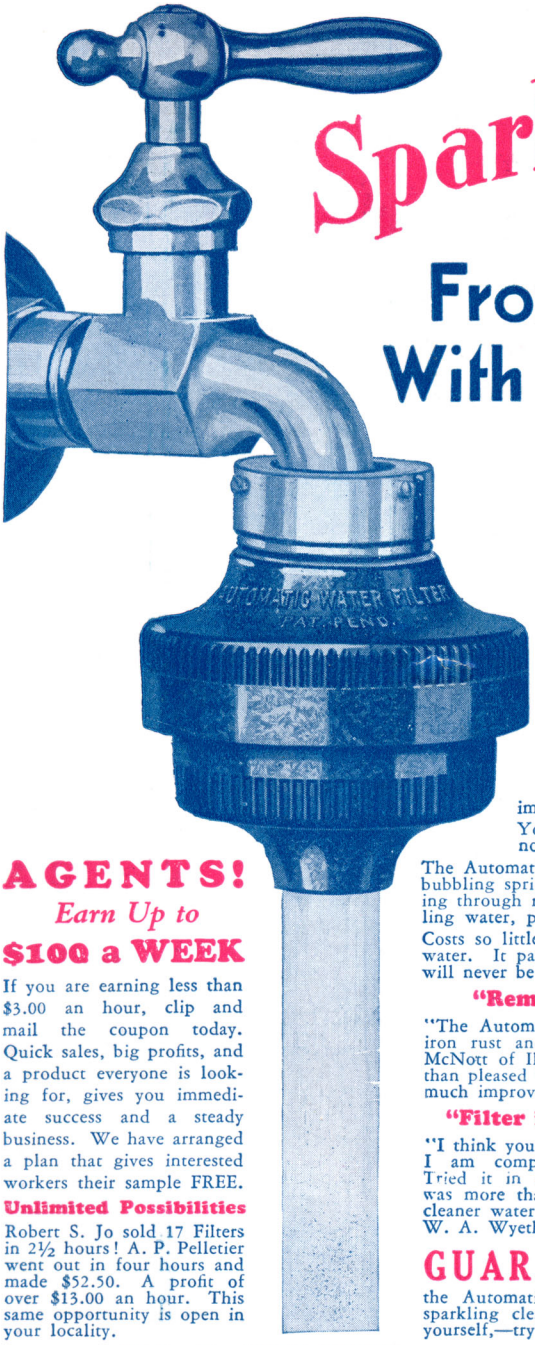
Rush to me free of charge (1) a full description of the position checked below; (2) Free copy of 32-page illustrated book "How to Get a United States Government Job"; (3) List of the United States Government Jobs now obtainable.

- ☐ Railway Postal Clerk..($1,900-$2,700)
- ☐ Post Office Clerk.....($1,700-$2,300)
- ☐ City Mail Carrier.....($1,700-$2,100)
- ☐ Rural Mail Carrier.....($2,100-$3,300)
- ☐ General Clerk—File Clerk....($1,260-$2,500)
- ☐ Inspector of Customs .....($2100-$3000)

Name .....

Address .....

Use This Coupon Before You Mislay It—Write or Print Plainly



Sparkling Clear WATER From Your Faucet With New Invention

Removes Dirt Instantly

HERE'S the article that housewives everywhere have been looking for. Just imagine a device that filters drinking water instantly at the faucet! In half an hour it removes enough dirt and suspended materials to cover the bottom of a glass. You can actually see the difference in the water.!

Filters Thru Crystal Sand

This amazing invention shows you in a few minutes why it should be on your faucet—shows you how much dirt it collects—shows you why not to drink unfiltered water.

Water is so vitally important to health. Drink lots of it every day, medical men advise. But, it's equally important that the water you drink is clean.

You filter the oil and gasoline going into your car—why not use the same care in filtering the water you drink?

The Automatic Water Filter on your faucet is almost like bringing a bubbling spring into your kitchen. It uses Nature's method by filtering through millions of grains of sand. That's why it delivers sparkling water, pleasing to the taste, more wholesome.

Costs so little, everyone can afford it. Saves buying expensive spring water. It pays for itself. Once you have used it in your home you will never be without it.

"Removes Rust"

"The Automatic Filter takes out iron rust and dirt," says L. S. McNott of Illinois. "I am more than pleased with it. The taste is much improved, too!"

"Never Expected Dirt"

"Your Filter sure is wonderful. I never expected to find the amount of dirt that has been taken out of the water with it," says Wm. A. Thuran, Pennsylvania.

"Filter is a Wonder"

"I think your Filter is a wonder. I am completely sold on it. Tried it in my own home and was more than pleased with the cleaner water it gave me," writes W. A. Wyeth, New Hampshire.

"Results Amaze"

"Was amazed when I tried your Filter on my faucet," writes Otis Smith of W. Virginia. "In 25 minutes it took out enough dirt to cover the bottom of a glass. I am ordering one [illegible]."

GUARANTEE: It makes no difference where you live or what kind of drinking water you have, the Automatic Water Filter will remove dirt from it and deliver sparkling clear water, or the trial costs you nothing. Prove it to yourself,—try it in your own home, at our risk.

AGENTS!

Earn Up to

$100 a WEEK

If you are earning less than $3.00 an hour, clip and mail the coupon today. Quick sales, big profits, and a product everyone is looking for, gives you immediate success and a steady business. We have arranged a plan that gives interested workers their sample FREE.

Unlimited Possibilities

Robert S. Jo sold 17 Filters in 2½ hours! A. P. Pelletier went out in four hours and made $52.50. A profit of over $13.00 an hour. This same opportunity is open in your locality.

Write For FREE OFFER

Good paying territory is still open. Mail Coupon at right for full details and money making offer. Also plan that gives Free Samples to workers.

AUTOMATIC WATER FILTER CO.

1241-2621 N. THIRD ST. MILWAUKEE, WIS.

MAIL THIS COUPON TODAY

Automatic Water Filter Co.
1241-2621 N. 3rd St., Milwaukee, Wis.

Gentlemen: You may send me full particulars of your free offer and big money making proposition.

Name .....

Address .....

City ..... State .....

DANGEROUS DIMMING ENDED..

Road Light Doubled!

Crowds swarm about new invention at Auto Shows and learn how science has at last banished motordom's worst and greatest problem. Read details below.

AMAZING INVENTION FITS ANY HEADLIGHT...

Revolutionizes Night Driving!

At last! Night driving suddenly becomes actually SAFER than day! At one sweep, a tiny, inexpensive invention banishes glare yet doubles road illumination! Cuts through every light on the road! Fits any car. Use coupon QUICK for liberal FREE TEST OFFER!

IT IS a well-known fact that motor car manufacturers have solved every big problem except one. As soon as the sun goes down at night, the highways of America break forth into a constant, rushing stream of "dimming and damning." Speed is cut down one-third to one-half. Every Monday morning finds the highways littered with broken glass, wrecks, cars in the ditch, overturned, shattered against telephone posts. Every man who ever groped dizzily down the highway in traffic at night knows the horrible sensation of being half-blinded by cars on his left, unable to see the ditch on his right, his own lights seeming dim and shadowy and practically worthless. Now, in a twinkling, this curse of night driving is lifted completely and *inexpensively* from the shoulders of the entire motoring world!

FITS ANY HEADLIGHT

This new lighting discovery is called Perfect-O-Lite. It is a little invention that replaces the "bulbs" in your automobile headlights. No extra wiring or installation. Yet actually DOES double road illumination. Banishes need for Glare Shields. Cuts through the other fellow's light, yet absolutely cannot glare in his eyes. Makes ruts, animals, children, detour signs, etc., visible at least three times as far. Makes night driving at 40 to 50 miles an hour safe and easy.

The secret of this new light is in the kind of "beam" or "ray" that it throws. Instead of ordinary light, this new invention pours a solid beam of double-reflected or "infused" light down the entire roadway. Shows up ditches at the side, as well as distant objects, absolutely clear, without the usual flickering "shadows." Space here limits further discussion of the facts.

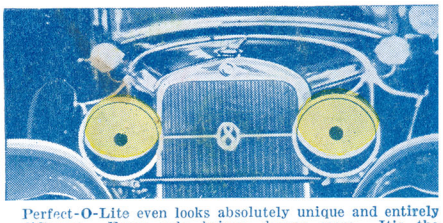
MAKE YOUR OWN TEST FREE

Under an introductory offer you are now invited to be the judge and jury without risking one penny. The coupon brings full details of the invention, offer of a set on FREE TEST and facts about agent's money-making opportunities. Mail the coupon, without obligation, TODAY!

AGENTS! Davis Made $1,400 in One Week

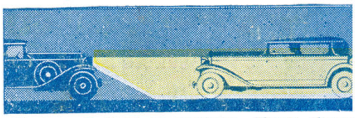
This new invention unquestionably opens up one of the most amazing money-making opportunities ever presented. Here actually IS that chance for $8 to $14 in your FIRST hour, $6,000 to $10,000 THIS year, with no limit WHATEVER for Distributors! Fleet owners buy quantities. H. J. Heinz (57 Varieties) trucks just equipped. Other big orders flooding in. A real self-advertiser; each car equipped is seen by thousands. Davis, Pa., actually reports profit of $1,400 in one week. Start full-time or spare-time. Use coupon for FREE TEST OFFER and details of Exclusive Territory, etc.

HACHMEISTER-LIND CO.
Dept. L-490 Pittsburgh, Pa.



Perfect-O-Lite even looks absolutely unique and entirely different. Every sale brings dozens more. It's the greatest "self-advertiser" ever known.

Lights entire roadway, including ditch. Absolutely no glare to on-coming car. Unique double reflected, "infused" light beam cuts through every light on the road. No flickering "shadows." Even lights distant objects with daylight clearness



Throws all light on roadway. Shoots through fog, mist, rain and snow like magic!

Hachmeister-Lind Co., Dept. L-490, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Rush details of your Free Test Offer; also send facts about agent's money-making opportunities, without obligation.

Name .....

Address .....

City ..... State.....

FARNHAM'S, MINNEAPOLIS