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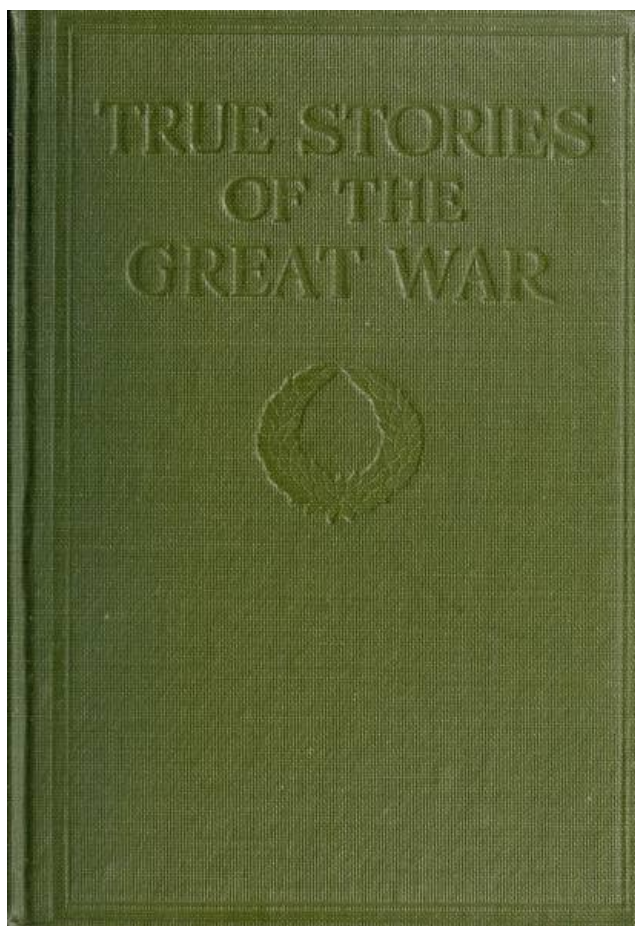
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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK TRUE STORIES OF THE GREAT WAR,
VOLUME 4 (OF 6) ***





TRUE STORIES OF THE GREAT WAR

**TRUE STORIES
OF THE
GREAT WAR**

TALES OF ADVENTURE—HEROIC DEEDS—EXPLOITS
TOLD BY THE SOLDIERS, OFFICERS, NURSES,
DIPLOMATS, EYE WITNESSES

*Collected in Six Volumes
From Official and Authoritative Sources
(See Introductory to Volume I)*

VOLUME IV

Editor-in-Chief
FRANCIS TREVELYAN MILLER (Litt. D., LL.D.)
Editor of The Search-Light Library

1917
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The following stories have been selected for VOLUME IV by the Board of Editors, according to the plan outlined in "Introductory" to Volume I for collecting from all sources the "Best Stories of the War." This group includes personal experiences of Soldiers at the front, Submarine Officers, Aviators, Prisoners, Ambulance Drivers, Red Cross Nurses, Priests, Spies, and American Eye-Witnesses. They have been collected from twenty-eight of the most authentic sources in Europe and America and include 134 adventures and episodes. Full credit is given in every instance to the original source.

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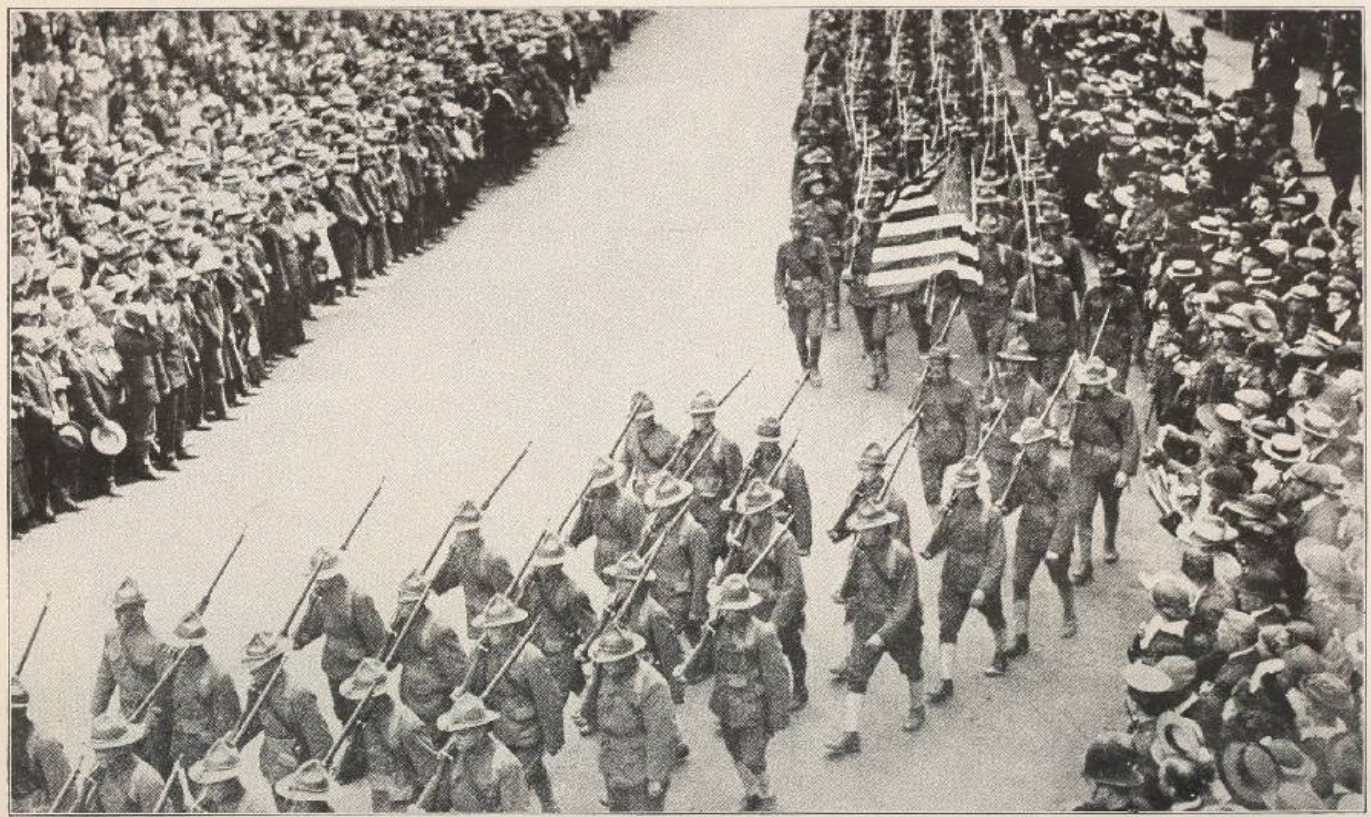
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"THE GLAD HAND"

An American Sailor in London Meets a Friend in the Canadian Army



THE STARS AND STRIPES PASSES THROUGH LONDON TOWN
The Parade of the First American Contingent Past Cheering Multitudes of Londoners



A LONG WAY FROM THE POLO GROUNDS
The Germans Complain That the English Don't Take War With Proper Seriousness: They Actually Play Football Between "Shock" Attacks. The American is Just as Bad: These Members of Admiral Sims' Destroyer Squadron Must Have Their Baseball in England as at Home.



SEEING THEMSELVES IN THE HOME PAPER
American Nurses Who Have Just Found Pictures of Themselves

"WHEN THE PRUSSIANS CAME TO POLAND"—A TRAGEDY

[1]

Experiences of an American Woman During the German Invasion

Told by Madame Laura de Gozdawa Turczynowicz

This is the story of an American woman, the wife of a Polish noble, who was caught in her home by the floodtide of the German invasion of the ancient kingdom of Poland. It is a straightforward narrative, terribly real, of her experiences in the heart of the eastern war-zone, of her struggle with the extreme conditions, of her Red Cross work, of her fight for the lives of her children and herself against the dread Typhus, and at last, of her release and journey through Germany and Holland to this country; and it is offered to the public as typical of the experiences of hundreds of other cultured Polish women. How truly she was in line of the German advance may be appreciated from the fact that iron-handed von Hindenberg for some days made his headquarters under her roof. A few of her hundreds of interesting experiences are told below by permission of her publishers, *G. P. Putnam's Sons*: Copyright 1916.

[1] I—STORY OF THE POLISH NOBLES

Very near the borderline between Russia and Germany lies Suwalki. It was a delightful, old-fashioned spot full of homes, and with many estates in the neighborhood. As one says in Polish, there were there very many of the "intelligence," meaning the noble class. People who were proud of the heirlooms, the old and valuable furniture, the beautiful pictures and books contained in their homes.

Into this old-world peace, came war, and of the homes and people, there is left only destruction and hopeless gray misery. How well I remember, and with what astonishment I think upon all that was before war was declared. [2]

My children were crying from the discomfort of being awakened so early, and had raised their voices in protest at the general state of disorder.

These three were Wanda, six years, and Stanislaw and Wladislaw, twin boys, five years! I think they were also protesting that no one was paying the slightest attention to them, and that was a state of affairs to which they were not used!...

II—THE FALL OF KING ALCOHOL

I think it was about a week after the first news when the Ukase of the Czar was published—that all spirits were to be destroyed, and the use of alcohol forbidden. What excitement prevailed over this announcement in a country where at dinner one must reckon at least one bottle of wodka for each guest! Such strong stuff was it that the only time I ever tried it I thought my last moment had come! The day before the official destruction was to take place we went to get alcohol for the hospital—both the pure, and the colored for burning in lamps, etc. There were tremendous crowds about, all struggling to get a last bottle to drink, already drunken—without shame, and horrid! I thought then what a wonderful thing the Czar had done for humanity. How brave it was deliberately to destroy a tremendous source of income in order to help his people! We were forced to have police protection to bring the bottles home. Such bottles! Each one holding twelve quarts! [3]

The next day we saw the destruction of the "Monopol." The chief of police ordered all spirits carried to the top of a hill in the outskirts of Suwalki—then with much ceremony the bottles were smashed, letting the fiery stuff flow in streams! What cries there were from the people—the peasants threw themselves down on the ground, lapped the wodka with their tongues, and when they could swallow no more they rolled over and over in it! After a while my husband thought it better to leave; even in an automobile there was little safety among such mad creatures. We were very glad when "King Alcohol" had been vanquished, and we shuddered to think what would have been if such an orgy had taken place without police to quell it!

About nine o'clock a peasant came to tell me the Germans were coming! Some one had seen them. I made the four soldiers eat, and gave them food and cigarettes to carry with them. They were ill men. After a mutual blessing they went back to await their fate.

Suddenly hearing an uproar, I saw some of the bad elements of the town looting, searching for food, knocking each other down, screaming—a horrid sight! The Jews who were always so meek, had now more self-assertion, strutting about, stretching up until they looked inches taller. It was hard work to tear myself away from the balcony. I, too, seemed unable to control myself, running from the balcony to the child and from the child to the balcony.

At eleven the streets again grew quiet, the time was near, and I saw the first *pikel-haube* come around the corner, rifle cocked—on the lookout for snipers!

The first one was soon followed by his comrades. Then an officer, who rounded the corner, coming to a stop directly before our windows. An old Jewess stepped out and saying, "*Guten Tag*," handed him a packet of papers, and gave various directions with much gesticulation. A spy at our very door! A woman I had seen many times! Busy with Wladek I saw no more for a while when a cry from the two other children made me rush to the window. They were coming into our court. The soldiers! And in a moment rushed into the room where we were, in spite of the signs tacked up on all doors "Tyfus." Seeing me in the Red Cross uniform they held back a moment. One bolder than his comrades laughed, saying, "She is trying to deceive us," and came toward me with a threatening gesture. Then with all my fear, God gave me strength to defy them. In German, which fortunately I speak very well, I asked what they wanted.

"Food and quarters."

"You cannot stop here. There is typhus."

"Show us the ill ones."

Opening the door to my own bedroom where the child lay, talking, moving the little hands incessantly, I saw that the nurse from the excess of fright had crawled under the bed. The soldier yanked her out, saying he would not hurt her, chucked her under the chin, and called her a "pretty animal!" Poor Stephinia, she could hardly stand! I, in my anxiety, pushed the soldier from the room, to find the others already making themselves at home.

"You cannot stop here. Go away! I am not afraid of you; I am an American. If you do any harm to us the world shall hear of it!"

They had been drinking, and the very fact that I defied them made an impression.

[5]

"Go out on the road. I will send food to you."

They went. One of them, giving me a look of sympathy, said:

"You have my sympathy, Madame."

That gave me courage, and shutting the door I went back to my boy. Always the same; I should not have left his side for an instant.

IV—INVASION OF AN AMERICAN WOMAN'S HOME

The town by now was in an uproar, every one seemed screaming together. As I looked from the window, my hand touched the prayer-book lying on the table.

"Lord, give me a word, a promise, to keep me steadfast and sane!" The book opened at the 55th Psalm—"As for me I will call upon God, and the Lord shall save me." Even in the stress of the moment reading to the end of the chapter—"Cast thy burden on the Lord." A conviction came to me then that God would keep us all safe!

Soon I had to wake to the fact that the house was being looted. Jacob, his wife, and daughter ran into the room. The soldiers had been knocking them about, taking all the food they could lay their hands upon. It was pandemonium let loose! An under-officer came to make a levy on my food for the army going through to Augustowo. He, with his men, looked into every hole and corner, but did not think to look inside the couches, which were full of things! To see your provisions carried off by the enemy is not a pleasant sensation. I asked the under-officer if it were possible the town was to be looted and burned.

"Looted—yes—to revenge East Prussia! Burned, not yet,—not unless we go!"

[6]

These first men had a black cover drawn over their caps and afterwards I heard they were from the artillery. Always the worst! Just at this time there was a great tramping of horses right in the rooms under us—where the hospital had been arranged—a thundering knock on the door, and a captain with his staff walked in. A tremendously big man, he seemed to fill the place!

"*Guten Tag*."

"*Guten Tag, meine Schwester—Hier habe ich quartier.*"

"Are you not afraid of typhus?"

"Nonsense—we are all inoculated. Is there really typhus?"

"Have you a doctor, Captain? Let him decide!"

A very fat boy just from the university was presented to me; so young, twenty-three and inexperienced, to have such a responsibility. Examining Wladek he decided it was dysentery, and tore down my notices!

As there was no appeal, I tried to be amiable. The *Herr Kapitain* was not so bad; he cleared the house out, and at least only orderlies came through; but for us was left only the bedroom. Children, servants, all packed together with the typhus patient. The captain was courteous enough, but said I would have to feed staff and men. That day seemed endless. With every moment came fresh troops, and I was glad the *Herr Kapitain* was in my apartments. At least there would be no looting. The rest of the house was full to overflowing with soldiers. Naturally they blamed the horrible disorder there on to the Russians. A telephone was soon in operation, and we were headquarters. All sorts of wires there were, and a rod sticking out of the roof. We were forbidden to go near that part of the house.

[7]

Every few minutes some one came to ask me to help them; the poor people, they thought I could

make the soldiers give up pig or horse or chickens. At six the captain told me he wished supper in half an hour. The cook seemed on the verge of losing her reason with some one continually making a raid on the kitchen, but she managed to get ready by seven. There were eight officers at the table—and they demanded wine.

"I have no wine."

"The old Jewess told us you brought home two bottles of wine when the Russians left."

"That was given me for my children."

"The children have no typhus, the doctor says, so they do not need wine—bring it to us."

So I gave up my precious bottles. The forage-wagons of the Germans had not come; they had no food with them and no wines, but the town fed them to the last mouthful. They turned in at half-past ten, leaving an atmosphere you could cut. It was so thick with tobacco smoke! Once more I could be without interruption with my children, for I had to serve the officers, pour their tea, etc.; it seemed as if one could not live through another such day. My boy was unconscious,—talking—talking—talking—all night long—no rest for me!...

V—NIGHT OF TERROR—SACKED BY GERMANS

The night wore away. The child grew terribly weak about four o'clock, and it seemed as if he were going and were held only by sheer force of my desire. If he could only sleep! Stas slept restlessly. Little Wanda was sorry for her mother, constantly waking to ask why Mammy did not lie down.

When six o'clock came the Captain thundered in, demanding breakfast, and hoping I had slept well. [8]

Arousing those poor people lying about on the floor, I freshened my own costume, trying to look as formal as possible. There was no bread. The Captain, informed of this, brought a loaf. They finished my butter, and drank an enormous amount of coffee. As I served them the cook came to tell me a lot of people were waiting, begging me to intercede for them. An old man rushed in after her, threw himself on the floor, kissing my hands and knees, weepingly telling how the soldiers had held him, had taken his two young daughters, had looted the hut, even to his money buried in the earth of the floor. They had then gone, taking the girls with them. The poor father crawled around the table, kissing the officers' hands. They laughed uproariously when one gave him a push which sent him sprawling over the floor.

The Captain, seeing my look of disgust (I learned to conceal my feelings better afterwards), asked me, "Whatever was the trouble—why he howled so!"

After I told him what had happened the Captain looked black and silent for a moment; then said he could do nothing. The girls now belonged to the soldiers, and I even saw he was sorry. One of the others, however, laughed, saying the father was foolish to have stopped about when he was not wanted. That was my introduction to Prussian *Schrecklichkeit*.

The other people waiting had mostly been turned out of doors while the soldiers slept in their beds, or were asking help to get back a pig or a horse, or else they were injured. I told them to go away and be glad they had their lives, that just now there was no help, but I would do all that lay in my power.

We heard the sound of battle all that day over Augustowo way. It seemed already like a friend, our only connection with the world. Another day of miserable anxiety, the boy always worse, and the trouble of providing food for all those men. I knew that a friendly seeming attitude on my part was our salvation. The Captain under all his gruffness had a kind heart, but even in that short time I had learned what the German system means. Their idea is so to frighten people that all semblance of humanity is stamped out! Every time something awful happened they said there was East Prussia to pay for. [9]

It was about dinner-time ... the officers were just about to sit down when my cook rushed in crying out that two soldiers came into the kitchen—while one held her (I am sure he bore the marks of her nails!) the other ran off with a ham and the potatoes ready for the table.

The officers were furious, and went out to find the culprits. They were found, and a part of the ham and potatoes also. Both got a terrible lashing, enough to take all the manhood out of them.

When this was told me as their supper was served, I asked why the men had been punished. They all had license to do as they pleased. Many dinners had been taken from the stoves that day in Suwalki. "But not where *die Herrn Offiziere* are!" *There* was the whole story. *We* did not exist—therefore no one could be punished for what they might do to harm us!

During that supper, it seemed as if all the officers in Suwalki came to say good-evening. I would hardly get one samovar emptied and go to the children than they would ask for another, at the same time expressing sorrow for my trouble, and saying the officers wished to meet the American lady,—and I dared not refuse! It was possible to avoid giving my hand in greeting because of the sick child. How miserable to be so torn asunder! To be kept there with those men when my baby needed me every minute, but what was there to do? *C'est la Guerre*, as all the Germans remarked in exceedingly bad French. One of the officers who came was evidently a very great personage. They paid him such deferential respect. He looked just like an Englishman. I told him so and he said his mother was an English woman—seemingly taking great pleasure in my remark, going on, [10]

however, to say the stain could only be washed from his blood by the shedding of much English blood! I shivered to hear the awful things he said; about having fought since the beginning of the war on the west front where he had many to his account; how, when the affair with the Russians was settled, and a peace made, he was going to England to call on his cousins, with not less than a hundred lives to the credit of his good sabre! It made me ill to hear him talk. In their power, one loses the vision of freedom or right; they filled the horizon; it is very difficult not to lose courage and hope. I *did* ask if there were no one else to take into consideration.

"Who?"

"Just God!"

"God stands on the side of the German weapons!"

VI—CAROUSAL OF SOLDIERS IN HOUSE OF THE SICK

That night was worse than the first, the forage-wagons had come! The drinking began. After I had served many samovars of tea, if you could call it so, half a cup of rum and a little tea, in and out, in and out from the children to the table, the officer whose mother's blood he wished to wash away, had sufficient decency to say I was tired and should be left undisturbedly with the children. That second night was as the first, only Stas also began to rave, talking in that curious dragging, almost lilted, tone,—one who has heard does not forget that dread sign!

[11]

Going from one little bed to the other, placing compresses, wetting the lips so cruelly dry, changing the sheets,—while in the next room those men caroused! It was only God's mercy kept me sane. Afraid to put on a dressing-gown, I remained as I was.

About five o'clock there was a great rushing about. Fresh troops were ordered to Augustowo. Many from our house were leaving. The staff remained, but my acquaintance of the night before was off. He came at that hour to wish me good-bye, showing me the picture of his wife and little daughter, telling me how "brilliantly" the child was going through the teething process! A gallant figure he was, mounted on a beautiful horse, as I looked out of the window, thinking sadly what those new troops meant.

That morning a Jew came to tell me he had some bread. By paying him well he gave me quite a quantity. Our supplies were getting low. The officers' mess had come, which served them with meat—but there was still much for me to provide, and it was only the third day!

The house was much quieter that morning, so that the sound of the little voices carried into the sitting-room. Every once in awhile Stas would shriek horribly, frightening me even more; but as a rule, during the day, they lay, constantly moving hands and head, talking incessantly, not recognizing me, and not sleeping. I should have given them milk, but there was none,—the only thing I had was tea or coffee—both rapidly disappearing.

The weather was very bad, snowing, the icy kind, which hurts one's face; it seemed to fit in with the other misery.

[12]

The officers were gay at dinner. They told me that day about the amiable project to surround Great Britain with submarines, that no atom of food might reach her shores. How in a few days the blockade was to begin, every ship was to be torpedoed! England through starvation was to be brought to her knees, the Germans were to be the lords of the universe, etc., etc. What a picture was drawn for me! Hard to keep one's balance and think the other side would also have a word to say in such a matter, not sitting idly by while the Germans put the world into their idea of order!

Shortly after dinner they all went away, leaving only the orderlies, to watch things. The two belonging to the Captain were very unpleasant. I could not bear them about, especially Max. Fritz was brutal and stupid—Max was cruel and not stupid! About my usual work, and trying to amuse Wanda girl, we all suddenly stopped still, breathless at sounds from the street! Wanda cried out:

"Oh, Mammy, *our* soldiers have come back—I hear their voices."

VII—STORY OF THE RETURN OF THE RUSSIANS

Yes, they had come back,—but how! The street was full of them, thousands, driven along like dogs, taunted, beaten, if they fell down, kicked until they either got up or lay forever still; hungry, exhausted by the long retreat and the terrible battle. I could have screamed aloud at what was enacted before my eyes, but there was my poor little girlie to quiet; she cried so bitterly. I told her she should carry bread to the Russians. My cook brought the bread cut up in chunks. I told her to go down to the mounting block with Wanda, thinking surely a little delicate child would be respected, and the surest means of getting the bread into the prisoners' hands. It seemed to me if I could not help some of those men I should go mad.

[13]

Leaving the nurse with my sons, I went to the balcony, seeing many familiar faces in the company of misery. When Wanda and the cook reached the block, there was a wild rush for the bread; trembling hands reached out, only to be beaten down. One German took a piece from my little girl's hands, broke off little bits, throwing them into the air to see those starving men snatch at them and then hunt in the mud. Finally one Christian among them gave the cook assistance; the bread was getting to the men, only we had so little.

Then something so terrible happened that while I live it can never be blotted from my memory. Wanda—my little tender, sensitive child, had a chunk of bread in her hand, in the act of reaching it to a prisoner, when Max, the Captain's orderly came up. Taking the bread from her hand he threw it in the mud, stamping on it! The poor hungry prisoner with a whimpering cry, stooped down, wildly searching, when Max raised his foot, and kicked him violently in the mouth! Wanda screamed: "Don't hurt Wanda's soldier!" The blood spurted all over her!

Rushing downstairs I gathered my poor little girlie into my arms, her whole little body quivering with sobs, and faced the brute, which had done the deed.

"What religion are you, Max?"

"Roman Catholic."

"Then I hope the Mother of God will not pray for you when you die, for you have offended one of God's little ones."

The soldier with bleeding mouth was lying on the side of the road; my cook tried to help him, but was roughly driven away. [14]

Carrying Wanda upstairs, trying to still her; heartbroken myself, what could I tell the little creature? Suddenly she asked:

"Mammy—why does God sleep?"

"God is not asleep, darling——"

"Then Wanda don't love God when He lets the soldiers be hurt and kicked!"

"God sees all and loves all—but the bad man gets into the hearts of some of His children——"

Difficult it was to do anything when I came back into that room where my little sons lay raving, not to just sit down and nurse my girlie, six years old, to have seen such sights! While attending the boys, another scream from Wanda took me to the window. No wonder she screamed! The captured guns were being brought into the town with the Russians *hitched* to them, driven with blows through the icy slush of the streets, while *the horses were led along beside them!* Wanda cried so hysterically, that she had to have bromide; the child was ill. Surely there was nothing worse to come?

The Captain, hearing the sounds and wanting his supper, came into the room.

"Go away, Captain, if you are a man, and leave me alone with my babies."

"What is the trouble? Is the little girl ill also?"

"Have you seen what is happening with the Russian soldiers, taken prisoners?"

"Yes, I have seen."

I told him what his orderly, Max, had done. He slowly, gravely answered:

"Yes, that is bad."

"Where are all those prisoners?"

"In the churches." [15]

Then he said, "Do not show so much sympathy—it will only do you harm and help no one. A great man will be quartered here to-morrow. Do not let him see you like this; some day when the children are well you will wish to get away from here."

"But the Russians will have retaken Suwalki long before that day, and my husband will be here."

"Never, and never, not while there is a German soldier! Now, be brave and smile, and I will help you as lays in my power."

But that evening I was not "begged" (?) to serve tea! What a night it was. My boys were so ill, and I could not pray that God save them for me. I dare not! God knows, I had come to a stone wall. It was not even possible to feel that somewhere my husband was alive. We were cut off from the living.

(Madame Turczynowicz, in her tales, "When the Prussians Came to Poland," vividly describes "The Aeroplane Visits," "The Flight to Warsaw," "Off to Galicia," "Back to Suwalki," and how she secured her release and freedom, which finally brought her to America.)

FOOTNOTE:

- [1] All numerals throughout this volume relate to the stories herein—not to chapters in the original books.

Visiting with Spies in America, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Germany

Told by Bernhart Paul Holst, an American

This is the remarkable recital of the adventures of an American who decided to penetrate the war-ridden countries. Armed with passports and credentials, with letters of introduction by United States Senators, and knowledge of secret grips and passwords, he made a journey which brought him into contact with the gigantic spy system of Europe. The author, who is one of the best known educators of the Middle West, has given his experiences permanent historical record in his book: "My Experiences with Spies in the European War." With his permission selections have been woven into the narrative herein presented. Copyright 1916, *Holst Publishing Company*, Boone, Iowa.

[2] I—STORY OF THE START OF A LONG JOURNEY

Manifold were the motives that induced me to leave my home in Boone, a thriving town in Iowa, and undertake a trip to Europe while the sparks were flying from the fire of many battlefields. I had no desire to expose myself to the carnage of war, or to witness the destruction of men as they fought for the principles which their country espoused, but rather to pursue in peaceful manner investigations....

My 40-horse-power automobile did good service in the drive of seven blocks on the rainy evening of September nineteenth, 1915, when I began my trip to the turbulent scenes of Europe, where the great war, which, since its beginning in the Balkan states, had been spread as a cloud of evil over the largest part of the continent. [17]

I confess even now that to me the liabilities of a venture into Europe at this hazardous time seemed to become magnified, especially as thoughts of the fate of the *Lusitania*, the *Arabic* and other ships passed through my mind, but such illusions, as I choose to call them now, quickly passed away and I soon felt fully assured of utmost safety even in the war zone.

In my possession I had an official passport to enable me to conduct my work of study and research in Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Switzerland, issued by authority of the United States Government, which, in order to become valid in the belligerent countries, required the visa of a consular officer of each of the countries which were at war and which I necessarily must enter to conduct my investigations. With this document in regular form, I felt that my security was absolute, so long as I traveled on a ship of a neutral country, such as steamship *Frederick VIII*, which carried the flag of Denmark. These conditions well guarded, I left home and friends with pleasant anticipations of an interesting trip across the Atlantic.

As I was about to board the Pullman car, I noticed one of the leading suffragettes of the community among those who had gathered on the platform. She was coming toward me with the winsome smile that only a veteran in the battalion of a suffragette campaign can wear, and I felt rather pleased than disappointed to have her among those who were to wish me a pleasant journey and a safe return.

"Put a few bullets into the kaiser for me while you are in Europe" were the words with which this apostle of equal rights greeted me as I felt her hand taking mine. "Well," said I earnestly, "I am an American and am going to Europe to study, to explore, not to fight. If it were possible, and, if the life of the kaiser were at stake, I would put forth an effort to save it as quickly as I would, to the extent of my ability, protect the life of the king of England or the President of the United States. I believe it to be the duty of an American, when he is abroad, to so conduct himself that he will be a credit and honor to his country. This duty compels me to preserve absolute neutrality in relation to the belligerent nations instead of—" At this point she began speaking and I cannot recall all she said, but her parting words, which she intended to be friendly, were these: "If that is the way you feel about it, if you are not going to help overthrow the kaiser, I do not care what happens to you." [18]

Having dispatched general business matters, my final object in Chicago was to have my passport visaed so as to admit me to the warring countries of Europe. However, this was merely a matter of form, as the personal letters which I carried from Senator Cummins, Congressman Woods, Governor Clarke, Senator Kenyon, Professor Bell and many other men prominent in politics and in education were sufficient to make the introduction ample and effective.

II—MYSTERIOUS STRANGERS ON THE PULLMAN TRAIN

The train was speeding swiftly when breakfast was announced in the diner.... My eyes surveyed the passengers with more than ordinary interest, not that I was looking for a familiar face, but because I was attracted by the appearance of several gentlemen who gave the impression that they were not Americans.... It was my conclusion that the faces in which I was interested included those of one Englishman, one German and two Frenchmen. They seemed to avoid conversation with each other, both here and later in the Pullman cars, and I began to think of them as secret agents who were operating in connection with the business end of the war in Europe. [19]

At the first call for lunch I again made my way to the diner and noticed that the gentleman whom I had suspected of being an Englishman was seated at a small table by himself. This appeared to be my opportunity to study him more closely and I took the seat left unoccupied at the same

table, facing him squarely, and began a conversation about the weather and other topics which usually are uppermost in the semi-vacant mind. My first effort secured the information that he had boarded the train at Niagara Falls and was ticketed for New York, where he had very important business not entirely of a personal nature. His conversation was guarded and considerate, while mine began to appear evasive; at least this is my estimate of the diplomacy we were practising.

Several years before I had been told by a court-joker, of which there are many in Europe, that the name of Hanson is borne by one-third of the people of Denmark and that the remainder of the populace in that country is largely of the Holst, Peters and Larsen families. Now, under these circumstances, if I would gain the confidence of this fellow traveler, I could not reveal my real identity, but, instead, must choose one or more of the methods of concealment which are so common in detective work.

"I take you to be an Englishman, or at least an English subject," said I, after a pause. [20]

He smiled knowingly and answered affirmatively, saying, "Your guess is correct in both particulars."

"Well," I continued, "I was born English, that is, I hail from the Australian state of Victoria, near the city of Hamilton, where my father settled on land nearly seventy years ago."

"Oh, indeed," said he, "then you must know much of Ballarat and Melbourne and Geelong, where I have been often."

After this our conversation was easy and covered a wide range of topics. Luckily we did not occupy seats in the same Pullman car, hence we agreed to meet at Albany and take dinner together on the run from that city to New York. I indicate that it was fortunate that we did not occupy seats in the same car, and I found it so, because it gave me an opportunity to plan a line of conversation for the evening ride.

III—THE "SIGN OF SILENCE"—THE SPY'S PASSPORT

At Albany all passengers for New York were required to change cars and it was necessary to wait a brief time to make connections. On the platform I met my new acquaintance, who had made himself known to me as John Fenwick of Adelaide, Australia, and here he was in earnest conversation with two young men. These he introduced to me as George Fenton and James Barton, the former a stout man with blue eyes and auburn hair and the latter a tall individual with keen, dark eyes and slightly gray hair.

In greeting them I took the right hand in mine and pressed the last joint of the small finger between my thumb and second finger of my right hand. Then I opened the back cover of my watch and inside of it exposed the *Sign of Silence*, saying, "This is the safe side." They answered, each for himself, "I notice." [21]

Having made the impression that I had knowledge of this order of secret agents and their manner of identification, I won their confidence. This way of winning them to trust me I had learned in Chicago several weeks before, where I met a number of large buyers of horses, who confided in me because I knew much of the horse market and the shipment of horses from Iowa.

Although Mr. Fenwick and his companions looked upon me as one of their class of people, I was far from it and entered upon a study of this line of operations as an interesting adjunct of the great war in Europe and Asia.

The trio of spies, as I choose to call them now, hailed with satisfaction the intelligence that I had been in Iowa, where I had made observations of the purchase and shipment of horses for the Allies, especially England and France. These shipments included several thousand animals.

This information was correct, as I had seen many carloads of horses unloaded for feeding at Boone, Valley Junction and other railway divisions in the Mississippi valley, later to be reloaded and forwarded to points east and eventually to Europe. I had also seen many horses that had been bought in the vicinity of Boone for the entente Allies and had examined them in the yards before shipment.

The western farming and ranching country, especially the Mississippi Valley, was covered by agents buying draft and army horses. Hundreds of posters were scattered throughout the stock-raising districts, among mule and horse raisers, and many newspapers carried display advertising in their columns.

They secured the impression that I was on my way to Europe for the purpose of looking more closely into the stock market in Denmark, where Germany had purchased quite heavily at the beginning of the war. As all this caused them to speak more freely, I evaded a discussion of my mission to Denmark, but told them I was ticketed for Copenhagen and that I expected to make the Hotel Central, on Raadhustpladsen, my headquarters. This induced them to have even greater confidence in me than before, as strangers usually give the mailing address at general delivery in the post-office, instead of divulging their place of abode. [22]

IV—AROUND THE TABLE WITH THE SECRET AGENTS

Soon after the train left Albany, I joined the trio in the dining car and, fortunately, we secured a table by ourselves. This was to be the farewell dinner of four who had widely diverging routes and vastly different purposes before them. Mr. Fenwick was to sail to Liverpool, Mr. Fenton and Mr. Barton were *en route* to the South and West, and I, as stated in a former chapter, was bound for Copenhagen. How wonderful it would be if we could meet two months later to compare the experiences and achievements of each traveler with that of the others!

The effect of my feint was that I was invited to meet with them at Hotel Belmont in New York, where they had planned a consultation. This invitation I accepted and agreed to be there as soon as possible after I would reach the city, not later than eight o'clock.

After a short visit in the lobby of the hotel, we repaired for a light luncheon to a café in the vicinity, where a private dining room had been reserved for us and to which refreshments, including cigars and several bottles of champagne, had been brought. It was not long until we got down to "merriment and business," as Mr. Fenwick called the proceedings. [23]

Unfortunate in good fellowship is he who attends such a meeting, if he has not learned to smoke and to imbibe the nectar of Bacchus, but this was my plight in the council which had assembled to promote or influence the labors of Mars. However, I was excused good-naturedly on the ground that, as I was to sail on the morrow, such indulgence would unsettle me as a sailor.

Between jokes and drinks, both of which came fast, but of which the latter came the faster, the discussion turned almost entirely to the project of starving Germany and her allies into submission.

"Well," said Mr. Barton, after emptying a fair-sized glass of champagne and blowing a cloud of tobacco smoke across the room, "I think the best dope is to keep the Yankees thinking the Germans are about to invade New York with an army of a million men, supported by a fleet of fifty superdreadnaughts. This will keep them discussing what they call 'preparedness for defense' while England is destroying neutral trade between America and Europe."

Having made what he considered a capital speech, Mr. Fenwick blinked his eyes and lilted in an unusually cheerful tone the rag-time he had hummed several times before:

"Ah'l lend yo' ma hat!
Ah'l lend yo' ma flat!
Ah'l lend yo' ma lovely overcoat of fur!
Ah'l lend yo' everyt'ing Ah've got—excep' ma wife!
An' Ah'l mak' yo' a *present of* HER!"

The trio laughed merrily and smacked their lips as they sipped the champagne drawn from a bottle with a long, slender neck. Mr. Fenton held his glass near his chin and smiled approvingly, shouting, "That is the spirit of genuine liberality." [24]

To me his smile appeared bland and harmless, but the impression he made, as he moved the glass up and down, was sinister and betrayed covert evil and danger. I began to feel uneasy and uncertain of the situation. This was the first experience of the kind I had ever witnessed.

Instead of studying me and my motives and purposes, these men became anxious to tell me of their experiences in the past and what they had set out to accomplish in the future. Instead of being a plastic organism in their hands, to be formed into shape and used to accomplish their desires as they had intended, they were divulging to me what I wanted to know of them in particular and the work of secret agents in general.

The school in which I had suddenly become a student was interesting beyond my power to describe. They howled and roared like raving beasts that are seeking to devour each other. My eyes and ears were open every moment, permitting nothing to escape, while I said only sufficient to keep the trio busy in their eagerness to surpass each other in relating the smart stories with which detectives are familiar. In this manner I easily accomplished my purpose, that is, I learned much of the work and methods of secret agents in America and received the information which enabled me to find their compatriots in Europe.

At this juncture I also learned that Mr. Fenwick was ultimately to locate in Holland, where he was to join other secret service men in keeping a close watch of the movements of goods imported with the consent of Great Britain from North and South America. He was to ascertain whether any of these goods were finding their way into Germany, and, if so, in what quantity and under what conditions. [25]

By this time we had finished our luncheon.

I was ready to leave the table and planned to do so as gracefully as possible. All I still wanted was some information about the confederates of Mr. Fenwick in Denmark. This was not difficult to obtain.

These spies, or secret service men as they called themselves, had the impression that I was in the same line of work as Mr. Fenwick, except that I was to operate in Denmark. For this reason they gave me much information about commercial affairs which were not open for publication and supplied me with addresses of people in Denmark in whom I could confide. The session came to a close at about ten o'clock, after which I hurried to the place of my residence near the Battery, where I had engaged quarters.

V—STORY OF A SEA VOYAGE FROM NEW YORK TO CHRISTIANA

Before leaving New York I mailed several letters and many American newspapers to the Danish capital, addressing them in care of Hoved Post Kontor, Copenhagen, Denmark. The letters had been given to me by Mr. Fenwick for identification among some people he knew and they later proved of much value to me in conducting my study of the work of spies and its effect upon commerce and the trend of the war. My purpose in mailing the letters and newspapers was to evade the possibility of losing them in case of detention and seizure of the ship before reaching the capital of Denmark, which was not entirely out of the range of probability.

The ocean-liner *Frederick VIII* was throbbing under the pressure of superheated steam when I

arrived at the docks in Hoboken, shortly before two o'clock in the afternoon of September twenty-second. Everything was ready for her to put to sea in the long route across the northern part of the Atlantic. [26]

At the table to which the chief steward assigned me were one Danish officer of the steamship and seven passengers. The latter included one English, one German, two Belgian and three American citizens. The general conversation was in German, and this was pleasing to me, as it gave me an opportunity to cultivate the use of the Teutonic tongue with much effect.

Among the passengers was Mr. Niels Petersen, who had been in Canada and had taken pictures at the principal seaports, such as St. John, Halifax, Quebec and Montreal. His photographs included views of harbors, bridges, railway terminals, stretches of highways and prominent buildings. He had been tracked to New York, where he was detected by British spies, and a telegram to Kirkwall by way of London demanded his arrest on the charge that he was guilty of espionage.

This party declared his innocence and claimed to be a Dane. He admitted having the photographs, but said they were taken for his personal study and for no other purpose. On the seventh day at Kirkwall he was taken from the ship as a spy and removed in a small boat. At the time of his arrest he was singing a patriotic song of Denmark, verses of which he continued singing as he was removed, and while taken away he waved his hand in farewell to the steamship that had carried him into the hands of his accusers. This was the last seen of him by the passengers; it is said he was taken to a detention camp and later imprisoned.

At Christiana British trade spies were numerous at the railway stations and in the vicinity of the docks. I saw them at restaurants and in the lobbies of the leading hotels, especially at the Grand, the Scandinavie, and the Continental. It was not difficult to identify myself by using the *Sign of Silence*, which I had employed successfully at Albany, when the two companions of Mr. Fenwick were introduced to me. My knowledge of the purchase of horses, grain, cotton and meat by the allies in America interested them. [27]

These spies were studying the register at the leading hotels so they might know the class of strangers who were in the city, whether German, Russian, French, etc., and the effect which the propaganda of these or any of them had upon public thought in Norway.

VI—WITH THE SPIES IN SWEDEN

From Christiana I went to Trondhjem and later to Hell, both seaports on fjords with deep harbors. At both these places I found spies of the allies on the same mission as those at Christiana, but in addition also agents friendly to Russia who were counteracting the rising feeling against the czar and his alleged desire to annex northern Sweden and Norway, to secure an outlet through an open port on the Atlantic.

On my second day at Trondhjem, shortly after leaving the Grand Hotel, I met Mr. Solomon Lankelinsky, a Hebrew merchant, from whom I learned much of the Russian agents who were working to influence sentiment. In fact I had met many Jews and all with whom I came in contact expressed themselves anti-Russian.

At this time the campaign at the Dardanelles was in full swing, which the czar expected would be forced by the British and French, after which Constantinople would be captured and the whole region annexed to Russia to connect her commercially with the Mediterranean. Several secret agents of Russia I met here and at Hell made this solution in the near East the theme of conversation and promulgated discussion by publishing articles regarding it in the newspapers. It appeared singular that these secret agents, although acting for Russia, conversed almost entirely in the German language, which tongue is spoken extensively in Warsaw and many large cities of Russia. [28]

In the Swedish capital, the city of Stockholm, the secret service men likewise were abundant. They were active in the lobbies of the Grand, the Continental and the Central hotels. I met them in the city and in the suburbs, everywhere busy as bees. Here the work of spies was not so much concerned with commerce as with the study and direction of public sentiment, for which purpose they wrote for newspapers both in Sweden and in their own countries.

This was before the movement for conscription had made much progress in England, and the British were endeavoring in vain to induce men to join the army. One of the English secret agents showed me a poster that was being used to enlist the support of the women, thinking they would lend a hand to induce their husbands, sons or sweethearts to go to war.

VII—STORY OF A RUSSIAN MADAM ON SECRET SERVICE

On the eighteenth of October I ticketed for Malmö by way of Nörrköping, taking the train from the central station. The seat opposite mine in the well-cushioned compartment was occupied by a lady of middle age. She kept her suit case near her seat as if she feared it might become lost.

Little was said at the beginning of the trip. She took observations through the window of the compartment, especially of the outlying districts of the city, a part of which is known as Gamle Stockholm, and seemed interested in the fields, gardens and forests. [29]

I busied myself reading in a guide of Sweden. At length we began a conversation. She tried to convey the idea that she spoke no language but Swedish, but I soon discovered her accent to be that of a Slav and that she was able to converse freely in German.

Pointing my finger at her, I said, "You are a Russian spy and the evidence is in your suit case."

To me it seemed that her face displayed all the colors of the rainbow. She threw up her hands

excitedly, moving them up and down like a country pedlar.

"Sir," she said at length, "you surprise me, you offend my loyalty. Why accuse me for no other reason than that I am a Russian?"

"Calm yourself, madam," I replied. "Although I am an American, I know of your work and have you noted in a list of people who are practicing espionage. However, you need not fear me in the least. I am neutral and am interested in you only as a matter of general information."

Then I showed her my American passport and many letters of identification, in which manner she was led to confide in me. My guess had proven a correct one.

She gave her name as Miss Michailowitsch and showed me some letters to bear out her statement. The work she was doing consisted of cooperating with others in watching Finland, where the men of military age had become restive and many were emigrating. It was her special business to observe these people and, if possible, learn who and how many were joining the German army in Poland and on the Dvinsk River.

I left the train at Nörrköping while Miss Michailowitsch went on to Malmö. At the time of leaving the train, I advised her to change her occupation, if she valued her life. This admonition elicited a bland smile. [30]

VIII—SPIES OF DENMARK—COPENHAGEN THE MECCA OF SPIES

The steamer ran into port at Havnegade, which is the landing place for the vessels crossing the Sound, and I made haste to Hotel Central, on Raadhustpladsen. At this hotel and at general postal delivery I expected mail from America and from secret agents I had met at New York and at various places in Europe. The mailman was liberal and gave me many letters and packages, small and large, which reminded me of an American mail order house. Had I been in a country at war, where strangers were carefully watched, I would have been under no mild suspicion.

The first evening, after a hasty meal, I made a trip to the leading hotels, including the Bristol, the Cosmopolite, the Dagmar, the Palads, the Monopol and the Grand Hotel National. By this initial but rapid tour it was possible to locate the places where strangers gather and to feel the pulse of commerce and public sentiment. My first impression was right: "Copenhagen is at present the Babel of travel and the Mecca of European secret service work."

When I was about to retire for the night, while on my way back to the hotel, I met a man who wanted to sell me a lead pencil. I purchased, but at the same time studied the expression of his face, which seemed to tell a story of a different life than that of the street vendor. He limped while stepping on his right foot and carried a rather elegant looking cane.

On Raadhustpladsen I met several men who were taking pictures for travelers. They were agreeable looking fellows and I engaged them to take several views of me, including one of the monument known as *Death and Sorrow* which is a fine bronze piece near the Hellig Aand Church. It was not long until I made the discovery that these men were spies. Indeed, I found spies disguised as street vendors, newspaper sellers, bootblacks, interpreters, guides and as workers in many other common callings. At the Bristol Hotel I met several spies to whom Mr. Fenwick had referred me while I was in New York. They gave spice to my leisure moments and stimulated interest in the war. [31]

After I had been in Copenhagen several days, late in the afternoon, I decided to go to the docks and shipping yards to take observations of the freight which was moving through the city. Here I discovered a man making notations of cars which were either loading or unloading. These cars were from the continent and were marked from different places, such as Bromberg, Dresden, Munich, Bautzen and other cities of Germany.

Here was the clue that Denmark was trading extensively with the Central Powers. This spy was listing the cars and steamships engaged in this trade; he was taking the names of the ships and cars and making a record of the commodities in which trading was done. After observing his work for some time, I made my presence known and found him to be the street vendor from whom I had purchased a lead pencil on my first evening in the city, but he was now posing as a railroad official and held his cane before him as he walked rapidly away.

It did not require much time for the street vendor, who pretended to be lame as he leaned upon his cane, to dent the crown of his hat and assume the more important attitude of a railway and steamboat inspector. He may have deceived others a long time, but I was on his trail and discovered his smart delusion much sooner than he expected. [32]

Several times I invited a number of the spies that I met at the Bristol Hotel to accompany me to entertainments, including a certain John Denton, a friend of Mr. Fenwick, who went with me to the Scala Theater, where a comic opera known as *Polsk Blod* was presented. This gentleman entertained much and came in contact with many prominent Danes.

I gave him the letter written by Mr. Fenwick at New York, but not before I made a copy of it, thinking this precaution would serve my purpose to an advantage elsewhere. Later, when I returned to New York, I secured stationery and had duplicate copies written on letterheads of Hotel Belmont.

IX—THROUGH CORDONS OF SPIES TO BERLIN

After some time of interesting visits and conversations, I left Copenhagen to go partly by train and partly by steamer to Berlin, making the trip to Germany by way of Warnemünde. This is the port on the Baltic Sea through which the German capital and the interior of Europe may be reached most conveniently.

I had not been in Germany many days until I learned from personal observation that some travelers I met professed friendship for Germany and in spite of their professions were false and dangerous enemies. To me it seemed, in view of this fact, that the authorities leaned rather on the side of leniency than on the side of severity. In all public places was the notice:

SOLDATEN
VORSICHT IN GESPRACHEN
SPIONENGEFAHR

The translation is as follows: Soldiers, careful in conversations; danger of spies!

[33]

That there was an invasion of spies and secret service men, mostly representing England and France, I learned soon after I reached the large cities of Germany. They were disguised in various ways, as laborers, students and professional and business men.

I had been in Berlin more than three weeks, had consulted with the American ambassador, Hon. James W. Gerard; with Mr. James O'Donnell Bennett and Mr. Robert J. Thompson, American newspaper reporters; with members of the German parliament, and many officials in civic and military positions, including Herr Gottlieb von Jagow, the German secretary of foreign affairs, before I obtained privileges to visit prison camps, border fortifications and fields in the east where action had destroyed cities and devastated the country.

After I had traveled to inspect the points which I wanted to visit, I began to plan to learn from first hand experience the strange and horrible action and destruction in war. It was my purpose to meet those who had fought at the front and had been in the thick of the fight at noted engagements. In this manner I obtained information by personal inspection and at the same time saw safely by proxy what would otherwise be dangerous and impossible.

X—"THE SPY I MET IN WARSAW"

The shortest trip from Berlin to Warsaw is by way of Bromberg and Thorn, but I chose the route going through Breslau-Oppeln-Czestochowa, the last mentioned town being in Russia, which takes the traveler through Skierniewice and enters Warsaw from the south-west. In returning, I chose the route Skierniewice-Alexandrowa, which, in Germany, is the line Thorn-Bromberg-Schneidemühle-Berlin.

[34]

This route permits the traveler to see much of the farming districts in eastern Germany and a large part of Poland, which, by the way, is no mean ambition in the time of war. Here as nowhere else is exemplified the great faith the Germans had in the soil as a mainstay of success. They had gone into partnership with nature to work out their salvation.

My entrance into the Polish capital was without formality. I went at once to Hotel Rom, where I left my hand baggage, and then reported at the police station. The fact that I had announced myself as a literary writer (Schriftsteller) seemed to entitle me to more than ordinary courtesies.

In the afternoon of my first day in the city, while near the main building of the university, I met a young man who was walking leisurely. He was holding a cane and was resting his chin upon his right hand.

Not long afterward, in an angular street near by, I saw a person who reminded me of the young man I had met shortly before. His pants seemed to be made of the same kind of woolen goods, but his hat and coat appeared different.

The following day I met the same person and took the liberty to speak to him. In the course of time I learned that he was a secret service man and had been detailed to watch a number of strangers who were sojourning in the city. Those who were under surveillance, I learned soon after, included me as well as several guests at Hotel Rom.

This young man had a coat with two sides suitable for outside wear. When one was exposed, he looked like a student, and in the other he had the appearance of a newspaper seller. He was one of many secret service men in civilian clothes who were doing police duty and detective work.

[35]

XI—STORY OF THE DAINTY SPY AT BERLIN

When I returned to Berlin from the east, I engaged quarters at Pension Stern, a pleasant place on Unter den Linden. The outlook from the front window enabled me to see all that famous thoroughfare, from the statue of Frederick the Great to the Brandenburger Tor. The panorama included the vacant French embassy, the Cafe Victoria, the main building of the University of Berlin and the Dom Kirche in the distance.

I had returned to the capital city to visit the museums, art galleries and palaces of Berlin as well as the suburbs of Spandau, Charlottenburg and Potsdam. It was my purpose to study life at the capital as well as to see the military side of the war in the German metropolis, including the great prison camp at Döberitz.

At the reading rooms of the *Chicago Daily News*, on Unter den Linden, I found many American and English periodicals and went there frequently to peruse them. Several times I met at this place a dainty lady who spoke German like a Bavarian and English with the (ze) accent of a Parisian. This lady I learned to know as Miss Julia Bross and I put her on my list of possible spies.

She accepted pleasantly my invitation to take dinner at Cafe Victoria, where she drank coffee and smoked a cigarette while I labored over a cup of tea as a final course in a long list of eatables. Her home was in Denmark, which was evidenced by numerous letters which she carried, and she was in the city to teach French and study German.

The story of the dainty dame was well planned, but I doubted her. She was a spy and was on

[36]

dangerous footing. With apologies to Bret Harte, I wrote in my diary:

That for ways that are dark
And for tricks that are vain
The female spy is peculiar,
Which the same I would rise to explain.

The city was full of soldiers,—at churches, in theaters, at restaurants, on the streets, in short, everywhere were soldiers. Life was no departure from the usual. The shops were full of goods and everybody was doing business in the even tenor of his way. The sound of martial music, the marching of soldiers and the flutter of many German, Bulgarian, Turkish and Austria-Hungarian flags in public places were the only reminders that war was in progress.

On a train of the Stadtbahn (city railway) I went to Döberitz, where I made a complete tour of the military camp, including the prison yards, the military drill grounds and the field of aviation. The clear sky was dotted with many flying machines, including *taubes*, biplanes and Zeppelins, making the district buzz with their rapid-working machinery.

Toward evening I wended my way from the prison yards to the depot, about a half mile, walking slowly over the sandy tract. When I arrived at the station I was surprised to find that Miss Bross was among the passengers who were waiting to return to the city.

Miss Bross had reached the place by a different train than the one by which I came. She had been busy in the sunlight, she said, enjoying the open sky and the warm, autumnal breezes.

To me her mission to Döberitz appeared very different. It seemed that she had no interest in the prison camp, that to her the sanitation and employment of prisoners was a blank book, but everything I mentioned about the drill of soldiers and the maneuvers of flying machines aroused her interest. To the one she was blind and to the others she was wide awake and far-seeing. The difference in her feeling on these topics deepened my suspicion that she was practicing a clever game of espionage. [37]

I had taken a seat beside her on a bench in the railway station and began to study her face. She was alert and cunning, but her attitude was vague and evasive.

When the express train rolled into the station, I was ready to board it without delay. The evening was pleasant and the train moved rapidly toward the metropolis. Miss Bross alighted at Potsdamer Platz, while I went as far as Friedrich Strasse.

Several times I met Miss Bross at the reading rooms of the *Chicago Daily News*, where she observed the news columns and editorials of the German-American newspapers with special interest. Near the last of November she told me she had decided to go home to Denmark on the third of December. By this time I had purchased passage to New York and left for Copenhagen the same morning.

After luncheon on the railway diner, Miss Bross seemed worried about the examination at Warnemünde, where German officers inspected the baggage and person of the passengers. This examination, owing to much espionage, had been greatly intensified.

"What do you think of the case of Miss Edith Cavell?" she asked, "I mean the nurse who was executed as a spy in Belgium by the Germans."

"This case," I answered, "is an unusual one. Miss Cavell had the utmost confidence of the German officers, who granted her extraordinary privileges as a nurse, while she busied herself most of the time organizing a band of spies to operate against the German army in France." [38]

"Yes, that is true; but she was a woman who had done some good and her life should have been spared. At least they think so in France and England where funds are being raised to build monuments to her memory."

XII—THE "SCRAP OF PAPER"—A DEATH WARRANT

The train was entering the station at Warnemünde. Miss Bross seemed nervous. She handed me a small scrap of paper, saying, "If I am on the train after we leave Warnemünde, hand it back to me; otherwise do what you like with it."

It was currently reported that all the passengers when entering or leaving a country at war, in Germany as well as in France and England, would be required to remove all their clothes and undergo a thorough examination. This proved to be the case in this instance, except where travelers could make an unusually good showing of neutrality and fairness, under which condition I passed the scrutinizing officers to my utmost satisfaction.

When the steamship was crossing the Baltic Sea, I looked in vain among the passengers for Miss Bross, who, according to subsequent reports, was retained as a spy. The examining officer, a German lady, had found a plat of the military grounds at Spandau pasted to the sole of her bare foot. I never saw her again.

This gave me the liberty to do as I pleased with the scrap of paper Miss Bross handed to me on the train. On examination I found it embodied a somewhat faulty plat of the military camp at Döberitz.

It occurred to me immediately that I had assumed a dangerous and unnecessary risk in permitting her to place it in my custody. Had I known the contents of this innocent looking scrap of paper, it would have been utterly impossible to have induced me to even touch it. However, the matter ended without injury to me, and I was extremely glad that I was sailing on the Baltic Sea, instead of being at the inspection rooms at Warnemünde with the scrap of paper in my pocket. [39]

(The author continues his interesting narrative with an illuminating description of the methods of spying and many other phases of his journeys.—EDITOR.)

FOOTNOTE:

[2] All numerals relate to stories told herein—not to chapters in the book.

"THE ADVENTURE OF THE U-202"—THE KAISER'S ARMADA

[40]

Hunting the Seas on a German Submarine

By Baron Spiegel Von Und Zu Peckelsheim, Captain Lieutenant Commander of the U-202

This is a thrilling day by day story of the daring, hunting raid of a German submarine, told by the officer in charge. He tells how the undersea boat is maneuvered; how the English and French attempt to guard the channel against the enemy's deadly U-boats. He reveals the emotions of the officers and crew of the little 202 in the presence of what seemed death the next moment, and tells of their marvellous achievements in the midst of their sinister tasks. This is one of the most astounding personal narratives that the War has yielded. These selections are taken from the German Commander's logbook with the permission of the publishers, *The Century Company*, copyright 1917, published by arrangement with the *New York World*.

[3] I—STORY OF THE SUBMARINE CAPTAIN

What peculiar sensations filled me. We were at war—the most insane war ever fought! And now I am a commander on a U-boat!

I said to myself:

"You submarine, you undersea boat, you faithful U-202, which has obediently and faithfully carried me thousands of miles and will still carry me many thousand miles! I am a commander of a submarine which scatters death and destruction in the ranks of the enemy, which carries death and hell fire in its bosom, and which rushes through the water like a thoroughbred. What am I searching for in the cold, dark night? Do I think about honor and success? Why does my eye stare so steadily into the dark? Am I thinking about death and the innumerable mines which are floating away off there in the dark, am I thinking about enemy scouts which are seeking me?"

"No! It is nerves and foolish sentiments born of foolish spirits. I am not thinking about that. Leave me alone and don't bother me. I am the master. It is the duty of my nerves to obey. Can you hear the melodious song from below, you weakling nerves? Are you so dull and faint-hearted that it does not echo within you? Do you not know the stimulating power which the thin metal voice below can inspire within you?" [41]

"This song brings greetings to you from a distance of twelve hundred miles and through twelve hundred miles it comes to you. Ahead we must look; we must force our eyes to pierce the darkness on all sides."

The spy-glass flew to the eye. There is a flash in the west. A light!

"Hey, there! Hey! There is something over there——"

"That is no ordinary light. What about it?"

II—NIGHT ON THE OCEAN—ON DECK OF A SUBMARINE

Lieutenant Petersen was looking through his night glasses at the light.

"I believe he is signaling," he said excitedly. "The light flashes continually to and fro. I hope it is not a scout ship trying to speak with some one."

Hardly had the lieutenant uttered these words when we all three jumped as if electrified, because certainly in our immediate neighborhood flashed before us several quick lights giving signals, which undoubtedly came from the ship second in line, which was signaling to our first friend. [42]

"Great God! An enemy ship! Not more than three hundred meters ahead!" I exclaimed to myself.

"Hard a starboard! Both engines at highest speed ahead! To the diving stations!"

In a subdued voice, I called my commands down the tower.

The phonograph in the crew-room stopped abruptly. A hasty, eager running was discernible through the entire boat as each one hurried to his post.

The boat immediately obeyed the rudder and was flying to starboard. Between the two hostile ships there was a continuous exchange of signals.

"God be praised it is so dark!" I exclaimed with a deep breath as soon as the first danger had passed.

"And to think that the fellow had to betray his presence by his chattering signals just as we were about to run right into his arms," was the answer. "This time we can truly say that the good God, Himself, had charge of the rudder."

The engineer appeared on the stairway which leads from the "Centrale" up to the conning tower.

"May I go to the engine-room, Herr Captain-Lieutenant?"

It was not permissible for him to leave his diving station, the "Centrale," which is situated in the center of the boat, without special permission.

"Yes, Herr Engineer, go ahead down and fire up hard!" I replied.

The thumping of the heavy oil-motors became stronger, swelled higher and higher, and, at last, became a long drawn out roar, and entirely drowned the sound of the occasional jolts which always were distinctly discernible when going at slower speed. One truly felt how the boat exerted its strength to the utmost and did everything within its power.

[43]

We had put ourselves on another course which put the anxiously signaling Britishers obliquely apart of our stern, and rushed with the highest speed for about ten minutes until their lights became smaller and weaker. We then turned point by point into our former course, and thus slipped by in a large half circle around the hostile ships.

"Just as a cat around a bowl of hot oatmeal," said Lieutenant Petersen.

"No, my dear friend," I said laughingly, "it does not entirely coincide. The cat always comes back, but the oatmeal is too hot for us in this case. Or do you think that I intend to circle around those two rascals for hours?"

"Preferably not, Herr Captain-Lieutenant. It could end badly!"

"Both engines in highest speed forward, let the crew leave the diving stations, place the guards!" I ordered. [4]

It was three minutes after six o'clock, and within about half an hour the sun would rise, but the sea and the sky still floated together in the colorless drab of early dawn and permitted one only to imagine, not see, that partition wall, the horizon.

Unceasingly our binoculars pierced the gray dusk of daybreak. Suddenly a shiver went through my body when—only a second immovable and in intense suspense—a dark shadow within range of the spy-glass made me jump. The shadow grew and became larger, like a giant on the horizon—one mast; one, two, three, four funnels—a destroyer.

[44]

A quick command—I leap down into the tower. The water rushes into the diving tanks. The conning tower covers slam tight behind me—and the agony which follows tries our patience, while we count seconds with watches in hand until the tanks are filled, and the boat slips below the sea.

Never in my life did a second seem so long to me. The destroyer, which is not more than two thousand meters distant from us, has, of course, seen us, and is speeding for us as fast as her forty thousand horse power can drive her. From the guns mounted on her bow flash one shot after another aimed to destroy us.

Good God! If he only does not hit! Just one little hit, and we are lost! Already the water splashes on the outside of the conning tower up to the glass windows through which I see the dark ghost, streaking straight for us. It is terrifying to hear the shells bursting all around us in the water. It sounds like a triphammer against a steel plate, and closer and closer come the metallic crashes. The rascal is getting our range.

There—the fifth shot—the entire boat trembles—then the deceitful daylight disappears from the conning-tower window. The boat obeys the diving rudder and submerges into the sea.

A reddish-yellow light shines all around us; the indicator of the manometer, which measures our depth, points to eight meters, nine meters, ten meters, twelve meters. Saved!

III—HOW IT FEELS TO PLUNGE BENEATH THE SEAS

[45]

What a happy, unexplainable sensation to know that you are hiding deep in the infinite ocean! The heart, which had stopped beating during these long seconds because it had no time to beat, again begins its pounding.

Our boat sinks deeper and deeper. It obeys, as does a faithful horse, the slightest pressure of a rider's knees, which, in this case, are the diving rudders placed in the bow and the stern. The manometer now shows twenty-four meters, twenty-six meters. I had given orders we should go down to thirty meters.

Above us we still hear the roaring and crackling in the water, as if it were in an impotent rage. I turn and smile at the mate who is standing with me in the conning tower—a happy, carefree smile. I point upwards with my thumb.

"Do you hear it? Do you hear it?"

It is an unnecessary question, of course, because he hears it as plainly as I do, and all the others aboard hear it, too. But the question can still be explained because of the tremendous strain on our nerves which has to express itself even in such a simple question.

Dear, true, splendid little boat, how one learns to love you during such trying moments and would like to pet you like a living human being for your understanding and obedience! We, here on board, all depend upon you, just as we all depend upon one another. We are chained together. We will face the dangers together and gain success.

You blond heroes who are standing down there in the bowels of the boat without knowing what is happening up in the light, but still knowing that the crucial moment has arrived—that life or death to every one depends on one man's will and one man's decision; you who, with a calm and strong feeling of duty, stick at your posts with all the strength of your bodies and souls strained to the breaking point and still keep full faith in him who is your leader, chief, and commander; you

[46]

show the highest degree of bravery and self-control, you who never have a chance to see the enemy but still, with sustained calm, do your duty.

Not a word was uttered, not a sound disturbed that deadly stillness on board. One almost forgot that the men were standing with strained nerves at their posts in order to keep the wonderful mechanism running right. One could hear the soft whirr of the dynamos and, more and more distant, the crackling of the exploding shells. Suddenly even this stopped. The Britisher must have noticed that the fish had slipped out of his hand. Shortly thereafter we heard his propellers churning the water above us. Soon this noise died away as it had come, growing fainter and fainter in a kind of grinding whirr.

"Did you hear how he circled around over us?" I asked through the speaking tube which led down into the "Centrale."

"Certainly. That could clearly be distinguished," was the short answer.

I was pondering over what to do next. At first we had no choice but to dive at the first sight of the destroyer suddenly appearing with the break of day.

IX—RISING FROM THE OCEAN BOTTOM

In our capacity as an undersea boat, we were now in a position to fight on equal terms, and I decided to risk a bout with him as soon as it became light enough for me to see through the periscope. The intervening time I made use of by having passed up to me in the tower the long desired cup of morning coffee, in order to stop the tantalizing agony which the smell of the coffee had caused my empty stomach. Thereupon we slowly climbed upwards from our safe breakfast depth of thirty meters. The higher we came—one can read on the manometer how we are ascending meter by meter—the greater became the excitement and tension. Without breathing we listened.

[47]

Slowly the boat rose. The top of the periscope would soon be thrust above the surface. My hands clasped the handle with which the well-oiled, and therefore easily movable, periscope can be turned around as quickly as lightning, in order to take a sweep around the horizon. My eye was pressed to the sight, and soon I perceived that the water was getting clearer and clearer by degrees and more transparent. I could not follow the ascent of the boat without consulting the manometer.

My heart was pounding with the huntsman's fervor, in expectation of what I was to see at my first quick glance around the horizon, because the destroyer, which we sighted only a quarter of an hour before, could be only a scouting ship. It might belong to a detachment of naval scouts to protect a larger ship. In my thoughts I saw the whole eastern horizon full of proud ships under England's flag surrounded by smoke.

I did not see anything, no matter how carefully I scanned the horizon. All I could see was the reddening morning blush spread over half of the eastern sky, the last stars now paling and the rising sun showing its first beams.

"For heaven's sake, nobody is here," I grumbled to myself.

"Oh, he'll surely come back, Captain," said my mate with true optimism. "The prey was too hot for him to tackle and now he has started to fetch a couple more to help him."

[48]

"It would certainly be less desirable," put in Lieutenant Gröning, who, full of expectations, was standing halfway up the stairway leading from the tower to the "Centrale" and had overheard our talk. "No, it would be less desirable," he repeated, "because then comes the entire swarm of hostile U-boats with their nets cunningly lined with mines. No good will ever come of that."

"There you are right, Gröning," I agreed. "With that sort of a nuisance, equipped as they are with so many machines for our destruction, it would be very disagreeable to make their acquaintance. If they come, it is best to disappear. It is not worth the risk. We have many more important duties ahead of us. It would be too bad to spoil a good torpedo on such trash."

At the same time, I decided to rise so as to get a better observation through the periscope and once more look around the horizon. I suddenly observed in the north-east a peculiar, dark cloud of smoke. I, therefore, did not give any orders to arise, but told "Centrale" by a few short commands through the speaking tube the new turn of affairs and, with added speed, went to meet the smoke cloud.

V—STORY OF THE SINKING TRANSPORT

Soon the outlines of a ship told us that ahead of us was a large steamer, steaming westward at high speed. The disappointment which we experienced at first was soon reversed when it was clearly shown that the fortunes of war had again sent a ship across our course which belonged to a hostile power.

No flag could be seen—nor was it run up. Otherwise we would have seen it.

"This is a suspicious circumstance," I reasoned with myself.

[49]

I called down to the "Centrale" all my observations through the periscope at regular intervals, snapping them out in the same sharp, brief style that the newsboys use in calling out the headlines to the listening public. My words were passed in whispers from mouth to mouth until all hands on board knew what was going on above the surface. Each new announcement from the conning tower caused great excitement among the crew, listening and holding their breath and, I believe, if you could measure the tension on human nerves with a barometer, it would have registered to the end of the tube, when, like hammer beats, these words went down to the

"Centrale:"

"The steamer's armed! Take a look, mate."

I stepped away from the sights of the periscope. "Can you see the gun mounted forward of the bridge?"

"Yes, certainly," he replied excitedly. "I can see it, and quite a large piece it is, too."

"Now take a look at her stern—right by the second mast—what do you notice there?"

"Thousand devils! Another cannon—at least a ten-centimeter gun. It's a transport, sure."

"Drop the periscope! Port ten!" I commanded.

"Torpedo tube ready!" reported the torpedo master through the tube from the forward torpedo compartment.

By this time I had the periscope submerged so that we were completely below the surface and out of sight, and it would be impossible to discover us from the steamer, even after the most careful searching of the horizon.

"Advance on the enemy!" was our determination.

Oh, what a glorious sensation is a U-boat attack! What a great understanding and coöperation between a U-boat and its crew—between dead matter and living beings! What a merging into a single being, of the nerves and spirits of an entire crew! [50]

"Just as if the whole boat is as one being," was the thought that passed through my mind when I, with periscope down, went at my antagonist, just like a great crouching cat with her back bowed and her hair on end, ready to spring. The eye is the periscope, the brain the conning tower, the heart the "Centrale," the legs the engines, and the teeth and claws the torpedoes.

Noiselessly we slipped closer and closer in our exciting chase. The main thing was that our periscope should not be observed, or the steamer might change her course at the last moment and escape us. Very cautiously, I stuck just the tip of the periscope above the surface at intervals of a few minutes, took the position of the steamer in a second and, like a flash, pulled it down again. That second was sufficient for me to see what I wanted to see. The steamer was to starboard and was heading at a good speed across our bows. To judge from the foaming waves which were cut off from the bow, I calculated that her speed must be about sixteen knots.

The hunter knows how important it is to have a knowledge of the speed at which his prey is moving. He can calculate the speed a little closer when it is a wounded hare than when it is one which in flight rushes past at high speed.

It was only necessary for me, therefore, to calculate the speed of the ship for which a sailor has an experienced eye. I then plotted the exact angle we needed. I measured this by a scale which had been placed above the sights of the periscope. Now I only had to let the steamer come along until it had reached the zero point on the periscope and fire the torpedo, which then must strike its mark.

You see, it is very plain; I estimate the speed of the boat, aim with the periscope and fire at the right moment. [51]

He who wishes to know about this or anything else in this connection should join the navy, or if he is not able to do so, send us his son or brother or nephew.

VI—SCENE OF TERROR AS THE SHIP GOES DOWN

On the occasion in question everything went as calculated. The steamer could not see our cautious and hardly-shown periscope and continued unconcerned on its course. The diving rudder in the "Centrale" worked well and greatly facilitated my unobserved approach. I could clearly distinguish the various objects on board, and saw the giant steamer at a very short distance—how the captain was walking back and forth on the bridge with a short pipe in his mouth, how the crew was scrubbing the forward deck. I saw with amazement—a shiver went through me—a long line of compartments of wood spread over the entire deck, out of which were sticking black and brown horse heads and necks.

Oh, great Scott! Horses! What a pity! Splendid animals!

"What has that to do with it?" I continually thought. "War is war. And every horse less on the western front is to lessen England's defense." I have to admit, however, that the thought which had to come was disgusting, and I wish to make the story about it short.

Only a few degrees were lacking for the desired angle, and soon the steamer would get into the correct focus. It was passing us at the right distance, a few hundred meters.

"Torpedo ready!" I called down into the "Centrale."

It was the longed-for command. Every one on board held his breath. Now the steamer's bow cut the line in the periscope—now the deck, the bridge, the foremast—the funnel. [52]

"Let go!"

A light trembling shook the boat—the torpedo was on its way. Woe, when it was let loose!

There it was speeding, the murderous projectile, with an insane speed straight at its prey. I could accurately follow its path by the light wake it left in the water.

"Twenty seconds," counted the mate whose duty it was, with watch in hand, to calculate the exact

time elapsed after the torpedo was fired until it exploded.

"Twenty-two seconds!"

Now it must happen—the terrible thing!

I saw the ship's people on the bridge had discovered the wake which the torpedo was leaving, a slender stripe. How they pointed with their fingers out across the sea in terror; how the captain, covering his face with his hands, resigned himself to what must come. And next there was a terrific shaking so that all aboard the steamer were tossed about and then, like a volcano, arose, majestic but fearful in its beauty, a two-hundred meter high and fifty-meter wide pillar of water toward the sky.

"A full hit behind the second funnel!" I called down into the "Centrale." Then they cut loose down there for joy. They were carried away by ecstasy which welled out of their hearts, a joyous storm that ran through our entire boat and up to me.

And over there?

Landlubber, steel thy heart!

A terrible drama was being enacted on the hard-hit, sinking ship. It listed and sank towards us.

From the tower I could observe all the decks. From all the hatches human beings forced their way out, fighting despairingly. Russian firemen, officers, sailors, soldiers, hostlers, the kitchen crew, all were running and calling for the boats. Panic stricken, they thronged about one another down the stairways, fighting for the lifeboats, and among all were the rearing, snorting and kicking horses. The boats on the starboard deck could not be put into service, as they could not be swung clear because of the list of the careening steamer. All, therefore, thronged to the boats on the port side, which, in the haste and anguish, were lowered, some half empty; others overcrowded. Those who were left aboard were wringing their hands in despair. They ran from bow to stern and back again from stern to bow in their terror, and then finally threw themselves into the sea in order to attempt to swim to the boats.

[53]

Then another explosion resounded, after which a hissing white wave of steam streamed out of all the ports. The hot steam set the horses crazy, and they were beside themselves with terror—I could see a splendid, dapple-gray horse with a long tail make a great leap over the ship's side and land in a lifeboat, already overcrowded—but after that I could not endure the terrible spectacle any longer. Pulling down the periscope, we submerged into the deep.

VII—WRECKAGE AND CORPSES—THE OCEAN GRAVE

When, after some time, I came again to the surface there was nothing more to be seen of the great, proud steamer. Among the wreckage and corpses of the horses three boats were floating and occasionally fished out a man still swimming in the sea. Now I came up on the surface in order to assist the victims of the wrecked ship. When our boat's mighty, whale-like hull suddenly arose out of the water, right in their midst, a panic seized them again and quickly they grasped their oars in order to try to flee. Not until I waved from the tower to them with my handkerchief and cap did they rest on their oars and come over to us. The state in which some of them were was exceedingly pitiful. Several wore only white cotton trousers and had handkerchiefs wrapped around their necks. The fixed provisions which each boat was required to carry were not sufficient when the boat's crew was doubled and trebled.

[54]

While I was conferring with our mess officer as to what we could possibly dispense with of our own provisions we noticed to the north and west some clouds of smoke which, to judge from the signs, were coming towards us quickly. Immediately a thought flashed through my head:

"Now they are looking for you. Now comes the whole swarm."

Already the typical masts of the British destroyers and trawlers arose above the horizon. We, therefore, did not have a minute to lose in order to escape these hostile and most dangerous enemies. I made my decision quickly and called to the captain of the sunken steamer that he could let one of the oncoming ships pick them up as I could not spare the time, but had to go "north-east." Then I submerged—right in front of the boats full of survivors.

(Here the captain graphically describes his escape from the British fleet; how near they came to his capture. He relates many interesting tales of the "Days of Terror," "A Lively Chase," matching wits "The British Bull-dog," and the joy of "Homeward Bound."—EDITOR.)

FOOTNOTES:

[3] All numerals relate to stories told herein—not to chapters in the book.

[4] (The captain here describes a night of perilous adventures and escapes on the sea, until morning brought them face to face with death.)

"PASSED BY THE CENSOR"—TRUE STORIES FROM THE FIELDS OF BATTLE

[55]

Experiences of an American Newspaper Man in France

Told by Wythe Williams, Officially Accredited to the French Armies on the Western Front—Paris Correspondent of the "New York Times"

The brilliant stories of American journalists form an important part of the literature of the Great War. Mr. Williams is one of the ablest of these correspondents. His dispatches from the battle grounds received the commendation of Ambassador Herrick and Premier Clemenceau of France. At the outbreak of the War Williams was stationed in Paris. He was refused, with all other correspondents, any credentials permitting him to enter the fighting area. He daringly worked his way to the fighting lines, where he was arrested, returned to Paris as a prisoner of War and lodged in the Cherche Midi prison, the famous military prison where Dreyfus was confined. He was released under the intervention of Ambassador Herrick, but still baffled at getting to the front as a war correspondent, he volunteered for service in the Red Cross as an orderly on a motor ambulance. The stories which he tells are classics in American journalism. They have been collected into a volume entitled "Passed by the Censor" from which we make the following selections by permission of his publishers, *E. P. Dutton and Company*. Copyright 1916.

[5] I—STORY OF THE AMBULANCE DRIVER IN PARIS

[56]

I never expected to drive a motor ambulance, with badly wounded men, down the Champs Elysées. But I did. I have done many things since the war began that I never expected to do;—but somehow that magnificent Champs Elysées—and ambulances—and groans of wounded seemed a combination entirely outside my wildest imaginations.

This was a result of the eight days' parole, after my release from the Cherche Midi; I was forbidden to write anything concerning my trip to the battle fields.

During those eight days I came to the conclusion that the popularity of journalism in France had reached its lowest ebb. In the antebellum days newspapermen were rather highly regarded in the French capital. They occasionally got almost in the savant class, and folks seemed rather glad to sit near their corners of the cafés and hearken to their words. I found that now, in popular estimation, they were several degrees below the ordinary criminal, and in fact not far above the level of the spy. Also the wording of my parole was galling. I could not even write private letters to my family, without first obtaining permission at headquarters of the Military Governor.

We had "run into an important turning movement of troops on that trip to the front" was the final official reason assigned for our particular predicament. We were dangerous; we might tell about that turning movement. Therefore the eight days' parole.

Nevertheless, for eight days my activities for my newspaper were suspended, and even then the hope of getting to the front seemed more vague than ever. I thought over every plan that might produce copy, and finally I called on the Ambassador—which was the usual procedure when one had an idea of front-going character.

[57]

"I am weary of the reputation that has been bestowed upon me," I told Mr. Herrick. "I am tired of being classified with the thugs and yeggmen. I am tired of being an outcast on the face of Paris. In other words, for the moment I desire to uplift myself from the low level of journalism. I desire to don the brassard of the Red Cross."

"Yes," said the Ambassador, "I don't blame you."

"All right," I rejoined, "but as a journalist they won't have me—unless you give me a bill of health. If you tell them I am not so bad as I look nor so black as I am painted, I stand a chance. I confess frankly that I am actuated by the low motives of my profession. I am first and last a newspaperman and I believe that a Red Cross ambulance may get me to the battle front. However, I am willing to do my share of the work, and if I go into the service with my cards face up and your guarantee—why——"

"Yes," replied Mr. Herrick. "And that goes, provided you will not use the cable until you leave the service."

I promised. The Ambassador kept his word. A week later, vaccinated and injected against disease of every character, clad in khaki, with the coveted badge of mercy sewed on the left sleeve, I was taken into the ranks of the Croix Rouge as an ambulance orderly. I remained for two months—first hauling wounded from great evacuation stations about Paris to hospitals within the walls. Most of our wounded went to the American Ambulance, when we broke all speed laws going through the Champs Elysées, en route to Neuilly. Later I was stationed at Amiens with the second French army, at that time under the command of General Castelnau. We slept on the floor in a freight station and we worked in the black ooze of the railway yards. The battle front was still many miles away.

[58]

One morning when the weather was bleakest (it was now December) and the black ooze the deepest, and the straw from where I had just risen was flattest and moldiest, I received word from Paris to get back quick—that at last the War Office would send correspondents to the front,

and that the Foreign Office was preparing the list of neutrals who would go.

I resigned my ambulance job and took the next train. But I kept my brassard with the red cross upon it. I wanted it as a proof of those hard days and sometimes harder nights, when my profession was blotted from my mind—and copy didn't matter—I wanted it because it was my badge when I was an ambulance orderly carrying wounded men, when I came to feel that I was contributing something after all, although a neutral, toward the great sacrifice of the country that sheltered me. I shall keep it always for many things that I saw and heard; but I cherish it most for my recollection of Trevelyan—the Rue Jeanne d'Arc and those from a locality called Quesnoy-sur-Somme.

II—STORY OF TREVELYAN—THE ORDERLY

The orderly on the first bus was sitting at attention, with arms folded, waiting for orders. It was just dawn, but the interior of his bus was clean and ready. He always fixed it up at night, when the rest of us, dog tired, crept into the dank straw, saying we could get up extra early and do it.

So now we were up "extra early," chauffeurs tinkered with engines, and orderlies fumigated interiors; and the First Orderly, sitting at the head of the column, where he heard things, and saw things, got acquainted with Trevelyan. [59]

The seven American motor ambulances were drawn up with a detachment of the British Red Cross in a small village near B—, the railroad where the base hospital was located, way up near the Belgian frontier. The weather was cold. We had changed the brown paint on our busses to gray, making them less visible against the snow. Even the hoods and wheels were gray. All that could be seen at a distance were the two big red crosses blinking like a pair of eyes on the back canvas flaps. The American cars were light and fast and could scurry back out of shell range quicker than big, lumbering ambulances—of which there was a plenty. Therefore we were in demand. The morning that the First Orderly met Trevelyan our squad commander was in conference with the fat major of the Royal Army Medical Corps concerning the strenuous business of the day.

Both the First Orderly and Trevelyan were Somebody's. It was apparent. It was their caste that attracted them to each other. The First Orderly was a prominent figure in the Paris American colony; he knew the best people on both sides of the Atlantic. Now he was an orderly on an ambulance because he wanted to see some of the war. He wanted to do something in the war. There were many like him—neutrals in the ranks of the Croix Rouge.

The detachment of the Royal Army Medical Corps to which Trevelyan belonged arrived late one night and were billeted in a barn. The American corps were in the school house, sleeping in straw on the wood floor. A small evacuation hospital was near where the wounded from the field hospitals were patched up a little before we took them for a long ambulance haul. [60]

Trevelyan was only an orderly. The American corps found this "quaint," as Trevelyan himself would have said. For the orderly of the medical corps corresponds to the "ranker" of the army. In this war, at a time when officers were the crying demand, the gentlemen rankers had almost disappeared. Among the American volunteers, being the squad commander was somewhat a matter of choice and of mechanical knowledge of our cars. We all stood on an equal footing. But Trevelyan was simply classed as a "Tommy," so far as his medical officers were concerned.

So he showed a disposition to chum with us. He gravitated more particularly to the First Orderly, who reported to the chauffeur of the second bus that Trevelyan had a most comprehensive understanding of the war; that he had also a keen knowledge of medicine and surgery, with which the First Orderly had himself tinkered.

They discussed the value of the war in several branches of surgery. The chauffeur of the second bus heard Trevelyan expounding to the First Orderly on the precious knowledge derived by the great hospital surgeons in Paris and London from the great numbers of thigh fractures coming in—how amputations were becoming always fewer—the men walked again, though one leg might be shorter.

Trevelyan, in his well-fitting khaki uniform, seemed from the same mold as hundreds of clean-built Englishmen; lean face, blond hair. His accent was faultlessly upper class. The letter "g" did not occur as a terminating consonant in his conversation. The adjectives "rippin'" or "rotten" conveyed his sentiments one way or the other. His hand clasp was firm, his eye direct and blue. He was a chap you liked. [61]

At our midday meal, which was served apart for the American contingent, the First Orderly asked the corps what they thought of Trevelyan. "I've lived three years in England," said the chauffeur of the second bus, "and this fellow seems to have far less 'side' than most of his class."

The First Orderly explained that this was because Trevelyan had become cosmopolitan—traveled a lot, spoke French and Spanish and understood Italian, whereas most Englishmen scorned to learn any "foreign" tongue.

"Why isn't he in a regiment—he's so superior!" wondered the chauffeur of the second bus. The First Orderly maintained stoutly that there was some good reason, perhaps family trouble, why his new friend was just a common orderly—like himself.

The entire column was then ordered out. They hauled wounded from the field hospital to the evacuation camp until nightfall. After dusk they made several trips almost to the trenches. But there were fewer wounded than usual. The cold had lessened the infantry attacks, though the artillery constantly thundered, especially at nightfall.

New orders came in. They were:—Everything ready always for a possible quick advance into L —, which was then an advance post. An important redistribution of General French's "contemptible little army" was hoped for. At coffee next morning our squad commander, after his customary talk with the fat major, admonished us to have little to say concerning our affairs—that talk was a useless adjunct to war.

III—WHO IS THIS MYSTERIOUS GLOBE TROTTER

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That day again the First Orderly's dinner conversation was of Trevelyan. Their conversation of that morning had gotten away from armies and surgeons and embraced art people, which were the First Orderly's forte. People were his hobby but he knew a lot about art. This knowledge had developed in the form of landscape gardening at the country places of his millionaire friends. It appeared that he and Trevelyan had known the same families in different parts of the world.

"He knows the G's," he proclaimed, naming a prominent New York family. "He's been to their villa at Lennox. He spoke of the way the grounds are laid out, before he knew I had been there. Talked about the box perspective for the Venus fountain, that I suggested myself."

The corps "joshed" the First Orderly on that: asked him whether Trevelyan had yet confided the reason for his position in the ranks. The First Orderly was indifferent. He waved a knife loaded with potatoes—a knife is the chief army eating utensil. "He may be anything from an Honorable to a Duke," he said, "but I don't like to ask, for you know how Englishmen are about those things. I have found, though, that he did the Vatican and Medici collections only a year ago with some friends of mine, and I'm going to sound them about him some time."

There were sharp engagements that afternoon and the corps was kept busy. At nightfall, the booming of the artillery was louder—nearer, especially on the left, where the French heavy artillery had come up the day before to support the British line. The ambulance corps was ordered to prepare for night work. They snatched plates of soup and beans, and sat on the busses, waiting.

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At eight o'clock a shell screamed over the line of cars, then another, and two more. "They've got the range on us," the fat Major said. "We'll have to clear out." Eighteen shells passed overhead before the equipment and the few remaining wounded got away and struck the road to the main base at B—.

The American squad was billeted that night in the freight station—dropping asleep as they sank into the straw on the floor. At midnight an English colonel's orderly entered and called the squad commander. They went out together; then the squad commander returned for the Orderly of the first bus. The chauffeur of the second bus waked when they returned after several hours, and heard them through the gloom groping their way to nests in the straw. They said nothing.

It was explained in the morning at coffee. "Trevelyan" had been shot at sunrise. He was a German spy.

IV—STORIES OF THE RUE JEANNE D'ARC

We were sitting in a café at the *apéritif* hour—an hour that survives the war. We were stationed in a city of good size in Northern France, a city famous for its cathedral and its cheese. Just now it was a haven of refugees, and an evacuation center for wounded. The Germans had been there, as the patronne of the Café Lion d'Or narrated at length to every one who would listen; but now the battle lines were some distance away. If the wind came from the right direction when the noise of the city was hushed by military order at nightfall, the haunting boom-boo-o-m of heavy artillery could be faintly heard. No one who has heard that sound ever forgets it. Dynamite blasting sounds just about the same, but in the sound of artillery, when one knows that it is artillery, there seems the knell of doom.

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The café was crowded at the *apéritif* hour. The fat face of the patronne was wreathed in smiles. Any one is mistaken who imagines that all Northern France is lost from human view in a dense rolling cloud of battle smoke. At any rate, in the Café d'Or one looked upon life unchanged. True, there were some new clients in the place of old ones. There were a half dozen soldiers in khaki, and we of the American ambulance column, dressed in the same cloth. In a corner sat a young lieutenant in the gorgeous blue of the Chasseurs d'Afrique, drinking vermouth with a grizzled captain of artillery. Other French uniforms dotted the place. The "honest bourgeois" were all there—the chief supports of the establishment in peace or war. They missed the evening *apéritif* during the twelve days of German occupation, but now all were in their accustomed places. For the places of oldtimers are sacred at the Lion d'Or.

Madame la patronne acted in place of her husband, who was now safely serving in the cooking department of the army, some kilometers from the firing line. Madame sat contentedly at the caisse superintending the activities of two youthful, inexperienced garçons. The old waiters, Jean and André, vanished into the "zone of military activity" on the first day of the war. After several post cards, Jean had not been heard from. André was killed at the battle of the Marne.

We had heard the garrulous tale of the German occupation many times. It was thrillingly revealed, both at the Restaurant de Commerce and the Hotel de Soleil. At the Lion d'Or it was Madame's absorbing theme, when she was not haranguing the new waiters or counting change. Madame had remained throughout the trouble. "But yes, to be sure." She was not the woman to flee and leave the Lion d'Or to the invaders. Her ample form was firmly ensconced behind the caisse when the first of the Uhlans entered. They were officers, and—wonder of wonders—they spoke French. The new waiters were hiding in the cellar, so Madame clambered from her chair with dignity, and placed glasses and drink before them. And then—would wonders never cease?—

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these Germans had actually paid—even overpaid, *ma foi*—for one of them flung a golden half louis on the counter, and stalked from the place refusing change. Of course at the Hotel de Ville, the invaders behaved differently. There the Mayor was called upon for one million francs—war indemnity. But that was a matter for the city and not for the individual. Madame still had that golden half louis and would show it if we cared to see. Gold was scarce and exceedingly precious. The sight of it was good.

Now the Germans were gone—forced out, grace à Dieu, so the good citizens no longer lived in the cellars. They were again in their places at the Lion d'Or, sipping vermouth and offering gratitude to the military régime that had the decency to allow cafés open until eight o'clock. Outside the night was cold and a fine drizzle beat against the windows. Several newcomers shivered and remarked that it must be terrible in the trenches. But the electric lights, the clinking glasses on the marble tables, the rattling coins, soon brought them into the general line of speculation on how long it would take to drive the Germans from France.

V—A NIGHT AT THE LION D'OR

For a hundred years the cafés have been the Forum of France. The Lion d'Or had for that entire period been the scene of fierce verbal encounters between members of more political and religious faiths than exist in any other nation of the world. Every Frenchman, no matter how humble in position or purse has decided opinions about something. But now the voices in the Lion d'Or arose only in appellations concerning *les Boches*. There was unanimity of opinion on the absorbing subject of the war.

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The members of the American ambulance column sat at a table near the door. Our khaki always brought looks of friendly interest. Almost every one took us to be English, and even those who learned the truth were equally pleased. We finished the *apéritif* and consulted about dinner. We were off duty—we might either return for the army mess or buy our own meal at the restaurant. We paid the garçon and decided upon the restaurant a few doors away. Several of the men were struggling into their rubber coats. I told them that I would follow shortly. I had just caught a sentence from across the room that thrilled me. It held a note of mystery—or tragedy. It brought life out of the commonplace normality of *apéritif* hour at the Lion d'Or.

The speakers were two Frenchmen of middle age—fat and bearded. They were dressed in ordinary black, but wore it with a ceremonial rather than conventional manner. The atmosphere of the city did not seem upon them. They might rather be the butcher and the grocer of a small town. One of the pair had sat alone for some time before the second arrived. I had noticed him. He seemed to have no acquaintances in the place—which was unusual. He drank two cognacs in rapid succession—which was still more unusual. One drink always satisfies a Frenchman at *apéritif* hour—and it is very seldom cognac.

When the second man entered the other started from his seat and held out both hands eagerly. "So you got out safe!" were the words I heard; but our crowd was hurrying toward the door, and I lost the actual greeting. I ordered another vermouth and waited.

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The two men were seated opposite each other. The first man nervously motioned to the waiter and the newcomer gave his order. It was plain that they were both excited, but the table adjoining was unoccupied, so they attracted no attention. The noisy waiter, banging bottles on the table, drowned out the next few sentences. Then I heard the second man: "So I got out first, but you managed to get here yesterday—a day in advance."

The other replied: "I was lucky enough to get a horse. They were shelling the market place when I left."

The second man gulped his drink and plucked nervously at the other's sleeve. "My wife is at the hotel," he almost mumbled the words, "I must tell her—you said the market place. But how about the Rue Jeanne d'Arc?—her sister lived there. She remained."

"How about the Rue Jeanne d'Arc?" the other repeated. He clucked his tongue sympathetically. "That was all destroyed in the morning."

The second man drew a handkerchief from his pocket and mopped the sweat from his forehead.

VI—STORIES OF THE REFUGEES FROM THE SOMME

They were climbing out of the cattle cars into the mud of the freight yards. They numbered about fifty,—the old, the halt, the blind and the children. We were whizzing past on a motor ambulance with two desperately wounded men inside, headed for a hospital a half mile away. The Medical Major said that unless we hurried the men would probably be dead when we arrived. So we could not lessen speed as those from Quesnoy-sur-Somme descended painfully from the cattle cars. Instead, we sounded the siren for them to get out of the way. The mud from our wheels splattered them. But it was not mud—not regular mud. It was black, unhealthy ooze, generated after a month of rain in the aged layers of train soot. It was full of fever germs. Typhoid was on the rampage.

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As we passed the sentinels at the gates of the yards we were forced to halt in a jam of ammunition and food wagons. To the army that survives is given the first thought. The wounded in the ambulance could wait. We took right of way only over civilians—including refugees.

We asked a sentinel concerning those descending from the cattle cars, "*là bas*." He said they came from a place called Quesnoy-sur-Somme. It was not a city he told us, nor a town—not even a village. Just a straggling hamlet along the river bank—a place called Quesnoy-sur-Somme.

The past tense was the correct usage of the verb. The place *was* that; but now—now it is just a

black path of desolation beside a lifeless river. The artillery had thundered across the banks for a month. The fish floated backs down on the water.

When the ammunition and food wagons gave us room enough, we again raced through the streets and delivered our wounded at the hospital—alive. Then we returned to the freight yards for more. Several ambulance columns had worked through the night from the field hospitals to the freight yards. There the men were sorted and the less desperate cases entrained.

We plowed our way carefully through the ooze of the yards, for ahead of us walked those from Quesnoy-sur-Somme on their way to the *gare*. They walked slowly—painfully, except the children, who danced beside our running board and laughed at the funny red crosses painted on the canvas sides of the ambulance. It was raining—as usual. The sky was the coldest gray in the universe, and the earth and dingy buildings, darker in tone, were still more dismal. But one tiny child had a fat slab of bread covered thickly with red jam. She raised her sticky pink face to ours and laughed gloriously. She waved her pudgy fist holding the bread and jam, and shouted, "*Vive la France!*"

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We were now just crawling through the mire. The refugees surrounded us on all sides. The mother seized the waving little arm, and dragged the child away. The woman did not look at us. She just plodded along, her eyes fixed on the mud that closed over her shoes at every step. She was bareheaded and the rain glistened in great drops upon her hair. The child hung back. The mother merely tightened her grip, doggedly patient. She was past either curiosity or reproof.

VII—THE FORLORN MASS ON THE BATTLE ROADS

Our car ran so slowly that accidentally we killed the engine. I got out to crank her up and meantime the forlorn mass surged by. Two soldiers herded them over the slippery tracks to a shed beside the *gare* where straggled some rough benches. We lined our car up behind the other ambulances. Then we went to look at the refugees.

They had dropped onto the benches, except the children. The littlest ones tugged fretfully at their mothers' skirts. The others ran gleefully about, fascinated by the novelty of things. It was a holiday. Several Red Cross women were feeding the crowd, passing about with big hampers of bread and pots of coffee. Each person received also a tin of dried meat; and a cheese was served to every four. We helped carry the hampers.

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Most of the refugees did not even look at us; they did not raise their eyes from the mud. They reached out their hands and took what we gave them. Then they held the food in their laps, listless; or staring out across the yards into the wet dusk.

One or two of them talked. They had been hustled out at sunrise. The French army thought they had occupied that dangerous place long enough. There was no longer hope for any living thing remaining. So they came away—bringing nothing with them, herded along the line by soldiers. Where they were going they did not know. It did not matter where. "*C'est la guerre!* It is terrible—yes." They shrugged their shoulders. It is war!

One old man, nearly blind and very lame, sat forlornly at one end of the line. He pulled at an empty pipe. We gave him some tobacco—some fresh English tobacco. He knew that it was not French when he rolled it in his hand. So we explained the brand. We explained patiently, for he was very deaf. He was delighted. He had heard of English tobacco, but had never had any. He stuffed the pipe and eagerly lit it. He leaned back against the cold stone wall and puffed in ecstasy. Ah! this English tobacco *was* good. He was fortunate.

We glanced back along the line. As we looked several of the women shrank against the wall. One covered her eyes. Two French ambulances passed, carrying a wounded Zouave on a stretcher. A yard engine went shrieking across their path and the ambulanciers halted. The huddled figure under the blankets groaned horribly. Then the procession proceeded to our first ambulance. The men were on the seat, ready for the race against time to the hospital.

After a few minutes the soldiers who had herded the refugees into the shed came again to herd them out—back to the cattle cars. I asked one of the soldiers where they were going. He waved his hand vaguely toward the south. "*Là bas,*" he muttered. He didn't know exactly. They were going somewhere—that was all. There was no place for them here. This station was for wounded. And would they ever return? He shrugged his shoulders.

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I looked at the forlorn procession sloshing across the yards. The rain beat harder. It was almost dark; the yard lamps threw dismal, sickish gleams across the tracks. The old man with the tobacco brought up the rear, helped along by an old woman hobbling on a stick.

We heard the voice of the Medical Major bawling for "*les ambulances Américaines.*" We looked behind into the gloom of the *gare*; a procession emerged—stretchers with huddled forms under blankets. As far down the yards as we could see—just on the edge of the night, those from Quesnoy-sur-Somme were climbing slowly into the cattle cars.

FOOTNOTE:

[5] All numerals relate to stories told herein—not to chapters in the book.

"PRIESTS IN THE FIRINGLINE"—THE CROSS AND CRUCIFIX

[72]

A Reverend Father in the French Army

By René Gaell—Translated by H. Hamilton Gibbs and Madame Berton

This is the revelation of the soul of a priest, who heard "the call to duty" and went to the battle lines to fight for his country and to relieve the suffering. He tells about his experiences at "A Soldier's Death Bed"; "Mass Under Shell Fire"; "Absolution Before the Battle"; "The Blood of Priests"; "How They Die"; "Confession on a Parapet"; "The Blessed Sacrament"; and "The Last Blessing." The chapters here given on "His Call to Duty" and "The Story of a Wounded Man" is by permission of his publishers, *Longmans, Green and Company*.

[6] I—STORY OF A PRIEST'S "CALL TO DUTY"

"It's no joke, this time," said my old friend the General.

These words were uttered on the evening of the International Congress at Lourdes.

Hearts and voices were raised in prayer.

I, too, was filled with the thought of a peace which seemed as though it could have no end.

But the General was filled with quite other thoughts. "No," he said, with that fine strength which is capable of facing the saddest emergencies and of stilling the fever which the thought of the dreaded future sends rushing to the brain. "No, it's no joke this time.... War is upon us."

And he began to explain the international complications, the appalling pride of Germany faced by two alternatives, to expand or to perish. [73]

He showed me the uselessness of diplomacy—the treachery of international peace-parties—the rush of events towards the inevitable yet outrageous catastrophe.

In a week or perhaps less, millions of men would receive marching orders, and Europe would be bathed in blood.

Five days later, I left a deserted Lourdes. I read on the cover of my military certificate my destination for the first time ... my destination ... my orders to rejoin my unit ... and that simple piece of paper suddenly spoke to me with formidable eloquence.

I was a soldier, and this time it was "no joke." I was going to fight. The citizen in me shuddered, as every one shuddered in those first terrible hours whose emotion still prolongs itself and is not likely to end soon.

But the priest in me felt bigger, more human. To every one who asked if I were going too, I replied, "Yes, but not to kill—to heal, to succour, to absolve."

I felt those tear-filled eyes gaze wistfully at me, and that in passing, I left behind me a feeling of trust, of comfort.

A mother, whose five sons were going to the front, and who was seated near me in the train, said in a strong voice, but with the tears streaming down her cheeks: "They have scattered priests in all the regiments. You will be everywhere.... It is God's revenge!"

How much anguish has been soothed, how many sacrifices have been accepted more bravely, at the thought, "they will be there."

It was at the headquarters of a certain division of the Medical Service, during the first days of mobilisation. [74]

There, as everywhere, feverish preparation was going on—a tumultuous activity. Through the big town, the first regiment passed on their way to the firing line.

How the fine fellows were acclaimed, how they were embraced!

There were a thousand of us already, and we were the first to be called up. Half of us were priests, and our clerical garb attracted a lot of sympathy. The love of our country and the love of God so long separated were now as one. It is no longer time to scoff or to be indifferent to religion. People now wrung us by the hand, and came close up to us.

An officer came up to us and before that enormous assembly of men, said: "Gentlemen, I should like to embrace each one of you in the name of every mother in France.... If only you knew how they count on you, those women, and how they bless you for what you are going to be to their sons. We don't know the words that bring strength and healing, and we are ignorant of the prayers that solace the last agony ... but you...." And at the words, he wept, without attempting to hide his feelings. He already realised the immensity of the sacrifice, and the powerlessness of man to bring consolation to those struck down in their first manhood.

No, it was no longer "a joke" this time, and every one felt it and showed it by their respectful looks and manner.

The others, those millions of men on their way to the front, were starting for the unknown.

We, on the other hand, knew well what lay before us ... we should have to succour the wounded

and throw wide the Gates of Heaven for them to enter in—we should have to dress their wounds and arouse courage in those crushed, by the burden too heavy for mere flesh and blood to bear. [75]

Never had we felt such apostles ... never had our hearts dilated with such brotherly feeling.

II—CARRYING THE CROSS OF CHRIST TO THE BATTLEFIELDS

"Attention!"

Instantly there was dead silence. In imagination we saw nothing but those far-off battlefields.

Our names were called, and we were allotted our several tasks. First the stretcher-bearers. There was a long list of these, and in two hours they were to set out for the front, to pick up the wounded in the firing line.

From time to time the officer broke the monotony of the roll-call by trenchant remarks—such as one makes on those occasions when one has accepted one's share of sacrifice simply because it's one's duty to do so.

"You will be just as exposed as those who are fighting. The enemy will fire on the ambulances; and the Red Cross on your armlets and on the buildings will not protect you from German bullets."

The list was growing longer. In their turn men of thirty and forty received the badges of their devotedness.

"There are many of you who will never come back. Your courage will only be the finer. They may kill you, but you will not be able to kill. Your sole duty is to love suffering in spite of everything, no matter how mutilated the being may be who falls across your path, and who cries for pity."

"Even the Boches?"

The officer smiled, then said almost regretfully: "Even the Boches."

Amongst us there was a hum of dissent.

"I quite understand," said the officer, "but when you remember that your duty is that of heroism without thought of revenge—just pure heroism, that of apostles who are made of the stuff martyrs are made of..." [76]

He who had protested, and who happened to be standing next to me, was a dear old friend of mine, one of those valiant souls who fear nothing and nobody. He was a fine, soldierly priest.

He was among the number of those who were off to the front, and his face had lit up when he heard his name called.

"Thank Heaven! I was so afraid of being left behind."

To be left behind was a kind of disgrace we felt ... and we old territorials who were to be sent to the hospitals in the west, felt it badly.

The Abbé Duroy was already living it all in spirit. His eyes saw the near future and his heart beat with joy at the thought of his great work. He was going down to the terrible "là-bas," to anguish unspeakable and to death, and in his person, I thought I saw all the priests of France going towards the frontiers, invested with the divine mission of opening the gates to eternal life to those who were quitting this poor mortal life.

When we had separated, in order to pack our traps, Duroy took me apart.

"You are jealous," he said.

"Why not?"

"I understand. After all this new life is part of our very being. Do you think though that it was necessary to be mobilised in order to do what we are doing? For twenty years, always, we have been patriots ... soldiers who blessed and upheld."

There was a bugle call. It was the first signal for departure. He held out his hand ... our eyes met and spoke the same great thought, the same great fear. [77]

I was the weaker man, and the question which wrung my heart, escaped to my lips.

"When shall we meet again?"

He, proud and stern at the thought of danger, repeated my words.

"Shall we meet again?"

Then he broke the short silence. "To die like that, and only thirty.... I'm afraid I don't deserve such a grace."

Then becoming the true soldier he always was, he struck me on the shoulder and said—

"I've an idea, old friend. I'll write to you from 'là-bas,' as often as I can ... and from the impressions you get, joined to mine, I'm sure you'll be able to write some touching pages. I am your War Correspondent."

He embraced me, and I felt that his promise was one of those which are kept.

III—A PRIEST'S STORY OF THE MAN NOT AFRAID TO DIE

It was night-time, and I could hear the hours striking, hours which would have been long if I had not beside me moaning and groaning, suffering to be consoled. We had had to wait for them for a fortnight, but there they were now, filling the great dormitories of a school which had been

turned into a military hospital, where we had joined our post in the war. They suffer in silence, or when in the throes of a hideous nightmare, they scream and groan with the torture their mutilated bodies wrings from them.

I went up to a bed over which the lamp shed a subdued light. There lay a young fellow of about twenty, awakened by the intensity of his suffering. I had seen him but a short time before on his stretcher, a poor broken thing, his eyes staring, with the horrors of his dreadful journey still pictured in them. [78]

What appalling scenes had I read in them. All the horrors of war had become present to me.

Stretched out motionless on his stretcher, he looked like a corpse, whose eyes had not been properly closed, indifferent to all around him. Then, when we had lifted him, and with such care, he began to scream and cry out. A doctor should have dressed his wounds at the front, but they had not been done for four days. On being lifted up, his shattered leg, cramped and asleep, gave him excruciating pain, and his whole body writhed as though it had been on the rack.

I had noticed this young Marseillais, with his child's face among all the other wounded men, and I had been attracted by his youth and his sufferings.

I went up to his bed. I leant over him, and said with the instinctive gentleness which compassion inspires one with: "You are suffering, my child?"

Without answering, he withdrew his burning hand from mine, and put his arm round my neck.

"Father," he said, in a weak voice, "Father, am I going to die?"

What answer could I make? I didn't know; besides, even when one is sure, one can't say it out brutally like that.

Then the poor boy guessed I had misunderstood him, and his proud, brave soul wished to keep the glory of the soldier, who has braved danger without flinching. Now he defied death and found strength to smile.

"Oh! I'm not a bit afraid, but I wanted to ask you...."

He stopped and began to cry. He drew me still closer to him. He was no coward, this young trooper. One felt it instinctively. I knew that this lad who had lived through the bloody epopee, was not to be approached by maddening fear. His heart was stamped with virility. A month's campaign had made of him an old soldier who had gone through tragic adventures. [79]

"No, I'm not afraid. I've seen so many die all around me that I don't care a scrap whether I live or die. But ... It's my mother, I'm thinking of. If I die, she won't understand, and it will kill her too."

Little by little the sighs and moans had ceased in the darkened ward. Only his solemn words broke the silence. Everything else faded away at the meeting of the two beings, at that supreme moment, more than mere men, the soldier and the priest, to whom France had confided the guarding of her frontiers and the treasure of her ideal.

Then, knowing how nature rebounds, and trusting to the hardy stock from which he sprang, I dared to assure him that he was not mortally wounded.

"No, my child, you won't die, you are too young to die." A sceptical smile stopped me.

"And what about those others 'là-bas?'"

All the same, I don't believe that we shall not be able to save the poor, mangled body. The head doctor, whose diagnosis is never wrong, said only a little while ago that he would save him.

"I tell you, you will recover."

IV—THE STORY FROM HIS DYING LIPS

The poor fellow looked at me, and this time believed me. He raised himself a little, made the sign of the cross, and whispered—

"You must pray for me."

He closed his eyes in prayer, and I could no longer see him, for the tears in my own. To comfort him, I placed my hand on his breast. [80]

He winced. "Forgive me, father, I've had a bullet through there, too."

Not only had he a shattered leg, but a bullet had gone through his breast, and another had gone just above his heart.

His shirt was red with blood which had oozed through the dressings. Somehow it did not occur to me to think of his great suffering. He seemed more like a martyr broken on the wheel, with a halo round his head. This young boy, who knew how to suffer so well, must have fought magnificently.

And I thought as I raised my hand to bless him: "How fine he is!"

Four medals hung round his neck, and he held them out for me to kiss them.

They tasted of blood, and I still have the strange taste on my lips of those medals which had lain over the wound, which bled above his heart.

"That one, the biggest, was given me by a priest down there in the ambulance, which was an old farm once, and whose walls are riddled with shells. What a night it was! and what an amount of blood there was about!"

My young Marseillais writhed, not with the pain from his wounds, but with the fearful

remembrance of that night. The horror of that superhuman agony took possession of his mind. I wanted him to sleep, but words poured from his lips, in his fever. It was useless to try to stop him, so I let him tell me his sad tale.

"We had been fighting all day long, and felt death stalking beside us all day too. It was like a frightful tempest, like hell let loose. Bullets fell round us like hail, and I saw my comrades fall at my side cut in half or blown into bits by shell fire. They uttered no cries, they were wiped out instantaneously. But the others ... those who were still alive.... I can tell you it was enough to make your blood run cold. It was enough to make one go raving mad."

[81]

He stopped to drink a little. I thought he was exhausted with the effort of recalling the awful scene.

"Try to rest now, my child. You shall tell me the rest to-morrow."

But he would not listen to me. Up to now, it was the man who had been speaking, now suddenly the soldier awoke, the lover of his country, the French trooper fascinated by the glory of it all.

"It was so sad, yet so fine. War may kill you, but it makes you drunk; in spite of everything one had to laugh. I don't know what makes one laugh at such times.... Something great and splendid passes before one's eyes.... There is danger, but there is excitement, and it's that which attracts us.... The captain was standing, we were lying down. From time to time he would say: 'It's all right, boys.... We're making a fine mess of the Huns! Can you hear the 75's singing?'

"So well were they singing that, over there, helmets were falling like nuts which one shells when they're ripe. Their voices shook the ground, and each of their cries went to our hearts and made them beat the higher. Then we sprang up to rush forward, and then we flung ourselves down again flat, as above us the bullets whistled in their thousands."

He squeezed my hand tighter then, as if to drive home the truth of his story.

"You see, it was fine in spite of everything. Even when a bullet laid you low.... It happened to me about six o'clock, just as the captain fell, shouting 'Forward, men, and at them with the bayonets!' We went forward to the attack. In front of us we saw nothing but the flames from the cannons ... our ears were deafened with the cry of the shells. I took ten steps. We were walking in flames. It was red everywhere, as far as one could see. Suddenly a thunderbolt burst in the middle of us.... I fell near a comrade, brought down at the same time as I was."

[82]

"It was the chaplain of the division, a reservist, aged twenty-eight, who called out to me, laughing: 'You've got it in the leg, old man, I've got it in my shoulder!'

"He was drenched with blood, and still he went on joking. Then, suddenly, he became serious, and he began speaking like a priest speaks to the dying."

"Now, my children, make an act of contrition. Repeat after me with your whole heart, 'My God, I am sorry for my sins; forgive me!'

"I can see him now, half raised on his elbow; his unwounded hand was raised, while the poor fellow blessed us all, as we prayed God to have mercy on those who would never rise again."

"I saw him again in the field hospital, half an hour later. He was breathing with difficulty, but he kept on smiling. It was then that he gave me his medal."

"He died, with his rosary in his hands, and I looked at him for a long time when he had breathed his last. His face was like an angel's, and the blood went on flowing...."

"I remember that the doctor stopped at this moment, and bent over him. Then standing upright he called the other orderlies round and pointed to the dead man:

"There's a man who knew how to die finely. The poor devils who die before us so often, are sometimes sorry for themselves. This poor fellow has had no thought but for others for the last two hours. Look at him, he is still smiling."

The wounded boy stopped, his heart was torn at the thought of his friend. He, too, forgot his suffering in thinking of the priest whose absolution had strengthened and consoled him in his torture. I gave him something to drink; he kissed his medals, especially the big one, his precious legacy, and went off to sleep without dreaming that he had told me a sublime story."

[83]

There were twenty-four like him in the ward, and seeing them stretched out there overcome by pain, I told myself that the humblest among them, the most illiterate peasant even, had his share of glory, and that they were all transfigured by the halo round their heads.

Somehow, that first evening in the wards, I felt that I too had my share of courage and of usefulness.

Down there, in the firing line, they had found wherewith to feed their pride; here, the young heroes would be able to unburden their souls. At the front they had seen the living France. In this hospital, perhaps, they would come face to face with God—forgotten, misunderstood, abandoned—God who is so good to those who fall.

The major gave us his recommendations and the last orders. He was struck at seeing so many budding moustaches, and beards.

"Heavens! I only see priests to the fore!"

"Priests to the fore!" That is indeed our motto. Our comrades say we are rash. All the same, they are as rash as we are. *They* go to the bloody business laughing, *we* go praying.

FOOTNOTE:

[6] All numerals relate to stories told herein—not to chapters in the book.

STORIES OF AN AMERICAN WOMAN—SEEN WITH HER OWN EYES

[84]

"*Journal of Small Things*"

Told by Helen Mackay, an American Author

This is a story of little things and impressions gathered on the battle grounds by a woman of sensitive vision and understanding. She relates her impressions with a delicate pathos, little incidents half observed, half forgotten, which clustered around the big tragedy. Mrs. Mackay has gathered several hundred of these little stories into a book. A few of them, typical of their literature and woman quality are here related by permission of her publishers, *Duffield and Company*: copyright 1917.

[7] I—THE STORY OF THE DEPOT D'ÉCLOPÉS

The dépôt d'éclopés is just beyond the town, on the Roman road. The building was once the Convent of the Poor Claires. When the Sisters were sent away it was used as Communal Schools. There is a great plane tree outside the door in the yellow wall, and a bench in the shade. There is room for seven éclopés to sit crowded together on the bench. They bring out some chairs also.

All day long, and every day, as many of the éclopés as can get about, and do not mind that the road see them, and can find space in the shade of the plane tree, sit there, and look up and down the sunshine and the dust.

Some of them have one leg, and some of them have one arm. There is one of them who is packed into a short box on wheels. He sits up straight in the box, and he can run it about with his hands on the wheels. There is another in such a little cart, but that one has to lie on his back, and cannot manage the wheels himself. There is one who lies on a long stretcher, that they fix on two hurdles. There are two who are blind. The two blind men sit, and stare and stare....

[85]

I often go and stay with the éclopés at the gate, they like to have anybody come. It was a long time before I dared go in at the gate.

Inside the gate there is a courtyard that was once the nuns' garden, with their well in the middle of it and their fruit trees trained along the walls. And there, there move about all day, or keep to the shadow, of first the east wall, then the west, those of the éclopés whom the road must not see.

Some of them look up at you when you come in. But most of them turn away from you.

The two blind men at the gate who stare and stare, they cannot see the golden town or the golden mountains. They cannot see the compassion and the kindness that there is for them in the faces of all those who look upon them.

But these men in the courtyard, however will they learn to bear, down all their lives, the looks that there will be for them in the most kind, compassionate faces?

There are not ever enough chairs under the plane tree. There are more éclopés than there are chairs. How they laugh! They think it very droll to see a man who has only his left leg and a man who has only his right leg sharing a chair.

The men who have no legs say that that is not nearly so bad as having no arms. They say that the men with no arms are ashamed to be seen, like the men wounded in the face. They say that the men with no arms will never come out even to the gate.

[86]

They never will let you stand. It is a dreadful thing to do, to take one of their chairs. But they like to talk to a stranger.

All of them, except the man whose spine has been hurt, love to talk.

The man whose spine has been hurt lies all day, the days he can be brought out, on a stretcher, never stirring. He never speaks except to say one thing. He is very young. He looks as if he were made of wax.

He keeps saying, "How long the days are at this season!"

He will ask, over and over again, "What time is it?" and say, "Only eleven o'clock?" Or, "Only three o'clock?"

And then always, "How long the days are at this season!"

They are taking out for a walk those of the éclopés who are fit for it. There must be nearly a hundred of them. In every possible sort of patched, discolored uniform, here they come hopping and hobbling along. They have more crutches and canes than feet among the lot of them.

One of the men who has no legs goes so fast on his wooden stump and his crutches that everybody stops to look, and all the éclopés laugh, and the people stopping to look, laugh, and he laughs more than any of them.

If things are tragic enough, they are funny. I have come to know that, with the éclopés at the gate. And inside the gate, with those of the éclopés who keep back against the walls, I have come to know that the only safety of life is death.

II—STORY OF THE OLD WOMAN AND THE OMELET

[87]

The vine was red on the white old soft wall. It was very beautiful. There were masses of purple

asters under the red vine, against the wall. There was a bowl of purple asters on the table between the carafes of red and white wine.

We had an omelet and bread and butter and raspberries, and water, very beautiful in the thick greenish glasses.

Under the yellow boughs of the lime tree we could see the misty valley and the mountains.

The table had a red-and-white cloth.

The little old thin brown woman who served us wanted to talk all the time with us. She wanted to talk about the omelet; she had made it and was very proud of it. She wanted to talk about the war and to talk about her son.

She said that there had been some horrible, strange mistake and that people thought that he was dead. She had had a paper from the Ministry of War telling her he was dead. It was very strange. She had had a letter also from the Aumonier, telling her he was dead. But, of course, she knew.

She said he would come home, and be so sorry she had had such dreadful news, and so glad that she had not believed it.

They would laugh together. He had beautiful white teeth, she said, and his eyes screwed tight up when he laughed.

She told us how she and he would laugh together.

III—STORY OF THE APACHE BABY—AND ITS WAYWARD MOTHER

[88]

They telephoned from the canteen that the baby of the girl Alice was dead at the hospital, and that the funeral was to be from there that afternoon at three o'clock, and that Alice wanted me to come.

Mademoiselle Renée, the *économe*, who telephoned, said it was the apache girl with the ear-rings.

I don't know why she wanted me to come to the funeral of her baby. Of the nearly three hundred women who came twice every day to the canteen, she had never been especially my friend. Her baby had been a sick little thing, and I had been touched by her wild love of it. It had no father, she told me. We never ask questions at the canteen, but she had been pleased to tell me that. She had said she was glad, because, so, it was all her own. She had rocked it as she held it wrapped in the folds of her red shawl, and shaken her long bright ear-rings, laughing down at it, over her bowl of soup. And now it is dead.

Claire came to me. We had just time, if we took a taxi, to get to the hospital, stopping on the way for some flowers. It was raining more or less, and very dark.

At the hospital they sent us round to the back, to a sort of shed opening on a street that was being built up, or had been torn down, I don't know which, desolate in the rain.

In the room of the shed there were two families in black, two mothers with dingy crape veils, and two dead babies in unpainted pine boxes that were open.

The baby in the box on the right was quite big, the size of the most expensive doll one could get for a rich little girl at Christmas. There was a quite fine white tin wreath on the floor, tilted up against the pine box. The family of the bigger baby was quite numerous, half a dozen women, an old man, and several children. They all had shoes, and several of the women had umbrellas, and one of them had a hat.

[89]

In the smaller box was the baby of Alice, very, very small and pinched and blue, even more small and pinched and blue than when she used to bring it to the canteen. The family of Alice consisted of a small boy with bare feet and no hat, a small girl with a queer colored skirt and felt slippers and a bit of black crape over her red hair, and a boy of perhaps seventeen, also in felt slippers, with his coat collar turned up and a muffler round his chin and his cap dragged down over his eyes. Alice had a hat and a crape veil and a black coat and skirt, and down-trodden, shapeless shoes much too big for her.

There was a small bunch of violets in the pine box with the baby.

We put our roses down on the floor at the foot of the box.

Both babies had on the little white slippers that the hospital gives.

The family of the bigger baby, and the brother and sister of Alice, stared at us.

The mother of the bigger baby stood leaning against the wall, her head against the whitewash, her two hands over her eyes. She was making a queer little noise through her teeth. She kept it up all the time we were in the shed, a sort of hissing. She never once uncovered her eyes.

Alice was standing close, close beside her baby in the pine box, just looking down at it. She never took her eyes from it. She is a tall, straight girl, but she was bent over, as if she were feeble and old. Her veil was pushed back from her face. It had been wet, and the black had run over her face. But it must have been the rain, for she was not crying at all. All the time in the shed she never moved or cried at all.

[90]

Her little brother and sister stood back as if they were afraid of her.

Claire and I waited near the door of the shed.

For a long time we waited like that.

Then two croquemorts came, in their shining black clothes. One of them had a sort of hammer in his hand.

They went to the box of the bigger baby, and one of them picked up the cover of the box and put it on, and the other began to drive the nails in.

When he drove the first nail in, the woman with her eyes covered so she could not see him, heard, and knew what it was, and began to shriek. With her hands over her eyes she stood against the wall and shrieked.

The croquemort drove in all the nails, and the woman kept on shrieking.

Then the other croquemort put the tin wreath on the lid of the box, and then both of them came over to our baby.

Alice had been just looking and looking at her baby. When the men came, and one of them took up the lid of the box from the floor, and the other stood with his hammer, she gathered herself up as if she would spring upon the men who would take her little dead thing from her and put it away for ever. I thought she would fight over it, quite mad. The little brother and sister stood away from her, shivering.

But what she did was to stoop and take up our roses from where they lay on the floor, and put them into the pine box with the baby. She put them all in about the baby, covering it with them. She hid it away under roses and then stood close, close to it, while the croquemort drove the nails in, all the nails, one by one.

Then one of the croquemorts took up the box of the bigger baby and carried it out of the shed and put it, with the tin wreath on the top of it, into a hearse that there was waiting on the left of the door. And the other croquemort took up the box of Alice's baby and carried it out, and put it into a hearse that was waiting on the right of the door. [91]

The family of the bigger baby followed away, after the hearse and one of the croquemorts, toward the depths of the city, two of the women leading the baby's mother, who still kept her hands over her eyes, but was not shrieking any more, only sobbing. I know no more of them after that.

IV—THE FUNERAL PROCESSION OF THE ILLEGITIMATE BABY

Alice went out of the door alone, and turned to the right, after the hearse in which was her dead child.

Our croquemort would have gone ahead of her, but she would not let him pass. She would not have him between her and her baby. She kept close, close to the hearse, almost touching it, all the way.

The croquemort walked behind her, and the brothers and sister walked behind him, and Claire and I at the end of it.

We went through a tangle of poor streets, narrow and crowded. People drew back out of our way; some of them crossed themselves, and all of them were silent for an instant as the apache baby passed.

We went through wide, forlorn streets of coal yards and warehouses and factories. The carters and laborers in those streets stopped to look at us and made the sign of the Cross, for the baby passing.

We went over the canal bridge and the railroad bridges, and along desolate streets of the outskirts, all in the rain. [92]

We went by barracks, where many blue coats, going about their duties, or standing idly about, drew up to salute the baby in its poor little unpainted rough box.

At the fortifications many blue coats were digging trenches, and they all looked up and stopped their work to salute the baby.

Twice we met groups of the blue coats marching along the muddy empty roads, and both times the officer halted his men to salute the apache baby going by.

The bigger brother walked like a true apache, slouching and slinking along, shoulders hunched up, head sunk down, face hidden between his muffler and the peak of his cap. The smaller brother and the sister slouched too. But Alice walked quite straight, her head up, close, close to her child.

So we came to the cemetery, in at the gates, and along a street of little marble houses, to a field where there were only wooden and black iron crosses, and to a hole that was dug in the red, wet earth.

There was a man waiting for us by the hole. He helped the croquemort to take the box out of the hearse and put it in the hole.

Alice stood close, close to the edge, looking down into the grave.

The rest of us stood together behind her.

The croquemort gave her a little spade, and told her what to do with it.

Then she stooped down and dug up a spadeful of earth and threw it into the hole where they had put the box.

Each of us went in turn to give earth to earth. And then it was over.

Alice stood close, close to the edge of the hole, and looked and looked down into it.

The croquemort said something to Alice, but she did not move. He then spoke to the bigger brother, who shuffled up to Alice and tugged at her sleeve. [93]

But still she did not move.

The smaller brother began to cry.

Then the sister went to Alice and pulled at her other sleeve.

"Take her away," the croquemort said to me.

I said, "Dear, we must go."

Without looking at me, she said, "I—I stay here." She stood close, close to the hole and looked at the little pine box, and said again, quite quietly, "I stay here."

I said, "You cannot stay," stupidly, as if we were discussing any ordinary coming or going.

Her little sister, pulling at her skirt, said, "Say then, ask thou the lady to let thee go to supper at the cantine."

"The cantine is for those who have babies," Alice answered. Then she looked at me for the first time, her great wild eyes, in her face that was stained and streaked where the black from the wet crape had run.

FOOTNOTE:

[7] All numerals relate to stories told herein—not to chapters in the book.

From the Battlefield to the Camp

Told by André Ward, a Soldier in the French Army—Translated by M. Jourdain

These are the personal experiences of a common soldier. He tells his tales from the viewpoint of the man in the ranks. His stories have been collected into a volume "Prisoner of War." The first of these is here told by permission of the publishers, *J. B. Lippincott Company*.

[8] I—STORY OF A PRIVATE—LOOKING BACKWARD

Paris again, with its streets, where one can walk where one likes, and its restaurants, where one can eat what one pleases, its real houses, real laughter, and real bread! There it is, after seven days and seven nights in the train. I look at my ragged and buttonless overcoat, with its strap pinned on by a safety pin, and the dirty strip of stuff which was once my red cross *brassard*, and I fancy it is all a dream.

People ask me to "tell them all about it." That isn't easy; just at present I am afraid of losing grip of my will and memory. I think I have lost the taste for writing, just as I have lost the taste for good tobacco and good wine. These last two days I have been constantly asked what I thought of such and such a wine or cigar. I tell you I don't "think" anything at all. I have lost the habit of such flavours, and it is only by degrees that I shall begin to understand them again. Give me time....

In the same way I must have time to think before telling my story. For the moment I can only see the past—all that happened nine months ago—through a mist of confused impressions, with here and there some quite unimportant event in clear relief against it. I can see the bustle and hurry of mobilisation, our start from the barracks, our marching through Nancy, and people crowding round us with fruit and wine and flowers; there was a dahlia or a rose stuck in every man's gun-barrel. Then the strains of the *Marseillaise* and the *Chant du Départ*. We were covered with sweat and dust, and women embraced us. Then, and for the first time, I had a feeling that we were on our way to things heroic and difficult—things we *had* to do, however difficult. And then on we went again, and here my recollections become confused—a medley of crossing the frontier and tearing down the frontier posts; the first sound of the guns; the first fusillade; the men who fell, who had to be left behind our lines; the Boches in flight; the intoxication of advancing; and then the sudden halt at Morhange. Why did we stop there? I have not the least idea; a private soldier never has. I remember marches and counter-marches at night, heartrending marches on roads crowded with troops, among dragoons, gunners with their guns, carts of all sorts, and ambulances and wounded men who were being attended to. Then we fell back, and at the Grand Couronné de Nancy we were told to halt. There was a rumour that the enemy was quite near, and that he must not be allowed to advance any farther. There was a battle, and I can see Chasseurs and colonial troops dashing on before us, through the din of battle, with their bayonets, and that was the last we saw of them. We were told that the Bavarian troops in front of them were giving ground. The noise of the guns was terrible, and we dug trenches with bullets whistling around us. Days went by; we were still waiting, and every evening after the day's bombardment we saw a village in flames. They all flared up, one after the other. Would the village we were holding be spared?

No, its turn soon came; and a shell fell on the hospital, and several of our wounded were killed, and then the church!... I can see the ornaments of the altar scattered in the road, and the windows as full of holes as a spider's web, and above it all the torn and riddled carcass of the belfry. All the time the unceasing thunder of the guns made one dizzy. We were told we were near a place the Germans wanted to take, which we were to defend at all costs. The Chasseurs had been fighting like mad for two days, and we were sent at night to relieve them. We crawled to their position, and crept into their trenches, which were covered with branches. Later we were told that the Kaiser was there watching us and awaiting a triumphal entry into Nancy.

II—THE ROAD LITTERED WITH DEAD BODIES

We were fairly comfortable in the trench, which was covered with branches and leaves. Bullets passed overhead, almost without touching us. From time to time there was an attempt at an attack, and the grey helmets came on. Then the word of command, "Fire!" and we saw men dropping and hurrying back. We were full of confidence, almost cheerful.

And then I saw the comrade who suddenly ran towards us through the ever-increasing din of the cannonade. There was blood on his face, and he told our captain that a neighbouring trench had given way under shellfire, and that we were outflanked and would be rolled up. Then we saw them advancing on our right, with their bayonets, and pouring a steady rain of bullets upon the trench which we had to abandon. It was an awful moment. To get away from this infernal spot and take up another position we had to cross a strip of ground rather more than two hundred yards across. There was nothing for it but to face the steady concentrated fire, which took a heavy toll of us. A man dropped at every step of the way, and when we formed up to retake the trench we had lost, we looked round, and half the company was gone. Then we fell back again; I still do not know why. I felt that the deafening machine-guns were tearing gaps in our ranks; we were very hungry and thirsty and quite exhausted, but our *moral* was not bad. And I suddenly remembered our feelings when a small notice was put up on the door of the farm where we were billeted one evening long ago—an order from general headquarters to hold firm "at any cost" until

a certain day in September that was mentioned. Only one week more! We counted the days and hours. At last the time came, and the German menace, instead of pressing on, was rolled back. The Germans were not going to take Nancy; they were in retreat. What could have happened?

Before we followed them up the roll was called. My poor company! Of our squad only three were left. The lieutenants and corporals were all gone; we had but one sergeant; the *liaison* men, the hospital orderlies, and the stretcher-bearers were all killed. We had to have others at once, and I was chosen.

We were occupying villages which the Boches had abandoned; and this inaction in this melancholy and deserted countryside, in these ruined villages, among these poor little pillaged houses and among these weeping peasants was worse than fighting. There was nothing much to do while we waited for the fighting to begin again, and that was bad for us. We had time to become downhearted and think too much of home. [98]

Then we got good news. We were to leave! It seemed we were not wanted in the east, but should be useful in the north. So we started for the north. We were in good spirits again, without knowing why. The journey was pleasant, and at every station people crowded round the trains into which we were packed, and cheered us and brought us drinks, food, flowers and tobacco. It was just the same when we reached our journey's end: we were taken possession of; everybody was ready and willing to give us food and lodging. The Boches, apparently, were quite close. Meanwhile I was delighted to make the acquaintance of this land of plenty and land of Cockaigne, where one felt so proud of being a soldier, and so content to be alive.

Our joy was short-lived. Two hours after we detrained we were told that the Germans were attacking D—.

So we left the town to fight again. Then two days were spent in the hideous tumult and fever of battle, in picking up our wounded under fire. The second day the commanding officer came to the dressing station where I was and said that his battalion was evacuating the village, and that we must remove our wounded at once as best we could. A peasant woman lent us her horse, another a four-wheeled cart; the horse was put in and the cart loaded. It soon was full, and we set out, jolting along a road littered with dead bodies and wounded, with dead horses and limbers without drivers, and bordered with burning ricks. Shells were bursting round us; and I remember, like a picture, the commanding officer coming back, explaining something, and making signs. Our retreat was cut off, and the regiment quitted the road, and marched across country in good order to some destination unknown to me. But where should I take the cart, which had to keep to the road? I decided to drive straight on. [99]

There was a village five hundred yards or so further on. Perhaps we should be safe there. So I lashed the horse I was leading, running as fast as I could to keep up with its gallop, under the fire of a German machine-gun which swept the road. The bullets whistled by, knocking up dust and pebbles around us, and rattling off the hood of the cart. We went on running as fast as we could. Twice the horse was hit, and stumbled; the third time he dropped. The machine-gun never ceased firing.

There was only one orderly with me, and together we lifted the wounded men from the cart and put them under cover behind a rick. Then we waited. The day seemed unending. The regiment had disappeared, and we were left alone by this deserted road, where the bullets were still whistling. One soldier, who was only slightly wounded, tried to join his comrades, and fell as he started to run. The machine-gun never gave us a moment's peace. Then evening fell, a fine late summer evening, bringing us a little coolness and darkness. Perhaps the firing would cease, and we could overtake our men. We would find a horse or push the cart, and get out of our difficulty somehow. But what was that?

III—HOW WE WERE CAPTURED BY THE BOCHES [100]

Two hundred yards from us, in the deepening twilight, appeared a row of dark silhouettes, which vanished again. We looked at them in utter astonishment. The machine-gun had ceased firing. Then the black silhouettes appeared and vanished again. There was no possible doubt: it was the Boches. What was to be done? We were only a party of wounded, guarded by two unarmed men, and a dead horse. We waited for the final volley to make an end of us. Then a Chasseur, with his knees broken, had an inspiration. With a finger dipped in blood from his wounds, he traced a red cross on a handkerchief, tied it to the end of a bayonet, and waved it. We thought we were safe under this emblem, but we got a volley which went clean through our party, hitting no one. A sergeant pulled a rosary from his pocket and began to pray: "Let us commend our souls to God." Then the dark figures drew closer, and we could see the shape of their helmets. They were a hundred yards, then fifty, then twenty yards from us, and we could hear them speaking German. At ten yards distance three shadows came forward from the group, covering us with their rifles. One of them called out: "*Auf!*" I got up, and clapping my armlet, answered: "*Rothe Kreuz!*" They surrounded us and ordered us to abandon our equipment and our knapsacks and march. So, slowly and painfully, the slightly wounded carrying or supporting the others, we entered the enemy's lines. We were prisoners of war.

I can see the farm full of German soldiers busy emptying the cellar and drinking in silence. The barn was full of wounded men. We joined them, and a captain who spoke French ordered our money to be returned to us. All night long my comrade and I were busy attending to the wounded, both French and German, who were lying in a confused heap on the straw. We were allowed to keep our instruments, and we used the men's first aid dressings. [101]

At daybreak carriages and a section of German ambulance men arrived. Our wounded were removed, and I and the orderly, the only two unwounded, were marched off between a corporal and soldiers with fixed bayonets. We did not know where we were being taken.

It was a sinister march as we four went silently on past houses either empty, or ruined, or mere smoking shells, where here and there a shrinking figure of a woman or child showed itself. And then the dead lying on the road, *our* dead! *Their* dead had already been removed. On all the doors were notices of billets written in chalk. Their soldiers were taking their ease, and going and coming in silence, or lounging in their grey uniforms in armchairs looted from the houses near by. We passed inns and grocers' shops which had been pillaged, and a cow lay dead in a field.

Our first halt was in the guard-room where we were taken. It was in a lawyer's office. The men greeted us without any apparent antipathy and gave us some of their food, but kept the wine they had stolen from the owner for themselves. The man in charge was fairly well educated. He talked to me about Munich, and showed me photographs of pictures a friend of his had painted and also some vile picture postcards on which we Frenchmen were coarsely caricatured. He had a kindly smile, and really did not seem to see that he was offensive. Then came our examination. A staff officer entered and questioned us in perfect French about the position of our artillery, our fortifications, and the English army. We replied that we were in the medical service and knew nothing about these things. The officer did not press us, and merely said: "This war will be a long one, for after taking Paris we shall have to crush the Russians. But it will all be over in July." [102]

IV—TAKEN TO GERMANY AS PRISONERS OF WAR

The staff was quartered in the lawyer's house. We spent the night there, and next morning we were allowed to go into the garden. This was the sight which met our eyes: In front of the house a military van was drawn up, escorted by a party of unarmed soldiers in service caps. They went into the house, and others remained by the door, with hammers, a bag of nails, and a saw. They very quickly knocked together large packing-cases, and the looting was silently and methodically carried on around these cases; a piano went into them, the chairs, and a sofa. Every man was hard at work, sawing, hammering, fetching and carrying. Then the pictures were brought out, all well wrapped up, and fragile objects carefully packed in straw. An officer, smoking a cigar, gave directions. It was all very well done; no professional furniture removers could have done better. When the van was full it was driven to the station.

As for us, we continued our journey on foot. We were in the charge of the police, who sent us with a convoy, where we found ourselves mixed up with prisoners of all arms, civilians, and Moroccan soldiers who were obviously dazed and dumfounded at what had befallen them. We marched all that day, guarded by the mounted police. The police turned us over to old men of the Bavarian Landstrum, who wore leather caps with white crosses over the peaks, and who were stiff in their manner to us, but not unkindly. They were not fighting men, and there was nothing of the conquering hero about them. Night fell, the third night since our friend the Chasseur waved his blood-stained handkerchief at the end of his bayonet. Our poor little party was packed into a small coachhouse. The captain, a fat and portly little person, before shutting us in said: "Any one who tries to get out will be shot. Those are my orders." A Bavarian gave us a little soup, and we stretched ourselves on the floor to wait for the morrow. [103]

In our march next day we met on our way ammunition wagons, enormous lorries, ambulances, guns, and cavalry escorts. The carriages were grey, the guns grey, the uniforms grey, the only note of colour the dolls dressed in the uniforms of French soldiers, looted from some shop, on the front of the officers' motors. We met a company of infantry. One tall fellow left the ranks, and with an oath struck one of our wounded, who had his arm in a sling, with the butt-end of his rifle. The poor fellow stumbled, and an officer, without a word, pushed the brute away. We heard shouts from an officer's motor as it passed; they cursed us, and as it vanished in the dust one of them shouted: "You dirty Boches!" Well he knew that there was no worse insult.

We came to a town. Our escort conversed and looked up: they had just seen an aeroplane. It was a French machine, and coming rapidly towards us. The German soldiers were much excited, and we heard the click of their rifles as they pulled the triggers. Then we heard a whistle, and a deafening volley rang in our ears. Then we had another painful experience. Bombs had been dropped from the aeroplane, and we were at once lined up against the wall of a house. The aeroplane had disappeared. The officers argued for a moment; then the captain got on his horse again, and gave the order to march. We entered the town—Cambrai. [104]

The streets looked dead; there were notices on all the walls, in French, from the *Kommandantur*. People saw us go by without a word. One woman, who stepped forward to give us some bread, was roughly pushed away by a soldier. Then we halted in a square, near the town hall. The bombs from the aeroplane had fallen there, a shop had been gutted, and dead horses were lying in a pool of blood. We were tired out, and stretched ourselves on the ground. The townsfolk, who were allowed to come near us, brought us provisions, chiefly bread and fruit. Our escort seized them and ate their fill, then beat off the crowd with the butt-ends of their rifles, and off we marched

again. I saw some women crying.

We had not much farther to go. We were taken to the goods station, where the Bavarians handed us over to some big Saxon soldiers—quite young fellows—who handled our poor flock somewhat brutally. There were all sorts and conditions in this flock which we found there, filling the station, soldiers and civilians and some old men among the civilians. A little lad of thirteen, weeping bitterly, was dragged along by a big fellow in a helmet. The child was found playing in the street with a case of cartridges, and the Boche explained: "*Franc-tireur! franc-tireur! Kapout*,"^[9] making a sign to the thirteen-year-old prisoner that he would have his throat cut. That is their mania; they see *francs-tireurs* everywhere.

Night fell. We were famished, for we had only been given a handful of biscuits since the morning, and we were put into cattle trucks. There were forty-six of us in my truck, among them the poor little lad who was a *franc-tireur* and ten wounded men. The train moved off into the night towards Germany. Where were we going to?

The little boy cried all the time.

[105]

(The French prisoner here describes "The Camp"; "The Germans and Us"; "Fighting Depression"; "Telling How the Prisoners Spend Their Time," with many other interesting anecdotes.—EDITOR.)

FOOTNOTES:

[8] All numerals relate to stories told herein—not to chapters in the book.

[9] *Kapout*, slang in German for "Done for," "dead."

By Carita Spencer, Appointed Delegate Extraordinary by Minister Justin Godart, Under-Secretary of State and Head of French Service de Santé

Miss Spencer is an American girl who has been working heroically to relieve suffering in France through various American Committees, including the National Surgical Dressings Committee and also the "Food For France Fund," of which she acted as chairman. She recently collected her experiences under a little volume, the sale of which is devoted to War Relief. "The scenes and occurrences which are recorded in these pages," relates Miss Spencer, "made such a deep impression upon me and remained so vivid that I hope the recital of them may be found interesting to others. If any one is interested in sending assistance to a particular class of war sufferers suggested by the reading of these sketches, he or she may communicate with me at 10 East 58th Street, New York City." Copyrighted, 1916, by Carita Spencer.

I—AN AMERICAN WOMAN'S VISIT TO THE QUEEN OF BELGIUM

Paris, April, 1916.

"La Légation de Belgique a l'honneur de faire connaître à Miss Spencer que Sa Majesté la Reine la recevra Vendredi prochain, 28 avril, à La Panne, à 2 heures et demie. Miss Spencer est priée de vouloir bien prévenir La Légation, du lieu et de l'heure ou on pourrait la faire prendre à Dunkerque ou à Calais."

For six weeks I had wondered where and how the door to the war zone would open, and here at last came the answer. "The Belgian Legation has the honour to inform Miss Spencer that Her Majesty, the Queen, will receive her on Friday at La Panne at half past two."... It was midnight when the letter came, too late to do anything until the morrow, when I must find the way to break all rules for civilians and get out of Paris in three hours instead of eight days. [107]

My official invitation was certainly a wonderful gate-opener. Legations, embassy and war office armed me with the necessary papers in less time than it usually took to reach the sub-clerk in the commissaire's office. Dressed in my khaki suit and my little brown hat with the laurel leaves,—funny little hat, since become famous because so many officers thought I wore the leaves as a presage of victory in honour of the Allies,—with my small handbag, heavy coat and an umbrella, I reached the Gare St. Lazare with twenty minutes to spare. Ahead of me were two English officers, shiny and polished from head to foot, with their elaborate hand luggage all neatly marked. One might think they were running down for a week-end at the Casino. On all sides crowded sky-blue coated *poilus*, the faded dull looking sky-blue which blends into the horizon and helps to hide the French soldier from the keen-sighted Boche.

Have you ever stood by the gate to the trains and watched the men come up to go back to the front? Some come slowly, slouching along in their stiff boots under the weight of their heavy knapsacks and equipment, tired-eyed but determined. Others come running up in twos and threes, cheerful and carefree. Others come with their wives and children, their mothers, their sweethearts; and these do not talk, unless it be the tiny tots, too small to know what it is all about. Nor do they weep. They just walk up to the gate, kiss him good-by and stand aside, and look as long as their eyes can follow him. Sometimes he turns back, but not often. I watched a while, then I too went through, showing my papers to several inquisitive officials in succession. [108]

Everything was quite like ordinary times until we passed E—, where we lost the last of the civilians on the train except myself. My compartment was quite empty, and as I stuck my head into the corridor it seemed as if the rest of the car were also empty. But no, there was a turkey gobbler in a wooden cage and in a moment a French officer bending over him with a cup of water. It seemed the gobbler, poor innocent bird, was on his way to make gay an officer's mess.

Soon we came to what still remains one of the most impressive sights of my trip, the miles of English reserve camp. Sand dunes, setting sun and distant sea, and tents, and barracks and tent, and men in khaki never ending! These bright, happy, healthy faces! Why, as the train crawled through them, so close I could shake hands out of the window, I fairly thrilled with the conviction that they could never be beaten. I wanted to shout at them: "Boys, I'm from over the water too, God bless you all!" But it choked in my throat, for they came from Canada and Australia and New Zealand to give their lives for a principle, while I came from the land "too proud to fight." (To-day, Aug., 1917, thank God, proudest of all to fight.)

There were the shooting ranges and the bayonet targets, burlaps the size of a man's torso stuffed with straw, hanging on a clothesline in a row. The boys stand off a hundred yards and with fixed bayonets charge the bursting burlap. But now, at sunset, they are sitting around in groups or playing games, waiting for their evening meal. They have not faced fire yet, but their turn is coming and they are keen for it.

The officer and the turkey descended at Boulogne and darkness closed down about the same time. There was only a shaded night lamp in the car, and the lonesomeness of the unknown began to take hold of me. The train crawled on about as fast as a horse would jog. I was hungry, as with civilian-like lack of forethought I had provided myself with no lunch or dinner. I sat close to the window, looking for the lights of Calais which never came. The train stopped and a kindly conductor with a white badge on his arm, which shows that he is mobilized, helped me to stumble out in the dark. There had been a "Zep" alarm, and not a single light was visible in the overcast [109]

night. I pushed along with groups of soldiers into the station, where, in an inner room, an officer sat at a small table with a small shaded safety lamp and examined passports. He was duly suspicious of me until I showed him the Legation paper. Stumbling and groping like the blind man in Blind Man's Buff, I was finally rescued by a small boy who piloted me across the bridge to a door which he said was the G— hotel. They refused to give me food because not even a candle was permitted. In the dark I went to bed.

Early next morning I looked from the window on an animated square. Tommies, Tommies everywhere. Was it England after all instead of France? The Belgian *réformé* who will carry a limp to his dying day as his ever-present memory of the great war, and who acted as my chamberman, could not do enough for me when he heard that I was going to see his Queen. He spoke of her as of the dearest loved member of his family. She was a real Queen, he said. She loved and cared for the poor and suffering. He had even seen her once and she had smiled at him when he wore his uniform with his *croix de guerre*.

The palace motor came promptly at 12:30 and into it I got with my little bag, wondering whether I was going into Belgium to remain two hours, two days or two weeks. I noticed that the car had seen service. The glass was cracked even where protected by wire netting and the upholstery was threadbare in spots, but there was nothing the matter with the engine, and we whizzed along at a goodly pace....

[110]

We passed in and out of towns with guards at attention. Even at the frontier we were not stopped. The country was flat and the roads fearfully dusty. The heavy motor lorries and trucks which were constantly traveling with supplies from the base to the front interested me greatly, as they were the first I had seen in action. They came in groups of three to thirty, and the boys on the drivers' seats were so caked with dust I could hardly distinguish their features. My official motor carried a special horn which cleared the road of man and beast. The fields on all sides were tilled. I wondered who the workers were, when what do you think I saw? Forty children in a row, boys and girls, all ages, from the little tot to the boy who would next year be in the army, each with a hoe. In front of them stood an old man who beat time with a stick while the children plied the hoe, and I warrant they had a happy time doing it.

At last I knew we must be nearing La Panne, for soldiers became more numerous. There is always one division of the Belgian Army *en repos* at La Panne. The motor made several sharp turns, and as long as I live I shall never forget the scene. Warm sunshine, a sandy beach over an eighth of a mile wide—small breakers—a line of brightly coloured seaside houses and villas—little sloops on the sea and warships in the distance—cavalry manoeuvring on the sands—the dunes at either end and behind neat white veiled nurses and brightly clad convalescent soldiers on the walk and in the sands—the distant booming of big guns, probably English—and the nearer sounds of practice rifle and machine gun firing.

In a small villa I met the Queen, pretty, charming and gracious, with wonderful eyes that seemed to look straight through me and beyond. We talked for quite a long time and she asked me what would interest me most to see in the little corner of Belgian Belgium. I replied that I should like to see everything that was being done in a constructive way for the soldiers, civilians, children. With the promise that my wish would be gratified I took my leave and was then escorted to the villa of the famous Dr. Depage, where I remained for a week as his guest. The hospital is a wonder of excellence in every way. Charming ladies efficiently shoulder the burdens of the trained nurse, and they and doctors work hours on end when the wounded come in crowds from the nearby trenches.

[111]

At sunset descended an English aeroplane on the beach. In a few minutes it was surrounded by a couple of hundred men in khaki, just as if they had sprung out of the ground. Then off it went, gracefully dipping in a low sweeping curve in front of the "palace," then soaring high as it struck out to sea. Then the beach guard changed, and suddenly over the front only a few miles away appeared a Belgian plane with German shrapnel bursting in little black puffs around it. I went with Dr. Depage to see the wounded arriving in the ambulances, and I took a thirty second peep at a leg operation in the doing. At dinner—a very frugal but good one—we talked of everything except war. And this was my first day at the front.

II—A WOMAN IN THE TRENCHES AT THE YSER

[112]

Trenches La Panne, May, 1916.

Seven o'clock in the morning and I had just returned from the trenches, fairly well-behaved trenches, but real ones nevertheless, for several German bullets had sought us as a target in the early morning mist. It was all unreal, for I saw nothing. Yet I had to believe it, for I heard.

Thanks to the courtesy of a gallant staff captain and a charming grey-haired general, I made this unique expedition. The captain and I started before daylight in the cold of a grey morning and rode to the trenches in a comfortable limousine. The fields about were desolate, even the trees destroyed. Here and there a heap of stones, the remains of a thrifty farm, sheltered a small company of soldiers. The roads were unspeakable, so deep the holes and ruts. We passed through P—. There were still a few walls standing, and there we picked up a piece of marble to make me a paper weight. I knew the Germans were not far off, for the cannonading was continuous about three miles down on our right. But for all I could see I might as well have been on the western prairies.

"What in the world is straw fixed up that way for?" I asked.

"That is a curtain of straw which stretches for miles along the road behind the trenches to hide our motors from the enemy. A motor means an officer, and if they could see us we would not be

here long."

We stopped behind the straw screen and got out, crawling under it into a communication trench. I had better call them ramparts, for this district, you know, was the inundated land of the Yser. One hundred yards in this winding alley of concrete and sandbag wall and we reached the main trench, a solid substantial rampart of concrete, sandbags and earth, with the grass growing on the side facing the enemy. Here the soldiers on duty lived in their little cubby-holes in the wall. They slept in groups of fours, stretched out on clean straw with their guns beside them ready for sudden call. And, if you please, do not suppose that these domiciles went unnamed or unadorned. By the irony of fate the first wooden door we came to was thus inscribed, all in French, of course: [113]

*Villa "Ne T'en Fai pas!"
War with Notes!
Wilson-Bethman!
Hurry up, you Neutrals!*

How commonplace trench life has become after these two long years of habit! Nowadays men do not go to the office and the shop. They go up to the trenches for daily duties. These trenches we were in were main-line, where the enemy was not supposed to penetrate unless rude enough actually to break through. So the soldiers portioned off the rough earth beside the board walk that ran parallel to the rampart, and first they had a little vegetable garden, and next to it for beauty's sake a little flower garden, and next to that a little graveyard, and then the succession repeated. Five hundred yards beyond the main lines, across the inundated fields streaked with barbed wire sticking up out of the water, was the front line trench, a rougher rampart, mostly of earth, and when it rained, oh mud! Under cover of darkness the boys went out and returned, walking across a rickety board walk.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Those were sharp shots and sounded like business. They might become more personal than the steady heavy roar of guns sending up their smoke at D— on our right. We dared not tarry, for the sun was coming up. [114]

The Major of the line was waiting to greet us and offered us early morning refreshment in his dug-out. His dug-out was a cozy, comfy little place, two boarded rooms in the rampart wall, high enough to stand up in, and furnished with a cot and blankets and some chairs and a stove and a mirror and some pictures, and, yes, a latch on the door to enter by. If I had had no ears it would have been difficult to persuade me that there were men not far off who, without personal animosity, would gladly have landed a shell in our midst.

The war as I glimpsed it in the many phases I was able at last to touch upon always gave me the impression of running up against a blank wall of contradiction. To people who live week in and week out in the range of shell fire, life and death take on a new relationship. Death may come at any moment, and yet meantime life must be lived, and one can't live all the time at high pressure. Perhaps no more vivid instance of this came to me than when I was sitting in barracks near F— as the guest of that wonderful woman, Mrs. I— T—. Up with the dawn, she and her fellow worker slaved without intermission, caring for the poor civilians of F—. They taught and fed the kiddies, dispensed medical and even surgical help, going out across the fields through the darkness at any call; gave out food and clothing to the women who came daily to claim their portion. Then, the day's hard work over, came dinner, at which an officer or two, French, Belgian, English, even American, might drop in, and afterwards my hostess would sit at the piano and sing Debussy with a voice of beauty and volume, while all the time the guns would thunder, the aeros might be overhead, and men were being killed on all sides. One's mind hardly grasped it, but one's emotions ran high. [115]

III—IN A HOSPITAL WITH THE COUNTESS V—

P—, May, 1916.

P— was close by the famous Ypres and had the honour at the moment of being a bombarded town. Hardly a day passed that shells did not fall here in greater or less quantity. Have you ever been in a bombarded town? Gloom? You could cut it with a knife, and yet I could not make out why the gloom was so oppressive. The streets were full of soldiers—Tommies, Canadians, Australians—bustling about, cheerfully whistling, talking in groups or going about their individual duties. Peasant women were in evidence too, and the little shops had window displays; but oh the gloom! Many of the houses were destroyed and in some sections there was no such thing as a pane of glass left. The noise of the guns was almost constant.

I was staying in a hospital with the Countess V—, a front line ambulance in this section where fighting had been heavy. It was an old red brick building, probably the home of one of P—'s wealthier residents. The high-ceilinged rooms were bare of furniture and in its place were rows of cheap iron cots with a wounded man in each. The Countess was one of those charming, dainty feminine creatures with a will of iron and a courage beyond words. The story of her life during the first invasion of Belgium and her escape from German territory was thrilling. She came to P—, where she cared not only for this house full of wounded soldiers, but worked and planned with others the support and care of civilian wounded, men, women and little children, and of hundreds of little orphan boys and girls. My room was on the ground floor. It had half a window pane, one boarded-up window and some heavy blankets to hang up at night to hide the candle light from a prying aero. I simply can't describe the gloom. The Countess said that when she felt that she could not go on another minute, she just hunted out the box her husband had sent her when she got word to him that she had no more clothes and to send on some of her old ones. The box contained three filmy negligees, the ones he loved her best in. She got them out and spread them about the dismal room, and then she stood in the middle and laughed and cried until she felt [116]

better.

I sat outside on a bench one morning talking to a young Belgian officer who was so badly wounded the first year of the war that he will probably never go back to the front. We were talking of beautiful things, music, painting and such like. One of the ambulances drove in. He paid no attention, it was such a common occurrence, but I was all eyes. You have seen the ice wagon dripping on a warm day? The ambulance was dripping too, but the drops were red! One stretcher was lifted out and an orderly standing by raised the cover at one end. I saw something that had once been a head with a human face on it. The next stretcher contained a man wounded in the legs. One of the nurses spoke to him and he tried to smile. The next was carried without comment to the tiny stone hut in the fast-growing little graveyard just back of the house. These kind folk would find time to bury him and send a picture of his grave with a few words of how bravely he had died, together with the number of the chain at his wrist, to Headquarters to be forwarded to his family. And he was a cook who had never held a gun or seen an enemy. So they emptied the ambulance to the number of six and then they turned the hose on it and started it back for its next load. And may I tell you how the ever-present contrast came in here? Upstairs in the convalescent ward a boy, to cheer his comrades, was banging the jolliest kind of music on an old tin piano, impatiently waiting the day when he would be declared well enough to go back to be wounded again....

[117]

IV—VISITING BELGIAN ORPHANS WITH ABBÉ OF ST. PIERRE

Orphelinats, P—, May, 1916.

We went on a long ride over the hills to visit the little Belgian orphans and see how they were being cared for on French soil. As there was no military motor available, and as, for the one and only time in my war travels, I was unarmed with papers to get me across the frontier, we decided to go the eighty miles in an ambulance, where I could hide in the back as we whizzed past the familiar sentries. Mlle. M—, in her well-worn khaki suit with the Red Cross badge, sat in front with the chauffeur. Within the ambulance, on the hard wooden bench, was I with that wonderful hero of Ypres, the Abbé of St. Pierre. What a face of strength and poise and thoughtfulness he had! To the people of that country he was a saint, specially protected by heaven. He seemed to have led a charmed life. He was the last to leave the battered ruins of the once beautiful Ypres. They say he saved even the cats before he would depart, and still the longing to return to his beloved town came over him so strongly that at times his friends had great difficulty in restraining him. He loved every stone and he godfathered every poor child of the village. Shells have burst all around him, killing those at his side, but, by some wonder of fate, have left him untouched. His smile was a delight, his conversation a charm.

Along the white, dusty road we flew, for we had many miles to cover and several stops to make. Every one is familiar with the beautiful rolling country of this part of France, the cultivated fields, the neat little villages, the white ribbon of road between the well-ordered rows of trees. I could not resist waving a triumphant salute at the astonished sentries when they realized they had let pass an ambulance with a civilian in it, and a woman at that! But the clouds of dust hid us from view before they could do anything about it. We passed through B—, a lovely little town way up on a hilltop, from which we could look down over the distant valley in whose heart the hostile lines of trenchmen fought for supremacy. We stopped here to leave a message with an officer and learned that nearly every one in the town was ill with a touch of asphyxiating gas. It seemed that the fumes had penetrated this far during the night, but were not strong enough to awaken people. So they had inhaled unconsciously. Every one sleeps with a gas mask at the head of his bed in these parts.

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We coasted down the long hill on the other side of the town, glorying in the beauty of the extended view before us. How could there be anything but happiness in the world that brilliant morning! The Abbé and I talked of many things and he told me how he and the Countess planned and worked to get enough money and clothing for the hundreds of orphans in their care. If only some of the discarded but still useful warm clothing of my little friends in America could be sent! And think of the untold joy some of their superfluous toys would give!

Our first stop was to see the boys, and certainly for me it was a unique experience. The Abbé announced that a great treat was in store for us, as we were to lunch with the priests of W—, who ran the *orphelinat*. He told me to be sure to ask Father —, the jolly, fat, old fellow, to sing and recite for us. He said it would please him enormously and would give us untold amusement, and he was right. We entered the courtyard of an old stone house, and after shaking off several layers of the white dust, went in to the bounteous feast prepared in our honour. The welcome was simple and cordial. We washed our hands in an old tin basin and used the coarsest towel I have ever seen. I am sure it will never wear out. Then we sat down to enough food for twenty instead of six, and how they did enjoy it! I don't wonder Father — was almost as broad as he was long, if he enjoyed every meal as much as he did this one. He ordered up *the* wine from the cellar, the last precious bottle he had carried away from Ypres, and then, after much persuasion, he rose at his end of the table and in a dear, gentle, cracked old voice, mouthing his words so that his apparently one remaining front tooth was much in evidence, he sang the favourite songs of his youth. I am sure they were funny because he laughed at them so heartily himself.

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Luncheon over, we walked to the boys' dormitories. How they did love the jolly old priest, and how glad they were to see the Abbé! From all corners of the courtyard they dropped their play or their fight, as the case was, and came running with all the joy of a pack of little tail-wiggling fox terriers, to throw themselves upon the two men. Where he carried it, I do not know, but the Abbé produced cake after cake of chocolate and every boy had a bite.

The boys are taught all the simple studies and always to sing. The Belgian peasant children really sing beautifully. Even the little tots can take parts. We went up through the dormitories. There were closely filled rows of cots graduated in size, and over the foot of each one the sisters in charge had neatly laid out the boy's *other* suit, for to-morrow would be Sunday and they would all be dressed up. The lavatories consisted of wooden benches, again graduated in height, with tin basins and towels on them, about one to every three boys. It made me shiver to think how cold that place must be during the long damp winter, but then the peasant is used to such hardships. Finally we came to the schoolroom, where the older boys were already hard at work, learning in both Flemish and French. And of all the cute sights I ever saw, here happened the very cutest. The tiny tots, three and four years old, had finished their lunch and their playtime, and must have their noon-day nap. Were they put to bed like ordinary babies? Oh, no. They tumbled into the schoolroom, their big eyes staring out of their chubby, round, little faces, full of wonder as to who the strange lady was. Somewhat abashed and very quietly they slid along their baby bench, snuggling up to each other as close as they could. Then at a word from the teacher all the little right arms went up on the long bench table in front of them, the perfectly round little heads flopped over into the crook of the row of little elbows, three blinks and all the little eyelids closed, and like peas in a pod they were asleep. How I wished for a moving picture of that scene!

V—THE NUNS IN THE OLD CHATEAU AT WISQUES

Last we visited the chapel, of which Father — was so proud. A little musty-smelling chapel with a crude figure of the Madonna in a high window niche at one end. Father — had placed above it a pane of blue glass, of a blue which turned the sunlight into a wonderfully cool, pure colour. He said it was the emblem of hope to him, and that when his heart was heavy behind his cheerful smile, he would come in there alone to think and to pray.

We were in no hurry to go, but there was still a long stretch to be covered before we reached Wisques, where the girls were housed. So we said good-by to Father —, his priests, and his children. I only hope I may see them again some day.

Our ride was now enlivened by the presence of many aeroplanes, friendly ones, maneuvering now near the earth, now so high that they were almost lost to sight. They were probably indulging in preliminary exercises before scouting over the German lines.

Arrived at Wisques, we were welcomed by the nuns into the beautiful old château, now an orphan asylum. The Queen had recently paid a visit here and the whole place was decorated in her honour with coloured papers and garlands of leaves and branches. It had been a very great and wonderful occasion for the motherless little girls. Coffee was served us out of a brilliantly shining kettle from the huge old-fashioned stove in the great open fireplace. Everything was so spotlessly clean! The nuns certainly took good care of the children. The girls' dormitories were neat, here and there brightened by a piece of coloured cloth or a picture or a bit of ribbon. There were only the barest necessities, and none too many of them. The girls were taught to do the housework and to sew, in addition to their regular school studies. They were all dressed in black and the Mother Superior bemoaned the fact that the Abbé simply could not keep them in shoes. Several classes were assembled to sing for us, Belgian and French songs, and finally in my honour the nearest they could come to anything American, "God Save the King"—at least that was in the "strange lady's" language—English.

I wandered away from the others and out of doors into the garden. There were the real babies, most of them just big enough to walk. They were digging and playing, twenty-five or more of them, in charge of a couple of the older girls and one nurse. I sat down on a broken stump and tried to make love to one of the little boys. He was awfully shy at first and would just look at me out of his big blue eyes. All of a sudden he toddled over to the other side of the yard and after him toddled the whole bunch. He was certainly a coming leader. In the far corner was a perfect carpet of dandelions. Each baby picked one or two and, like a flock of little chicks, they came tumbling back again to present me with the flowers. It was too sweet for words and the tears came to my eyes. I wanted to hug them all... If only all the little war orphans were cared for as well as these in charge of the good Abbé! May money and supplies never fail to come to him for this good work.

(Miss Spencer then describes her visit to the military depots where the soldiers receive the comfort packets sent to the soldiers by our American women; she tells of the gratitude of the soldiers and how they idolize the women in far away America who are thinking of them and working for them. She then narrates her experiences in the Italian war zone, with this appeal to Americans: "Is there really one of us with a heart and mind who dares to let twenty-four hours pass without dropping his mite of time, sympathy or money into the brave hand of suffering Europe! Men, women and children, they need us! If we do all we can, then we are not doing half enough! The horror of their suffering is hideous! The magnificence of their sacrifice is sublime!")

"WAR LETTERS FROM FRANCE"—THE HEARTS OF HEROES

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Collected from the Soldiers

By A. De Lapradelle and Frederic R. Coudert

This is a series of extracts from letters written from the French trenches, from hospitals in France, from officials and soldiers in the French Army and from members of different private families. Spontaneously written and telling of the things as they are from the personal viewpoint of each writer, these letters form an excellent record of history in the making. Suffering, courage and hope speak their simple language and without intent reveal the very soul of the courageous nation. The letters here reproduced are by permission of the publishers, *D. Appleton and Company*: copyright 1916

I—GLIMPSE OF A BURNING VILLAGE

This letter was stopped by the receipt of marching orders. It continued a little later with the following vivid descriptive passage:

"The flames of a village destroyed by shell fire, a livid moonlight and a terrible storm, such were the precursors of our entrance this morning into a pretty village of the Vosges, where a dozen houses were gutted, burned or totally demolished by shells. Chickens were pecking at the door-sills of the deserted houses. That is war! Our men might have been put in bad humor by all this. But no! Their witty remarks cheered the situation. They are laughing and chatting now, while the German bombs are falling not far from us, whistling through the air with metallic shrieks, followed by frightful explosions. Our men are getting used to this music of a special style."

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II—STORY OF THE GOOD WOMAN

A good woman in whose house a lieutenant was quartered told him the following story of the occupation:

"The worthy old lady with a black cap on her white locks, her face lighted by the flame of the wood fire burning on the hearth, keeps up a tireless flow of anecdote, while the little granddaughter at her side listens with wide open mouth. This woman seems to me to personify the entire French race, gifted with a good share of common sense and with intelligence not entirely devoid of malicious roguishness. In language filled with an imaginative quality she describes the departure of her three sons and her two sons-in-law—all reservists. From two of these men she has received no word since the war began, and when one speaks of them a shadow steals over her face giving it that stamp of grandeur which grief heroically borne impresses. She told me about the conversations she had with the Germans many of whom could speak French; how insufferable and naïve they were in their arrogance. Then she told of their retreat and the sudden arrival at a gallop of two little Chasseurs, blue as the summer sky, plain brave little Chasseurs! 'What a pity you are on horseback,' she said. 'Why, mother?' 'Because I should like to kiss you.' 'Don't let a little thing like that stop you,' they cried, and were on the ground in a minute. 'What a good kiss I gave them, monsieur; it was as if one of my own boys had come back. Then amid cheers and flowers they rode off toward the forest with a squadron of ten, on the track of the last Uhlans who had left the village two hours before. We never saw them again.' Isn't that the very soul of France?"

On the twenty-eighth of September, 1914, J. T., a very quiet man in ordinary life, writes the following excited letter, without superscription of date or place:

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"Courage good—always on my feet—bullets through my coat twice—covered with the dirt plowed up by shells—but as yet uninjured. Will tell you perhaps some day the tragic details. They are glorious and sublime. We are bearing everything with absolute confidence in our victory. Victory! That was the word on our lips when we parted at Paris. Let us repeat it, never forgetting the men who have fallen. If I don't come back you know that I shall have done my duty."

J. D., who has not had a chance to wash for two weeks, who sleeps on the ground, and has his ears continually filled with the roars of cannon and musketry, declares with simplicity in a letter of September 26, 1914:

"I love this life of bivouac though the stormy nights are hard. What I like most about it is being in the free air and having a feeling of unforeseen danger, the sense of uncertainty and suspense. When the cannon is still at night, I hear the groans and the death rattle of the wounded who have not been picked up in front of the trenches facing the enemy. Our recent victories have strengthened our soldiers' confidence until now they are regular war dogs who don't interrupt their cooking when the shells rain around them—not until the pieces fall into the kettle. Still the war is hard and they are waging it against us without mercy or humanity. Quite often the Prussians dispatch our wounded soldiers with a lance thrust or a blow with the butt of a musket. I know what I'm talking about for I have seen it."

On the fifth of October, 1914, F. writes from Fouconcourt in the department of the Somme:

"The horrible rain of iron and steel that hundreds of infernal machines are pouring on us every day cannot dampen our courage. It is a grand thing to fight for a holy cause like this of France. In spite of forty continuous days of battle in the Vosges and in Picardie, in spite of forty nights passed mostly in icy weather under the naked stars, in spite of hunger, rain and forced marches, and in the midst of horrors, I find myself admiring the sublime forests of the Vosges, the picturesque villages, and the gay little houses of red brick." [126]

III—SIMPLE STORIES OF THE SOLDIERS

There is such literary charm in these simple letters of men who frankly speak their noble thoughts, that they seem hardly inferior to this beautiful letter of a young but well-known writer, Louis Madelin, now Captain Madelin, the historian of Danton and Fouché, and author of the history of the French Revolution, which has been recently crowned with the first grand Gobert prize by the French Academy. From Verdun, one of the gates of France which the Germans are especially anxious to break down, Captain Madelin writes on the fifth of November, 1914:

"I have with the colors three brothers, two brothers-in-law, three nephews, eighteen to nineteen years old, and these men are soldiers of all grades in every rank of the army. They write letters fairly brimming with courage and zeal. Some of them have been wounded, but they returned as soon as possible to the firing line. One of my brothers took some Alsatian villages. He saw the colonel and five out of six of the captains of his battalion of Chasseurs fall. The youngest and sole surviving captain, he took command of what was left, led it from the Vosges to the Marne, enforced marches of forty-five kilometers a day, keeping its morale intact and losing not a single man. After fighting like a lion on the battlefield of the Marne he received his fourth galoon, richly deserved, from the hands of the general of the army corps. He wrote me a charming letter from the trenches in the North, in which he said that his soldiers (like all the rest) were accomplishing prodigies of valor. Another of my brothers, on the staff of one of the corps, dispatched with a message to a regiment of cavalry, found the regiment without colonel or major. He put himself at the head of the troops and hustled a strong force of German infantry. I have a little devil of a nephew who enlisted at the age of eighteen and five days later was sent to the front. He fought like a demon with the light infantry on the Marne and the Aisne, and when his shoulder was broken by a bursting shell he begged the doctors to heal it quickly so that he could return to the front. Eighteen years old! There's your type of volunteer that shows what a generation we have in reserve, and with what spirit they will march to reconquer lost ground. All my life long I shall remember the first night of my command of a post in the Woevre, where I used to walk with my men, the citizens and fathers of the region, every one of them ready when called on to give his last drop of blood for the Fatherland." [127]

From Morcourt in the department of the Somme on the seventh of November, 1914:

"Shall we ever return? What does it matter? We march on. Some fall, others advance, and the frightful drama continues to unroll before the eyes of the dazed nations."

IV—THE SOLDIERS' SWEETHEARTS

Do not imagine that the soldier is bored. He has his friends and his sweetheart.

"Sweethearts! Don't be astonished. Their names are Gaby, Madelon and Sylvia. Gaby is a little person, plump, with an odor of wild cherry about her. I never spend more than ten minutes or a quarter of an hour with her. Sylvia is more slender and frail. She smells of the autumn heather and I talk with her for fifteen or twenty minutes. As for Madelon, she is a grand lady in her splendid brown dress with gold trimmings. She is very cultivated, too, and I spend twenty-five minutes or half an hour with her. Gaby, Sylvia and Madelon are—pipes. During the long, anxious hours of suspense one hardly knows what to do. It is impossible to read or write, for one has to be ready to start at the first signal. So we smoke our pipes. One of my men carved Gaby for me from a branch of wild cherry. Madelon and Sylvia were presents from my subordinate officers. So much for my sweethearts. As for my friend he is a very devoted personage, very silent and always with me. He lies at my feet with his honest brown eyes fixed on me until he drops asleep. He is a wonderful scout and guide. Moose is his name—a black and yellow water dog who got himself adopted on the tenth of September and has never left me since." [128]

Our soldiers are wonderful, so full of hope and courage. Still, when one sees them, one knows what they have endured. They all have a tragic look, but they are filled with energy and zeal, even though they are under no illusion as to the possible duration of the war.

We shall come out victorious and France, that most beautiful nation, will resume its peaceful, prosperous life. War will yield finally to peace and men will live happily forever.

An Englishwoman in the F. A. N. Y. Corps in France and Belgium

Told by Grace MacDougall

This is a vivid record of service by an English nurse. It is one of the first accounts of the systematic care of the wounded in modern war. She relates graphically her adventures with the field ambulances owned and driven by the woman; their heroic service to their country on the road to Lierre, at Malines, during the bombardment and flight at Antwerp. She tells how the corps came to Calais, life at the regimental camp, and the stories of the convalescents in the hospitals. The chapter here related is by permission of her American publishers, *Robert M. McBride and Company*.

[10] I—STORY OF AN ENGLISH GIRL ON THE ROAD TO DUNKIRK

One day in the spring of 1915 Chris and I started off for the front with "Flossie," the little Ford ambulance. It was a perfect day, a cold wind blowing but a blue sky overhead. The road between Calais and Dunkirk flew past; the walls of Gravelines and the narrow winding streets were left behind. Dunkirk itself was gay with zouaves in their baggy red trousers. Along by the canal we raced past ponderous convoys toiling up with their loads. Many a staff car and "*ravitaillement*" wagon met us and sped on their ways. And so to Furnes, no longer the busy centre of activity it had been earlier, but a desolate town with one or two large shell holes in the square. No shops, no cafés, except in the side streets—all was quiet and deserted. So we left Furnes, too, behind. Along the straight bare road we whizzed, and now not far off we heard the old familiar booming. We passed the picket at Pervyse, and there drew up to make inquiries.

As we halted we caught sight of two Englishmen pacing slowly along a side path, looking at the rows of damaged houses—the streets of ruin—and on recognising one as Major G—, a familiar figure in Belgian lines, we hailed him. He introduced his companion, Lord Curzon, and on learning our errand they made further inquiry, and let us know that the fighting was in the neighbourhood of Oostvleteren. We ran on past the field with its 300 shell holes that had formed our first landmark in November. Our old "*poste*" at the cross-roads was occupied by strangers, who hailed us with delight, and with them we left a few hundred cigarettes and some socks for the — Division. A shell, mistaking its direction, came crashing to earth on the roadway near by, so we hastened our farewells and shot off past the little church that had been bombarded steadily for months. It was still standing, but the troops once quartered in the cottages round about had been withdrawn. The canal bridge, where the morning washing parade was held regularly in December, was deserted. No life seemed to exist in that once busy spot; and the shrapnel whizzing over us in the sky, directed against the railway to our right, was a sign of the times. We slowed up at Lampernisse, and sadness seized us. The church was down. I recalled its friendly tower—the throng of soldiers that had surrounded it, the gay faces of the little blue Belgians that had met one cheerily on every side. To-day there was quiet and stillness, and the outer walls of the church were represented by heaps of loose stones. Inside the pillars stood—broken wall, broken altar; fragments of glass and melted lead from the windows that had been. As we watched, the *curé* appeared, sad of face. He came to us simply, and at our few faltering words tears came to his eyes.

"There were 40 wounded inside," he said gently; "we saved all we could." A grave at my feet was churned up—broken bits of wood stuck upright in the earth; a heavy stone monument had turned sideways and lurched forward like a drunken man; and something else lay near, thrown out of the earth to which in happier days the priest had committed it. I shuddered involuntarily. The *curé* asked if we could take one of his remaining parishioners to safety: she was old and bedridden; her cottage was there in the shadow of the church. Shells came daily and at any time one might strike the roof that sheltered her. We took a stretcher up the tiny path, and in at the little door. There on the floor on a mattress lay an old withered woman. We carried her out gently, the *curé* helping. General J— passed—a brave and kindly man, adored by the soldiers. He remembered us, and approved our action. Then he asked us to lunch with him on our return journey.

We started off slowly and evenly and reached Alveringhem, where the *curé* had told us a convent of nuns took in such old and helpless peasants. Alas! the mother superior refused. Nothing would shake her decision; she would have no more—her hands were full. I looked round the large waiting-room, and begged her to let the poor old thing lie there. But it could not be. So we went on several miles farther, and were directed to a home kept by an Englishwoman for refugees. We sent messengers on every side to find her—unsuccessfully—so we left the old woman in the house in charge of the other refugees, as we could find no one with authority. We left full particulars and departed. We were late, as the difficulty in finding shelter for our charge had been greater than we anticipated.

We lunched off sandwiches *en route*, and explained our non-appearance for lunch at Divisional Headquarters. General J— was very charming, and gave us tea and invited us to lunch for another day.

We had arranged to dine at an artillery mess at Ramscappelle, and so hurried on there. Things were fairly lively, and after a wonderful dinner we had some music, and then in the darkness went up to the trenches. The rockets and flares were fascinating. Viewed from afar they are strangely remote, but very friendly here, when one crouched down amongst all these gallant men—soldiers and heroes whose country had been torn from them, whose wrongs cry out for

vengeance, whose simple response to honour saved the whole of Europe from being overrun by the barbarous Boches.

We made sure the doctors had no cases to dispose of, and returned to the brickyard, where "Flossie" waited patiently. The flares and a pocket flashlight were all the light we had, and we got off across bumpy roads—in and out of shell holes. Once we nearly had a nasty smash, but that was near Furnes. A convoy of great heavy wagons had been left on the wrong side of the road, and as lights were not permitted and the night very dark Chris was driving slowly and warily—peering into the shadows. She brought "Flossie" to a violent halt, our bonnet touching the first of these unwieldy monsters!

II—STORY OF THE LITTLE CORPORAL AND THE GENERAL

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Three days later General J— sent his motor cyclist to bring us out to lunch. The courtesy was indeed great, as the lad had 50 miles to come, if not more. Unluckily he had a smash, and rode back on the step of our car. He was a type of the modern Belgian youth. Well-bred, clever, with frank, humourous eyes, and the adorable smile of a "Parisian gamin," he kept us amused all the way. His comments were racy, and always gallant.

"I am no longer a simple soldier; I am corporal. The General has done that—because of you others, there is no doubt."

And his merry eyes challenged us to disbelieve that a simple soldier would not be good enough as escort.

"Yes, we are all gay," he would say; "yes, but it is sad too. I am *fiancé*, and I have no letter from her—no, not from the day the war broke out. I have written, yes, but she does not answer. It is gay the war, *n'est-ce pas*, madame?"

And a little later, with his childish pout: "I have had a letter from my mother. She is in Brussels; she does not find the war gay. She cannot see me, and she loves me."

His shrill whistle, prolonged on a certain note, took us past sentries and barricades.

"You see, the Belges are musical. There, hear me whistle like a bird, and say 'Passez! passez! les oiseaux!'"

The wind was keen and the roads greasy, but Chris sat steady as a rock, her great grey eyes fixed on the future, her mobile face calm and tranquil. Jean was piqued.

"Look, mam'selle, Chris is absorbed. She drives, yes; but she will not listen to our chatter. She has no time to smile then. Oh, these ladies who drive cars!"

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Chris (who had danced and skated in peaceful days with the little cyclist) turned her ready smile in his direction, and he forgave.

We arrived at length at the farmhouse where Divisional Headquarters were. The General was busy, but greeted us warmly. He sent for liqueurs, at the appearance of which Chris edged diplomatically nearer the coal-scuttle. The General produced his mascot, a woolly dog sent by a lady from England. He showed us also his grand chain and Order of Leopold Premier given him for his gallantry at Dixmude. Then we had lunch—and such a luncheon as any London restaurant would have been proud to serve. Suddenly the telephone rang. Taubes were bombarding a village near at hand. Even as the adjutant rang off and reported to the General we heard the engine throbbing overhead. We all ran out to the yard to watch the graceful death-dealing machine circling in the clear sky. Then it flew on and glided out of sight. The General showed me his two horses lying down in a little shed near.

I forgot to mention that before lunch he took us up to his bedroom to wash, and displayed with simple pride the bed he shared with his major and the other bed which two captains occupied. Accommodation was limited! He also produced a bottle of scent for our use!

Then he sent for his car, and with Major — we set off for the nearest battery. The chauffeur cared not for speed limits, and a wild rush landed us in a very short time at the corner of a field. We walked across this to inspect a battery of small guns. Then we went on, carefully avoiding the wire of a field telephone to an advanced gun position. As we neared what looked like a ridge of trees we saw that these also were cunningly contrived to conceal the guns. This was a new battery of which the officer in charge was very proud. He told us what good work they had done within the last ten days. They had only been sent up then. In another hour he suggested we might judge for ourselves; but General J— did not deem it prudent, so we thanked the officer and the cheery gunners for all the trouble they had taken. Here, too, the dug-outs were beautifully finished off—even little panes of glass were let in as windows.

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III—STORY OF THE MOTHER—WITH FOUR LITTLE CHILDREN

The General then took us to a bridge on the canal where fishing was occasionally indulged in. The doctor who had lunched with us appeared, and with great glee produced a hand grenade which he flung in the water. The explosion was followed by a geyser-like rising of the water, and then hundreds of dead fishes floated to the surface and were caught in a net and safely landed!

Just then an officer joined us to ask if we could take away from the nearest village four little children and their mother, who was shortly expecting another baby. The village was being bombarded, and the little family were in terror. We gladly acquiesced, and the General took us back in his car; we got "Le Petit Camerade" (our second Ford ambulance) into action and departed, Jean, the motor cyclist, being sent by the General to see us on our way. We collected the poor little mother and her four sturdy little boys, wrapped them well up in scarves and

balacclavas, and took them to the English lady's refugees' home. Again, unluckily, we failed to find her. Jean ran round himself to look for her, and at last, after waiting for an hour, we left the little family there and departed. [136]

The relief of the good woman was touching. She was not like the other woman with nine children, a husband, and a pig, whom we tried in vain to rescue. The doctors of a certain division were perturbed by the danger run by the nine children (whose ages were from two to eleven), who had to lie in a damp trench for four hours every day whilst their village was bombarded. After much argument, the woman consented to leave, and we arranged with the Refugee Committee in Calais to take them over, and we sent a big car out to fetch them. However, when it came to the point, the mother refused to leave the pig; all persuasion was useless, and the car took the father and the nine to Calais. Two days later he got permission to take his nine children for a walk; and they never returned. News was heard of them walking back the 50 miles to rejoin their mother and the pig!

Having left the four little fellows waving to us from the doorstep, we retraced the road and arrived at Pervyse. Here we said good-bye to Jean and took the road to Ramscappelle. The sentries at first refused to let us pass, as the road was being shelled, but we were in a hurry, so they yielded. We left the car at one point and took shelter in the ruins of a cottage, but a shell also landed there, knocking one of the shattered walls to pieces, and so we deemed it more prudent to rejoin the "Petit Camerade" and race for our lives. A burst of derisive laughter followed us. Unknowingly we had been on the edge of a Belgian trench!

As we neared Ramscappelle a soldier leapt towards us with a warning cry. We heard the cold shriek above our heads that denoted trouble coming; and Chris set her mouth a trifle sternly, rammed her foot on the accelerator, and we were past just as the house staggered towards us and fell, blocking the road behind us. We glanced round; the soldier who had shouted waved reassuringly, and we turned into the old brickyard. A few fresh shells had fallen, and beside the path were two little graves marked with wooden crosses that had not been there last time we passed. We found a suitable place to leave the "Petit Camerade" against a wall of bricks piled high. The ground was rough and greasy. We hurried to the cottage where the artillery mess was, and the whizzing and whistling overhead denoted "activity on the front." In fact we ran at top speed up that garden path and hammered on the door. Friendly faces greeted us, and we were soon inside and the table was being laid. [137]

IV—STORY OF A NIGHT AT DIVISION HEADQUARTERS

Our hosts got us a jug of cold water and a basin, and we proceeded to wash on a chair in the corner of the room, the commandant and three other officers being interested spectators. Then we sat down to dinner and had soup and fish and meat; and then, ye gods! asparagus and cheese and fruit—a right noble repast. The windows were barred and shuttered, but all around we heard the heavy boom of big guns, the angry screaming of shells. As the meal drew to an end the two telephones in the room got busy. There were, I think, fifteen officers and ourselves, and two of the subalterns were at the receivers:

"Yes, my wife is in England. She is so happy there; she loves the English, and there is no sign of war." The commandant was interrupted in his peaceful picture by the sharp voices of the telephonists.

"'Allo, 'allo, 'allo! Find the trench major. 'Allo! What? No, the major, find the major; I would speak with the major. No—the major...."

The wild glare of the exasperated man who wanted the major met the equally ferocious stare of the man who held the other wire, and whose voice had all this time been cutting through his. [138]

"'Allo, 'allo! Yes, this is the Artillery; yes, he is here. 'Allo! What? When? At what hour? What? Speak up! Cré nom de Dieu, speak clearly! Pardon, mon Colonel. To-night towards eleven hours. Yes, mon Colonel. It is understood."

By this time the table talk had risen—something was under discussion.... Our voices rose; the two telephonists' voices rose also. My eyes met Chris's; we could not help laughing—this was like a scene from a pantomime.

"Sapristi!" The man who still wanted the major could not forbear longer.

"Silence—I beg of you. Silence. Be quiet, you with that telephone. 'Allo, 'allo! Find the trench major."

From the other side of the room the other man spoke:

"Be quiet with your own telephone. 'Allo, 'allo! Yes—yes. Gentlemen—ladies—I pray you be silent. 'Allo! Yes—mon Colonel. Oh, what is then—Lieutenant who?"

And so on! We were asked to write our names in the pocket-books of all our hosts. Then someone said "Music," and in a moment we were all round the piano that had been brought from a shelled farmhouse in our honour. The telephones were still busy, and one young lieutenant got orders to go to the top of a very tall chimney that remained standing "to observe, as there was a certain movement along the front." His comrades mocked him, crisping their fingers, as if climbing hand over hand up the long iron ladders.

"You make a good target, George," one wit said soothingly.

George bade us good-night, looking annoyed. We heard him in the passage directing his sergeant to go up the chimney and waken him if necessary! [139]

Chris played and sang song after song; every chorus caught up and re-echoed. Then in a lull we heard steps outside and a heavy banging on the shutter, and as we listened a pure tenor voice lilted:

"Good-bye, Piccadilly,
Good-bye, Leicester Square;
It's a long, long way to Tipperary,
But my heart's right there."

"De — de —!" everyone shouted, and Captain de — entered, smiling.

"Where have you come from?" we asked, for we had last seen him at Calais.

"My battery is seven miles from here, and they telephoned to me you ladies were here, so behold me!"

We had more songs, and then the Belgian National Anthem. It was a fine and inspiring thing to hear—sung from their hearts by these big, strong men who were offering their lives daily for their king and country, and sung as it was to the tune played by Chris, with her lovely girlish face, and the deep booming of the guns to render it still more effective. I shall never forget it.

Then out in the darkness we groped our way to our car, thinking the day's adventures were ended. Along the sky the rockets and star shells blazed and spluttered, lighting us for the moment, and then leaving the darkness still more oppressive around us. It took much pushing and shoving to get the "Petit Camerade" on to the roadway, and our hosts bade us good-bye heartily, though in whispers, as we were very near the "movement along the front."

FOOTNOTE:

[10] All numerals relate to stories told herein—not to chapters in the book.

"FROM DARTMOUTH TO THE DARDANELLES"—A MIDSHIPMAN'S LOG

[140]

Told by a Dartmouth Student (Name Suppressed)

This is the narrative of a boy who was a midshipman in the Dardanelles Campaign. The mobilization of the Dartmouth Cadets is tragic evidence of the grim facts of War. The loss of these boys on the ill-fated *Cressy*, the *Aboukir*, and the *Hogue*, brought an outburst of protest in parliament. This midshipman describes among his adventures: "The Scenes When the Students Left Dartmouth College"; "The Voyage from Egypt to Mombasa"; "The Bombardment of Dar-es-Salaam"; "Ordered to the Dardanelles," and "The Sinking of the Ship." The latter chapter is here reprinted by permission of his publishers, *E. P. Dutton and Company*.

[11] I—STORY OF THE SINKING OF THE SHIP

Crash!—Bang!—Cr-r-ash! I woke with a start, and sitting up in my hammock gazed around to see what had so suddenly roused me. Some of the midshipmen were already standing on the deck in their pyjamas—others, like me, were sitting up half dazed with sleep. A party of ship's boys crowded up the ladder from the gun-room flat, followed by three officers; one of these, a sub-lieutenant R.N.R., called out: "Keep calm, and you'll all be saved."

Up to that moment it had never dawned upon me that the ship was sinking, and even then I thought it improbable until I noticed that we were already listing to starboard. Then I got up and walked up the hatch to the quarter-deck. The ship was now heeling about five degrees to starboard, and I climbed up to the port side. It was nearly pitch dark. A seaman rushing to help lower the boats charged into me, and I turned and swore at him.

Gradually a crowd gathered along the port side. "Boat ahoy! Boat ahoy!" They yelled; but, as the ship listed more and more, and there was no sign or sound of any approaching vessel, the men's voices seemed to get a bit hopeless. The Commander was urging on a gang who were trying to get some heavy timber overboard; but, as we listed further and further over, they found it impossible to get it up on the port side and couldn't get round to starboard, as the capstan and the Captain's hatch and skylight were in the way. At last they gave it up, and going to the side joined their voices to those of the crew, who were trying to attract the attention of any vessel that might be in the vicinity. [141]

Inside the ship everything which was not secured was sliding about and bringing up against the bulkheads with a series of crashes. Crockery was smashing—boats falling out of their crutches—broken funnel-guys swinging against the funnel casings. She had heeled over to about twenty degrees, then she stopped and remained steady for a few seconds. In the momentary lull the voice of one of our officers rang out steady and clear as at "divisions": "Keep calm, men. Be British!"

Then the ship started to heel rapidly again, and I felt sure there was no chance of saving her. I turned to jump overboard. The Commander, who was standing a few paces away on my right, went over a second before me. Raising my arms above my head I sprang well out board and dived. Just before I struck the water my face hit the side of the ship. It was a horrid feeling sliding on my face down the slimy side, and a second later I splashed in with tremendous force, having dived about thirty feet. [142]

Just as I was rising to the surface again a heavy body came down on top of me. I fought clear and rose rather breathless and bruised. I swam about fifty yards away, to get clear of the suction when the ship went down; then, turning round and treading water, I watched her last moments. The noise of crashing furniture and smashing crockery was continuous. Slowly her stern lifted until it was dimly outlined against the deep midnight sky. Slowly her bows slid further and further under until, with a final lurch, she turned completely over and disappeared bottom upwards in a mass of bubbles.

She had been our home for nearly ten months—she was gone—vanished—in less than four minutes.

II—OVERBOARD—A SWIM FOR LIFE

Turning over and swimming a slow side-stroke I made for *H.M.S. Cornwallis*, which I could discern faintly silhouetted against the sky about two-and-a-half miles distant. Suddenly something touched my leg, and the thought of the sharks we had watched from the bridge the previous afternoon flashed shudderingly across my mind—but it was only a floating potato! Soon the shrieks of the drowning grew faint in the distance and I swam on with three others near me. When I had been in the water for about twenty minutes I looked up and saw what I thought to be a boat. I shouted out, "Boat ahoy!"—and turning on my side swam for some time a fast side-stroke. When at last I rested and looked for the imagined boat, which ought to have been quite near by now, I discovered that I had somehow misfocussed the *Cornwallis*, and so come to imagine she was a small steamboat quite close instead of a battle-ship a mile and a half away. However, I felt quite confident of reaching her if only I persevered, so I continued to swim a slow side-stroke. Soon after this my pyjama jacket came undone, and I took it off as it hindered me. A few minutes later I sighted a huge spar about twenty feet long, probably the topgallant mast or lower boom from our ship. It must have been thrown a tremendous way by the force of the [143]

explosion to be so far down the channel. The current was very strong, and of course that was a great help to those who were swimming. I hung on to the spar for a minute or two to get my breath back a bit, and rubbed myself all over in order to restore the circulation, as by that time I was getting very cold. After a short rest I started off again to try and reach H.M.S. *Cornwallis*. Presently it seemed to me that I was not approaching her as rapidly as before, and almost at the same moment she switched on her searchlights, when I saw by their light that she was out of the main stream of the current, and that to reach her I should have to swim half a mile absolutely unaided by the flow of the tide. I tried to get in the beam of her searchlight, thinking she would be sure to have some boats out and that they would see me; but I found I was unable to manage this, and after about five minutes I gave up trying. Then I turned round and looked about for some other ship to essay and make for. About a quarter of a mile behind me, and slightly up stream, I saw another ship with all her searchlights going and I determined to try and reach her. I swam towards her, and presently saw two steamboats push off from her bow and make up stream for the scene of the disaster, but they were too far off to hail. Five minutes later I heard the welcome splash of oars, and looking to my left saw a cutter approaching with a man in the bows sweeping the surrounding water with a hand lantern. I yelled out, "Boat ahoy!" and back came the cheering answer: "All right, we're coming. Hang on!"

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A minute later the lantern flashed in my face, a pair of strong arms grasped me by the shoulders and hauled me clear of the water.

I must have fainted then, for I remember nothing more until I became dimly conscious as in a dream that I was in the stern sheets of a boat lying alongside some other vessel. A man's voice said, "Here's a midshipman, sir," and next moment I was picked up and set down on the deck.

Barely conscious as yet of my surroundings, I was taken into a sort of cabin, where I was given some neat rum. It was very fiery and nearly choked me, but it bucked me up a bit all the same. Then I was conducted down to the boiler-room, where some one stripped off my pyjama trousers (my one remaining garment), and I sat down on a locker before the furnace and soon got a degree of warmth back into my body.

Presently I heard the voice of one of our lieutenants speaking up above, and called out to him to know how he'd come off. Then I was helped up the gangway again and into a small sort of saloon in the stern. Here I was given some more rum, a very large sweater, and a pair of blue serge trousers belonging to one of the crew, and when I had put them on I lay down in a bunk and immediately fell asleep. About an hour later I woke up and found the saloon full of officers and men.

The Lieutenant to whom I had spoken in the boiler-room was sitting at the table. He was dressed in a jersey and a seaman's duck trousers. Two other survivors, a marine and an armourer, were also at the table, and across the saloon in the bunk opposite mine lay a gunner's mate. I asked the Lieutenant what time our ship was struck. He said his watch had stopped at 1.29 a.m., when he jumped into the sea, and so he presumed we were torpedoed at about 1.27, as the ship only took *three and a half minutes* to go down. She had been struck on the starboard side by three torpedoes fired from a Turkish torpedo-boat, which had drifted down the straits keeping close inshore, and thus eluded our destroyer patrol. To give the enemy his due it was a jolly smart piece of work.

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III—RESCUED—THE BURIALS AT SEA

It was now somewhere about 3.30 a.m., and, as I did not feel inclined to sleep any more, they gave me some hot cocoa and some bread-and-cheese. I drank the former, but the bread-and-cheese was more than I felt equal to just then. About 6 o'clock the Lieutenant was transferred to another ship for medical treatment, as his back was badly bruised by drifting wreckage; and half-an-hour later the rest of the survivors were re-embarked in H.M.S. *Lord Nelson's* cutter, the same that had picked us up; and leaving the trawler she took us to the *Lord Nelson*.

When we got on board I was at once taken down to the gun-room, where I found four more of our "snotties" who had also been rescued. One more was reported as having safely swum ashore; but there was no news of the other three, and subsequently it transpired that they had been lost.

The survivors were mostly sleeping—the sleep of exhaustion. We had all had a pretty tough fight for it, and I realised then how uncommonly lucky we had been in escaping not only alive, but for the most part uninjured. Cunninghame had a nasty cut on his head, but the rest of us were only suffering from minor bruises, and of course to a certain extent from shock.

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One of the *Lord Nelson's* middies kindly lent me some old uniform, and after I had dressed I made a parcel of the clothes I had been lent on the trawler and took them to the ship's corporal, and asked him to see that they were returned to their owner.

I remembered, with an odd sense of unreality, that the last time I had been in the *Lord Nelson* was at the manœuvres the previous July!

On my way up to the deck I met three more of our lieutenants, and we exchanged accounts of our experiences. From them I learned that our Commander had been saved, and was also on board; but there was no news of the Captain. Some days later I heard that his body had been picked up, and it was thought that he had been killed by the falling of the pinnace when the ship turned over just before she sank.

At 7.30 we put to sea and proceeded to Port Mudros. On the way, and after divisions, the lower deck was cleared, the whole ship's company, together with the survivors from our ship, mustered on the quarter-deck, and then took place a mournful ceremony, which poignantly brought home

to us the fate we had so narrowly escaped.

Through the battery—very softly—came the sound of muffled drums, growing gradually louder as the band advanced. Then appeared a procession of seamen from our lost ship, headed by the *Lord Nelson's* chaplain, and carrying three stretchers, on each of which lay a body covered with the Union Jack. The first was that of our Fleet paymaster, and the other two those of a seaman and marine respectively. The bodies were lifted from the stretchers and laid reverently on a platform slanting towards the water, which had been erected on the port side. Clearly and solemnly the chaplain recited the beautiful Burial Service, and as he uttered the words "we therefore commit their bodies to the deep," the staging was tilted and the weighted corpses slid feet foremost into the sea.

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The service ended with three volleys fired over the side and then the long sobbing wail of the "Last Post" rang out across the still waters in final farewell.

When we were dismissed we went below in silence, awed by the solemnity of this last committal to the deep of those with whom we had lived and worked side by side for ten long months.

(The midshipman here describes his voyage home, closing with this expostulation from his mother: "I had not seen him since he left Dartmouth nearly fourteen months before. Then he was a round-faced, rosy boy. Up the steps, dragging a seaman's canvas kit bag came a tall, thin figure, white of face, drawn, haggard—incredibly old. I had not quite realized this. For a second my heart stood still—where was my boy? Then he saw me waiting in the hall and his face lit with half credulous joyous wonder, 'Mother! you here!' My boy was gone forever—but my son had come home.")

FOOTNOTE:

[11] All numerals relate to stories told herein—not to chapters in the book.

HORRORS OF TRENCH FIGHTING—WITH THE CANADIAN HEROES

[148]

Remarkable Experiences of an American Soldier

Told by Roméo Houle, of the First Canadian Division

This story reveals in all its realism the reason why America entered the Great War—to save the world from the suffering herein described. Every American who reads this story will be aroused as never before against the German War despots who forced this horror upon civilization. To bring this war to an end the Americans crossed the seas to fight with the Allies—and save humanity. This true story of the trenches is undeniably one of the most thrilling human documents that the great struggle has produced. Roméo Houle was born in New Bedford, Mass., Oct. 29th, 1893, the son of a local barber, Zacharie Houle, and Xeline Bagnoche. He has a common school education. He moved to Montreal in 1912, where he was a barber. When war was declared he enlisted in the Sixty-fifth Regiment, First Canadian Division, Aug. 10, 1914. His father secured the young soldier's discharge through Congressman Walsh of Massachusetts on the ground that he was an American citizen and was not of age when he enlisted. He made notes of his experiences while in the trenches, and the subjoined production was written by him for *Current History* in collaboration with his friend Arthur L. Bouvier, editor of a French newspaper at New Haven.

I—TRUE STORY OF THE "GERMAN PLAGUE"

The true story of the trenches has never been told. I know, because for many months I have lived in trenches. I have slept daily in dread of bullet, shrapnel, mine, and deadly gas; and nightly in fear of mine and gas—and the man-eating rats.

I am one of the few soldiers living who entered the front trenches at the opening of the war and who lived to fight the Germans in the front trenches in February, 1916. Of my original company (the Fourth of the Fourteenth Battalion, Third Brigade, First Canadian Division), which marched away to that hell at Laventie and Ypres so gaily—500 brave boys—I am one of the sixteen who survive.... [149]

Who has seen hell? Who has experienced the horrors of Milton's terrible vision or the slow tortures of Dante's inferno? God! If Dante's dream madness were truth, and those seven circles were seven encircling battle lines in Northern France or the torn fringe of brave little Belgium, I could stand up and say there is no agony of body or mind which I have not seen, which I have not experienced. I thank God and give Him the glory that I still am sane. Gas? What do you know of it, you people who never heard earth and heaven rock with the frantic turmoil of the ceaseless bombardment? A crawling yellow cloud that pours in upon you, that gets you by the throat and shakes you as a huge mastiff might shake a kitten, and leaves you burning in every nerve and vein of your body with pain unthinkable; your eyes starting from their sockets; your face turned yellow-green.

Rats? What did you ever read of the rats in the trenches? Next to gas, they still slide on their fat bellies through my dreams. Poe could have got new inspiration from their dirty hordes. Rats, rats, rats—I see them still, slinking from new meals on corpses, from Belgium to the Swiss Alps. Rats, rats, rats, tens of thousands of rats, crunching between battle lines while the rapid-firing guns mow the trench edge—crunching their hellish feasts. Full fed, slipping and sliding down into the wet trenches they swarm at night—and more than one poor wretch has had his face eaten off by them while he slept.

Stench? Did you ever breathe air foul with the gases arising from a thousand rotting corpses? Dirt? Have you ever fought half madly through days and nights and weeks unwashed, with feverish rests between long hours of agony, while the guns boom their awful symphony of death, and the bullets zip-zip-zip ceaselessly along the trench edge that is your skyline—and your deathline, too, if you stretch and stand upright?... [150]

You wouldn't believe all I have seen, all I have left. Ah, no; you would say, "Roméo Houle, you are lying," were I to tell you some unbelievable things that I have really lived through. Men go mad over there. When you know what life in the first-line trenches is like you will wonder that I have returned, and that, having returned, I am still in my right mind. Sometimes, at night, I find myself again carrying the wounded back after the charge, and listening to dying soldiers telling me to look into blood-soaked pockets for last letters to their sweethearts or mothers back home. "Tell mother that I received the Blessed Sacrament before the battle began." I hear their breaking voices whisper, "Tell mother," while the thundering artillery pours its curtain of fire upon us, and our boys throw back from their rude, handmade sling shots their deadly "jam-pots." "Tell mother!" I think all the battle front is crying now those words. O Mother of God, hear them and end this needless butchery!

I fought at Ypres. I fought at St. Julien. I fought at Lacouture and Festubert. I fought at Cuinchy. I fought at Givenchy and La Bassée, and in the first-line trenches at Messines. And before all these I fought in the first line at Richebourg and Laventie, and I live, one of 16 alive out of 500.

II—AN AMERICAN WHO WENT "OVER THERE"

[151]

I am an American by birth and a barber by occupation. I have shaved men for my living in New

Bedford, Mass., and have shaved soldiers of necessity in time to the cracking of rifles in Northern France. I chanced to be in Montreal when England declared war. That was on Aug. 4, 1914. On Aug. 10 I enlisted in the Sixty-fifth Regiment of French Canadians commanded by Major Barre of Montreal. There were two New England boys with me in the regiment—Henri Bertrand of Attleboro and a fellow named Collette from New Bedford. There were 500 French Canadians—then—between the ages of 18 and 28. I left most of them buried in unmarked graves.

We left Montreal on Aug. 25 for Valcartier, where they made out of a fair barber a good soldier, I think. The Duke and Duchess of Connaught inspected us at Valcartier, and a brave sight we were in our new uniforms and our full and gallant ranks. But the Duke and Duchess would have shuddered could they have inspected us, say at Cuinchy or Messines. Our 500 got thinner the older the war grew. Our 500 will be gone, I think, all gone but me, before the war is over. I'd be gone, too, but for Congressman Walsh and the American Government, which, after all, is mine, and the one I'd best die for, if die I must for any. It was on Sept. 25 that I sailed with my regiment for Plymouth, England, on board the Cunarder *Alunia*. There were 1,000 men on board, half English, half French.

Thirty-three vessels sailed together in three rows of eleven boats each, with three cruisers to left and three to right of us, and one before and one behind to guard us. So great was our dread of German torpedoes and mines, it took us twenty-one days to cross. [152]

I was in the Seventh and Eighth Companies of this French Canadian regiment, the Sixty-fifth, but at the front my company was known as the Fourth of the Fourteenth Battalion, Third Brigade, First Canadian Division. The *Alunia* was the second to land at Plymouth, and the whole town turned out to give us a reception, with houses decorated and flags flying—for 484 of us a death bridal, indeed! Three days later we were reviewed by Lord Roberts on Salisbury Plain, and the King also inspected us. Thence we marched to Larkhill, where we remained until Feb. 12, 1915. Then we left for France.

First came St. Nazaire; then Hazebrouck, and a twelve-mile hike to Fletre, a village in the north. We had a two-days' rest, and marched twenty-four miles to Armentières. At Armentières I first entered a trench. We trained there with English troops. And we lay shivering in the rain for forty-eight hours, and then gladly left for Richebourg, three miles away.

At Richebourg we entered trenches of our own. There Charles Lapointe of Montreal, the first of our company to die, looked over the edge of the trench. That is death. Machine guns all day sweep the trench edges. If you raise your hand, your fingers will be cut off as by a knife. And once I saw a poor wretch, weary almost to death of the trench, raise his right arm at full length. He was sent home, maimed and in agony, as he had wished. And who can say that his act was cowardly? He who has lived in the trenches for weeks and months knows. The soldier had courage to raise his hand. Perhaps some who clung to the mud at the trench bottom were greater cowards than he.

Well, Lapointe looked over the trench edge; and nobody knows what he saw. His brother was there to lay him down. He buried him (as we ever must the dead at the front) in a shallow pit in our trench. And the brother had for a time the agony of having to fight and feel the earth give over Charley's breast. [153]

Two miles from there, at Laventie, we fought in the first line again. A German shell exploded over a pile of brush in a field near where I was shooting toward the German line. And we, weary of the monotony of the fighting, were overjoyed to see the ground covered far and wide with potatoes, which some farmer had hidden under hay. Potatoes! We blessed our periscope for the toothsome vision. And, marvelous to relate, we noted that the German fire slackened. Our officers could not restrain the French Canadians. On our bellies, over the death line we crawled unscathed, and, flat on the ground, wriggled to the potatoes, braving death for what we deem so common in America.

I got my share. Nor did the flaming sky pour upon us the leaden hail we feared, for the Germans held their fire while we gathered the crop we did not plant.

Toward night, in the dusk, we discovered by our spectroscope that the German boys, who were cold in their trenches, were demolishing a house for firewood, an old cottage, the property, perhaps, of that very peasant who had hidden our potatoes under the hay. We had their lives in our hands. We remembered our Irish feast—and word went down the line to hold our fire. Nor did one German die.

That was the Golden Rule of the battle front.

III—"MY FIRST NIGHT UNDER FIRE"

I slept in my blanket, my first night under fire, with a lump of cheese at my feet, as a bribe to the rats to spare my face. Not that I slept much. The night rocked with sound. The night is the true time for fighting, and the wire-cutters were creeping about on their dangerous errands between the trenches. The rockets now and then hissed skyward, throwing their powerful flares of light over the darkened world. Wounded men groaned. And rats, like flies in Summer, scuttled about, making queer noises, which we could hear in momentary lulls. I had not lain there long before an officer called for volunteers to examine the land between our trench and the enemy's and repair our broken barbed wire entanglements. The wires are destroyed every day by the bombardment, and must be repaired every night. It is a most dangerous duty. Yet, I gladly volunteer, with Aurele, Auguste, and other friends. [154]

While we were at work upon the wires the Germans threw up some flares and turned our protecting darkness into the glare of midday. They poured upon us a deadly fire. We dropped

among the dead bodies which littered the ground. And long I lay, sprawled across the corpse of some brave German lad killed there many days before—constrained to feign death to save my life. But we did not all escape. Martin of Montreal was killed and many of our little party were wounded. But, as usual, I came back at last, moving painfully on my stomach, uninjured. I reported to Captain Desserre and told him all that I had heard and seen. And then I went back to sleep upon empty sandbags; and a cold, cold night it was.

I awoke at 7 o'clock, sore and stiff. I soon had kindled a little fire and cooked a slice of bacon and steeped a little tea for my chum, Aurele Roy of Montreal, and myself.

"I can lick the whole German Army alone this morning!" I exclaimed in French, warmed by the tea.

"Not alone!" cried Roy, reviving also under the influence of our breakfast, "for if you begin to lick 'em, I'll be beside you." And we laughed together, little dreaming how soon our brave words would be put to the test. [155]

I did my turn at guard duty almost cheerfully. I cleaned my rifle and bayonet, shaved myself, and washed up a little, and then thought I would get a little more rest while I could. But, alas, some one had stolen my two empty sandbags! So I took off my overcoat and spread it on the ground and covered myself with a blanket. The sun meanwhile was shining hotly on the heaps of dead bodies which lay not far away outside the trench. I was glad to cover my head with a blanket to shut out some of the awful stench. And that is how the smell of decaying bodies saved my life.

Arthur Robillard, a car conductor back in Montreal, was on guard duty. I was roused when he fell over me. As I sat up something got me by the throat and began to strangle out my life. The air was rent with awful cries. Many of my comrades lay dying and dead about me. I hurled myself in semi-madness into a huge crater near by, made by a bursting shell. There was a little muddy water at the bottom, and I fell in it, face down.

The water relieved me a little, and I wet my handkerchief in it and covered my face. The green, stinking air was thus shut out, and I began to breathe easier. I crawled out, and half blindly sought my unconscious chum, dragging him back ten yards into the crater where the water was. I laid him face downward there, and he, too, revived a little, and there we lay, waiting for death.

Ten minutes later, I heard a shouting, and knew that the Germans were coming fast. Then I ran back into my trench, got my gun, and began firing as fast as I could. The rifle soon became so hot that it burned my hands. I threw it down and began throwing bombs. The order to retreat to the next trench came. My half-strangled comrade was with me. We ran together and, looking back, saw the big, strapping gray fellows of the Teuton army leaping down into our trench. [156]

I forgot the rheumatism from which I had been suffering for several days when I saw them come, (we all suffer from rheumatism, it is one of the curses of the trenches). Meanwhile, the French had retired to their fourth line, and we were left, almost surrounded, with our left flank exposed and annihilation threatening us.

Somehow we got hold of two machine-guns, and placed them where they would do the most good. One of these was running 560 shots a minute, and the other—blessed French destroyer!—was pouring out death at the rate of 700 shots a minute.

IV—"I SHALL NEVER FORGET THOSE GERMANS"

I shall never forget those Germans. When our guns suddenly spoke their front line melted; their second crumpled before this destruction; but on, on, on they came, unflinching, marching with even steps into certain death. We were like lions at bay. It was our lives or the Germans'. Then, as fourteen of us fought together, a bomb dropped amid us, and killed eleven. I came to consciousness, lying in the bottom of a trench, with Roy leaning over me.

"Are you living, Roméo!" he exclaimed in amazement. I rose dizzily. He and I and one other stood alone among our eleven dead friends.

Then Roy told me that I had been blown clear of the trench, twenty feet from where I stood, and that he had braved death to secure, as he supposed, my dead body. A careful examination showed that my only injury was a terrible bruise on the calf of my leg, where the round surface of a flying shard had struck me, but without breaking the skin. Miracles are but small matters when you fight in the presence of death. [157]

"I'm not afraid now," I told Roy. And from then on I and all my soldier friends believed my life was charmed and that the Germans could not kill me.

We were driven back before their heavy guns to the fourth line, and were almost immediately told in haste to leave it as quickly as we could. Our engineers had mined the place, and as we fled the Germans poured down a gray horde of men. So we blew them up.

Have you ever seen a thousand men hurled to atoms by a giant blast? I cannot forget that awful sight. The whole earth seemed to leap skyward, and through and through the black mountain of earth and stones shot heads and arms and legs, torn fragments of what were once heroic men. Next to the gas which they gave us, I think our blowing them up like this was surely the worst thing men could do to men.

Perhaps you have heard of the friendship which often springs up between the Allies and their foes. I know something about it. It was at Laventie that the Germans began to amuse themselves by putting a bullseye on a biscuit box and letting us use it for a target. We then returned the compliment and set up a similar bullseye for the Teuton boys. For between Germans and Allies as individuals, there is no hate, though I must except the treacherous German prisoner I had to kill

to save my life.

Every time the Germans made a bullseye, I would raise a shovel. If they missed, I put up a handkerchief. They did the same for us. And so we who sought each other's lives played together, and death spoke sharply all around.

Sergeant Pichette was a wag. He put an old derby on a stick and ran along the trench as if it were a man, and the Germans fired at it. He would pull the hat down occasionally to make the enemy believe that the man under it had been shot, but soon afterward he would raise it again, thereby causing much amusement. [158]

We used to talk back and forth—those German boys and we Canadians. They were the 157th and most friendly. "Hi! Where do you come from?" a voice in French once called over to us.

"We are French Canadians," we replied with pride.

"Well, we're Canadians, too," came the astonishing answer. "We come from Ontario."

There came a pause. There was no firing. Then the German shouted, "Let me see one of your group; let him stand above the trench, and on my word of honor we shall not fire."

One of us sprang out of the trench and stood up. There fell a deep silence upon the two armies. Then many stood up, and finally the Germans, too, were rising. We talked for hours so, when the officers were not looking. When they looked we did a deal of firing—but our aim was much too high.

One day the Germans threw over a bit of paper wrapped around a stone. "If you don't fire on us, we won't fire on you," some one had written. We kept that strange pact for days, until the officers, discovering this pact of peace, moved us to another part of the trenches.

Some months later, curiously enough, we found ourselves opposite the same regiment. Neither side forgot we were both Canadian, and steadfastly kept our treaty of peace. They did not consider that rough note a "scrap of paper." Not a single shot was fired and only one man was killed, and he by a stray bullet.

Because friendships started easily between hostile bodies, they kept moving a regiment from one part of the trenches to another, that we might not get too friendly with our enemies. We had no heart in the butchery, Germans or we French Canadians. [159]

V—"WE CRAWL FORTH TO DEATH"

A big part of trench warfare is the mining operations. I feared the mines more than anything, I think. It was more terrible than gas poisoning to think that at any moment the earth would be rent and you would be thrown a thousand ways at once. The mining operations were carried on by trained miners, who burrow along under ground about fifteen feet below the surface. The engineers in charge figure out just how far they must dig to reach positions under the German lines, and when they have done so a fuse is run in—and Fritz and Hans and their friends jump fifty feet toward heaven.

We do this; the Germans do it. It is bad work. And on both sides, we have to keep men listening all the time for the digging. When it is discovered that a mine is coming our way, we sink a tunnel deeper still and blow up their tunnel. And the Germans do the same thing with our mines. The soldier in the trench never knows when he may be blown into small pieces—and that is why we always preferred to risk uncertain dangers between the lines at night, instead of lying down in the wet trench, helplessly waiting for death.

I never felt so secure, indeed, as when I was on guard between the trenches, through all the night I could hear the bullets go over me....

And I have seen men of good health grow so weary of the trenches that they have simply stood up at noon-day. Some machine-guns swiftly ended them. And others, as I have written, simply stick up their hands above the trench top and bullets trim off their fingers.

I was twenty days at Laventie. We only had the regular rifle shooting there, and were fortunate in losing not a single man of our 500 by bombs. We then marched to a point about one mile to the right of the now famous Neuve Chapelle, where we caught the Germans by surprise and took nearly 3,000 prisoners. [160]

For two days and two nights I was firing continuously. My rifle became so hot that I had to fill my hands with dirt before firing. The fighting became so fierce that we had to employ men to do nothing else but carry ammunition to us from 200 yards in the rear. We were two and one-half miles to the left of the British. The Germans, but for us, could have got reinforcements, but we Canadians were in the way. We expected, at first, to attack them, as they were only sixty yards away. We had constructed special bridges to cross a ten-yard stream near by. Our work was to fire upon the German reserves in the rear, and this we easily did, because our guns carried for two miles. The Germans were defeated largely because they supposed the British had plenty of reinforcements.

The whole thing began suddenly at 2:30 in the morning, after a quiet day. It was an earthquake. Our company until then had fought in no real battle and had lost only five men. Other companies used to declare that we had some guardian angel to protect us. Anyhow, many say that I had some guardian angel to protect me—and I am sure that I did.

Three men volunteered to go and cut the wire entanglements. Bullets were humming through the air. They crawled forth—to their deaths, we thought—but succeeded in cutting nearly all. So the Germans thought we were about to attack them. As soon as the Germans discovered what our

men had done, we poured a withering fire over the broken wires, so that no man could live to reach and repair them. [161]

The English bombarded the Germans for two whole days. Then we heard cries, and fast by us went the Black Watch, a Scotch regiment, and the Coldstream Guards. It was between 4 and 5 in the morning that they passed us, and within ten minutes they had captured the three first lines of the Germans.

The Germans lost 25,000 men and 3,000 prisoners. Our loss was between 10,000 and 12,000. Two days later troops came to relieve us, and in time, for we were well-nigh exhausted. We marched at night to Estaires, a pretty village eight miles away. Our men were so worn out that they dropped from weariness on the way. We spent eight days in this town and were royally treated by the French.

At midnight of the eighth day we were warned to get ready for marching again. We walked twenty-seven kilometers to Cassel, where General Dorrien, who was in charge of the battle when the English retreated from Mons in France, in the early part of the war, told us that he was going to take charge of the whole Canadian division, and that our regiment would be transferred to another army corps. He gave us three days' rest, and told us we were to occupy French trenches at Ypres.

VI—"WHAT I SAW AT YPRES"

Ypres is the graveyard of the old Sixty-fifth. We were carried to within six miles of the place in London buses, twenty-five men in a bus. Ypres was forty miles away. We met there the Canadian Scottish Third Brigade of 5,000 men. From the end of the bus line we tramped six miles and encamped outside the village of St. Julien, one mile away. Two battalions were in reserve at St. Jean and two were in the front line, mine being one of the two at the front. [162]

It was at Ypres that we first met the gallant French troops. My company was on the left of the English line, so that we acted as interpreters between the French and the English. A roadway ten yards wide separated the two lines and a tunnel ran from the English to the French lines.

We found the trenches here to be forty yards from the German line and in bad condition. Firing was continuous, by day and by night. The communication trenches were in bad shape, too, and the Germans, who were on a height, raked us terribly with their machine-guns. I looked through my periscope and saw between 400 and 500 unburied German dead lying between the lines. I counted 25 dead Frenchmen among them. Three months before, I was told, the Germans had tried to carry the line and neither side had given the other a chance to bury its dead.

Our French neighbors were Zouaves, between 19 and 30 years of age, and the gayest soldiers I have ever fought beside. They sang gay ditties and called us French Canadians "Frères." We spent our nights in throwing grenades at the Boches and our days in the slow monotony of everyday trench life.

I rose at noon, the day after our arrival, and took the time to shave, a rare event. At 4 o'clock in the afternoon, at one mile from us, we saw yellow smoke rising from the ground. This smoke was the deadly gas being thrown upon the French and upon the Scotch regiment that had taken our places while we were resting, for, of course, we were resting when I shaved. We formed at once in light marching order and went to help the Scotch.

We entered the reserve trench, and at midnight the first-line trench. The Scotch had lost half of their effectives and were returning with the French, the blood streaming from their mouths and noses, and their faces all yellow-green. The French had lost nearly all their regiment. The Germans within five minutes had occupied our first and second lines. [163]

In half an hour the Boches began a great bombardment. At 7 o'clock they tried to take our line, repeating their attacks all the night, but we rolled them back. They came even to within ten yards of us, a flood of human waves. But our machine-guns, our "coffee grinders," as we called them, mowed them down like hay, and we lost not many men.

Our artillery had plenty of ammunition. Our light guns were placed at 400 yards from the front line and the heavy artillery at one and a half miles, and some pieces as far as four miles away. The famous French Africans, called Senegalese, were fighting here with us. The Boches set fire to the City of Ypres in the night, and I watched its sullen glare against the sky. The civilian populace went running by, in dreadful condition. That night, of my friends, died Vaillant, Poitras, and Bond, all of Montreal, and two others. Poirer and Lefebre of Montreal and O. Wiseman, also my friends, had been killed during the day. Yet I lived!

Ypres was a famous battle, one of the greatest of the war, I think, till this terrible onslaught at Verdun. Our division (Canadian) reached from Ypres (Belgium) to Poelcappelle Road. At 2 P.M., before the gas overtook me, I was sent out between the lines with another man to examine the wire entanglements. We heard a sound as of some one handling pipes, but discovered nothing more. Then the Boches sent up their flares (skyrockets whose bursting bombs turned night into daylight) and we lay on the ground motionless. In the darkness which followed, we crept back over the heaps of dead toward our line. When I had almost reached the trench, another great flare burst right over us, and I had to lie still for several moments until the welcome darkness gave me an opportunity to drop into the trench again. [164]

Men were dying from the gas, their eyes popping, their faces green, and crying: "Water! Water! I'm choking! Air! Air! Air!" It is a frightful thing to hear your friends crying like that. I saw one die right before my eyes, rolling upon the ground as if mad, tearing at his chest. His fingers were crooked after his death, his body full of blue spots and his mouth white. Another poor wretch fell

two or three feet from me, dying from the gas. He was sucking water from a dirty handkerchief.

VII—THIS IS WHAT THE GERMANS FORCED UPON THE WORLD

Listen. Suppose you were fighting in a trench. The wind comes toward you, foul with odors from nameless, twisted, torn bodies unburied between you and the Boches. Near you are your brave comrades. Some lie wounded and dying in agony on the trench bottom. The bullets zing-zing eternally over your head. There is a mighty swelling from an organ more sonorous than ever human organist played. The rockets are bursting; the flares shedding white glares over the torn ground. Your coffee grinders are mowing them down.

Then, rising from somewhere near by, comes the gas, yellow or green. Then comes a sudden stinging in your nose. Your eyes water and run. You breathe fire. You suffocate. You burn alive. There are razors and needles in your throat. It is as if you drank boiling hot tea. Your lungs flame. You want to scratch and tear your body. You become half blind, half wild. Your head aches beyond description, you vomit, you drop exhausted, you die quickly. [165]

Every other man seemed to fall. As I fought I marveled that I was spared. And again came to me the belief that my life was charmed; that the bullet had not been melted, the shrapnel not been loaded, the gas not mixed which would cause my death. An ecstatic confidence buoyed me up. I was brave, because I was so sure of life, while all my comrades seemed groveling in death.

My platoon was under a withering fire, before which we crumpled and melted away. We left the trench, pressing forward. All hell seemed to rise suddenly from the bowels of the earth and pour over us flame and molten lead. The ground seethed from the exploding shells. The mitrailleuses vomited death.

Our thinned lines gave a yell. I saw a black hole in the ground. Sergeant Albert Pichette shouted, "Into their trench!" I leaped in. Four Germans were trying to escape on the further side. I did not fire, intending to make them prisoners. But the only thing I took was a great blow on the side of my head, and away went my prisoners.

I crawled up the trench a few feet and came upon two men trying to strangle each other. I thought, then, of motion pictures I had watched back home. Here was a more terrible drama than ever the movie camera showed.

A bayonet charge is a street fight magnified and made ten thousand times more fierce. It becomes on close range almost impossible to use your bayonets. So we fought with fists and feet, and used our guns, when possible, as clubs. We lay in our prize trench for about four hours. The boys, excited because they still lived, sang and jested, and told of queer experiences and narrow escapes they had had.

By 10 o'clock came the story that the British had lost four field guns and asked our help to recapture them. I was one of twenty-one from my company who volunteered to go. So we joined men from the Tenth and Sixteenth Battalions, and at 11 o'clock prepared to storm the wood where the cannons were. [166]

We had only forty yards of open ground to cover, but the German artillery and machine guns worked havoc among us. It did not take us long to run those forty yards.

We were soon in the wood, where it was so dark that we could hardly distinguish friend from foe.

I ran in and out among the trees and asked every one I met who he was. I came upon one big fellow. My mouth opened to ask him who he was, when his fist shot out and took me between the eyes. I went down for the count, but I knew who he was—he was a German. I got up as quickly as I could, you may be sure, and swung my rifle to hit him in the head, but the stock struck a tree and splintered. I thought I had broken all my fingers.

I found three wounded men, French, I thought they were, in that gloom. So I carried them into our trench. As I brought in the last one, the officer said, "You are doing good work, Houle." I asked him why he thought so; and he answered: "You have brought in three wounded men and when we put the light on them we found they were Germans." Well, I am glad I saved them. I would have done so anyhow, had I known their nationality. For we were all trained to give a wounded man help, whether he were friend or foe.

Yet it is dangerous work, helping a wounded German. I never helped another, after the experience I had. It was one of the two occasions when I knew with certainty that I killed a man. He was a wounded German soldier. We found him suffering and weak. But we knew we could save his life and were dressing his wound. My back was turned. He took a revolver out of his tunic pocket and fired point-blank at me. [167]

I do not know how I escaped death. Perhaps it was because his hand shook from weakness; perhaps my guardian saint turned aside that death bullet. Anyhow, he had his revolver in his hand. We had to act quickly. My officer spoke a quick word, and I made sure that he would never fire another shot.

Well, we got our machine guns. But the Germans had blown them up, and all our sacrifice of men was in vain.

We were relieved by a British regiment before morning and marched back to our billets to have a rest. I slept all the rest of the night until 11 o'clock the next morning. It was the first rest I had had in forty-eight hours, with only a slice of raw bacon and a piece of bread to eat.

These were little incidents of the bloody battle at Ypres. That afternoon some of the boys brought out tables from a house and placed them in the sun. The civilian populace, in their flight, had left

behind their live stock. We caught some hens and rabbits and cooked them in wine we found in a cellar. Ah, that was a feast. I never had a better one.

Yet we were strange feasters. Had some artist been able to paint us he would have had a strong canvas. Some of the boys had their heads bandaged, and nearly all of us were covered with dirt and blood. Some sang for us, though others were downhearted. It surprised me that a few hours after we had faced death and had been suffering untold hardships we could now gather like college boys at a beer night feast and sing.

During the rest of that battle we lived in the reserve trenches, bombarded day and night. The battle lasted twenty-one days. When it was over they called a roll of our regiment. There were 500 of us when we left Montreal. As the commander called the roll, name after name was met with no response. At Ypres 480 out of 500 of us were left dead on the field. And in reality our loss had been greater than that, for our 500 had been thinned out in other actions and filled with a full roster again. Twenty of us out of 500 survived at Ypres.

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VIII—FIGHTING AGAINST BARBARISM

We fought madly at St. Jean, after Ypres, and retreated. We rested eight days at Bailleul, marched through Steevwerck and rested eight more days there; we also rested at Estaires for eight days, then through Vieille Chapelle, and then had another eight days' rest. We reached Lacouture at night and went into battle again at Richebourg.

We arrived there in May, 1915. Richebourg is in France, eight miles from the Belgian border, on the English front. A very small agricultural village we found it, coming to it after a hard twelve-hour hike from Bailleul. We got into the Richebourg trenches in the evening.

I found myself in a German trench, captured by the British. Five hours before the battle had raged, and the place was still full of wounded and dead, both German and British. Trench by trench we worked our way into the British front line. We had been reinforced by the Twelfth Battalion of reserves, which was made up of French Canadians and Englishmen; thus our decimated regiment was swelled to 365 men.

The battle was going on. Relieving the front line proved a dangerous task. We had to proceed cautiously to avoid bullets, and it took us three hours to reach the front line, which we did at midnight. Ten of our men were killed by shrapnel or stray bullets on the way.

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Then came the report from our left that the Germans were trying to counterattack. Our officers called for volunteers for a bomb and hand grenade throwing party. We were gone twenty minutes, fifteen of us in all; three of us were wounded, and Carrier of Montreal was killed. We were able to report on our return that we had done effective work. After that things quieted down and gave us a breathing spell.

The next morning we were ordered to take the German first-line trenches. Our cannon began to clear the way first at 2 o'clock in the morning. The famous French 75—the French 75 which is always helping the English at difficult times—blasted out the pathway over which we were to charge. We had thirty-two of these 75s—four guns to each of the eight batteries. When worked hard, these guns can fire twenty shots a minute.

We were all Catholics. At 5:30 o'clock we began to say our prayers, and soon after we were charging with fixed bayonets. We had no great difficulty in taking two lines of trenches. But when we reached the third, they rallied and drove us out. There the Germans made a counterattack, raking our flanks with their machine guns as soon as we reached their third trench. They killed 75 of us, wounded over 100, and took 20 prisoners. We were obliged to leave our wounded in their trench with the dead.

I lay until night in the German second-line trench, among the dead and wounded. There was, of course, no communication and we could not clear the place we had taken or get medical help for the men who writhed in agony all around us. A company of Highlanders from the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Battalions came to our relief at night. The Highlanders and my company were given orders to capture an orchard on our left. Through this orchard ran the German trench. German snipers were concealed in the old apple trees, and the place seemed one huge shrapnel, which burst and never ceased bursting. Three-quarters of our men were killed. And I, as usual, was among the unwounded survivors.

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We took the orchard trench, but were glad enough to retire at the counterattack, and unfortunately lost our orchard and our third trench. Listen! Out of 250 Highlanders, only forty came back. Of my own company (which you will remember had been reinforced to 365 men), only seventy came back. And Roméo Houle, with the charmed life, was again among the few who returned, and had not a single wound.

About one and one-half miles on the right of Richebourg, we took up a new position, after three days' rest in a village next to Lacouture. The Scots Greys and the Coldstream Guards were in the trenches. To our surprise, they greeted us with shouts and cheers. We asked them why they cheered us so. They answered that they thought so well of the Canadians that, helped by them, they would encounter any odds. The shooting was then going on; the Scotch had tried to advance and had been pushed back. When our company came, we all tried to advance together. Again our company had been reinforced, this time to 420 men.

The Germans occupied a hilly place. Although they were only sixty yards away, we fought back and forth for an hour. Our first two charges were stopped by their entanglements. The wires in many places were not down at all and we could not pass. Then our artillery began to mow among the wires. In thirty minutes our way was clear, and on the third tussle we got into the German

trench. It was a close fight. We used even our fists. My bayonet was broken, and I used my gun as a club. There we remained until we got reinforcements. Out of 420 men, my company was reduced to eighty. No, I could not be killed. [171]

IX—"I AM PROUD OF THE FRENCH CANADIANS"

We were at Cuinchy only two days, but we took three lines of trenches there, and retreated. The dead we left on the field covered the barbed wire entanglements. The Germans in their counterattack came at us in serried ranks. Our coffee grinders smashed their first, their second, their third lines, but they came on and on, resistless as a flood. We could not but give way and withdraw before that awful advance. They cared not for the lives of men, but thought only of the ground they gained. Every foot they advanced cost them many, many lives. But those trenches from which we retreated are now occupied by the British. All their silly outlay of men was in vain.

To the south of Cuinchy, we fought at Givenchy. Five days we were in the third line, and four in the first. German mortars opposite us were belching forth thunderous volumes of flame and death. Chaos was at Givenchy. Lightning lashed us—the swift lightning of 10,000 rifles and great batteries of field guns. Yet we destroyed their mortars and took fifty prisoners. Do you wonder that I am still proud that I fought there—proud of the French Canadians? What soldiers ever fought more valiantly? Who ever gave their lives in a noble cause more gladly? Who ever met certain death more steadfastly and unafraid? Whatever I think of war—and before I am done, I shall tell—whatever I think of war, I say that braver soldiers never lived or died than the gallant French Canadians. But oh! I am sorry to think how their handsome lines have been thinned— [172] thinned more than most people know.

Two of our men cared for ten prisoners. A Sergeant led them away. I suppose that they are in England now, spectacles for the curious. They were brave men. I am sorry for their captivity, on their account; but glad to see their terrible martial strength thus ebbing. When we took a trench, the Germans would throw up their hands and cry "Comrade." The Saxon Germans always surrender the quickest, because they are so nearly akin to the English. The Bavarian Germans and the Prussian Guards are different propositions.

At Béthune, a town of 50,000 population, we had a ten-day rest. They shifted us to Oblingham—and then another rest. And then three more weeks of fighting at La Bassée. It was the same story!

I had fought in the first line of the battle front until all the bed I knew was wet earth, and all the rest I knew were snatches of sleep obtained during lulls in the rocking tumult. From almost the very opening of the war I had fought. And long since I had had my fill of the fighting.

The American Consul at London wrote me a letter. It came, I remember well, in October, 1915. It brought me my first ray of hope—my first real hope of life. For I knew that that strange chance which had spared me so many months, when so many of my comrades had died, would not always be mine. I knew that death fought by my side in the day and slept with me in the night. I saw him grinning at me from the twisted features of those shot in the battle. I heard him gibbering on the horrible field at night!

The Ambassador gave me the hope that, having been under age and an American by birth when I enlisted, my Government might secure my discharge. Influential friends were working for me. [173]

On Jan. 10, 1916, in the forenoon, I was notified to report to headquarters, 300 yards behind our firing line. I laid low in the front trench all day, fearful lest at the last moment I should be shot. For a friend, who had obtained a long furlough for rest in England, on the very eve of his departure, had been killed by my side a few days before. It seemed so pitiful an ending, just when he was going home.

So eager was I to leave, that I planned the best I could how to escape. But I knew that if I yielded and went, I should forfeit my life. By a great effort, I restrained myself. But at 4:30 o'clock I could stand it no longer. My friends wept at the parting—for joy for my sake that I was going back to life; for grief that they were left, to die probably, so far from their fair Canada.

At 4:30 o'clock, then, with last hand-grips and the well-wishes of all, I jumped a little ditch and crept on hands and knees in a circuitous way to the headquarters.

I walked seven miles to the railroad. The firing sank away. The trenches and their fevers, their wounded and dead, their noxious odors and their deadly gases, and the man-eating rats—all became a memory. I was free, going home to my wife and child, my parents, my friends, unwounded.

THE FLIGHT FROM CAPTIVITY ON "THE THIRD ATTEMPT"

[174]

How I Escaped from Germany

Told by Corporal John Southern, and set down by A. E. Littler

The thrilling experiences of a British soldier who succeeded, at the third attempt, in escaping from imprisonment in Germany. Rendered desperate by the brutality of his jailers, he made up his mind to get away at all costs. Once he tunneled his way out of the camp, only to be recaptured and punished. A second time he tried, only to meet with the same fate and more severe punishment. But liberty still beckoned, and yet again, with two comrades, Southern essayed the feat—this time successfully—and eventually reached the dear homeland. A remarkable human document recorded in the *Wide World*.

I—"WHAT I HEARD IN CAPTIVITY"

I am back again in England, back in my beloved native town, with its houses all askew and its quaint and narrow streets. For nearly two years the Huns have had me in their grip; they had drawn for me the picture of an England that would have been a nightmare; they had told me of towns bombarded from the skies and reduced to ruins, and of thirty-three British warships sent to the bottom of the sea.

What did I expect? Much what I have found; for we learned to suspect those German-made victories by land, by sea, by air, and we discovered means of inoculating ourselves against the poisonous virus. Scraps of newspapers enclosed in parcels from home, tales passed from mouth to mouth—things like this gave us courage and hope.

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To you, mayhap, captivity is just a word, at best or worst suggestive only of discomfort and loss of personal liberty. To me it represents all that is hideous, humiliating, irksome, and galling. It brings back before my eyes two years of petty tyranny, of pin-pricks, aggressiveness, hostility, degradation, and, at times, absolute cruelty.

Those who have never lost their freedom cannot understand how the iron may enter one's soul; they cannot understand the days and nights and weeks and months of maddening monotony.

It was from this death-in-life that I determined to escape almost before I had tasted the full bitterness of my lot. It was from this that I fled, a hardened, desperate man. My heart seemed to have turned to stone, my soul to flint.

To talk like a soldier, I was simply "fed-up," and I meant to let nothing come between me and freedom.

Before I tell you of my three escapades I want to try to show you how I came to be in that miserable plight—a prisoner-of-war. With my comrades of the Cheshire Regiment I found myself, in August, 1914, trying to stem a rushing, raging torrent. What a handful we seemed; what millions the Germans appeared! It was fight and retreat, retreat and fight, with little time for food, little time for attention. Wounded or whole, we fought doggedly on; and I mention this because, when I was taken prisoner on October 21st, 1914, I was suffering from a wound in the left leg.

It had not rendered me helpless, however, and when twenty-eight of us were surrounded I did my best to escape through a village, but was brought back by the the German soldiers and marched with the rest for a day and a night, without food or water. A tramp of twenty or twenty-five kilometers landed us at Douai, where, for a week, we were lodged in a church, sleeping on the floor and kept from starving to death by the food the French people were permitted or ordered to give us.

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II—IN A "BLACK HOLE" ON WHEELS

I have no wish to paint the picture in lurid colors, yet I wish some of our pro-Germans and "pacifists" could have had a taste of that journey to Germany. Over seventy of us were packed together in one cattle-truck, occasionally kicked or prodded with bayonets by the gentle exponents of *Kultur*. Food? We were shown loaves of bread, we were asked to look at buckets of water—but these things were not for us; they were merely exhibited to torture us, a typical example of German spite. For three days and three nights we were huddled in that truck "Black Hole" on wheels. Not all of us reached Germany alive.

As for myself, I was too hard to kill, too full of hate and detestation of my captors to go under without a struggle, and during the seven-kilometre tramp from the station to the "Münster Laager" I registered a mental vow that "this child" was going to make a bid for freedom at the first opportunity. As we left the station the civil population, who were none too delicate in their attentions, sang "Deutschland über Alles." And they seemed to think it was true, too.

This, however, was only on a par with the arrogance we encountered in the Laager. The guard told us how German hosts had invaded England—or were going to do it in two months; and of how the All-Highest War Lord, the Kaiser, was to have his Christmas dinner at Buckingham Palace. The ignorance of some of these "educated" Huns was colossal, and you will perhaps scarcely credit the fact that I have been asked by Germans whether it was possible to get all the way to England by train!

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Soon after we got into camp we begged an officer to give us water, but with a contemptuous sneer he advised us to go to England for it. Battens of straw, laid on bare boards, were our beds, and there was no covering. With so many French, English, and Russians as prisoners, I can tell you it looked rather hopeless just then for the Allies' chances of victory. Those were the early days, remember, when the Germans seemed to be winning all along the line, and when every success made them all the more brutal.

Right through the winter of 1914-15 food was scarce and clothing scant, and punishment more liberal than either. For a paltry offence I was tied to a post, six hours at a stretch, for ten days, while for telling a brutal German what I thought of him I was put into a dark cell for nine days. This particular Hun had knocked down and kicked a Norfolk, who then went for him with his shovel. The Englishman was marched off—to what fate I am ignorant.

A piece of black bread and a cup of coffee was our customary breakfast, and for dinner we had each a pint of soup which got steadily worse as the winter advanced. Six pounds of bread served ten men for a day, and occasionally—it was like an angel's visit—we had a bit of beef or sausage. I spent the first twelve months of my imprisonment between Redbarn, Münster, and Sennelager, often going out in charge of working parties, for a non-commissioned officer doesn't actually labor except of his own free will. I cudgelled my brains until my head ached in trying to devise plans to escape, but so far had seen no opportunity. [178]

At the Münster camp, where I again found myself permanently lodged in September, 1915, I slept in a big wooden shed which accommodated two hundred of us. Right round the camp, at a height of eight yards, ran a fence of "live" electric wire. To attempt to pass through this meant certain death. I had no wish to try electrocution as a means of suicide, although it would have been speedier and less irritating to the temper than the kicks and cuffs and manifestations of spitefulness to which we were all liable. On the outer side of the wire perambulated the sentries. What chance had a prisoner to escape?

My straw bed was placed in a far corner of the "little wooden hut" to which I have referred. At last a happy thought occurred to me. I would burrow my way from the hut to the outer world, or, in other words, beyond the deadly wire! This, however, was easier said than done, but after a time I commandeered a shovel and surreptitiously removed a piece of board from one of the rafters. Possessed of these implements, which I carefully hid, I waited until all was quiet and the tired sons of England, Russia, and France were fast asleep. Then, raising two or three boards beneath my heap of straw, I started upon a voyage of discovery.

III—"HOW I TUNNELED TO LIBERTY"

Fortunately for me, there was a hollow space beneath the whole expanse of flooring. Quietly I began to dig in the soft soil, pushing it beneath the floor as my hole grew bigger. The first night I kept at my task for two or three hours, and then, leaving my board and shovel in the cavity, I returned to my bed, carefully replacing the lengths of flooring which I had removed, and obliterating all traces of my pleasant evening's occupation. [179]

It seemed a forlorn hope upon which I had entered—half a chance in ten million. Yet I was prepared to seize it, ready to risk imprisonment and punishment on discovery rather than not make the attempt.

For six weary weeks I worked at my tunnel, and so secretly was the job carried on that only one man in the hut shared the knowledge with myself. I often told this man off to keep watch and ward and give me the signal should any too-inquisitive sentry or guard take it into his head to depart from his wonted custom and visit the place at night. The sharer of my secret decided that when I had burrowed clear of the sentries he would escape with me, but at the last moment his nerve forsook him and he "cried off."

As I have said before, I was thoroughly "fed up"; I had reached that condition of mind when we believe the ills we are enduring cannot be equalled by anything that is to follow. Nothing save force, I decided, should deter me from pursuing my plan to the bitter end.

Thus, night after night, I dug and delved, distributing the *débris* as best I could. I took precautions with diabolical cunning, for I was not going to throw away my chances by any eleventh-hour recklessness. Six weeks—forty-two nights, to be exact—I played B'r'er Fox in my "dug-out," six feet down, until my tunnel was fifteen or twenty yards long and big enough for me to crawl through. The sounds above and the distance that I knew the wire fence to be from the rear of the hut told me when my burrowing had gone far enough.

It was a fortnight before Christmas, 1915, that I broke out from my burrow. I timed my exit for the change of sentries, at seven-thirty in the evening. Of food I had virtually none, with the exception of an odd biscuit or so. I possessed, however, what I deemed to be more important than food—a compass, bought from a Frenchman, which I had guarded far more jealously than Hun ever guarded Englishman. [180]

After the preparations I have described, the actual escape seemed as easy as falling off a log. I emerged from the hole, saw that the coast was clear, and made off towards the north-west. Walking throughout the night, keeping to the fields and the woods, and continually crossing ditches and other obstacles, I put as much distance between me and Münster Lager as was humanly possible. It was really very uneventful.

In the day-time I kept to the woods, sleeping and resting; at night-time when compelled to cross a road I slung my boots across my shoulder and flitted by like a shadow. The weather was wet, my clothing was well-nigh soaked, hunger gripped me—and then came Nemesis.

As a matter of fact, I had met very few people. Three nights I tramped, three days I lay hid. It was during the third night that all my plans went wrong, all my fond visions were dissipated like a pricked bubble. And I believe it was my over-cautiousness in walking a road without boots that proved my undoing.

IV—RECAPTURED—"I WAS SENTENCED TO SOLITARY CONFINEMENT"

A policeman challenged me and I replied—I hadn't much German—"Deutsch." All, I think, would have gone well had he not glanced at my feet. Then he promptly switched on an electric lamp, worn at his breast, and covered me with a revolver. The game was up; my race was run! I had to admit that I was an "Engländer." To add to my mortification, I learned from the officer that I was only five or six kilometres from the Dutch frontier. [181]

Well, to give the German his due, that policeman played the good Samaritan. He knocked up a cottager and got me some coffee and bread—and never did anything taste so sweet. I was utterly reckless as to my fate, for I had developed a devil-may-care frame of mind. I was disappointed—that was inevitable. Who wouldn't have been disappointed at seeing a scheme that had arrived so near fruition come toppling down like a house of cards? Punishment I knew I should get, and punishment I certainly received.

I was sentenced to ten days' solitary confinement in a cell, at first totally dark, to which the light was gradually admitted. Next I was paraded round the camp as a standing example of Germany's might, and a hideous warning to "evil-doers." A red and white band sewn to my sleeve gave notice to all and sundry that this was the ill-mannered churl who spurned *Kultur* and wanted to get back to that despicable England about which the Germans sang.

I should here explain that, in the intervals of contriving splenetic irritants for their prisoners, my captors often sang the notorious "Song of Hate." I have seen them march in all solemnity around the camp singing the "Vaterland" and "Gott Strafe England"—and the spectacle was too much even for my limited sense of humor.

Their brutalities were beyond the belief of any commonplace civilized beings. At the Sennelager camp, for instance, there were many civilian prisoners, and they were treated far worse than we soldiers were—and that's saying something. One especial form of amusement (for the Huns) was the shaving of civilians. Whether it was as punishment or as sheer devilry I don't know, but I have seen many civilians shaved on one side of the head and face, with half their hair, half their whiskers, and half their moustaches gone. Fit game for a Nero, wasn't it? [182]

Neither that ten days' confinement, nor yet the beautiful red and white band, and my exhibition before my compatriots, broke my spirit, and I was still determined to see England or die. The Germans talked of their glorious deeds. Goodness knows how many times they sent our navy to the bottom of the sea, and I have forgotten how often they told me their Zepps were "sending England to H—." They were very full of their Zepps, by the way, but we didn't swallow all their stories either of their ships in the air, their ships on the sea, or their victorious armies on land.

Now and again, you see, authentic news reached us, and an occasional smuggled newspaper told us that the tide had turned and gave us heart of grace to bear our burdens, if not with patience, yet with some degree of fortitude.

V—"MY SECOND ATTEMPT—AND PENALTY"

My second attempt to escape was even a greater fiasco than the first; I had scarcely a run for my money. A cart daily conveyed swill from the camp to a large piggery, this work being delegated to a French prisoner. A man named Grantham and myself resolved that, whether we went to the dogs or not, we would at least go to the pigs. With the cognizance of the French driver, we hid ourselves between the swill barrels, which were usually left in the cart on its arrival at the piggery overnight. We were not missed from the camp, and remaining in our unsavory quarters until dusk fell over the land; we then slunk away like Arabs.

I have omitted to tell you that once again I had a compass. The other one had been taken from me on my recapture, but I had purchased a second from a Russian for the sum of seven shillings. We were without food, and a dark night seemed to favor us, but before morning—we had covered only six or seven kilometres—a couple of sentries simply ran into us, and we were haled back to camp. It was ignominious, but inevitable. [183]

If one escape merited ten days' solitary confinement, a second justified twenty-one. At any rate, that was my portion, and Grantham got ten days. Once again I was trotted round the camp as an object lesson on ingratitude for favors already received. It was after this that the monotony of prison camp life was relieved by a gentle jaunt to Russia. I am not surprised that people should imagine that I am romancing when I speak of going from Germany to Russia. Yet I am stating nothing but the bare truth. Eighty-nine men from the Münster camp were told that they were to join a party destined for "unknown regions," and as one of the officers put it to me, he considered I had "better go, or I should go somewhere worse."

How that would have been possible none but a German mind can conceive. At a railway station two thousand of us, sad-looking fellows most of them, were assembled from different camps. We were in the train for seven days, plus two days at Frankfort, before we reached our destination. At Frankfort martial law was read, and we were politely informed that we were to be asked three times whether we would work, and if we refused we were to be bayoneted! It was to Windau, in Russian Poland, that we were eventually taken, and the life there was a hell upon earth.

The re-laying of railway metals torn up by the retreating Russians and a certain amount of farm work were the duties imposed upon us. The sights I have seen! I hate the very thought of them! [184]

Men were continually being felled to the ground and kicked and bayoneted. I have even heard captives, worn out and dispirited, beg the sentries to shoot them and thus end their misery, and the poor wretches meant it, for it would be better to die than to endure such slavery. One poor chap, goaded into retaliation, was kicked viciously, had a bayonet thrust through his leg, and was then flung, half dead and bleeding, into the guard-room.

After this there was a wholesale refusal to work and much bludgeoning, and general mutiny threatened. The Germans saw they had gone too far, and they capitulated. They told us that if we behaved fair to them they would be fair to us. All the time we were under martial law, and the orders that were read out to us were signed by Hindenburg.

Escape now seemed farther off than ever, so I played 'possum, pretended to have rheumatism and other ailments, and was sent back to Münster. I was still wearing the red and white signal of my attempts to escape, and one of the first things that I did on my return was to commandeer a fresh coat, otherwise I should have been a marked man.

What new plan of campaign could I evolve? Two had been tried and failed; yet I was just as keen and just as ready as ever to stake even life itself on a desperate throw. It was now that I met with a bit of luck, for I happened to fall in with Private Leonard Walker, of Oldham, and Private Fussell, of Taunton, one a Welsh Fusilier and the other a Somerset. They were bent on escape even as I was, and Walker had also tried the game before, having spent five days and five nights in the open with a chum, living on biscuits and a rabbit which they picked up and steering a course by map and compass. They, like me, had been caught, when crossing a railway line. A woman signalled to the sentry; they were captured, and had undergone solitary confinement. Walker, Fussell, and myself were a pretty good trio, with none of the turning-back spirit in our composition. Lot's wife turned back, you'll remember, but her fate was a shorter shrift than ours, and far less uncomfortable. A grand chap for the job was Walker, and his experience stood us in good stead. He studied the situation, weighed matters carefully, was resourceful and cute, but nevertheless had that touch of recklessness so necessary for such a venture.

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VI—"MY THIRD ATTEMPT—THE FLIGHT"

We fixed up our arrangements and bided our time. We stuffed our pockets—"stuffed" is a good word—with twenty-one biscuits saved from our parcels—twenty-one for three of us. We also had two tins of sardines, and, better than all, a map and compass. One thing that we determined to do was to get rid of a conspicuous stripe sewn down the sleeves of our coats and the legs of our trousers. It was a bit of a puzzle at first, but Walker got over the difficulty by cutting up his waistcoat and inserting strips under the light stripes, which, when we got clear, were torn away, leaving us to all intents and purposes clothed like ordinary citizens and not like wicked "Engländerers."

It was on September 27th—fateful, happy day!—that our opportunity came. We were at work in a barn on a farm four or five miles from the Laager, for which work I had volunteered with a view to escape, feeding a threshing machine. It was a job that was supposed to last four days, but while the guard was out of the way we quietly put the machine out of action with a crowbar. Then we went off to dinner and ate as hearty a meal as we could in case of emergencies. Two sentries stood guard over about twenty of us, and one of them showed signs of sleepiness.

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"Why, Colonel," said I to the other, "aren't you going to have a nap with your friend?" He grinned and walked away to lie down at the far end of the barn. Thereupon we three conspirators passed the tip to each other, and off we went. There were some thick bushes growing outside the barn, and we had placed our coats containing the food near the door. I was wearing a cap, a cardigan jacket, a black scarf, and an old coat. I won't deny that my heart beat pretty briskly as we made for the bushes as quickly and as noiselessly as we could.

There was good cover of this sort for a mile or so, and it was pretty certain we weren't missed, at any rate until we had got quite a respectable start. We had some open country to negotiate before we found the friendly shelter of a wood, and lay there until night closed in.

As a ruse we first turned eastwards and then cautiously worked our way round until we had our heads in the direction of liberty. During the night we heard sounds which led us to believe we were being searched for. We had resumed our flight from the wood about seven o'clock, and we kept going until day broke. Another wood sheltered us during the day, and for the time being we dared not leave it, for our furtive observations showed us a considerable tract of open country which it would have been madness to face in broad daylight. We were taking no undue risks this time, and we husbanded our resources and our strength, even as we husbanded our food supply, taking it turn and turn about to watch and sleep.

Water in the ditches supplied us with drink, and the rain saw to it that we had plenty of water both without and within! When darkness returned we set off once again, often starting at our own shadows and slinking back into the blackness whenever we heard a sound. There was safety as well as weakness in numbers—safety in our lookout, and weakness in the inability of three men to give a reasonable explanation if we were tackled. Whenever we had to take to the road we carried our boots and trod as warily as panthers. Three or four times we had to pass through towns and villages, but our luck was in, and we were not challenged. Our heads were turned aside and as much distance imposed as possible whenever we heard anyone walking on the thoroughfares.

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Bootless and footsore, we also traversed four miles of railway, and it seems miraculous, looking back as I now do, that we were never seen or stopped by sentries. Three times, too, we had, willy-nilly, to cross rivers. We "did" our first river in boats which we found secured to the bank of the stream. There were two boats, and in the darkness we paddled them as silently as Red Indians to

the other side, and then turned them adrift. I suppose it was what you might have called a theft, but stern necessity knows no law, and a German boat more or less was neither here nor there.

Another river was spanned by a bridge, and you can imagine how we slipped across, as noiselessly as ghosts. Neither bridge nor boat offered itself as a solution of stream number three, but it did not prove a particularly formidable obstacle, and we walked through it, the water rising to our waists.

From dusk to the time the first streak of light began to gild the eastern sky we "padded the hoof." On the fourth night we reckoned that we must be nearing the frontier. Tired and weary, footsore and very hungry, our vigilance was never relaxed. That last night we approached a town of considerable size. We did not dare to walk through it, and made a long detour in order to pass wide of the outskirts. Though we knew it not, we were nearing the last lap of our journey. [188]

It was dark, with a velvety blackness, and neither moon nor stars were showing. Suddenly the stillness of the night was broken by the challenge of a sentry. Evidently he had seen three silhouettes, or imagined he had.

Were we to have had all our toil in vain? Were we to be shut out even as the gates of Paradise seemed to be opening to us?

Without a sound we dropped prone upon the ground and waited, waited, listening to the beating of our hearts.

For twenty minutes or more we lay there, each thinking his own thoughts, and listening to the silence. At last, with a whispered word, we rose and moved on, our boots in our hands, to the north-west. Soon we saw the white stones which told us that the frontier was in sight, and I rolled down a steep bank and walked right into a man. It was a soldier. Hazy in mind, scarcely realizing that I had crossed the Rubicon, I stood speechless. Then the sentry spoke.

It was a Dutchman!

VII—"SAVED—WE REACHED DUTCH SOIL"

I called out joyfully, and my comrades, the men who had proved themselves true and staunch, having joined me. The soldier made himself understood, and tumbled to the fact that we had escaped from the land of captivity.

"France, Russia, or Engländer?" he asked.

"Engländer!" I replied, with pride. Out came his hand, and I clasped it. He greeted all three of us warmly, muttering his congratulations the while. To a house close by he took us, fed us, and warmed us. It was like a foretaste of heaven, and we could hardly believe that our troubles were at an end. [189]

We had struck the frontier, it appeared, in the State of Overijssel, thirty to forty kilometres from the Münster camp, and we could not have made a luckier strike. It was not long before we were put in touch with the British Consul and were sent to the Sailors' Home at Rotterdam. Everybody was kindness itself, and I shall never forget the good old Dutch pastor who prayed with us that we might reach home in safety.

To each of us he gave a Testament, in which he wrote our names and his own, together with the words, "Take God's gift, the gift of Eternal Life, by believing in the Lord Jesus." Passports were soon obtained; we were photographed just as we were, and at last we landed at Hull, thankful with a big thankfulness.

Need I describe my home-coming? I had had no chance to prepare my people, and I dropped down upon them like a visitor from Mars. It was a brief visit to begin with, for my first duty was to report myself at headquarters, and by the next train I was on my way to Chester, where I was immediately granted a month's leave. What is to be done with me it is for others to say, but I am hoping I shall get some of my own back upon the Huns.

With scarcely an exception, you can say that the British in captivity are in good heart and are not cowed or browbeaten. I am told that I am one of the very few Britishers who have escaped, and I am not surprised at that, for we are more strictly guarded than the French or Russians, who are often permitted to work on farms from Monday to Saturday without any guard whatever.

My impressions of Germany are of no value, for I saw little of the civil population. But it was evident from the yarns spun us by the soldiers that they are fed on lies and that a day of awakening will come. To my mind, they are certainly suffering from the effects of the blockade. When we first arrived in Germany food seemed plentiful, but latterly the soldiers often asked us for biscuits and other things sent us in the parcels which kept us alive. [190]

Working parties on the farms were fed decently in 1914 and 1915, but during these last months the farmers would give them a few potatoes and a scrap of bacon, and excuse themselves on the ground that it was all they had, and there was no food in the country. For what it is worth, it is my opinion that Germany is kept going largely by the work of prisoners of war. They labor on farms, they are sent into coal mines, chemical works, and munition factories, they make and repair railways. They work hard—from six in the morning till six at night—and their wages are threepence a day. Whether the Germans still believe they are winning I cannot say, but their treatment of prisoners has lately improved, and this seems significant. Winning, the German is a bully and a cad; beaten, he whines, and his temperament is reflected in his conduct towards those who are in his power.

CLIMBING THE SNOW-CAPPED ALPIAN PEAKS WITH THE ITALIANS

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"*Battling Where Men Never Battled Before*"

Told by Whitney Warren, an American on the Austrian Front

After climbing Carso peaks with Cadorna's Alpini, descending into shell craters with Petain's poilus and fraternizing with Haig's Tommies on the shell swept fronts of the Somme, Mr. Warren, an American, has made the world comprehend the loyalty, the sacrifices and the practical services of the Italians. Fired by his enthusiasm for the courage, devotion and military ability of the Italians, he tells the vivid story of the comparatively little known fighting on the Italian-Austrian front in the *New York Sun*.

I—OVER THE ALPS WITH CADORNA'S MEN

Sly hints are about in America as to the pusillanimity of the Italians. Some persons are ready enough to absorb these hints. Nothing could be more monstrously false. It is not a matter about which I need to argue—I *know*. No one with the full use of eyes and ears and possessed of moderate intelligence could spend twenty-five days with Cadorna's fighting men without being thrilled. They are battling where men never battled before—upon the tops of high mountains, elevations that only eagles knew before Germany put the torch to civilization. They are swinging bridges across incredible chasms. They are chiselling roadways where monkeys could scarcely cling. They are blowing off the tops of gigantic mountains in order to progress a few meters. They are accepting the most frightful hardships with that charming acceptance of the inevitable which, it seems to me, is so characteristically Italian. They freeze. They starve. But always they go ahead—and Vienna knows with a drag at the heart that the standards of Italy will shortly snap from the housetops of Trieste.

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I say that men never fought before in country so frightfully convulsed by nature. Wily Austria, peering into the future, knew that the hour would come when Italian forbearance would strike twelve and demand the liberation of oppressed Italians in the Trentino, and so Austria in the Peace of Villafranca brought about an iniquitous boundary which left her with her feet planted in Italian territory, with her fortresses upon Italian mountain crests. And that desperate handicap was what Italy faced when she went to war to liberate her people. All the odds were against her. But she is winning—winning a few hundred meters at a time. She conquers first one peak, then a whole range, then another peak, then another range, and all the time fights classical warfare, the classical warfare that has been abandoned in France and Belgium. Hear this story—one of fifty such:

II—STORY OF ITALIAN-AMERICAN WHO BLEW UP A MOUNTAIN

Fifteen years ago a charming, cultivated young Italian, son of the Duke of Sermonetta, came to the United States to study mining engineering. He sank his identity in a family name, Gealsio Caetani, earned his degree in the Columbia School of Mines, went West and labored at \$2 a day with pick and shovel so as to know his business from the ground down, became superintendent (out of sheer ability) of a great mine in Alaska and eventually opened a consulting office in San Francisco. When the Germans overran Belgium Caetani threw up his business, hastened to Belgium and volunteered. When Italy was ready to fight he joined his own colors and entered the aviation service. I saw him in flying man's toggery.

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"But you, Caetani, are an engineer," I said. "Why not overthrow mountains and build bridges instead of winging about as an observer." Then I went away to see how successful the Austrians had been in destroying the art treasures of Venice and Milan; and after a while men told me the story of an engineer who uprooted a mountain range upon which two battalions of Austrians had defied an army for many months. This engineer who had solved nature's great problems in the Rocky Mountains and in Alaska climbed like a fly up the face of sheer rock cliffs, managed to drag after him the necessary drills and then, with Austrian riflemen patrolling high overhead drilled a tunnel of 300 meters length into the solid rock. It took three months. He stuffed the tunnel with seven tons of explosives, attached his fuses and his wiring, scrambled back down the cliffs and invited the army to a spectacle. A touch of the forefinger, a cataclysm, cheers ringing through the defiles. The mountain top was gone. This engineer was the American trained Gealsio Caetani. The mountain was the Col di Lana in the Trentino.

When one visits such men one climbs to the aeries of eagles, for it is at such heights that the troops of Italy are fighting. To such heights—2,000 meters, 3,000 metres, often 4,000 meters, they must swing or drag the great guns, their stores of provisions, their supplies of ammunition. Major Neri, a great engineer, nonchalantly bridged two mountain ranges with slender wire cables; They had told him it couldn't be done. He did it. I asked him how. "By fastening one end of the bridge to one mountain and the other end to another mountain—so," said Neri. What does one reply to such men?

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In the Carso I formed a pretty good idea of the difficulties of the Italian campaign. From the point of view of attack the character of the country is the cruelest imaginable. It is simply inconceivable that any human beings could persist for two years blasting out trenches inch by inch, building up both sides to a proper height with fragments of rock and myriads of sand bags under the most terrific and plunging crossfire of mitrailleuse, musketry, hand grenades and all kinds of artillery, until at last a trench was constructed varying from ten to twenty meters in distance from the

paralleling enemy's work. Everywhere were barbed wire and chevaux de frise, endless lines of them. The rocks between the trenches were literally and absolutely covered with shells of every caliber, exploded and unexploded, and with thousands of hand grenades, so that it was a very serious matter where one should put one's feet. Many of the dead were lying under stones, and fragments of bodies were strewn about.

In the beginning there may have been some stunted trees upon these hills, but when I was there all verdure was gone, burnt up in shell fire or gas attacks. An officer who accompanied me described these attacks as the most inhuman imaginable. I had known this man for years and no better sportsman or soldier exists. His mother was an Austrian and he entered the war without any great enthusiasm. But he told me that never in his life had he experienced the sensation of hate until he witnessed the first gas attack. The sight of his men returning under its influence filled him with passion, and the finding of the iron spiked maces which were used by the Austrians to hammer the heads of the bewildered, gasping Italians left no room in his heart to doubt the baseness of the enemy. One of these maces was given to me. I have it.

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III—GIGANTIC FEATS OF ITALIAN ENGINEERS

The engineering problems solved in the Carso are such as would be considered insurmountable in peace times. Fighting has been taken to the very tops of the mountains. In order to get material where it is needed and to transfer troops quickly from one sector to another more than 6,000 kilometers of automobile road have been literally chiselled out of the solid rock of almost sheer cliffs. To the most difficult peaks mule paths have been carved, and after victory comes a whole new and marvelous country will be opened to the dilettante tourist by means of these extraordinary trails. The Italian engineers have hesitated at nothing. Mountains considered unscalable have been mastered, and one now goes up to a forbidding peak or crag as one formerly went up to an easy pass. Palisade formation is no longer an obstacle, the roads traversing the palisades being of perfect type and execution. The admiration and marvel I experienced going over them are indescribable and the feats that have been accomplished well nigh unbelievable. Over the roads and mule paths stretching higher and ever higher to the snow-piled mountain tops cannon of all calibers are hauled by traction or man power and are installed in impregnable positions. Often heavy cannon are passed from mountain top to mountain top by means of wire cables, just as cash boxes are flung by wire trolleys from department store counters to cashiers' desks.

Having motored nearly to the summit of a mountain, I entered a tunnel. Presently I found myself on the other side of the mountain, in a gallery where a battery of heavy artillery was mounted. On the one side as we entered we had looked down upon the sunlit plain of Vicenza. On the other side, in the shadow, we faced the tops of the Trentino Alps. The contrast was bewildering. Praise is poor recompense for the men of science who dared to imagine and for the willing hands that dared to execute those extraordinary feats. And the one I mention was not exceptional. An Alpini remarked to me: "It is indeed the death of Alpinism, for every one now is an Alpinist!"

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Where it is impossible to use roads or mule trails for the transport of troops or supplies the Italians use aerial railways, called *telleferica*. I saw one of these consisting of a single span of 2,160 meters—this was Neri's remarkable accomplishment. And ever so often cannon in leash, men in baskets go swinging from post to post over chasms that make the heart pound as one darts a look into their recesses. There is to-day in all that mountain country scarcely a spot upon which a bird may roost or to which a goat may climb that the Italian engineers have not conquered, and in conquering achieved so much in pressing back the detested Austrians. And with what cheerfulness, light-heartedness, courtesy, consideration for one another, devotion and loyalty are the Italians accomplishing these miracles of warfare. When one has looked upon their work and has associated with them in the deep snows and in their tunnelled quarters one is seized with an irresistible desire to tell the world how wonderful they are—to describe, however poorly, their triumphs of will and courage.

IV—"AVIVA ITALIA!" UNCONQUERABLE LATIN

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It is not in the army alone one finds that spirit. In the little villages along the roads the very bright-eyed children cry, "*Aviva Italia!*" and there is the soul of it. There is expressed a profound love of country. Italy no more doubts that she will reconquer Trieste and Trent than France doubts the recovery of Alsace and Lorraine. The despoiled Latin is determined to have justice, to wring justice, from the Teuton mauler, and peace talk is a weariness to them in their exalted mood. The spiritual and economic interests of Italy and France have been held apart only by Teutonic perfidy, intrigue and insinuation, but all misunderstandings are disappearing and absolute confidence is taking the place of doubt. A captain of Alpini said to me: "France and Italy are one—is it not so, sir?" How many times have we heard discussed the reasons why Italy was so long in declaring war against Germany! For my part I have never doubted that Italy's reasons were perfectly legitimate. One does not quit one system of alliance for another without damaging a whole series of interests. Italy, so to speak, found herself in the position of an individual who must divorce in order to remarry. But what must be remembered is the absolute loyalty of the Italians. Never have they changed since the beginning of hostilities. They are a people of heroes.

Let me speak of Milan and Venice as I saw them in intervals of visits to the mountaintop fighting fronts. At Milan my first care was to study the precautions taken against the destruction of art treasures. Always the Latin, who creates, is forced to protect and defend his works from the German, who destroys. The cathedral, all in stone, risks little from fire, all the glass and precious objects having been taken to places of safety, and it remains intact and marvellous under its mantle of lace, intact in spite of the Austrians and marvellous in spite of Ruskin. At Santa Marie

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del Grace the "Last Supper" of Leonardo is protected by a wall of sandbags and by a fireproof curtain. Churches and museums have been emptied of their riches. In the streets I watched the crowds—a people astonishing in purity of line and proportion, moving always with grace and harmony. Here lies for me the secret of their artistic superiority, for it is well known that the artist, in spite of himself, reproduces in his work his physical perfections and faults.

In Venice the same precautions are taken as at Milan. The Scaliger tombs are covered with sand and the more important ones are enclosed in stone turrets. All statues are shrouded in a preparation of straw and plaster sufficient to protect them from fragments of bombs, but what a wonderful mark for some aerial bandit San Zeno and St. Anastasia, with their wooden ceilings, would be. In the middle of the night I disembarked in Venice, where two carabinieri conducted me to a hotel hermetically sealed so that no ray of light escaped. And here I stayed in the pitch dark with a prospect of being lodged under the Piombi of the Ducal Palace if I betrayed the slightest evidence of having a light.

As always Venice presents an incomparable aspect. There is no better moment to visit Italy than during a war, for it is only then that one finds the Italians really at home. A war clears the scene of a whole world of intruders. A great calm reigns over Venice. All classes fraternize. Life is very normal, and no one regrets the absence of the Germans, Austrians and Hungarians, who used to arrive from Trieste—no more hobnailed shoes, no more Tyroleans, no more alpenstocks, no more noisy vulgarity. The harbor is empty except for a few captured Austrian vessels. Off in the distance to the south-west is the great fleet, ready at a moment's notice to take position in the open sea. The city presents no particularly wartime characteristics excepting at night. I know of no pen or brush that has been able to render justice to Venice—Turner perhaps; but Guardi and Canaletto were too much the slaves of detail and of other conscience. At 8:45 P.M. all lights were put out. It is absolute darkness with the exception that a little blue light, very feeble, burns at the end of each street, just enough to give guidance for direction. Even the little lamp of the fisherman which hangs before the Virgin on St. Marc's has been extinguished. Happily one is permitted to smoke, otherwise it would be difficult to navigate about the narrow streets. One cannot imagine the intensity that a lighted match takes, and the cafés, which are better patronized than ever, resemble enormous nests of glow worms, everybody puffing at a cigarette or a Virginia. An amusing detail is that one must pay in advance for one's refreshments, because in case of an aerial attack the general cry is "*Sauve qui peut?*" and heaven help the proprietor.

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V—DROPPING BOMBS ON VENICE

The aeroplane—that is the great question; not that they are feared. It is that every one asks with feverish anxiety what possible further ravages will be accomplished among the marvellous art treasures. At the time of Titian, when fashion decreed that every woman must have that wonderful blonde hair for which Venice was famous, many of the houses had constructed upon their roofs an open loggia, which was called "Paltana." It was there that the beautiful Venetians after having bathed their hair in some mysterious fluid remained for hours allowing it to dry. Well, it is from these "Paltana" that the guard watches over the city, armed with mitrailleuse and furnished with megaphones, and every half hour one hears the sentinels calling as they repeat the cry ringing from the Campanile of St. Marc: "*Per l'aria, buona guardia.*" And throughout the entire night the silence is broken by a chain of cries which reunites these invisible belfries. Nothing lacks. Searchlights, special cannon, aerial squadrons and aquatic squadrons—all are ready for defence. But Venice is so filled with treasures that it is only by the greatest luck that a bomb does not destroy some unique object. It is my firm conviction that some day St. Marc's or the Ducal Palace will be smashed by the Teutons. Although everything possible in the way of protection has been done, one trembles at the thought of what may happen. Already the Church of the Scalzi has been pierced, and of the wonderful fresco of Tiepolo not a piece as big as one's hand remains. Bombs have fallen within a few feet of St. Marc's. These are the attacks of savages, purely barbarous, with the sole intent of destroying something.

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From the third story of the Hotel Danielli I witnessed raids by Austrian hydravians. At 11:30 P.M. the signal of danger came. A gun roared from the Moline. Sirens shrieked in many parts of Venice. Then there was temporary silence, disturbed only by the rustle and shuffle of feet as people scurried to shelter. Presently all the batteries surrounding Venice opened fire. In intervals of this din one heard the whine of the Austrian air motors, a noise like the buzzing of a gigantic fly. It advanced over rooftops. Many batteries spat fire into the air. But the only sign of the air machines that I observed was what might be called a faint, very vague sort of electric fluid which seemed to appear momentarily in different parts of the heavens. From time to time all firing ceased. Silence came. One again heard the hum of the invading motors. Then the air was assailed by the explosion of a dropped bomb, followed by the crash of breaking roofs, the splintering of glass, the shrieks of injured persons. The whole effect was stupefying to me, not terrifying; but there is, too, a feeling of quite utter helplessness. Shortly after the last bomb was dropped the signal came that it was all over. The people fairly flung themselves into the streets searching for souvenirs, scratching about amusingly with candles and matches as they recounted laughable or tragic experiences. Such raids are made preferably during the moon. It is known that the defence is imperfect, that the only perfect defence is one of reprisals, but as an English General said to me, "That is a dirty game, dirty ball, as you Americans say. It is pretty hard to descend to their methods."

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Sem, the caricaturist, has a picturesque method of noting the odious uselessness of bombarding Venice. "To fire on Venice," he says, "is as if one amused oneself by firing at the chandelier."

I spent twenty-five days among these Italians, upon the plain and among the mountains, days of wonderment. One must see the difficulties in the midst of which they are fighting, the thousand

obstacles, to do them justice even feebly. The King is the soul of the army and of the Government. He directs the struggle upon the field of battle—and he is "always on the job." He is always in the place of danger and honor and yet no one hears him spoken about. He disdains the theatrical attitude. Beside the King is the Duke of Aosta, a fine presence and a fine character, and Gen. Cadorna, an energetic chief. Cadorna is a great friend of France. In an hour's talk with him he supplied me with a vivid sense of the unfaltering spirit of Italy. I saw much of D'Annunzio and I cannot resist the temptation to add my humble praise to all that has already been addressed to him. He made every effort in lifting Italy to arms against the Teutonic Powers and he well personifies in his ardor and simplicity the people who followed his exhortations. He spoke with good humor of the sufferings he endured, saying that in their attempt to save his sight the doctors forgot that he was possessed of a body and a soul. I read a letter of his, written when he was 14, in which he predicted that his mission on earth would be to chastise the hereditary enemy of his country. It is a beautiful letter. I thought of that first chapter of Macchiavelli in which he writes:

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"The people who habit the countries on the north, situated on the other side of the Rhine and the Danube, are born in these prolific regions in such multitudes that a portion are forced to abandon the native soil and to look about for a new country where they may advance themselves." The Germans of to-day proceed differently, but in the same spirit—but they are finding their match and more than their match in the indomitable Italy of to-day.

AT SEA IN A TYPHOON ON A UNITED STATES ARMY TRANSPORT

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Story of a Voyage in the China Sea

Told by (name suppressed), a United States Army Officer

This is the private letter of a captain of the — Infantry, United States Army. It was written at sea on the transport *Thomas*, somewhere between Keelung and Nagasaki in the China Sea. The army officer, whose name is withheld by request, tells how the transport, with the whole — Infantry, officers with their families, and civilians, numbering 2,000, passed through a typhoon in a night of terror, paying high tribute to the discipline of the soldiers. It is one of those human documents that give a deep insight into the adventurous experiences of the American Army in the days of World War.

I—"HOW WE LEFT MANILA BAY"

U. S. Army Transport, *Thomas*,
At Sea, August 21, 1917.

I will tell you a tale of the China Sea, only it will differ from the usual sea tale in that it is absolutely true. The scene is laid to the east of Formosa and in the vicinity of the chain of the Ryukyu Islands, which extend in a general southwesterly direction from the southern end of Japan toward the northern end of Formosa.

At noon, August 15, 1917, the U. S. Army Transport *Thomas* slipped her moorings at Manila, amid usual scenes of farewells, bon-voyages, tears, handkerchiefs, flowers, the girls-left-behind-us, and with the military band playing "Alohae." It is a scene enacted the 15th of every month when the transport leaves for the homeland via Nagasaki. On board were the whole —th U. S. Infantry, with officers and their families, and civilians and crew,—a total of some 2,000 souls. As we passed the island fortress of Corregidor, military aeroplanes circled over the ship. The wish of all was for more power to the stokers—we could not get to San Francisco too soon. As we steamed along the west coast of Luzon, the weather was bright and the sea calm, but we knew that in another day rough weather could be expected. In the Balingtang Channel, between Luzon and Formosa, the sea is practically always rough; and those waters and to the east of Formosa are in the usual course of the typhoons. True to form, late in the afternoon of the 16th the sea became rough. I promptly took to my bunk, not being any kind of sailor. As I lay in my bunk next the port with the wind scoop out, I could feel the wind gradually rising and the alternate violent puffs and lulls were signs that a typhoon was brewing, as the master of the ship was well aware from his falling barometer. Later in the evening when I left my cabin for a few moments, my surmises were confirmed.

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On the next day (Friday, August 17), we were well into the typhoon. The wind was violent and the sea both magnificent and awful. In a typhoon the wind blows the surface water into clouds of foam and spray. For all the world it looks like a snowstorm at sea. The waves were frightful. As the ship dipped down between them, the conviction was borne in upon us that if one were to land upon the ship's deck the lookout in the crow's nest would no longer sing out at the half hour: "All's well."

That night the storm seemed at its height; and it was an anxious, trying night, with the wind howling and the rain coming down in sheets. Very few went to sleep. The water could not be kept out. It came in through the ports and through the seams in the cabin roofs. On the top deck, stateroom doors were forced and the rooms flooded. Beds were wet and some cabin floors awash. The boat hove to and kept its nose to the wind. I later heard that we made eight miles in fifteen hours under steam, but we knew not how far we had been blown from our course. After about eight nerve-racking hours, the wind began to abate; and by Saturday, the 18th—although the wind and sea both remained high, with the weather thick and rainy—we firmly believed that we were running out of the typhoon. After drifting in heavy squalls and thick weather all day, I dozed away that night in a wet bed.

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Later I was awakened by the rising wind, howling through the ship's passageways and superstructures. We were running into the typhoon again. No more sleep that night. Experienced mariners know that the way to get out of a typhoon is to keep the wind on the starboard bow and side, gradually working out or getting blown out. This our ship's master did not dare to do, for the chance would have been extremely good that the ship would be cast upon one of the many islands. He therefore elected to keep the wind on the port side and run through the typhoon.

The wind and sea soon became more violent than the night before. It was awe-inspiring. For a couple of hours it blew hard, and then at about 1:30 A.M. there came a sudden lull—with no air stirring, with a calm sea, and with the barometer falling precipitately. The pressure on the ear drums was intense.

II—"WE WERE FIGHTING A TYPHOON"

It was plain that we were in the very center of the typhoon, and that our most severe battle with the elements was just ahead. Some time around 4 A.M. the wind again arose suddenly, and the fight was on. It soon became terrific and well over 100 miles an hour—estimated by the First Officer as between 125 and 130 miles—the worst thus far we had experienced.

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Now ensued a time of desperate peril that even a landlubber could appreciate. Many a prayer went up that night from lips that had not uttered one since the days of "Now I lay me down to sleep" at a mother's knee. Many a rough nature felt stirring within him thoughts and feelings that had been strangers many a year.

The awful force and roar of the wind, the violent pitching and rolling, the absolute darkness outside, the puny efforts of the big, powerful ship and its apparent helplessness, added to the fact that we knew we were in an unknown position in a sea in many places uncharted and dotted with coral reefs and islands,—all convinced us that we were in the immediate presence of the Great Adventure and that only the guidance of the Divine Hand could succor us.

The immediate scenes were enough to inspire terror. The big steam whistle could be but faintly heard above the wind, when it was blown to call deck hands to clear away wreckage caused by the fall of the top of the front mast with the wireless antennae. In the galley, right outside my door, pots and pans and dishes and glassware were thrown about in continuous din and confusion. In staterooms, trunks, water bowls, and other loose articles were flying around. It was dangerous to be about. The thick glass of a port hole was broken to bits by a wave, and a woman so cut by the glass as to require many stitches for her wounds. In the troop decks many bunks were broken and fell to the floor. Several soldiers suffered broken legs, arms, or collar bones. The ship's doctor in his palmiest day in civil life I venture, never saw things coming his way half so thick and fast. The only way to remain in a bunk was by bracing and hanging to rail and hooks. The first streak of dawn showed about 5:30 A.M., Sunday the 19th, and, though welcome, revealed an awful sea and driving sheets of rain. This violence kept up most of the day, until late in the afternoon it appeared that wind and sea were somewhat abating. The barometer was slowly but steadily rising, and it was plain that we were running out of the typhoon. But night was upon us, and the Master had not had an observation of the sun for more than three days—since Thursday noon, August 16. The situation was perilous. A temporary respite only had been given.

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The behavior of passengers, crew, and all during this time was remarkable. There was not a trace of panic or alarm. Some passengers, gathered in the main saloon, seated about tables, talked it over conversationally. Others remained in the social hall, in the passageways, or in staterooms awaiting quietly the expected call. Some officers were fully dressed in uniform, either khaki or white, others in swimming clothes of pajamas with bathrobe or raincoat over. The women also were in various degrees of preparation. There was no hysteria, weeping, or raising of voices.

And so the long Sunday night wore on with the three of us in our bunks, the little boy asleep and — and I attempting to doze. We were destined for our third successive sleepless night. The wind and sea were still high. Some time before midnight I was brought to my feet in the middle of the cabin with a bounce, by a severe metallic blow against the ship's side. I turned on the light and the little boy awoke startled to get into bed with his mother on the couch and doze off again immediately. To this date I have not satisfactorily settled what caused that blow. It may have been the violent impact of one of four lost lifeboats against the hull or one of the parts of a broken davit hitting the side. Weak and dizzy and vomiting continuously I thought it best to remain up.

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From some reason or other—misery or what not—the next event of which I write was unknown to me until after the happening. I therefore relate what I have heard from others, whose remembrances tally very well. I was conscious only that the ship was listing at a severe angle, with our trunks sliding across the room.

At about 11 P.M., it seems, the ship hit something twice, and in turn was struck on the starboard side by two big waves. The vessel remained rigid for several minutes (estimates vary from 5 to 25 minutes), not rolling in wave action, but taking the seas over the forecabin. During this time a soldier was swept overboard and his cries for help were heard by passengers as he was swept past. A life preserver was thrown towards him in the darkness,—all that could be done for the poor fellow. About this time the lookout up ahead saw a steep, black shape close at hand, but thought it was a low-hanging cloud. The First Officer saw it from the bridge and immediately sent an emergency signal to the engine room. We were merely drifting, so the engines were immediately reversed. The ship drew away carefully. After some time, I should say about half an hour, we appeared again to have reached the wind and rough water.

I have neglected to state that some time previously I had myself noticed (my stomach being a delicate instrument) a sudden lull in the chop of the water and a longer, smoother roll and a drop in the wind to almost nothing. As the barometer was rising we could not have been in the heart of the typhoon, and I remarked to an officer that we must be in the lee of some land. All this occurred between 10:30 P.M. and midnight. It is the universal belief that the black shape just ahead was in reality a high cliff. The further inference is—although not acknowledged by ship's officers—that while drifting under little or no headway the ship struck a sandbar as she dropped deep into the trough of the big waves, close to the cliff, and while there took two big waves on the starboard side. Then, when the engines were reversed, she pulled off and made away.

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III—"IT WAS OUR LAST HOUR"

During all this time, though I had not noticed the two jars (being one of the very few who did not), I was conscious in my bunk that something serious had happened. As a ship's officer went by the cabin, I heard him say: "I'm going to see if the wireless won't work." I have learned since that the Master wanted to send the "S. O. S." out over the sea, and say that he would try to keep his ship afloat until daybreak. Inasmuch as he could not give our position this was but a last chance. I was not so sick that I could not comprehend that much in a flash. But the wireless was entirely out of commission. When the top of the mast went on Saturday night, the antennae had gone overboard with it. The latter had been roughly secured again to the mainmast, but the wind had driven the

rain through the cabin and short-circuited the sending apparatus. About this time a man came into the passageway and began stripping the slats from a life preserver rack. He said there was danger of the wireless house on the top deck being swept away, and that he was going to take the men some life preservers.

There was much passing to and fro. Putting on raincoat over pajamas, I went out to look things over. In the saloon I found some fifteen or twenty persons grouped about the table, in all manner of attire. All were seated, talking in conversational tones. None had life preservers, though the word had been passed along to put them on and many in other parts of the ship had done so. [210]

On the floor was stretched an officer with a bloody bandage on his left eye. When the two big waves struck he had been in the social hall. The sudden list of the ship had catapulted him across the hall toward the open door. He would have gone over the rail, but managed to fetch up against a seat and land unconscious. This is only one of numerous similar incidents. Going down the hall on my side of the ship—starboard—I met perhaps eight or ten officers and no women. Things were flying loose and it was dangerous to be up. There was no sign of panic. Conversation was general and light. Presently a small group struck up Harry Lauder's "I Love a Lassie, a Bonnie Hieland Lassie."

I had learned the real situation by this time, and was convinced that it was our last hour. Since then I have found that that belief was universal among all except a few who were ignorant of conditions. So I went back to my cabin to await events or orders, which promised to be immediate. I sat on the end of —'s couch, wet with perspiration through weakness, sickness, and fear, too, I guess. She asked me if there was any danger, and I answered, "Yes, some danger, of course." She made no reply and seemed satisfied. Then I reached slyly under the bed for my revolver and cartridge belt. I had in mind the usual sea tale of stampede under such conditions and wanted to be ready. There was never an indication of necessity for it, however, I am bound to say. I did not reach for my life preserver, for fear of raising in her a feeling of panic. The little boy still slept. And so we waited. Nothing happened, and shortly afterward, as before related, by the sound of the wind and the feel of the sea I knew we had pulled away from the land into the open sea and would have at least a temporary respite. [211]

IV—"WE TOSSED ABOUT THE OCEAN"

Now as to the conduct of the soldiers. It was splendid and magnificent, showing under extreme test the value of discipline and training. They had been held under hatches for two days, it being too dangerous on deck, so that they were in ignorance of exact conditions. They did know our plight was desperate. In the face of all this when the ship struck (as my First Sergeant afterwards told me), the non-commissioned officers assumed command of their men, and perfect order reigned. The word came to put on life belts. The men did so and lined up awaiting orders. The chaplains went from hatch to hatch and prayed with the men, who joined in earnestly. Many soldiers offered to save passengers. An officer went below and told the men the circumstances,—that we had drawn off the bar and that although temporarily safe were still in danger. The men cheered with a vim. It revived my faith in human nature to see that in this supreme test, no matter what their individual shortcomings may have been before, every man had the spark of manhood which measured up to the stern requirement. There was no doubt in their minds but that their last hour had come. It was too much to expect that life boats, even if they could have been lowered, could have existed in the sea. It was a solemn moment that will impress itself on the future of every thinking man board this ship.

During the rest of the night we tossed about the ocean, by some chance avoiding the shoals and reefs of the Ryukyu group in the vicinity of Iriomote Island (as later determined). There was a reaction and many people who had been awake more or less for three days dropped off into the sleep of exhaustion. After a while the passageways became cleared and no one was to be seen. As for myself lying in the top bunk holding my midriff with my hands, I tried to keep awake by once in a while raising feet to the cabin ceiling. In time even this failed and slumber came. [212]

Dawn showed about 5:30 A.M. that Monday morning, bringing a foggy air but without rain for the first time since Thursday night. The sun was necessary for us to locate our position, and danger was imminent until this could be known. With what anxiety that morning (my first on deck) did the officers gather forward and watch the captain on the bridge, with his sextant ready to take a "shot" at the sun should it show itself. Several times it seemed about to break through, and finally at 2 P.M. it came out and an observation was made. After the latitude and longitude had been determined from this observation the captain found that his ship was near the island of Iriomote, or some 150 miles north-east of where he had guessed the vessel might be. In the meantime when the fog had lifted a little, a low-lying coral reef was seen off the port bow, not a mile away. Our course was changed to avoid this, and about noon we passed an island of some size on the port side showing dimly through the mist. The land could not be identified.

To-day, Tuesday, August 21st, the sun rose on a comparatively calm sea with some breeze. At about 7:30 A.M. about eight miles away on the port bow was seen a four-masted schooner, with all masts and spars in place and full sail set. We wondered if it had been caught in the storm and decided not, otherwise her rigging could not have been in such good shape. Evidently the master thought so too, as we continued on our course. As soon as sighting us the ship had flown the signal "B. N.," meaning "send assistance immediately." This was not seen by us at the distance, so the Stars and Stripes were lowered from top to half mast. This attracted our ship's attention and our course was changed. As we approached the schooner, we could see the crew working the pumps for dear life. It was the *Irmgard* of San Francisco, which had been laden with a cargo of copra and lumber. All the cargo had been lost. Upon reaching hailing distance and with the [213]

Irmgard's captain on the after deck in blue shirt and khaki trousers making a megaphone with his hands, the following conversation ensued:

Master of the *Thomas*: "What's the matter?"

Master of the *Irmgard*: "Ship half full of water. Crew can't hold out much longer. Been through a typhoon. Give us a tow and send aboard a machinist." A lifeboat was lowered, and our First Officer was sent aboard with the Second Engineer and a crew. Our First Officer reported to our Captain: "Six feet of water. Stand by. If she opens up she will go." A line was made fast, and at reduced speed—with our own ship severely damaged—we are now steaming to Keelung, the northern port of Formosa, to leave the *Irmgard* there and to go into drydock ourselves. The *Irmgard* could not have lasted over night, as her captain declared. And so ended happily another drama of the sea.

Translated from the Diary of Eugène Escloupié by Frederik Lees

A remarkable human document—the diary of a fourteen-year-old French boy, who when his father was called up, ran away from home and managed to smuggle himself to the front, where he took part in some hot fighting. Translated for the *Wide World Magazine*.

I—STORY OF A FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD BOY

Historians of the Great War will have difficulty in finding a more striking example of juvenile patriotism and ardor than that of Eugène Escloupié, the fourteen-year-old author of the following pages. Born and educated in the Principality of Monaco, he disappeared from his home on the Boulevard de l'Ouest in the early days of the mobilization of the French army and, hidden among the soldiers, found his way in a military train to Belfort. His plan was to fight side by side with his father, a soldier in the 125th Regiment of Territorial Infantry. Though he did not succeed, he did indeed attain one of his many ambitions—that of reaching the Front and witnessing the conflict. He was present at one of the most terrible episodes of the first period of the war—the Mulhouse affair, which cost the lives of more than twenty-five thousand Frenchmen. There, upon the field of battle, he assisted his adult comrades amidst the dead and wounded.

The literary skill with which this human document is penned is often as extraordinary as the patriotic spirit which shines out from almost every line of the narrative. [215]

Eventually Eugène Escloupié returned home. But not for long did he find it possible to resist the call of battle which still sounded in his heart. After completing his diary—at my earnest request—he once more turned his footsteps towards military life in the north, where the authorities, despite the tender years and child-like physique of this heroic boy of the Midi, have granted his wish "to do his duty on behalf of *la patrie*."

II—"HOW I WENT TO WAR"

When the general mobilization of the French army began I was in the employment of a contractor. Without a moment's delay I hurried to the Monaco railway station, and was able to witness the departure of several trainloads of soldiers. These ceremonies, the touching farewells, and the joyous songs of the conscripts, made a deep impression upon me, so that on returning home I passed a very restless night.

On awakening on Sunday morning several ideas occurred to me, but the one which filled my mind the most was that of following a convoy of soldiers as far as Belfort, the town where, it seemed to me, hostilities were likely to begin. Once more I proceeded to the railway station, spending the whole morning there. In the afternoon I went for a walk, in the course of which I saw several horses requisitioned by men of the 27th Battalion of Alpine Chasseurs.

Returning home, I found my brother-in-law ready to leave. His departure made my desire all the stronger, and on retiring to bed I determined to carry out my plan the very next day.

The morrow arrived. After breakfast I left the house, on the pretence of going to my work, and went to the railway station. But entrance there was forbidden. Every time an opportunity offered, I slipped through on to the platform, but two minutes before the arrival of each train it was cleared of people and, willy-nilly, I had to leave. Eleven o'clock struck. Half-past eleven and noon came without my being able to bolt into a train. Returning home for the midday meal, it was hardly over before I was again back at the station, filled with the hope of having better luck this time. Thrice they turned me off the platform and thrice I returned until, at last, about half-past four, a train drew up and I found myself in front of it. In less time than it takes me to record the fact I dashed towards the first open door and entered an unoccupied compartment. Ten minutes later the train set off—and there I was, *en route* for the Front! [216]

The train was quiet, and few conscripts occupied it until we reached the suburbs of Toulon; but from that place fresh bodies of troops began to join at every station, whether big or little. Ah! what a sound of singing all along the way! At every station there was a distribution of food and drink—bread, apples, pears, and wine; everybody gave what he or she could. At a place near Marseilles, during a wait of an hour and a half, a delegation of twenty young girls of sixteen to eighteen visited every carriage. Not a soldier went without a gift; not one continued on his way unknissed.

We reached Lyons the next day at seven in the evening. Many reservists got out here, but more joined the train than left it. There was a wait of an hour and a half; then off we went again. My companions in my compartment included an Alpine chasseur, a chauffeur, and a dog-catcher of the city of Lyons. They fell into conversation—the dog-catcher being the first to speak.

"That *sale tête de Boche* William has committed an infamous action! Here am I forced to go to the war—I who have four children, and the eldest only seven. But since we must defend our native country, let us do so cheerfully." [217]

"You are right," replied the Alpine chasseur. "Only a fortnight ago I got back from Morocco, where I caught a fever and was two months convalescent. And yet I'm going to set off like the others."

Conversations on those lines enabled us to while away the time until we reached Dijon at half-past ten. Jumping out of the train, I saw a notice-board bearing the words, "Belfort direction, 12.12 a. m. Platform No. 3." I proceeded to the *trottoir* mentioned, and waited for the hour of the

train's departure. At half-past eleven the *employés* got together a long string of cattle trucks. I was at a loss what to do, whether to get into one of them or ask the men if that was really the train for Belfort. In the midst of my speculation, and as though they had understood my dilemma, the railway officials put up five or six notices similar to the one I had seen on arriving.

So I entered the nearest truck I could find. It was supplied with four seats, made of planks. I stretched myself upon one of them and was quickly asleep.

III—"I FOLLOWED THE FRENCH ARMY"

When I awoke the sun had already risen. Looking through an opening in one of the sides of the truck, my gaze encountered an immense plain, neither the beginning nor the end of which I could distinguish. I asked a man who was next to me where we were, and he told me not far from Besançon. Half an hour later we entered that place. It was there that I saw a convoy of automobiles—about a hundred—pass by. The train set off once more, and an hour's travelling brought us within sight of the first forts of Belfort. An hour and a half later we reached our destination. [218]

Unperceived I was able to slip through the exit on to the square in front of the railway station. An ambulance was drawn up there. Drawing near, I raised the covering and saw a number of soldiers stretched at full length. In answer to my question as to what was the matter, they replied that they were ill and had just left the hospital; they were being "evacuated" to other towns. Thereupon I wandered forth to make a tour of the town and discover the object of my search.

The first corps I encountered was the 8th Regiment of Territorial Infantry. I followed it and found it was quartered on the ground floor of an hotel in the Rue Thiers. At the end of the day, which I spent with the men, a sergeant said to me:

"Eh! young man, you don't belong here?"

"No, sir," I replied.

"Where do you come from?"

"Monaco."

"Why did you leave Monaco for Belfort?"

"To go on campaign."

"But where are your parents—your father?"

"Father is mobilized."

"Where?"

"I don't know."

"And your mother?"

"She's at Monaco, with my sisters."

"And why did you leave them?"

"As I've already told you, to go on campaign."

"What's your name?"

"Eugène Escloupié."

"Age?"

"Fourteen."

"Have you had your dinner?" [219]

"No, sir."

"Well, come with me. I dare say there's a drop of soup left, and if there is any meat you shall have it."

I followed the good-hearted sergeant to the kitchen where, for the first time, I ate out of a French soldier's *gamelle*. When I had finished the non. com. said to me:

"You shall remain with us. Go sit outside a bit and then get off to bed. But it's on straw, not on feathers you'll sleep, my boy. However, since you want to go to battle, you must accustom yourself to our life, and if we leave, you shall come with us."

"*Oui, mon sergent.*"

"Good! I'm pleased to see that you're beginning to accustom yourself to the military life."

And with those words he left me.

Acquaintance with the soldiers was quickly made, but there was one in particular with whom I became friendly. When the sergeant had gone he took me aside and said:

"Have you eaten?"

"Yes; the sergeant saw to that."

"Well, if you're still hungry, don't hesitate to say so. I've got some bread and meat I was unable to finish. Come now, will you have some?"

"No, thanks, I'm no longer hungry."

"Then you must be thirsty, and you won't refuse a drop of wine. One moment, whilst I fetch my canteen."

He was back in two minutes with his canteen and poured me out a good quartern. Then we sat on the edge of the pavement and began to talk about one thing and another.

As a fine rain began to fall about half-past eight, everybody went inside to go to bed. Unlacing my boots, I stretched myself out in the straw by the side of my new comrade. At the door of our quarters stood a sentinel, and although we slept with the door open and without blankets we were not in the least cold, for there were thirty-six in our room, which measured but twelve metres by nine. A terrible storm raged outside. About one o'clock in the morning a deafening noise awakened us. Everybody asked what had happened. One said it was thunder, another the cannon. The sentry declared he had seen the flash and the smoke; he was certain it was the cannon. But no one was sure. It was not until daylight came that we learnt through an officer that it was indeed the guns. Thus, for the first time, I heard the roar of cannon.

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IV—"MY FIRST DAY IN THE ARMY"

On waking up at about half-past six the storm had abated a little; it was still raining, but in an ordinary manner. The distribution of "juice" (coffee) began. A milkman happened to be passing down the street and my chamber-fellow called to him and made me drink two quarterns of milk, for which he paid the modest sum of one penny.

We spent the morning in visiting the town. I saw the Place Quand Même, the Lion of Belfort, and the aviation ground, where new airships were being built. It was rare to find a street in which there were not one or two houses bearing marble plaques on which were such inscriptions as this: "Here was born General ——. Appointed general on such and such a date. Fought in the following campaigns——. Died in such and such a year."

In the afternoon we went to a fort, where my comrades received their equipment—a rifle and bayonet, a knapsack, a cartridge-pouch, a canteen, a blanket, a pair of leggings, and a covering for the *képi*. On returning to the cantonment a captain delivered the following speech:

"My lads, I wish to inform you that one of these days we are going into action. It may be tomorrow or the day afterwards—I cannot say exactly. But I would ask this of you: to behave like brave men and follow your leader, for all the time you follow and obey me I will undertake to lead you along the path of honor and victory. Remember the words of your chief. You must not say, 'I shall not be frightened,' for I myself shall be one of the first, on the first bullet whistling past my ear, to duck my head and be scared. But I shall salute it and overcome my fear and never fail you. Therefore recollect that and say to yourself, continually, 'Yes, I am frightened, but I shall overcome my fear;' and in that way you will succeed."

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This little discourse was heartily applauded by the conscripts, and it was not until the captain had shaken all of them by the hand that he left.

We breathed the fresh air for half an hour longer before retiring to rest. The night passed without incident. I did not awaken until dawn. The weather was fine. After taking our coffee we were about to go out when the order came that no one was to leave. At half-past nine we learnt that we were to go into action—a happy piece of news which filled all the reservists with joy. Preparations were made. I had been provided with a rifle, a pouch, a canteen, and a *képi*. At the thought of seeing the Boches fighting and being overcome I was filled with joy. But not for long, for at half-past two, before setting out, the company was passed in review. It was then that an officer caught sight of me and cried out:

"What's that boy doing there?"

"He is following us, captain," replied my friend.

"Where does he come from?"

"Monaco. He left because his father was mobilized and he was without a parent."

"What's your name?" demanded the officer.

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"Eugène Escloupié," I replied.

"Have you any papers to prove your identity?"

"*Non, mon capitaine.*"

"Are you French?"

"*Oui, mon capitaine.*"

"It's a pity, but as you cannot prove your identity I cannot keep you. A strict order has just been given against allowing any foreign person with the soldiers."

"But I'm not a foreigner, *mon capitaine.*"

"I dare say not, but you must prove to me who you are."

There was nothing more to be said. I had to abandon my equipment and flee. Before leaving, however, my comrade said to me: "Don't be discouraged. Go to the Bureau de la Place—military headquarters—and tell them that, being an orphan, you left Monaco to follow a regiment, and see what they say. *Bonne chance.*"

Having embraced him, I set off and went straight to headquarters. Entering the first office I came to, I saw four or five officers, including a doctor, in conversation. Hardly had I crossed the threshold than one of them exclaimed:

"What do you want here, boy?"

"Let me tell you, please, that I was at Monaco——"

"And now you're at Belfort!"

"——at the beginning of the war. My father had left to join his corps, and being alone I left in a train to come here and go on campaign with the soldiers."

"You've come here, then, to enlist?"

"No, I cannot do that; I'm not old enough."

"Ah, *bon!* Why are you here then?"

"To see if you can pass me into some regiment or ambulance."

All the officers had listened attentively during this examination. The doctor then spoke.

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"Since you wish to enter an ambulance, it's to work there?" he asked.

"Yes, sir."

"In that case I'll take you."

"Thank you, sir."

"Go downstairs and wait for me at the door, and when I come you shall go with me to the ambulance."

I descended the staircase more joyfully than I had mounted it, and waited at the appointed spot. It was not long before the doctor followed and took me off with him to the military hospital.

V—"WE FIGHT ON SOIL OF ALSACE"

I had already been two days at the ambulance when, at half-past five on the morning of the third day, the *réveillé* sounded and we were informed that we were to leave for Alsace. Preparations were made immediately, and at seven o'clock we set off. The cavalry marched away first; then the infantry, whilst we others formed the rearguard. The Red Cross section including myself, were in the lead, followed by the ambulances and motor-buses containing the ladies of the Red Cross and the doctors.

We set foot on the annexed soil of Alsace at nine o'clock. What a sight it was to see the frontier posts overthrown and the Alsatians cheering our troops! Our soldiers had already passed that way, for tricolor flags were to be seen everywhere. The sight touched our men and filled their hearts with courage.

We camped in a village, and it was not until five o'clock in the evening that we set off again. After marching for twelve kilometres, we began to hear the cannon, from which we concluded that our comrades could not be far distant. I have forgotten to say that we were not in the first line, but on our way to join our comrades, who were in need of reinforcements. At nine o'clock we camped, sleeping in a cornfield. No sooner had I stretched myself out on a favorable spot than I fell asleep, not to awaken until dawn, when several detonations aroused me. I found that we were only eight kilometres away from the Germans. So, at last, we were to see the Boches—to fire upon them and to bring them down!

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When we reached the second village the enemy were not far away. They had already bombarded several farms, but our "75's" had opened fire and succeeded in silencing the German guns. All this was splendid, but sad. Moreover, we had not yet seen one of the enemy. Still marching forward, we came up with our comrades. The ambulance was installed in the neighboring village, three kilometres distant from where the battle was being waged. Campbeds having been set up at the Mairie and in the school, the Red Cross men proceeded to the scene of the fight, and some of them ventured forth, under the shower of bullets and shells, to bring in the wounded.

We still kept a sharp lookout for the Boches, but they were well concealed and invisible. Suddenly, everybody cried, "There they are!" and we beheld a green, grass-colored mass, about seven hundred yards to our left, issue forth from cover. They were received on all sides with volleys from our infantry. The duel lasted for about half an hour; then the enemy broke into flight and our soldiers went in pursuit.

From that time we began to pick up the wounded. It was terrible work. There were dead men, lying face downwards, some of them half-buried by shells. Other poor fellows lay with shattered arms and legs shot off.

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It took two hours to bring in our wounded. We carried them to the motor-buses and the ambulances, which transported them to the village, where they received first aid. After that we advanced to the spot where we had first seen the Germans, for in their retreat they had abandoned their wounded. There the sight was no less sickening. The number of wounded was about the same as on our side, but the dead greatly outnumbered ours. By the time we had carried in all the wounded it was about five o'clock and we had had nothing to eat since the morning, for circumstances had not permitted us to return to the village. Four in our section of Red Cross men were missing; two had been killed by stray bullets and two others were slightly wounded. We did not reach the village until six o'clock. The soup was got ready, and we ate with a good appetite. The revictualling department was very well managed; we ate fresh meat. Having taken our fill, we stretched ourselves out in the buildings requisitioned by our troops, and a quarter of an hour later were fast asleep.

We were awakened at four o'clock in the morning to join the regiment and collect the soldiers

who had been wounded since the previous evening. Leaving the ambulance in the village, we set off at half-past five and at about six reached the scene of the fight of the day before. We then followed in the footsteps of our troops, in the direction taken by the retreating Germans. It was easy to distinguish the road, for it was littered with dead and wounded. Here and there, too, were dead horses, with their legs sticking straight up in the air. The first wounded we met with were about fifteen hundred yards from the scene of the battle. Doubtless the Germans had stopped and a second fight had taken place, but, judging by the small number of dead and wounded, it could not have lasted long. However, those few must have suffered terribly. The poor fellows had been lying there for fifteen to sixteen hours without assistance, and several of them were unconscious through loss of blood.

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Our soldiers had advanced six kilometres, and we came up with them about eight o'clock. They were camped in a wheat-field, not far from a fairly important village to which the Germans had retreated and which they were busy fortifying. Our cavalry discovered this on a reconnaissance, during which our brave *piou-pious* fortified themselves—first of all their stomachs, and then the ground.

On seeing this camp in the open country, I likened it to a cinema scene representing American cow-boys. At one spot was a group of men, sitting on the ground, resting, joking, and smoking. Near them were their piled arms, with knapsacks all around. Here and there were officers walking up and down. The horses were in a corner, cropping the beautiful green grass of Alsace.

In the midst of this peaceful scene there was heard a humming noise, followed by a few rifle-shots. An aeroplane appeared, evidently sent by the enemy to discover our positions. After having dropped seven or eight bombs, which missed their mark, it wheeled round and disappeared.

Whilst the soldiers were encamped their chiefs had telephoned to the ambulance to join us as soon as all the wounded had been sent to the rear.

VI—THE STORY OF A LIEUTENANT

It was thus that, little by little, in the midst of fighting, we passed beyond Altkirch and reached the neighborhood of Mulhouse.

Our front was very extended. After the capture of Altkirch, the order was received to march on Mulhouse, distant about twenty-five kilometres. We had covered about half that distance when we came across thirty wounded, including a lieutenant, who told us the following story:

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"We numbered about two hundred and were advancing without the support of artillery when, suddenly, we found ourselves face to face with four German guns. They were so well hidden that we got within about six hundred yards before we saw them. I ordered my men to take cover, and hardly had they thrown themselves to the ground than the four guns were fired. None of us were hit. Making a bound forward, I got my men to take cover again, whereupon the four cannon spoke once more. This time eight of my men were hit, including a sub-lieutenant, two sergeants, and a corporal. Thus we progressed until we were within eighty yards of the guns. Just as I was about to order a bayonet charge, sure of capturing the battery, four detonations rang out afresh and I was thrown to the ground. I must have fainted, though not for long—a quarter of an hour, perhaps—for when I came to I saw my men retiring. They were quite right in doing that, all the officers, with the exception of a few corporals, having fallen.... Whilst I was examining my wound, I heard the sound of marching behind me. It was the German infantry, and as it swept by a soldier stopped and bent over me. I feigned to be dead. He began by tearing my sword and revolver from me, then he undid my puttees, and finally took off my boots. I was boiling over with anger, uncertain as to what to do, whether to keep up the pretence or show that I was merely wounded. When he had robbed me of half my possessions, he decamped to rejoin his regiment. Heaving a sigh of relief, I closed my eyes and tried to sleep, but in vain. Three hours later I heard a sharp fusillade. I sat up and beheld the Germans in retreat. My soldiers had found reinforcements and beaten the Boches back. Several bullets fell near me. I thought that my last hour had come when the Germans once more passed over me. But what a pleasure it was to see them fleeing before our men!... Night began to come on; I closed my eyes, and this time I slept."

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The officer had been wounded by a shrapnel bullet, which had entered his shoulder and descended almost to his elbow. He had fallen about two in the afternoon. It was nine o'clock in the morning when we found him, so he had remained without help on the field of battle for fully nineteen hours.

Wounded men were picked up all along the way. We reached the walls of Mulhouse without encountering any serious resistance. Cavalry was sent on in advance to reconnoitre the town, and returned with the information that Mulhouse was defenceless. We accordingly entered the town, headed by the regimental band and cheered by the crowd. Our troops encamped on the Place de la Mairie and other squares. Just as they were about to requisition quarters for the night a sharp fusillade came from several windows. It was thought, at first, that a number of inhabitants had revolted, but the trouble spread and shots poured from all the windows surrounding the squares where our men were stationed. It was then discovered that the Germans were there in hiding, with machine-guns and rifles. It was a veritable death-trap, and our men were compelled to beat a hasty retreat, but not before more than twenty-five thousand of them had fallen. The stretcher-men succeeded in collecting a few of the wounded, but they had to abandon large numbers, for the enemy was at hand and had already captured several ambulances.

This defeat did not succeed in demoralizing our brave soldiers, who reformed a few kilometres from Mulhouse. Though they had to retreat, they occasioned heavy losses to the Germans.

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VII—"FATHER—I WISH TO FIGHT BY YOUR SIDE"

We retired to Altkirch. Here reinforcements arrived, and it was whilst marching to counterattack Mulhouse, after a small fight in a village we had already passed, that I was wounded. "Wounded" is perhaps hardly the word, but this is how I received my injury. After a heavy bombardment by the enemy of the place we occupied, we had to evacuate it somewhat rapidly. Whilst getting out of the way of a shell I climbed over a wall about six feet high and rolled to the ground. I picked myself up immediately, thinking nothing was the matter, but a sharp pain in my left arm soon convinced me that I had sprained it severely. It was, indeed, so badly hurt that I could not get over the wall again and had to call a Red Cross man to my assistance. Subsequently I was sent with the wounded to the ambulance, where the doctor who had taken me under his protection at Belfort massaged my injured limb with camphorated oil and dressed it. He decided that it was better I should no longer remain with the ambulance, so he sent me in a Red Cross train to Lyons, where I was in Auxiliary Ambulance No. 37. My duties there, as an assistant, were to carry food to the wounded, read the newspapers to them, write their letters, and do any other necessary light work. I remained there a month, and when my arm was no longer painful they sent me to Tournon to complete my convalescence. It was whilst there that I wrote the following letter to my father:

"Tournon, November 10th, 1914.

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"DEAR FATHER—At the present time I am at Tournon, in the Ardèche, and I have just received a visit from mother, who has left for Narbonne, where she hopes to see you. You will doubtless have learnt from her that I went to Belfort and served with an ambulance, but that, owing to there being too many Red Cross *employés*, I was sent with others to Tournon, where I am in convalescence, after spraining my arm, which is now well again.

"As you know, my desire is to enlist and follow the army to the battlefield. Mother tells me that one of these days you will be leaving for the front. A ray of hope flashes to my brain. My dream may at last be realized. That depends on the kindness of one man, your captain, and his kindness will consist in accepting me for his regiment, to fight side by side with you. If he is willing, he can only accept with your consent, but I do not doubt for a moment that you are ready to give your signature. I implore you, therefore, to speak to your captain, for if he is a true patriot he will understand the reason why your son of fourteen begs him to accept me in his company to go on campaign with you, even though it be only to raise up the poor wounded who have fallen gloriously for France, and who, as I have already seen, remain eighteen to twenty hours on the field of battle, exhausted through loss of blood. But my desire does not end there. I wish to fight by your side, and even to avenge the name of Escloupié if, unfortunately, you are seriously wounded. I promise you that if that happens in a bayonet charge and I am by your side, the Boche who is the author of your wound will pass to the other world—and quickly, too. If your captain is a good patriot and possesses a good heart, I repeat he will not refuse to relieve a poor little French heart which laments to find itself useless, when, at fourteen years of age, one can render service, especially when the honor of the country is at stake.

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"I shall not say much more, for my heart beats too quickly. That ray of hope revives me. I beg you to make this request for me. Speak to your captain—to your commandant, if the captain will not suffice—or to the general if that is necessary. And if my wish is granted, I swear on my honor that I will fight, not as a boy of fourteen, but as a soldier of the 125th Territorial Regiment.

"Farewell! My hand trembles. I cannot say more; if I could, it would not be a letter I should write, but a book.

"Farewell! Farewell!

"Whilst awaiting your reply, receive from your son—strong-headed but patriotic—a loving kiss and a vigorous handshake, which will give you courage and sufficient strength to do your duty as a good Frenchman. If you obtain what I ask of you, write me immediately and I will join my new regiment as soon as possible. Send your reply to Eugène Escloupié, Evacué des Places de Guerre, Maison Cross, Rue Aimée Dumaine."

I awaited the reply. On receiving it, my father told me that the captain could not accept me, but he would authorize me to follow his regiment when it was called to the front.

I still impatiently await his departure for the field of battle.

Tales of Valor in Battles of the Clouds

Told by the Fliers Themselves—and Eye-Witnesses

These are, indeed, days of the new knighthood. No knights of old ever rode into the tournament with truer chivalry than the modern knights of the air. Thousands of tales could be told of them—for each flight is another Great Adventure. The gallant Italians in their flights over the Alps have surpassed the bravery of the old Romans. Among them are such men as D'Annunzio, the Italian poet. The Americans, British, Russians—throughout the armies of the Allies, these knights of the airships have met the knights of Germany and Austria in death-struggles in the clouds. It is not possible here to call the "roll of honor" of Guynemer, Nungesser, Navarre, Chaput, Chainat, Dorme, Lenoir, Rochefort Heurteaux—and a host of others. Only a few stories can be told of the chivalry of the Frenchmen to symbolize the staunch hearts of all the men who battle in the clouds.

I—STORY OF GUYNEMER—LAST FLIGHT OF FRENCH DARE-DEVIL

The dashing Guynemer, King of the Airmen, has made his last sensational "down," a victim of a German plane. "Ace of the Aces" has been missing since the latter part of September, 1917. When last observed he was engaged, single-handed, with a squadron of enemy planes numbering more than forty, and the last official communication in regard to him read: "Although all means of investigation have been tried, we have not obtained any further information." And so it is feared that Capt. Georges Guynemer, the eagle of the birdmen, the Frenchman with the face of a woman and heart of a lion, has fought his last battle in the clouds. [233]

Guynemer was one of the youngest men of his rank in the French Army, having been appointed by President Poincaré in February at the age of twenty-two. It was his custom to operate alone, handling the wheel of his machine as well as his gun, and his wonderful aerial conquests made him a hero throughout France. All his short life he had been an invalid with a tendency to tuberculosis, and, believing that he would not live long, he determined to give his life to his country in a manner that would enable him to first accomplish the utmost to her advantage. A comrade thus described his last flight....

"Guynemer sighted five machines of the Albatross type *D-3*. Without hesitating, he bore down on them. At that moment enemy patrolling machines, soaring at a great height, appeared suddenly and fell upon Guynemer.

"There were forty enemy machines in the air at this time, including Count von Richthofen and his circus division of machines, painted in diagonal blue and white stripes. Toward Guynemer's right some Belgian machines hove in sight, but it was too late.

"Guynemer must have been hit. His machine dropped gently toward the earth, and I lost track of it. All that I can say is that the machine was not on fire."

Guynemer was last cited in the French official announcement of September 10, 1917, for having won his fiftieth aerial victory. In an unofficial dispatch a few days before he was said to have accounted for fifty-two enemy planes. His German rival for the war-honors of the air, Baron von Richthofen, is credited with seventy "downs." But the German method of scoring such engagements differs materially from that of the French, inasmuch as a French aviator, in order to get credit for a victory, must send his victim's plane to destruction in sight of two official observers, while a German scores if he but send a bullet through his adversary's motor, forcing him to glide to the earth. [234]

Guynemer had a fine courage as well as bravery, and a determined spirit that obtained for him entrance into the Army after he had been several times rejected for lack of sufficient physique....

Captain Guynemer was only twenty-three years old. He was born on Christmas day, 1893, the son of a prosperous manufacturer of Compiègne, who had been a captain in the French Army. All his brief life he had been an invalid, very tall and very slender, even showing a leaning toward tuberculosis.

Under tutors Georges had studied to enter the Ecole Polytechnique of Paris, but was rejected because of his frail health. The professors did not believe he could live to finish the course, so why waste the time with him? His parents had taken the youth to Biarritz for his health, and they had been there a year when the Great War started. Five times the young man tried to enlist as a private in the French Army and each time he was rejected because of his health.

Certain there was something he could do for his country, young Guynemer volunteered for work in the aeroplane factories. His natural bent was mechanics and his progress was rapid. His superiors recognized the thorough elementary education he had. He had studied in England for two years and made a tour of the world in search of health, but always studying. He remained for a time in the United States.

Soon Georges Guynemer became a mechanic at the military aviation-fields, and there his work and his personal character so impressed the officers that he was permitted to enlist as a student aviator. That was his chance, and he made more of it than any other aviator ever did. He obtained a pilot's license in January, 1916, and as a sergeant made his first flight in an *avion de chasse*. [235]

In less than three weeks he had brought down his fifth enemy aeroplane, thus becoming an Ace

and earning an official citation. From the first his career was, perhaps, more active than that of any other aviator along the battle-front. His most spectacular feat, for which he was made a lieutenant and decorated with the Cross of War, was on September 29 last year, when he rose in the air to defend a comrade of his *escadrille* who had been attacked by five German *Fokkers*.

At a height of more than 10,000 feet Captain Guynemer shot and dropped two of the Germans within thirty seconds of each other. He then pursued the three others, and in two minutes had shot down his third enemy machine. He was pursuing the remaining two *Fokkers* when an enemy shell exploded under his aeroplane and tore away one wing.

"I felt myself dropping," he said later. "It was 10,000 feet to the earth. I pulled and pushed every lever I had, but nothing would check my terrific descent. Five thousand feet from the earth the wrecked machine began to turn somersaults, but I was strapped into the seat. I do not know what it was, but something happened and I felt the speed descent lessen. But suddenly there was a tremendous crash, and when I recovered my senses I had been taken from the wreckage and was all right."

Three times Captain Guynemer was wounded in battle, but each time slightly.

Many stories are told which illustrate the importance which the Germans attached to his flights and their efforts to "down" the fearless aviator. H. Massac Buist tells this story:

"A distinct feature of the French aviation service in 1917 is its treatment of 'star turns.' One of the most brilliant is a man who has been shot several times, whose nerves are seemingly of steel, and whose skill rather increases than diminishes with the number of occasions on which he issues from hospital. [236]

"He is attached to no particular squadron. Instead, he is free to go of his own sweet will to any part of the front, from the Belgian coast to the Swiss frontier. The Germans attach so much importance to him that they follow his progress from point to point.

"One day the champion pilot elected to come where the British were. Within twenty-four hours of his arrival the enemy were on the alert for him. The Germans sent up ten machines to catch him. Single-handed he set out for them, and promptly brought down three.

"He travels in his personal automobile with his *chef*. The aeroplane he uses is always specially built to his own ideas. It is fitted with all manner of peculiar contrivances. When not engaging the enemy, in flying hours, it is his habit to take every opportunity to practise behind the scenes."

The story of the young airman's persistent and finally successful efforts to enter the aviation service is here told....

"One of the members of the *N-3* spoke to me of the early days when Guynemer was so nearly driven away from the gates of the aerodrome.

"You should have seen him, eh? A stripling of nineteen who knew how to fly and insisted. He was just from the *lycée*; he had been rejected four times, but he insisted and he came to Pau to the aerodrome. *Eh bien*, they let him in at last, and I will tell you what he did. I went up with him once, after we were both aces, to get some photographs, because I understand photography. And the last thing he said to me was: 'Old fellow, I give you warning. To-day I dodge no shells. To-day is my anniversary.' [237]

"Well, we went up and they recognized him—they always do, because he flies like no one else in the world. Never have I heard such a cracking of shells. They started in a big circle all around us and came nearer and nearer, but he did not move. On the course he kept, and I—took photographs. At last I report that I have enough; but, no, he asks me to take some photographs of the puffy clouds around our plane. And when that is done he starts home again, but turns again and does a spiral, I do not know how many times, right over one of the batteries which had been looking for us. In the line they thought he was crazy. But I knew well enough that Guynemer was paying us out for his early days when we dared to patronize him!"

Guynemer's development was coincident with that of the light aircraft of the *Nieuport* type. In the little machine with the clipped wings that must take the earth at sixty miles an hour because it has no buoyancy at a lesser speed, Guynemer was at home. He won his "aceship" in a slower type, but his developed tactics required a craft that could make its 10,000 feet in ten minutes, and maintain a speed of 120 miles an hour.

Estimates based on the carrying capacity of the machines that Guynemer destroyed credit the captain with accounting for more than eighty pilots, observers, and gunners, all told. It was Guynemer who shot down Lieutenant Hohendorf, pilot for a French aeroplane factory before the war, who had destroyed twelve French machines. It is not impossible that Guynemer himself was an unfortunate victim added to the record of Richthofen's squad.

II—STORY OF DORCIERES—DUELLIST OF THE CLOUDS

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For a generation Rouzier Dorcieres has been one of the most picturesque figures in Parisian life, holding the unique position of the dean of duellists. A dinner was given to him in April, 1911, by two hundred and fifty men, every one of whom had either fought a duel with him, been his or his opponent's second in a duel, been seconded by him, or had participated as principal or second in a duel he "directed." All told, he had been director of 267 sword or pistol combats, and of the occasions on which he had played the rôle of second he had completely lost count. He himself had fought no fewer than twenty-five duels, fifteen with the sword and ten with the pistol.

It is not surprising, then, that such a firebrand volunteered to serve France in arms when the war broke out, though he had passed the age limit set by the order of mobilization. Bulletins

announced that fact at the time, and added that he had been attached to the aviation service. Bulletins equally brief announced that Dorcieres was "missing"—presumably either dead or wounded. No further details have been given of his fate until this story of the dramatic end of a remarkable man.

On the night of August 2, 1914, Dorcieres and a few of his old cronies—old because all of the younger men who had consorted with him were mustered into the Army—gathered at their table in their favorite café.

"My friends," said Dorcieres, as calmly as though he had been announcing that he was going to Deauville for a holiday at the seaside, "I bid you farewell. To-night I am going to volunteer as a soldier of France.

"You may wonder why, at the age of thirty-nine, I voluntarily enlist in the Army, and why I choose to enter the aviation service, distinctly the place for a youth. Listen, then. You have always believed that I have never suffered an affront in my life that was not avenged. But there was one time when I was insulted—grossly—and the man who did it escaped me. Do you remember the winter, five years ago, that I passed in Switzerland? It was there, when I was stopping in Zurich, that the thing occurred. It was after dinner, when the man sitting next to me nudged my shoulder. [239]

"So you are Rouzier Dorcieres," he said. "I recognize you. And they say you have never been touched in a duel. Well, I am sorry I have never had the good fortune to meet you in one." Then he laughed a sneering laugh.

"My blood boiled. 'But you will have the chance to meet me to-morrow morning,' I replied, glaring at him for his insolence. And then as I surveyed his countenance I saw the answer for his piggishness. He was a Prussian.

"No," he answered me, "I will not be able to avail myself of the pleasure of measuring swords with you, as I leave for Germany on the midnight train. I am attached to the Imperial Aviation Corps and must report at Johannisthal to-morrow."

"I looked at my watch. It was but a few minutes after eight o'clock. 'Then I will teach you your lesson to-night,' I told him.

"Monsieur," he said, "I shall meet you here before ten o'clock with my seconds and the swords. We will settle this affair before I depart."

"I bowed with pleasure as he stalked from the restaurant. And then whom did I see sitting near me but our old friend, the Comte de B——, as fine a second as any man ever had. In a few words I had recounted the incident and called on him to act in my behalf. I waited in that restaurant with the Comte until eleven o'clock. The Prussian officer did not appear. Two years afterward I read in a dispatch from Berlin of his being brevetted as an aviator in the Kaiser's service, and recently I read of how he was working in the air-service of the German Army. [240]

"That is why I enter the aviation service of France. Because I still hope to meet him and make him repay his debt of honor to me."

Dorcieres went to the front to seek in the air the only man who had ever insulted him and failed to pay the price. His pilot, the aviator who operated the aeroplane in which he fought his last duel, told the rest of the story to Dorcieres's friends long after the official bulletins had announced his death:

"He told me to find you, messieurs, and to tell you just what he told me as he lay dying—dying from eleven machine-gun bullets which riddled his torso in that last combat which nearly cost me, also, my life.

"Rouzier Dorcieres was the strangest machine-gunner I ever had with me. Unlike other gunners, he always carried binoculars, and when we sighted and approached a *Boche* aeroplane he spent his preliminary time in peering intently at the occupants of the enemy machine instead of preparing and testing his mitrailleuse anxiously as most gunners do.

"As we circled near the German machine in his last flight Dorcieres passed me a scrap of paper. On it he had scrawled a request that I swoop past the German as near as I could. Instantly I divined his reason—and his reason for always carrying and using his high-power glasses. He thought he recognized one of the occupants of the other aeroplane.

"I swerved and doubled and shot past the *Fokker's* tail. Dorcieres's eyes had been riveted to the glasses, but he dropped them now, heedlessly, and they smashed in the bottom of the fuselage. [241]

"Dorcieres's right hand was on the mitrailleuse-trigger and his left was feeding the cartridge-belt cleanly into the loading-chamber as we rounded and flashed by, abreast, but a little higher, than the enemy.

"Taca-tac-pouf-pouf-taca-tac-pouf-pouf—and he drove thirty rounds at the *Fokker*. And then as I swerved the *Boche* turned upward and let fly at us. He had been traveling faster than I thought, because my mind had been distracted by approaching too near him at Dorcieres's request, and he reached us with every shot from his machine gun. Our fuselage cracked and splintered as the leaden hail perforated the car and the choking gasps that I heard behind me were the positive indications that my gunner had been hit. I, too, turned upward, as my motor was undamaged and

climbed with the German. Then we both planed and approached each other. I heard my mitrailleuse begin to spit at the exact fraction of a second that we came within range, and the enemy gun never once barked a reply. Dorcieres's first shot must have killed the enemy gunner. And his torrent of bullets ripped off the tail of the *Fokker* and it dived into our lines like a stone, nose down.

"I landed within fifty yards of the broken *Boche* car and its occupants. Two stretchers were waiting there for us, but I was unhurt, miraculously. We put Dorcieres in one, tenderly as a baby, and then started off. But he had seen the wreck of the *Fokker* there and he begged that we stop beside it.

"Beside the German machine were the pilot and the gunner, both dead. By a superhuman effort my dying gunner raised himself on his elbow. He gazed at the face of the enemy machine-gunner.

"'It is he,' was all he said. And we carried him to the field-hospital.

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"That afternoon I went to see him. He was pretty nearly gone. That is when he explained, and that is when he asked me to convey to you, messieurs, this message—that he had avenged his honor."

These stories of the aviators could be told indefinitely; how they met in mortal combats in the clouds; how they act as sky-pilots for the armies; how they raided the Krupp gun works; how they soar over the navies, but they must be left for future volumes for they are creating a history of their own—one of the most remarkable in the annals of war.

(The foregoing stories have been gathered by the *Literary Digest* from various sources.)

FOUR AMERICAN PRISONERS ABOARD THE YARROWDALE

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Adventures With the German Raider "Moewe"

Told by Dr. Orville E. McKim, Survivor of the Sunken "Georgic"

This is the dramatic story of the four American surgeons, starved in German prisons, whose demand for release by President Wilson nearly resulted in a declaration of war against Germany. Few more dramatic tales have been brought forth than the story of adventure, hardship and peril at sea, short commons on land and the new danger from the sky which was related by four American professional men. Snapped up by the German raider in mid-ocean, they cruised around for days while the commerce destroyer was gathering in further prizes. Then they made the voyage in the *Yarrowdale* to Swinemunde, under such conditions that they expected the ship's seams to open and the vessel to sink beneath them at any moment. They lived for more than two months in prison camps in Germany, on the meagre prison fare provided by the German government. This is the record of how the Americans of the *Yarrowdale*, by enduring hunger, deprivation, cold, despair, and days of pitiless imprisonment, wrote their names in the annals of the United States. It is romantic, for the elements of daring naval adventure and of international diplomacy are present. Ambassador Gerard, after several communications to the Wilhelmstrasse, which were more than energetic, was promised the release of the Americans, and the threatened declaration of war on this issue was averted. Dr. McKim, an American veterinarian, was aboard the White Star liner *Georgic*, in charge of twelve hundred horses for the Allies, when she was sunk by the German raider *Moewe* during its romantic exploits. He was taken to Germany, with the other prisoners, on the *Yarrowdale*. Dr. Snyder was captured aboard the British steamship *Voltaire*, the first vessel to be captured by the raider, while he was returning to America from France. Mr. Zabriskie was the veterinarian on the steamship *Mount Temple*, a Canadian horse transport, which lost three men from shell fire. Dr. Davis and Dr. McKim were on the White Star liner *Georgic*, the most important bag of the German raider. Dr. McKim was the first of the Americans to return and related his experiences in the New York *World*—Copyright 1917 by the John N. Wheeler Syndicate. A few episodes from his adventures are now retold.

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I—"MY FIRST NIGHT ON GERMAN RAIDER"

The first night on board the German raider which had sunk the *Georgic* (when we were hurled into a sea alive with swimming, drowning horses) was hell. That is the only way to describe it, if you will pardon the expression. At 9 o'clock all lights were put out. Even the tiny bulb that illuminated the compass on the navigating bridge was shielded and not so much as a match was allowed to be struck on the decks.

We were shut up in the forecastle, and we either had to go to bed or sit around in the dark. The ship rolled heavily and the propellers raced and pounded as her stern occasionally lifted out of the water because of the high speed at which she was constantly pushed. Nobody knew where we were nor where we were going.

With the others, I lay down on a hard, thin mattress, stuffed with excelsior, in the middle of the floor, and envied the men who had bunks or hammocks. Each of us had a shoddy blanket which was as damp as it was dirty and smelly. My bones ached from the cold when at last what seemed an endless night was over.

A sailor who had been detailed as a steward for us brought a mixture masquerading under the name of coffee and more of the black bread and beet jam. There seemed to be no end of bread, and Dr. Snider, who had been surgeon on the *Voltaire*, ate chunk after chunk of it.

"How can you swallow all that stuff?" I asked him.

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"When you've been on this d—— ship as long as I have, you'll know," he said. And before I got out of Germany I did.

I had no sooner eaten a few scraps of breakfast than the coffee nauseated me as it had the night before, and my frugal meal and I promptly parted company. As I returned to the quarters where the other men were I started to "beef" about my troubles. Immediately they all broke into song. The tune was that of the hymn, "Holy, Holy, Holy," and the words were:

"Growling, growling, growling!
You're always bally well growling.
When you're dead and in your grave
You'll bally well growl no more!"

I didn't quite sense the meaning of it at first, and when they were through singing I started to explain once more that I couldn't stand the coffee out of that infernal, sickening receptacle, looking very much like a wash basin. I hadn't got six words out of my mouth when the song broke out again, and this time the men in the adjacent forecastle room joined in, and I think every English-speaking voice on board the ship was roaring those words. I knew then what it meant, and never after that did I utter one word of complaint. If anybody did, the song was sure to drown his voice. That song might serve a purpose here.

At 10 o'clock in the morning we were led to a washroom, four men at a time. All we had was running salt water and no soap. It drove the dirt in further, but nevertheless it was refreshing.

Many of the men who had been on the raider for a long time were utterly despondent. The treatment to which they had been subjected in the vile-smelling compartments, the lack of decent food and the uncertainty of everything had broken their spirit. Little groups sat about the deck when we were up for our morning airing, their heads in their hands and their shoulders bent and hunched like those of aged men. [246]

A few tried to keep up the spirits of the others. I will never forget Chief Officer Evans of the *Voltaire*. He had been very stout but he was losing weight at an alarming rate. His features were pinched and his skin hung in folds, yet he was always joking and singing and cheering up the men. It was enough to crack nerves of steel.

Picture us. Some of us have nothing to our backs but pajamas and overcoats in which we left the *Georgic*. Some of my horsemen have nothing but shirt and trousers, even their socks having been left behind because they were working on the main deck which was awash when the raider fired into us.

None of us expects to reach home! The raider is heavily armed and her officers are brave men. They will tackle anything. Sooner or later it is inevitable we will encounter a British or a French cruiser—and then we will die. We won't be fighting like men. Down there in those rat traps with steel doors bolted against us, we will drown while others are fighting. The fellows who sit around the deck with their heads in their hands moaning, sometimes even sobbing, are not cowards. All they would ask is a chance to die like men. A man doesn't want to go like a drowned rat.

After our little breath of fresh air in the mornings, it seemed worse than ever to go back to that hole—the forecabin. There was just one doubtful cause for thankfulness. We officers, as I was rated, were not in quite as bad a situation as were the men. About 430 of them in all were packed below decks in a hold that smelled to the high heavens with air so laden with soggy, stale tobacco smoke that you could cut it with a knife. The mattresses, which most of them spread on the floor for beds, were made of old cotton waste, and they absorbed filth and dampness like sponges. As for food, the men got sea biscuit for breakfast instead of the black bread—and they were some biscuits. They were as hard as the decks we slept on. For this noon-day meal they were given noodle soup, such as we received, only thinner, and more watery if possible, but they seldom got meat, although we had it nearly every day with a very tasty gravy poured over it. [247]

For the first two days this noon-day meal was the only one I could retain, and I think it was because there was none of that abominable coffee with it. Our manner of eating was somewhat difficult too, for we were given spoons and forks but no knives.

"That's so, you can't file them down and make daggers," explained one of the German sailors. "We aren't taking any chances with neutrals or belligerents either." They weren't. We could readily see that. Of course one of the first things the Germans had done when we went aboard was to take away every firearm or weapon of any character and whatever might have been used to flash a signal to a vessel the raider might pursue or try to elude.

The commander's order was:

"Any man found with firearms or heliograph will be shot summarily." Nobody tried to hold anything out on him after that. The Germans mean what they say.

Every neutral was given a white band to wear around his left arm, and this allowed us more liberty than the other men and officers enjoyed. The belligerents were all obliged to take their air and exercise on the well deck aft, while we were allowed to go up on the head while on deck. I talked to many of the German sailors, and it was one of them who told me how the *Georgic* had been taken. [248]

II—"WHAT THE OFFICERS TOLD ME"

"We are sneaking along at night," he said in very fair English. He told me later he had once been on a Hamburg-American merchantman regularly out of New York. "We haven't a light showing. The ship's as black as the water around us, and there's not a pipe or a cigar lit on the deck.

"All of a sudden the lookout calls and we see your lights. Keeping them low on the horizon we steam along all night waiting for daylight to run in on you. After that it was simple. You know what happened then. (I certainly did know.) What fools you were to run with lights!"

One of the officers from the *Voltaire*, already taken and sunk, told me that afterward while the Germans were chasing us a sailor went below and informed the prisoners that the raider was overhauling the White Star steamship *Georgic*. The name had been chipped off the *Georgic's* counter and lifeboats and the only conceivable way they could have identified us was by intercepting wireless messages. For that, they must have had the British code. The incident lends color to the story that the Germans had the code when the *Lusitania* made her last trip and sent a message to the Captain to slow down to eighteen knots. There are many stories among seamen in England to-day that Capt. Turner of the *Lusitania* punished at least one member of his crew for treachery before he abandoned his ship.

"When we came aboard the raider," the officer from the late *Voltaire* continued, "one of the Germans said to me:

"'Where were you? You are twenty-four hours late.'"

"And we were. It's a cinch those Fritzies never dreamt that. They pick code messages." [249]

I had heard the raider was equipped with both coal and oil burning engines, so I managed to wander into the engine room to try to see how they were arranged while I was out for an airing one day. I hadn't had much time to look around when a heavy hand clutched my shoulder and a German sailor sent me spinning out of the doorway.

Nevertheless we neutrals were allowed a great deal of freedom, and I want to say that what I did discover showed me that the raider was about as cleverly arranged a ship as I have ever seen. While on the forecastle head for airings, I noticed that there were always six men on the bridge. This was an unusual circumstance, but it would be difficult to note it from a distance because the men on the bridge were partially concealed behind a canvas windshield.

There were always two lookouts in the crow's nest and sailors told me they only stood one hour watches each. This insured wide awake, alert men all the time. I noticed these scanners used telescopes most of the time, which gave them a longer range of vision than would binoculars.

There were always three operators in the wireless room—no chance of treachery there. One was continually listening to pick up messages and one was ready to "jam the air" should any vessel the raider was pursuing attempt to send out a message. Not a single ship ever got a message into the air because the raider jammed every one of them. This was accomplished by a noisy and continuous, disjointed sending, like a sputtering gossip of the sea.

Personally I saw seven guns and four torpedo tubes on the raider. She may have had more but I doubt it. They were quite sufficient for any merchant ship she might encounter. [250]

III—"OUR TERRIBLE DAYS ON THE 'YARROWDALE'"

On Wednesday, Dec. 13, four hundred of us prisoners were transferred to the *Yarrowdale* which had been cruising around in the wake of the raider ever since she was captured. A few provisions having been brought over from the raider, we parted company, and I was mighty glad to see the last of her. I didn't know then what was awaiting me in Germany.

On board the *Yarrowdale* eighteen German guards under Lieut. Barowitz were responsible for four hundred and sixty-two men, many of whom were belligerents.

I have often heard people laugh at the idea of less than a score of men subduing and holding several hundred, and taking a ship into port under such conditions. Just listen to our predicament:

On the *Yarrowdale's* bridge, one at either end, are two bombs, each of them large and powerful enough to sink the ship. Lanyards are arranged so that the commander can lower them over the side and explode them, almost with a single movement of the hand.

In the engine room, placed at the most vital points, are three bombs just as big and just as powerful. The German in command of the engine room has orders to explode all three the second he receives a signal from the bridge which has been agreed upon.

Beside the bombs, there are several boxes of hand grenades, always guarded by one of the German sailors who is heavily armed. There never are less than three Germans on the bridge—Barowitz, whom I believe to be crazy as a March hare, usually sleeps there, if he ever sleeps at all—and with these deadly weapons they could quickly quell any disturbance which might arise on the deck by literally blowing us to pieces. If we should succeed in overpowering the guards, Barowitz will blow the vessel up. [251]

The food was a little better than on the raider. As soon as we were on board, Lieut. Barowitz "signed up" the Norwegian crew of the steamship *Hallbjourg*, and it was they who manned the vessel. He then informed us that we would be obliged to shift for ourselves so far as the commissary was concerned.

"There is enough food for twenty-six days," he said. "And it has got to last twenty-six days. And be careful that you don't skimp the German guards. If you try to hold out food on them you'll find yourselves with worse troubles than starvation."

And this cheerful admonition was carried out to the letter, you may be sure, for Barowitz was a devil in uniform. No matter how long I may live, I shall never forget the first two nights on this madman's ship. The German guards tell us that Barowitz never leaves the bridge. He doesn't sleep and he scarcely eats. He must be trying to get to a certain point by a certain time, or cross some imaginary line before a certain time. His German seamen don't know just what his idea is any more than we do.

IV—"I AM ON A CRAZY SHIP WITH A CRAZY SKIPPER"

I have seen terrific storms at sea. I have been on ships where the floor of the saloon was awash for days and nights at a time, but never before have I been frightened. I am on this crazy ship with a crazy skipper. Straight into the teeth of a ninety-mile gale we are driving ahead at a speed which must be at least nine knots. This is tremendous for a vessel like the *Yarrowdale*. Continually she sticks her nose down, and her tail comes out of the sea and quivers as the propellers spin. The boilers never got below 220. Barowitz meant what he said. He knocked his own men down just as cheerfully as he did his prisoners—frequently it seemed even more so. [252]

After seemingly endless days on what had become a ship of terror, we sighted Iceland. It was so cold and rainy most of the time that we had not been able to take our airing on deck, but from the time we sighted Iceland we were not allowed above, anyway. For four or five days and nights we jockeyed around. Whenever we sighted a light at night or smoke in the day-time we turned and ran.

We were likely to be fired on at any moment by a British patrol boat or a submarine. We knew we were more than likely to bump a British mine, and as we could not display our colors a German submarine might sink us without warning—as they have been known to do. Finally, there were the German mine fields ahead of us. At last one morning Barowitz came down into our quarters. His face glowed all over and he rubbed his hands with glee, for all the world like a money lender who had just driven a hard bargain.

"We have got through the British patrol," he said. And it seemed to give him more satisfaction to taunt us with the information than it did to accomplish his purpose.

From that time on the attitude of Barowitz and his men changed toward all Americans on board. Until then he had acted with some restraint and the German sailors had been very friendly and courteous. Now that they were nearing the Fatherland, they treated us with the greatest disdain and superciliousness, heaped abuse on us and called us American "swinehunds," which meant dirty dogs.

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Well, about 9 o'clock one night we passed Bergen Light, and, in the morning were lying in Ore-Sund which separates Denmark and Sweden. We were certainly in neutral waters, for the sound was only three miles wide, with Sweden on one side and Denmark on the other. Imagine, then, our amazement when a German patrol steamed alongside and made fast.

That night I did not sleep a wink. All night long we would go ahead a little distance then back off, then ahead once more, sometimes at full speed, sometimes very slowly. If I had known what awaited us I think I would have preferred to strike one of the German mines. But we didn't, and shortly after daybreak we slid into the harbor at Swinemunde, and the crew of the *Yarrowdale* received one of the greatest naval ovations I have ever witnessed. Flags were dipped in salute, guns were fired and whistles shrieked. Barowitz went ashore and was feasted and feted. I saw later in a German paper he was decorated and promoted to the rank of Lieutenant.

What happened after we went ashore is subject for future stories. There had been blood curdling experiences on board the *Yarrowdale*. They were child's play compared to what we endured in Germany.

Told by "A. E. M. M."

Here is an amusing account of the human side of the campaign that ended the existence of German East Africa as a Hun colony. Told in the *Wide World Magazine*.

I—WITH THE AFRICAN MOUNTED RIFLES

"Sahib," said a man of an Indian mountain battery, when we were in standing camp in the shadow of Kilimanjaro, "you are obviously not infantry, and you are as certainly not cavalry. What *are* you?"

That was a question I had often asked myself since the day I enrolled as a signaller in the East African Mounted Rifles, locally known as "Bowker's Horse"—a deceptive nickname, for at that time we rode mules. We got horses later on, and uniforms and accoutrements all of a piece; but in the early days of the war we were an irregular corps of straight-shooting, cheery, undisciplined scallywags, wearing garments of our own devising, saluting or not as the notion occurred to us, and literally pawing the ground in our simple-minded anxiety to ride straight into "German East" and crumple up such slight resistance as we expected to meet. The corps was composed, for the most part, of settlers, a sprinkling of juniors from Government offices, an estate agent or two, and a leavening of those nondescripts who float round any new colony, to be inevitably washed up when any piece of adventure or devilry comes along.

That was how we looked at it then; we were booked for the great adventure, and were prepared to start on it out of hand with our own rifles and ammunition and a few scrag-ends of mule. [255]

For some days after the declaration of war Nairobi looked as it does in race week, and I wonder someone didn't get killed in the crush at Mackinnon's Corner, where all the principal roads converge. White men, brown men, black men, motors, bicycles, and mules seethed about all over the crossing. Somalis would bring up a batch of mules to be passed by the vet., and those would kick and bite their way through the maelstrom, whilst our local scorchers, who had blossomed into motorcycle despatch-riders, added to the joy of things by coming down Sixth Avenue like streaks and jamming on both brakes when within a few feet of the crush. This pleased the mules, of course.

It was an education to watch some of our bar-room buck-jumpers at play on the lightsome blend of fiend and whirlwind called a mule. There was a man in my troop called Eccles, who wasn't a "Buffalo Bill" at the best of times, and they served him out a mustard-crossed white mule that looked like some kind of loathsome slug. It kicked you when you tried to mount, and promptly bucked you off if you succeeded in getting on—a *perfect* brute, in short.

Eccles's first experience was at a parade in Government Road, when the mule took him out in front of the troop, deposited him on the hard road, and then capered about him, apparently undecided whether to trample on him or eat him. When we got out into camp the mule developed a habit of lying down in every stream or bit of water we crossed, and after a few days of this sort of thing Eccles decided to lead his mule. One morning, however, the animal disappeared into the blue, to the huge delight of Eccles, until a heliogram came through from the next camp to say that the mule had arrived there. Eccles scarcely spoke for two days. We sent a couple of Somali scouts over, and they, five Europeans, and a crowd of porters spent a futile morning in trying to catch the brute. [256]

Then our regiment commandeered all the mules and horses from that camp. This one refused to be caught, but attached itself to the corps, and, as we could neither catch it nor get rid of it, both Eccles and the mule enjoyed complete happiness.

II—THE MULE AS A COMRADE

The study of the gentle mule, as a matter of fact, occupied most of the first part of our time with the regiment. We camped along the railway line, and the entraining of mules is one of the most exciting pastimes I know, although the procedure is simple enough. One man leads the mule up to the door of the horse-box, whilst two others link arms across its hindquarters and heave or push it on board before it has had time to realize their intention. Sometimes it realizes first, and then heartless spectators gather round and yell with joy at the stirring scene. The man who pulls at the bridle has a busy time, for if the box is nearly full when he packs his steed in he has to quit through a storm of hoofs and teeth, and I've caught fragments of conversation on these occasions that would turn a dock-laborer green with envy.

Mules are utter hypocrites. There is no animal living that can assume an expression of such injured innocence as a mule when he has "done you down" properly. When, at the end of the first round of that exciting bout miscalled "stables," you abandon currycomb and brush and pause to consider the possibilities of the situation, your mount gazes at you more in sorrow than in anger, suggesting that *he* is the stranger in a pest-ridden country, and that he merely acted in self-defence. Of course, grooming is a painful process for both parties, for unless the beasts have been well sprayed with disinfectant beforehand, the clustered fauna of Africa display a desperate tenacity. The insect pests were, by the way, one of the chief features of the East African campaign; after patrol we used to feel as if we wanted spraying ourselves. [257]

Pack-mules provide some exacting moments when you are moving camp in a hurry. On our forced march into Aruscha—a matter of some seventy-five miles, with short intervals for food and sleep—

the dawn of one day found us enticing some of the dear things over plank bridges laid across a ravine. There was a nightmare suggestion about the scene that only Sime could have done justice to; for it was still too dark to see to the bottom of the ravine, and the swaying bridges seemed to stretch into eternity.

Our first camp was in a bit of the Southern Game Reserve—a lovely place. The signallers were perched on a rocky peak, surrounded by clumps of low hills, which merged into stretches of plain, covered with thorn scrub. After rain the hills used to turn to a heavenly blue, with shifting lights of mauve and purple as the cloud shadows slid over them, and we could see Meru, which we then looked upon as the first place we had to take, a jagged and formidable peak; and, sometimes, when the air was very clear, Kilimanjaro appeared like a big, flat-topped cake with powdered sugar dusted over it.

III—FIGHTING WITH LIONS AND RHINO IN JUNGLE LAND

At night a chill wind whooped down the valleys, and we were smothered in swirls of damp mist. Lions roared nightly, and it was possible to stumble on a sleeping rhino at any time of the day. They used to charge patrols and disorganize them, and one of our fellows who had strayed away from his troop met one face to face. His mule streaked one way, he another, and the rhino nearly broke his back in vamoosing in a third direction. The trooper was lucky to have found the beast in a timid mood, for the rhino's only amusement lies in chasing unoffending sons of empire through thick thorn scrub, though he's usually in too bad a temper to realize what fun it is.

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There is something peculiarly terrifying about a rhino charge in the camp at night. You awake and jump to safety all in a moment, impelled by the nightmare terror that belongs to the time when fear ruled the world, and the rash ancestor who slept on the ground made a spring for the nearest branch on the approach of some primeval monster.

We all have our affectations, and that of the old hand was indifference to the game peril.

"You mustn't believe all the wild beasts stories you hear," he would observe to the tenderfoot. "They are mostly frightful exaggerations." Then the nervous one would look up and observe a rhino gazing morosely at these intruders on the privacy of his own special tract of forest. The next moment the tenderfoot would be in the arms of a peculiarly inhospitable tree, wondering what was going to happen next. Certainly life in what the kinema posters call "Nature's Zoo" holds excitements of a kind unknown to the army in any other quarter of the globe. I used to think out problems unprovided for by the Hague Convention, such as, if a small British patrol met a small enemy patrol in thick bush, and at the same time flushed an angry rhino, what would be the correct procedure? Should the combatants combine to blot out the rhino, and then proceed with their own quarrel, or should they hurriedly retire and fight somewhere else? I never heard of any such contingency arising, but it easily might have done so, and it is certain that once, just as one of our patrols sighted a German patrol, a rhino charged our rear, and two of our men had to fall out to tackle it, whilst the rest fired on the Germans.

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Our first engagement was at Longido, in the first November of the war.

Our regiment had a tough day, and lay for many hours under fire without food or water, but I am not out to write the story of that skirmish. It doesn't come under the heading of the humors of the campaign, although there was a certain grim humor knocking about all the same. Our men were so new to that sort of thing that it took them some time to realize they were under heavy fire, and just when the firing was hottest one of them was waving a toothbrush and asking, "Any of you chaps lost a toothbrush?" whilst another shouted, "Come over here, you fellows. Lovely shooting!"

It was during the season that followed, when, as a correspondent of an English paper neatly put it, we "held the railway and shouted for help," that we realized the real, inner meaning of monotony. At first we expected to get going in a week, then we put the time forward to months, and finally we resigned ourselves. To live in standing camp for the rest of our natural lives, to do long patrol, short patrol, and "bait" patrol for ever and ever seemed the best we could hope of life. Letters arrived with some regularity, for we were then only some few miles over the border. Papers drifted through to us, and we knew more of the happenings in Europe than we did of our own campaign, though occasionally we gleaned some items of local interest from the English papers. It annoyed us to see an alleged illustration of one of our "scraps," in which smart-looking men on ramping horses were represented as fighting in open country at five hundred yards, whilst in reality it was done by untidy men on mules, in thick bush, at forty yards. The real thing was much better than the artist's conception of it.

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There are, as I have implied, three kinds of patrol—the long patrol, on which you spend many days scouring the burning veldt for Germans, and hoping you won't find them; the short patrol, on which you spend one day doing the same thing; and the "bait" patrol, on which you spend the cold and cheerless hours before dawn wandering round the camp and hoping the Germans won't find *you*. On the latter it is the earnest desire of your King and country that the noise of your getting shot will alarm the camp before the attack takes place. If, on these occasions, you meet a lion, or any vermin of that kind, you must allow him to bash you on the head and dine off your limbs rather than raise a false alarm. One of our fellows met a lioness with cubs on one of these cheery rambles, and was only saved by the fact that he and his mule both froze stiff with terror, and baffled her by not running away. He moved off slowly at last, and she followed the patrol till dawn, obviously puzzled by these strange beings.

Of long patrol your first intimation of the joy in store for you usually is an excited clucking of the telephone buzzer at 2 a. m. on a particularly joyless morning. "Kaar-kuk-kuk! Kaar-kuk-kuk!" it observes, exactly like a hen that has laid an egg. Of course, the obvious thing to do is to fling a

boot at the 'phone and go to sleep; but we signallers have a strong sense of duty, so we call the adjutant, who takes a mean revenge by telling us to be saddled up in fifteen minutes and go out for ten days to some "ticky" and waterless part of Africa which is, according to the 'phone, swarming with Germans. [261]

The next ten minutes is spent in feverishly collecting gear, with which you stagger through the night to your disgusted steed, who, when he has realized what is in store for him, behaves as though he had never seen you, nor your saddle, nor the helio stand, nor anything that is yours in his life before, this being his habit in all moments of emergency. Then you take a few frantic tugs at your cigarette before the "No smoking" order is passed down, and ride out into the unknown.

IV—NIGHT RIDES OVER THE VELDT

Those night rides over the veldt were all alike. Your vision was limited to the man in front of you, who was a blurred shape that you, in a half-dream, were always chasing and never coming up with. It was a dream that seemed to go on for years and years, and then your mule would stumble and bring you to your senses with a jerk. In that light—for it is never very dark in Africa—men appear as trees, and thorn bushes dismount and take aim at you.

Dawn would find the whole patrol riding with eyes glued to the horizon and lips closed on unlit cigarettes. The order regarding smoking on those night-marches is strict. Once when we were escorting a captured German patrol, one of our men thoughtlessly lit up. One of the prisoners promptly leaned over and said, in English: "You mustn't do that; the enemy will see us."

The scenery was always the same there—rolling stretches of sun-browned veldt, kopje upon kopje, wonderfully shadowed, patches of thornscrub, and, clothing the banks of rivers and streams, strips of forest; the climate cold by night and hot by day. Africa is a queer, baffling, changeable country. Exactly the same scene can take on absolutely different aspects at different hours in the day. The thorn-tree flowers into a white brush with a sweet smell, and in the early morning, with a whitish haze hanging over and a cool wind blowing, the country seems beautiful and the trees appear as though laden with apple blossoms. Yet, in the hard, hot light of midday, with inky shadows outlined and the dust settling on the trees, the same place is ugly and repellent. On these patrols we moved by night, and failed to sleep by day, because the patch of shade that will remain shaded for even a few hours is non-existent. I usually woke to find my body too hot to touch and my water-bottle on the boil. [262]

Later, when the South African forces came over and we got going, we had easier times, could travel by day, and lost that feeling of being little veldt-mice creeping out of our holes.

Once patrol was over and we were "home" in camp, we led a curious life, half soldier, half country gentleman. We lived in roomy *bandas*, or grass huts, a section in each, and as nearly every trooper had a "boy," or native servant, our meals were brought to the *banda*, and we clubbed together for luxuries. Also, we picked up our own sections, so that if four pals elected to go through the war together, they got the O. C. to fix it up.

Leave was the one thing that really mattered—those ten glorious days when you went back to your own life, and bathed daily and ate what you wanted to, instead of what you could get. No one minded night-rides across the veldt with that end in view, and I have slept very comfortably under the stars, with my saddle for a pillow, dreamily wondering if the lion in the distance was making that noise because he was hungry or because he had had too much to eat. Once in Nairobi, you bought a silk shirt, and could display the trousers with the crease in them and the socks that mother sent you. You wallowed in your bath, and walked down Government Road pretending that you had never shovelled damp earth out of a trench or groomed an accumulation of sticky African mud off a truculent mule. In the afternoon you sat in the fashionable tearoom and ate cakes and sweets and ices, and in the evening there was a dance, and you met the dearest girl. It was all like heaven! [263]

When we really *did* start—I was with the mounted column that came down from Longido, to sweep round and threaten the German rear—the people I was sorry for were the transport drivers. The rains broke soon after the advance began, and swamped us out at Kahe, where we had a three days' scrap in thick brush. What with weather and scrapping, and mud and broken bridges, we had a hard enough time ourselves—we had dropped the "country gentleman" part of it—but the wonder is that the transport ever got through at all. We used to curse at it sometimes. When you have been under fire all night and scrapping all day, when you have lost your pipe in the river and the cigarettes have run out, when you are very dirty and very hungry, and word is passed down that no one knows where the food-wagons are—that is the sort of happening that is calculated to make your spirits rise with a bound. Then they come along, like bearded and very dirty angels, dumping supplies of bully beef and potatoes, bread and jam, and dates and coffee, and all is forgiven.

It isn't always fun being a soldier in East Africa, but I think the transport driver who "gets there" every time deserves a Military Cross at the least.

Tales of Feminine Deeds of Daring

Thousands of stories from the battlefields tell of the heroism of the women of France, Russia, England, Italy—and all the countries involved in the war—women fighting as soldiers in every army; women who act as spies; women who risk their lives on dangerous missions. A few of these stories are told in these pages. The first three are from the *New York World*, and the fourth from the *New York American*.

I—STORY OF FRENCH WOMAN WHO DARED TO FIGHT IN A TANK

If Mlle. Gouraud were not the niece of Gen. Gouraud, whose right arm was blown off by a bursting Turkish shell at the Dardanelles, and who was in command of the contingent of Russian troops fighting in France, and who succeeded Gen. Lyautey as Military Governor of Morocco, she probably would never have had a chance to suffer from "tank sickness." And it's because she came so close to proving her point—that men and women are equal in war work as well as peace pursuits—that Mlle. Gouraud is discouraged. For to-day she is engaged in the—for her—exceedingly tame occupation of driving a motor ambulance between the railroad stations and the various hospitals in Paris.

Mlle. Gouraud has always believed in equal rights for women. When she was sixteen years old and first interested herself in suffrage she was hooted and laughed at. Her first speech was delivered in the Place de la Concorde, in Paris, near the Seine. The crowd deserted her for the river bank to watch some boys' swimming races. [265]

"I'll show them," said Mlle. Gouraud, and forthwith began swimming.

Eighteen months later she was the champion woman swimmer of France, and defeated many Belgian, Italian and German swimmers. Once interested in sports she speedily branched out and became a proficient amateur boxer. She put on the gloves with Frank Moran and Willie Lewis and Eugene Mattrot, and even Georges Carpentier, in exhibition bouts. Then motorcycling became popular, and after she learned the ways and habits of a gas engine she learned to fly and was brevetted.

The day all France was plastered with mobilization order notices Mlle. Gouraud gave up sports. She offered herself for the army, but even the influence of her uncle, Gen. Gouraud, was not enough to win her entree direct into active service. Instead she obtained the post of ambulance driver for a certain unit of aviators. But she was never satisfied with that and finally obtained permission to fly at the front but in a biplane machine, with a Frenchman as mitrailleuse operator.

And there came the rub. Machine gunners clamored for chances to go up with the men pilots, but all hung back at going up with Mlle. Gouraud. It was unlucky, they said, and beside they didn't want to be in on the deal if she persisted in risking her life when there were plenty of men for the job. Just as sailors of old were superstitious about women on board ship, so were the observers and machine gunners superstitious about having a woman in their airplane. And they tried to prove their point by citing the fact that in the burned wreckage of the first Zeppelin brought down inside the French lines were the feet of an incinerated body clad in filmy silk stockings and tiny black satin slippers.

But Mlle. Gouraud stuck to aviation, hoping eventually to persuade some machine gunner to be her team mate and at the same time trying to find another girl who would enter the service with her, until the French Army created its "tank" corps. Then she lost no time in setting to work for a transfer to that arm of the service. [266]

The order for "V. Gouraud" to join the "tanks" was finally put through and she went off to their base, behind the Champagne front, between Soissons and Rheims, thankful at last that she had won a berth in the newest and most dangerous and most exciting and the least understood and most interesting department of the army.

That was only a couple of weeks before Gen. Nivelle's great offensive was unleashed in the middle of April. It was just about the time that Lieut. Charles G. Sweeny of San Francisco and West Point, the only commissioned American in the French infantry, gave up his post in charge of a squadron of "tanks" to return to the United States and offer his services to the United States Army.

The first week of Mlle. Gouraud's training was easy and delightful to her. Inside the steel walls of the mobile fortress she learned to swing the little three-pounders and to operate the cartridge belts of the machine guns that bristled from all sides of the armored car. She learned how to sight through the periscopes projecting from the roof and sides to see the way and the enemy, and all the other routine work of the "tank's" crew.

But the second week, when she began her training in a "tank," spelled her undoing. The walls and the roof of the "tank" are covered with leather upholstery, and every projecting bit of mechanism and artillery in the little chamber was also cushioned with leather, because as the great steel fort plunged forward across shell craters and over trenches and up and down great piles of debris—which had once been French villages—the occupants were tossed about inside like ashes in a sifter.

But cuts and bruises and knocks and falls didn't weaken Mlle. Gouraud's determination to stay [267]

with the "tank" for the great offensive soon to be begun when the engines of destruction were to receive their baptism of fire under the tricolor. So she rigged up a sort of harness, with a line attached to a ring in the roof of the "tank" and with a belt around her waist. This left her swaying like a pendulum when the "tank" was moving but kept her from bumping against the walls, and, what was more important, from stumbling against other members of the crew and interfering in the pursuit of their duties.

Then the blow descended. Mlle. Gouraud fell ill of "tank sickness." Worse than seasickness, worse than any form of sickness which comes as result of riding in airplane, or on camel, or by any form of transportation ever invented, "tank sickness" rendered her absolutely incapable of remaining with the movable forts. So she was drafted out, sent to hospital as "malade" and in a few days when she was discharged, was shunted back to Paris as "reforme."

Just one fact consoles Mlle. Gouraud to a certain extent. And that is that she is not the only victim of "tank sickness."

"I stuck it out three days longer than any of the rest of the crew who were subject to it," she says.

II—STORY OF WOMAN WHO PASSED THROUGH LINES DISGUISED AS BELGIAN PEASANT

The thrilling adventures of Mme. Simone Puget, noted Frenchwoman, who, under disguises as a Belgian peasant and British "Tommy," undertook reaching her husband in the trenches at the grave risk of losing both their lives. While they were still together his regiment was despatched to the dreaded "first line" and ten days later she was notified of his death under fire.

There arrived in New York from Europe a young Frenchwoman, Mme. Simone A. Puget, dressed in deep mourning. Watching her as she stepped ashore, a stranger scarcely could picture her as she actually was, not many months ago, wearing the uniform of an English soldier and risking her life in that vague, blood-soaked and shattered inferno of trenches, craters and barbed-wire called "somewhere in France," to reach her husband before he died. [268]

Even before that Mme. Puget had achieved fame as the daring Frenchwoman who accompanied her husband, M. Andre Puget, the playwright and novelist, through the Orient disguised as his brother, and as the brilliant tennis player who captured the woman's championship for her country four years ago. Mme. Puget also is the author of "Les Etrangères," and other novels.

"There is so little to tell," she said quietly ... as she folded her hands on her simple black dress. "We were in Paris when war was declared and my husband was called to the front.

"I volunteered as an ambulance driver and worked almost day and night for four months carrying wounded from a field hospital to the big emergency hospitals in Paris.

"Then I heard that Andre had been wounded and sent to Moulins. I went to him immediately and stayed to nurse him until he was able to rejoin his regiment.

"After my return to Paris I received another message, this time from a little village close to the Belgian frontier, but across the border in Belgium. It did not say in so many words that Andre had been wounded again, but merely gave me the impression that he wanted to see me once more and that I was to try to reach him.

"I quickly realized the difficulties and dangers of such a journey. Only a short time before the military authorities had made it a law that any soldier whose wife was found in forbidden territory would be shot. But Andre and I had been through many dangers together and he knew that he could trust me. I prepared to start at once. Armed with my letter, which simply asked me to come without delay to the bedside of my dying grandfather, I left Paris for Belgium attired as a Belgian peasant girl. [269]

"Outside Paris I was stopped. The military guards absolutely refused to let me proceed.

"'We see too many letters like yours,' was the only explanation offered.

"In vain did I plead and weep. Then when I had almost given up in despair, I spied an English officer whom Andre and I had met in India. I told him who I was and he recalled me at once, despite my peasant garb. I asked him to help me to reach my husband. He said it was impossible.

"But I was desperate and when I wept and quietly implored his aid, he said he would help me if he could. That was the last time I saw him, but after my return to the little hotel where I had spent the night I received a parcel containing a soldier's uniform together with some instructions.

"I always felt very much at home dressed as a man, for I travelled all through Persia and other parts of the Orient as my husband's brother.

"An artillery train with much baggage was about to move forward and I could go with that provided I didn't object to riding in a forage wagon for six hours. My peasant costume I was to take with me wrapped in a bundle. Once through the rear lines in Belgian territory I was to look out for myself.

"We started. I rode for hours and hours, expecting at every halt to be detected and questioned. But fortune smiled on me and that night after we were well across the border of Belgium I slipped down and walked forward unchallenged. The place fairly swarmed with soldiers, Belgian, French and British. Near a farm house I changed back to my simple Belgian peasant garb and prepared to resume my journey on foot as soon as it became daylight. [270]

"Fortunately I had not many miles to reach the farm to which the letter had directed me. Walking

all day I reached the farm that night and there I learned to my great joy that my husband was safe. He had not been wounded, but his regiment was under orders to leave within a day or so for another part of the front where severe fighting was expected and he wanted to see me once more, if possible, before he left. I saw him next day. He came to the farm. Then on the morrow he marched away with his regiment toward Arras, and ten days later he was killed."

Mme. Andre found that it was easier to get out of the war zone than into it and she had little difficulty in returning to Paris. There she began to raise funds for Red Cross work and to gather material for future reference about the men-of-letters of America, France and England who have given up their lives in the great war.

III—STORY OF MAID OF LOOS WHO WON THE CROSS OF WAR

We in America find it possible to read with calm pulse and an attitude of cold, reasoned impartiality the stories that are written in red blood and heroic action by real participants in the great war. Their language, like their viewpoint, seems to us extreme, violent, embittered. Yet, inasmuch as the presence of stern reality, which colors viewpoint and language, is the same that inspired the valorous action itself, we submit, exactly as it came from Paris, this article, which recounts at first hand the desperate courage of Mlle. Moreau.

In the musty archives of the French Government she is merely Emilienne Moreau, youngest of her sex to have achieved mention in Gen. Joffre's Order of the Day and the right to wear upon her breast the Cross of War. But to thousands upon thousands of French and British soldiers, she is the Jeanne d'Arc of Loos—whose valiant spirit won back Loos for France. [271]

The Official Journal has only this to say about Emilienne Moreau:

"On Sept. 25, 1915, when British troops entered the village of Loos, she organized a first-aid station in her house and worked day and night to bring in the wounded, to whom she gave all assistance, while refusing to accept any reward. Armed with a revolver she went out and succeeded in overcoming two German soldiers who, hidden in a nearby house, were firing at the first-aid station."

No mention is made in the official record of the fact that she shot down the two Germans when their bayonets were within a few inches of her body; and that later on she destroyed, with hand bombs snatched from a British grenadier's stock, three more foemen engaged in the same despicable work.

Nor is it set forth how, when the British line was wavering under the most terrible cyclone of shells ever let loose upon earth, Emilienne Moreau sprang forward with a bit of tri-colored bunting in her hand and the glorious words of the "Marseillaise" upon her lips, and by her fearless example averted a retreat that might have meant disaster along the whole front. Only the men who were in that fight can fully understand why Sir Douglas Haig was right in christening Emilienne Moreau the Joan of Arc of Loos.

All this happened during the last great offensive of the allies in Artois, between Arras and La Bassée. For almost a year before Emilienne Moreau, who is now just seventeen, had lived in Loos under the rule of the invader. During almost all of that time the village had been under the allies' artillery fire. Yet neither she nor her parents made any attempt to move to a safer place. [272]

Their home was in Loos, and some day, they felt sure, the Germans would be driven back. They were always short of food. Sometimes they faced death by starvation, as well as by bombardment.

But they remained, and Emilienne even contrived to continue the studies by which she hoped to become a school teacher.

Like the historic Maid of Orleans, the maid of Loos has not only the warlike but the diplomatic genius. Despite the dangers she faced because she was both young and comely, she succeeded in gaining the Germans' confidence to such an extent they entrusted to her much of the administration of what remained of the village.

Children whose parents had been killed or taken away as prisoners were put in her care, and she was permitted to give them what little schooling was possible under the conditions. She was at the same time the guardian angel of her entire family; for her father, a hot-blooded old veteran of 1870, frequently put them in danger of drastic punishment by his furious denunciations of the enemy.

His chagrin so embittered him that, what with that and scanty nourishment, he died. Then Emilienne became the protectress and sole support of her mother and her ten-year-old brother.

She buried her father with her own hands, in a coffin built by her brother and herself, there being neither undertakers nor carpenters left in Loos. And she continued to go quietly about her many tasks, still stifling within her the resentment against the ever-present "Boche," until there came that glorious day when she knew the allies' offensive had begun. [273]

For three days the girl huddled in the cellar with her terror-stricken mother and little brother waiting for the end of that awful cannonade which she realized was destined to bring the British to Loos.

Every minute of those seventy-two hours she and every one of the handful of old men, women and children in the village were facing death, but she told an English officer after it was all over that to her it had been the happiest time since the German occupation began.

As soon as Emilienne heard among the deep notes of the guns the sharp reports of rifles she rushed out into the street and into the midst of the first phase of the battle. The British were driving the Germans before them at the point of the bayonet, but there was still much desperate activity going forward with bombs and hand grenades, for remnants of the German main line were ensconced strongly in various fortlets and bombproofs scattered among the trenches. On every street of Loos the wounded lay thickly.

Emilienne saw there was only one way she could help them, and so very swiftly she turned the Moreau house into a miniature hospital, and with the aid of the British Red Cross men she tended as many wounded as she could drag from the maelstrom of the fight.

It was when the first lull came that she detected the firing upon her first-aid station. How she followed and shot down the two Germans responsible for this wanton attack is narrated in the official report. Not long afterward she located three more in the act of perpetrating the same outrage, and this trio she despatched with grenades borrowed from a British sergeant.

Although it was the first time in the war that a woman had fought with hand bombs, such was the confusion of the battle that her brave exploit passed unremarked until it was revealed by a special correspondent of a Paris newspaper, the *Petit Parisien*, who got the story from British soldiers. From the same source all France learned that because a young girl had been courageous enough to sing the "Marseillaise" amidst the din of battle the British troops had ceased to falter in their advance, and the village of Loos had again become part of France. [274]

The spirit of Jeanne d'Arc, which inspired Mlle. Emilienne, is abroad, not only in her native France, but among the women of France's allies as well. Their heroines emerge in the war news day by day—sometimes individually, sometimes en masse.

There is an actual "Regiment de Jeanne"—a whole corps of French and Belgian women commanded by Mme. Louise Arnaud, who has obtained permission from the War Minister to put them in uniform. The corps is for general service at the front, one-third of the members to be enrolled as combatants, drilled and armed like ordinary soldiers, and all able to ride and swim.

Mme. Arnaud is the widow of an officer who was killed in the war. Her father was a merchant ship captain of Calais. Her new "amazon" command is to be officially designated the "Volunteer Corps of French and Belgian Women for National Defence."

Servian and Russian women are fighting alongside the men in the trenches along the Balkan and other fronts to-day. Mme. Alexandra Koudasheva, a distinguished Russian literary lady and musician, has been appointed Colonel of the Sixth Ural Cossack Regiment of the Czar's army, for her valiant services in the field.

England has the London Women's Volunteer Reserve, headed by Col. Viscountess Castlereagh, which drills regularly at Knightsbridge Barracks and has reached a high state of efficiency, both in manoeuvres and the manual of arms. [275]

Many of the English women soldiers are assisting the authorities as guards of railway bridges and other points of military importance in out of the way parts of the country.

The British Government shows no disposition to make use of the women in fighting, but many of the women themselves are eager to fight. The "suffragettes" have made themselves remarkable by demanding a more vigorous prosecution of the war.

The reports generally agree that the women fight with great bravery and some even say that they display greater bloodthirstiness than men. This is an interesting question which has hardly yet been settled, although psychologists have furnished an explanation why we should expect them to be more ferocious. They are of course more emotional and when circumstances such as an attack on their homes or children force them to overcome their womanly instincts and resort to fighting, they throw away all restraint and fight with mad, instinctive ferocity.

IV—STORY OF RUSSIAN PRIMA DONNA WHO SAVED VIOLINIST

A terrible tragedy, this cruel war that is tearing and searing Europe, but joy is sometimes an offspring of sorrow. In this instance one wonders if anything less strange and stern than an international earthquake would have delivered the beautiful Nadina Legat into the arms of Enrico Arensen. True, Arensen is a great singer and a distinguished musician, but he is a plebeian, whereas Mlle. Legat (her stage name), also a brilliant artist, is a member of a noble Russian family, the favorite daughter of General Schuvatoff, who is at present leading an army on the Roumanian frontier. Russian aristocrats, even if they have so far descended from their pedestals as to sing for the public, do not lightly relinquish their hereditary traditions, or if they listen to the pleadings of a lowly lover, a haughty parent intervenes and nips the tender affair in the bud. In this instance, however, it was Mars, and not Cupid, who broke the bars. [276]

When you sit through a performance of grand opera—almost any one of those combinations of drama and music which retain their hold upon the public—you cannot fail to be impressed by the tragic misfortunes which pursue the hero and heroine. The wise composers of grand opera see to it that the principal tenor and the prima donna have troubles calculated to call forth their highest powers of vocal expression. To find these strange and inspiring situations they have searched the dramatic writings of the master-poets of all nations and periods.

Real life, however, occasionally moves a living hero and a living heroine in ways which the master-poets of grand opera could not foresee. By a strange coincidence that has happened to a principal tenor and a prima donna who are impersonating together before grand opera audiences

classic heroes and heroines whose history and troubles were much less thrilling than their own.

Its coloratura soprano, formerly of the Russian Imperial Opera, is Mme. Nadina Legat, the much beset Gilda in "Rigoletto"—drawn from Victor Hugo's "Le Roi S'Amuse"; the heroine of "La Traviata," otherwise the consumptive Magdalene, Camille, created by the younger Dumas; the tragically unfortunate Lucia, for whom Donizetti went to Walter Scott's "Bride of Lammermoor."

The beginning of the story is essential because of its bearing on the "big situation." Legat and Arensen enjoyed their first great opera triumph together at the famous La Scala, in Milan, she was Gilda and he the Duke in "Rigoletto." Though both are of Russian birth, this was their first meeting. As La Scala is recognized throughout Europe as the final "acid test" of an opera singer's qualities, the status which both had attained separately in their own country was of comparatively small consequence. With nerves tense to the breaking point, each concentrated on the task of winning that cultivated, critical Milan audience.

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At rehearsals their quarrels were rather fiercer than is usual between the principal tenor and the prima donna.

"At that time I could hardly endure him," says Mme. Legat. "We quarrelled terribly. He seemed so unreasonably insistent on certain details at the rehearsals that I considered him unbearable, insupportable."

But Mme. Legat confesses that this feeling did not survive the triumph which they won together. Shortly afterward, when he departed to fill an engagement with the Imperial Opera in Berlin and she was summoned back to Russia, they parted as friends. If they had developed a stronger feeling for each other, neither was aware of it.

They went about their separate opera affairs. The beginning of the European war found Arensen still an opera favorite in Berlin and Vienna. Mme. Legat was spending the Summer at Nice, after two years of distinguished success in Russia, upon which the Czar himself placed the imperial stamp. She wished to return at once to Petrograd, but hearing from her mother that the latter would come to her, she remained at Nice until the Russian Hospital at Monte Carlo was founded, when both became nurses there.

And, month after month, while the celebrated opera soprano was nursing wounded soldiers, not knowing nor caring about anything else, Arensen, the tenor with whom she had quarrelled so fiercely on the stage of La Scala, was virtually a prisoner of war in Germany. For ten days after the beginning of hostilities he continued his successful appearances in Berlin—and then, without warning, the blow fell.

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Some said that rival singers, native Germans, directed suspicion against him, as though inquiring: "Russia is our enemy. What is this Russian doing here?"

One night German soldiers arrested him at the opera house and he was interned as an enemy alien. He appealed to the Government for release, pointing out that he was above the fighting age—as he then was, which was before the Russian army age limit was raised—and Germany would lose nothing by letting him go home. The suggestion fell upon deaf ears. His subsequent efforts to obtain his release the tenor himself relates:

"I was a prisoner for twenty-four hours in the Hausvogter Gefangniss, which is the delightful name the Berlinese give to the institution where they intern aliens. I sent a letter to the Kaiser himself, before whom I have many times sung, asking my release.

"It was not long before I received an answer to the letter, granting my request—a communication from the Kaiser. Of course, there were conditions. I was to go to America as soon as it was practicable for me to do so, anyhow, but that was not sufficient guarantee for the meticulous German war office.

"No, indeed. It was really a very solemn procedure. I had to sign an oath in German and Russian that I would never take up arms in any way against Germany or her allies. My word, once given, was sufficient. The German military commander in charge of the prison camp gave me my freedom, and I received a passport that permitted me to leave the country. On my last night in Germany some German officers opened champagne in my honor.

"I went through Switzerland to Italy, where I remained for some time—in fact, during the greater part of the long conflict that finally broke down the barriers of neutrality and led to Italy's enlistment in the war against her former allies. Eventually I crossed the Piedmont to the border town of Mentone, where I contemplated entering France.

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"Alas! Here misfortune began anew. I had barely entered the town when I was halted by a French frontier guard. From that time on I was treated pretty harshly.

"The French Government put me under strict surveillance. I was forced to report twice a day at the town police headquarters, and was really under suspicion at all times. The reason was, of course, that my associations with so many Berlin people were known—the French were aware that I had remained in the German capital after war broke out, and did not purpose to take any chances with me.

"I appealed to the Russian Ambassador in Paris for help, but was turned down pretty coldly. 'I can't do anything for you,' was the gist of his reply to my request, 'because I know that you have a

lot of German friends.'

"The outlook was, then, that I should have to remain practically a prisoner until the war was over. It was a pretty black future. At almost any time, something might happen, I suppose, that would give the French reason to think that they had been too lenient in merely keeping me under surveillance. I might have been interned and placed in a real prison camp.

"But Providence intervened. One day last Spring, just after the first Russian troops had come to France, I met a Russian soldier while he was off duty and had the opportunity I longed for to talk with someone who used my native tongue. When he learned my identity, he was much interested, and he gave me some news that proved a godsend. [280]

"'You are Arensen, the tenor!' he said. 'How remarkable! Mme. Legat, of the Imperial Opera at Petrograd, is only a short distance from this place—in the Russian hospital at Monte Carlo!'

"Imagine how the news delighted me! Here, at last, was a friend on whom I could count. I thanked the man profusely for the information he had given. Then I went to my lodgings and wrote an appeal to my country-woman."

The exact wording of that appeal has not been submitted for publication. Its effect upon Mme. Legat was electrical. For the first time in nearly two years she became oblivious to her immediate surroundings—shattered and bleeding war heroes and the gruesome accessories of a military hospital. In all those months she had hardly thought of the quarrelsome tenor who had shared her triumph at La Scala. Now, suddenly, he occupied her whole mental vision—the central innocent victim of an impending tragedy.

So intense was that vision that it overwhelmed her with the vividness of reality. She saw French soldiers dragging Arensen, her countryman, from his prison cell. She saw them place him with his back against a wall. She saw them blindfold him—and she could hear the tramp, tramp of the firing squad. Those grim human instruments of martial law! They turn face to face with the doomed prisoner—their musket butts ring upon the concrete pavement of the prison yard....

Suddenly another figure, that of a woman, rushes upon the scene and falls upon her knees before the commandant of the firing squad.

Mme. Legat recognized this figure as herself—and with the terrifying vision constantly before her eyes she rushed off to Paris to make her personal appeal to the Russian Ambassador. [281]

In the quiet, severe, official atmosphere of the Russian Embassy Mme. Legat calmed herself, collected her wits and prepared to measure them with those of M. Isowsky, her country's chief representative at the French capital. The Russian Ambassador paid to her the homage due to a celebrated singer—and then resumed his frigid official aspect. At her mention of Arensen he froze.

"But, Monsieur Arensen is a fellow Russian—our countryman."

"Madame," said the Ambassador, curtly, "I am by no means positive that Arensen is a loyal Russian. For two years he has lived in Germany and Austria—our two most powerful enemies. He acquired hosts of German friends. He comes to France plastered over with German credentials. He bears the Kaiser's own signed permit to leave Germany. He—"

"Do you believe that I am a loyal Russian?" demanded Mme. Legat.

The Russian Ambassador smiled graciously. Ah, he had no doubt of Madame's loyalty.

That awful vision still obsessed her. She realized that there was nothing she would not do to save Arensen. She remembered that she was the daughter of a general in the Imperial Russian army. She drew herself up to her full height and looked the Russian Ambassador straight in the eyes. She said:

"I will vouch for M. Arensen. I will guarantee that he is a loyal Russian, and will remain so."

"Um—," pondered M. Isowsky. "Well, well—um—how can you be sure? How can you assure me?"

Right then and there Mme. Legat felt a sudden emotion, and knew what she was going to do—what she wanted to do—to dispel that tragic vision.

"I'll give you the assurance of a wife," she said. "I'll marry him!" [282]

The Russian Ambassador was baffled—admitted it. He signed the papers that gave Arensen his freedom as a loyal Russian. The heroine herself relates the sequel:

"Like Tosca in the opera, I sped to him bearing freedom. I didn't have to tell him the whole story—not then. We found that our old acquaintance, begun at La Scala, had blossomed into love during our separation. So he did the proposing. We were married just an hour before the *Lafayette* sailed, bringing us to the United States."

The Story of a Sensational Escape from the Germans

Told by Sergeant "Maurice Prost," of the Belgian Army

"Maurice Prost"—now a sergeant in the Belgian army, escaped from Belgium, with a party of over forty men and two women, in very romantic circumstances. How he and an Alsatian outwitted the Huns is here narrated in his own words, as recorded by a correspondent who met him in Paris. For obvious reasons all the names have been disguised in this tale in the *Wide World Magazine*.

I—"I WAS IN A CAFE IN LIEGE"

The outset of the whole affair dates from one intensely cold day in the middle of December, 1916. I had slipped into an obscure *café* in a small street in Liége as much in search of tranquility of mind as with the object of getting a comforting glass of hot coffee. With thousands of other Liégeois I was trembling under the reign of terror caused by the daily slave-raids, which, ever since their inception a fortnight before by order of that arch-criminal, the Kaiser, had raised a mighty cry of anguish from the stricken city.

It was with a sigh of relief that I found the place was empty. Taking a seat at one of the little marble-topped tables, as near to the meagrely-heated circular stove as I could get, I prepared to snatch a brief spell of quietness from that day of sudden alarms and haunting fears.

But I had no sooner taken my first comforting gulp of the steaming hot liquid, served by a careworn woman in widow's weeds, than an incident occurred which sent a cold thrill to my heart. The *café* door opened, and in walked a German soldier, dressed as a *feldwebel*. After taking in the interior with a quick glance he clanked straight up to the stove, rubbed his hands vigorously, and, calling for a "*Café bien chaud*," in excellent French, sat down opposite to me with a formal "*Bonjour!*" [284]

I responded to his greeting with all the indifference I could summon up, but, eyeing him suspiciously, my inner self uttered the word "*Pincé*." There could be no doubt about it; I had "got dropped on" at last. Immediately my mind became once more engrossed with thoughts of the loathsome beast I had pictured the Huns to be—a huge octopus, faced by defeat and death, which had begun to suck the last drop of blood out of my unfortunate country by sending tens of thousands of men, women, and children into captivity. Now, at last, one of its tentacles had writhed my way and was about to seize me up! My heart was filled with a fierce hatred of the *feldwebel* sitting opposite me. A cynical smile seemed to lurk in his eyes—that look of inexorable cruelty which I had seen so often on the faces of the Huns as they went from house to house, dragging sons and daughters from the arms of their aged parents and driving them off into exile with the butt-ends of their rifles. These daily and nightly scenes, terrifying though they were had fascinated me. Should I make a clean breast of it and drag the mask from the rascal's smiling face, or spring at his throat and shake the life out of him?

Whilst I was in the midst of these conflicting thoughts the *feldwebel* drew forth a packet of cigarettes and, having pulled one half out held it towards me with a well-assumed air of good fellowship.

"Have a smoke?" he said. "It's a jolly cold day, *mon ami*. One's glad to be indoors to-day—even in a badly-warmed place like this. Mine's a particularly icy job, I can tell you." [285]

I accepted his cigarette with the feelings of a condemned man who has been granted his last smoke.... "*Merçi!*" I muttered. Then, becoming suddenly bolder, I added, not without a touch of scorn: "Yes; your job *must* be particularly cold these nights, going from house to house between twelve and one in the morning. How many did you rake in yesterday?"

"House to house? How many did I rake in?" repeated the *feldwebel*, reflectively, as he lit his cigarette. His smile quickly developed into a laugh, which would have exasperated me beyond measure had he not hastened to add: "Ah! I see. *Eh bien*, my friend, you're quite on the wrong track. My job is on the water, thank goodness. I've nothing to do with the raids. I've not sunk so low as that yet—and I don't intend to, either. You're a Belgian, aren't you?"

"Yes," I replied, still somewhat defiantly. "And you're a German, I suppose?"

"*Malgré moi*—in spite of myself. As the saying goes: 'The cowl does not make the monk.' I'm an Alsatian—Baldens by name."

The man was frankness itself. His open manner and the declaration of his nationality disarmed me at once. Whatever my first suspicions may have been, there was no gainsaying the sincerity of his attitude, the cordiality of that phrase, "*mon ami*," with which he interlarded his confidences, for we had not been in conversation more than ten minutes before both he and I dropped into the confidential tone of old acquaintances.

"Quite an excusable mistake on your part, when one comes to think of it," continued Baldens. "Well, as I was going to tell you, I'm on the water—that is to say, on the tug-boat *Anna*, stationed on the canal leading into the Meuse at Devant-le-Pont-lez-Visé. Ugh! it's cold work when the wind's blowing from the north or east! There are four of us on board, including the captain, and we've been in charge of the *Anna* ever since she was seized by the German Government. They're an uncongenial lot, and the captain's the worst of the three. If I were to tell you how deep my love is for France you'd be able to realize, *mon ami*, what my feelings are when I'm with those three [286]

Boches on a dark night on board the *Anna*. Many times, when on guard, I've thought of parting company with them. But that's easier said than done."

Baldens, the patriotic Alsatian, obliged to serve as a non-commissioned officer in the German army, proceeded to enlarge on his devotion to *la belle France* and, growing still more confidential, told me of his dreams of attempted escape from Belgium. To make a long story short, he and I finally put our heads together, and, over many hot coffees and innumerable cigarettes, hit on a plan by means of which we hoped to gain our liberty and assist a number of others to gain theirs. How we managed it I will now explain.

II—THE KIDNAPPED CREW ON THE "ANNA"

Three days after this fortuitous meeting, Baldens and I met at Devant-le-Pont-lez-Visé, not far from Liège, in order to study the disposition of the land and water. At a short distance from the *Anna*—one of those massive, coal-black tug-boats so familiar to the inhabitants of the banks of our Belgian canals and rivers—was a public-house frequented by boatmen; and near to it we found an equally convenient private house, which, as it was to let furnished, we took on a monthly tenancy. You will comprehend the reason for this when I add that, having made these preliminary preparations, I returned to Liège and began getting together a party of citizens who, in hourly dread of deportation, were anxious to join in any well-thought-out scheme of escape. Presuming that we succeeded in getting possession of the *Anna* and navigating her out of the canal into the Meuse, and thence to Dutch waters (for that was the ambitious plan we had in view), we had to have some place where we could temporarily harbour our fellow-adventurers before they went on board. I had no difficulty, I can assure you, in finding volunteers. No fewer than sixty people expressed their willingness to join us, and did, in fact, assemble at the house in question on the night fixed for carrying out our plans. True, eighteen of these got frightened at the last moment and returned home, on the plea that the risk was too great, as the boat would have to run the gauntlet past German sentries. Over forty, however, including two brave women, remained staunch and stuck to us.

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It was a pitch-black night just five days before Christmas when Baldens and I got our little party of fugitives under that convenient roof and started active operations by sauntering in the direction of the *Anna*, with the object of inviting the captain and crew to have a glass at the neighbouring "pub." The three toppers took the hook, daintily baited by Baldens, in splendid fashion, and—one bottle leading to another—we kept them at it until turning-out time. But it takes a lot of liquor to fuddle a Boche completely, and, though we arranged to mix their drinks pretty often and let them have the lion's share, they were still in possession of their senses when they started back for their cabins on the *Anna*. However, the far-seeing, ingenious Baldens was with them, and I knew he could be trusted to finish the job, especially when he whispered to me, after wishing me a boisterous good night in which the others joined:—

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"Everything will be ready, Prost, in an hour's time. You can all of you come aboard then and assist in the finishing touches. *Au revoir!*"

Back with my flock in the furnished house, where I found them waiting in great anxiety, I explained how things were going, and an hour later (how the time did hang on our hands!) we all sallied forth. I led the party in single file through the darkness, and it was an immense relief to me on reaching the *Anna* to find that Baldens was waiting for us—a clear proof he had succeeded in his object and that the coast was clear.

When we got below we found the captain and his two men stretched out on the floor, dead drunk, and chloroformed into the bargain.

"Now, quick's the word and sharp's the motion," said Baldens. "Off with their uniforms. And who'll volunteer to put them on? Prost, find three men who are about the same size as these fellows—three cool-headed men who don't mind facing danger."

It was not at all an easy task undressing and redressing those three helpless lumps of Boche humanity, but we managed it all right, in the dim light from a hanging lantern, and in a little over half an hour three Liégeois, armed with Mausers, were impersonating the German guards on the deck of the *Anna*.

We were to be off on our voyage as soon as possible. Steam was to be got up without delay, so several of us, with the assistance of Baldens, who, of course, knew the tug-boat from end to end, set to work to do our best to light the furnaces. Whilst we were in the midst of this work, which required to be done with the greatest caution, in order not to arouse the suspicions of the German patrol, whose measured footsteps could be heard along the towpath every half-hour, a tremendous uproar arose in the cabin where we had left the three prostrate Germans. Baldens and I rushed in, with drawn revolvers, and were just in time to prevent the captain—who had come to his senses and taken in the situation at a glance—from dashing up on deck and raising the alarm. He was a powerfully-built man, and it took the two of us to master him. He fought like a tiger, literally with tooth and nail. Finally, however, we got him in a corner, and, whilst I was pinioning him from behind, Baldens kept him covered with his six-shooter, which he threatened to empty into his carcass if he moved another muscle. Thereupon the mastered man caved in and begged for mercy in the classic phrase: "*Kamarades! Kamarades! Nicht kaput!*"

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III—"WE BOUND AND GAGGED THE GERMAN CAPTAIN"

When we had bound and gagged the obstreperous captain of the *Anna* we completed our work as stokers, and, with infinite care, lest we should attract the attention of the sentinels of a neighbouring lock, began to manœuvre the boat along the canal. It was necessary to pass through this lock in order to reach the channel which leads into the Meuse. The *Anna*, with its crew of

over forty fugitives, drew more than two metres of water, so we were confronted with the problem of the depth of the water in this channel. Was it sufficiently deep to accommodate us? Please remember that amongst the members of our improvised crew there was not a single boatman, not a single *homme du métier*. And remember, too, that we knew that if we were caught in the act we should all of us be ranged in line against a wall and shot without mercy!

I must confess that at this juncture the situation began to look very black indeed; and a certain amount of panic reigned among our flock. Yet no one asked to be put ashore. On the contrary, when, after a little plain speaking, the German pilot and engineer (who had come to their senses and begged to be released from their bonds) consented to throw in their lot with ours and go to their respective posts, willing hands were ready on all sides to assist in opening the lock and measuring the water in the channel leading to the Meuse. The depth was found to be a little over two metres, and the lock was opened without difficulty.

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Slowly and without any untoward incident the *Anna* entered the lock. When it was being closed behind her, however, the gates were worked too rapidly, with the result that the water was thrown into violent commotion. The tug began to roll from side to side, as if on an angry sea, and two of the three boats moored alongside her were smashed to matchwood against the walls of the lock. This accident, however, was actually in our favour, since it prevented the sides of the tug itself from being stove in and helped to propel her into the free water of the channel.

There was now a very faint glimmering of daylight, and the two German sentries stationed on the towpath approached a little nearer to look on at our strange manoeuvres. Luckily, however, their curiosity did not lead them to utter a word of comment or even to make a gesture. When we got into the channel (known as the Canal de la Sucrierie) and began the second part of our long and difficult work—the steering of the *Anna* into the river—these sentinels were joined by three or four other German soldiers, attracted by the unusual commotion at that early hour of the morning. They looked on, evidently quite amused at our efforts. Fortunately for us, it never occurred to them to put any questions to the singular *feldgrauen* with spiked helmets who were busily handling boat-hooks and ropes; and thus it was that the good tug-boat *Anna*, flying the German flag, slowly floated in safety into the Meuse, between two Boche sentries with fixed bayonets.

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What a relief it was to find ourselves in the river! The battle, we thought, was practically over. All we had got to do was to forge ahead at full speed towards Holland and liberty. But, as events proved, we were slightly mistaken in our calculations.

The boilers of the *Anna* were now heated to fourteen atmospheres, and away we went at as great a speed as was prudent in the semi-darkness. After we had proceeded for several miles, Baldens, who had been making sure that the captain was in a more reasonable state of mind, joined me on deck, and, with a grave face, said:—

"Prost, we're not out of the wood yet. The captain's still inclined to foam at the mouth and make trouble, though I've granted him the favour of ungagging him. No sooner had I done that than he began to 'strafe' me and you and everybody, and swore we'd get caught yet, because of the electric cable which the Boches have stretched across the Meuse between Lanaye and Eysden. We must now be getting pretty near the danger zone. Keep your weather-eye open, Prost, for I'm told there's a motor-boat there with machine-guns aboard."

And, sure enough, a quarter of an hour later I spotted this electric cable. Instructions were at once given to the engineer to put on his utmost speed, and everybody save the man at the rudder, was ordered off the deck. The only thing to do was to try to cut through the obstacle.

There was no resisting the heavy weight of the *Anna*. She snapped the wire easily, but as it broke, with an immense flash like summer lightning, one end, unfortunately, got entangled with our screw and rudder, which broke as though it had been made of glass. However, the dreaded motor-boat did not put in an appearance (I suppose the men were still fast asleep), and the tug drifted slowly onwards.

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The *Anna* was now completely helpless, and before we had drifted very far she stuck in the mud—fortunately well within Dutch waters. Needless to say we lost no time in utilizing our third and last boat, and in about an hour everybody, including the still unruly Boche captain, whom Baldens disembarked last of all, was ashore. Meanwhile, the four German sentries in charge of the cable had awakened and, finding the line broken, had got their electric searchlights to work and ultimately located us. It was too late then, however, for them to think of capturing us. They dare not come on to Dutch territory, nor was it prudent for them to fire a shot in our direction. As to their searchlights, they were actually of use to us, since they lit up, here and there, the still dark and unknown ground on which, for a time, we wandered, ere we came to a friendly Dutch dwelling house, where we inquired our way to the nearest village.

After such an exciting and lucky adventure as this, Christmas, 1916, was the happiest I ever experienced. Baldens and I and a number of others who had shared in our dangers spent the day together. I will leave you to imagine the heartiness with which we toasted each other and our mental congratulations on our fortunate meeting in that Liège *café*.

"We Are the Don Cossacks—We Do Not Surrender!"

Told by Herr Roda Roda, the Austrian War Correspondent

The story was written for the *Vienna Neue Freie Presse* by Herr Roda Roda, the most prolific and brilliant of the Austrian war correspondents. It shows a high literary skill and a fine simplicity of feeling. Unlike most war correspondents, Herr Roda Roda can see both sides of the picture. He reproduces the real experiences of the men who do the fighting, throwing into relief their true humanity and their lack of hate; and it is out of such material that the true history of the war on its human side will have to be constructed. When the time for that work arrives Herr Roda Roda will be rated as an invaluable authority. This story, with editorial comment, is translated by William L. McPherson for the *New York Tribune*.

I—A NIGHT MARCH WITH THE AUSTRIANS

Such a silent advance into gloomy, unknown Russia has its own beauty. The night is still, hanging like a dark veil over the land. One sees nothing of the villages which lie to the right and left; one has no idea of the depth of the woods which open before him and then close again; one feels only the sand or the clayey soil under his feet, and has but one measure for everything—the passing of time.

For two days past we have been out of touch with the enemy. On the whole front our machine guns have driven him out of his invisible positions. He has vanished, and only the trenches are there in which he sought again and again to carry on a rear-guard fight. They stretch on both sides of the road which we follow. Deep, black and wavering, the line runs in the dirty gray of the half-melted snow. And on the tops of the low ridges a tender, silvery light glimmers. It is the new day which pierces through the darkness.

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Our brigadier trots by with his staff. The tall, big-boned bay which he has ridden for the last four months throws in our faces for a second the foam of his flanks. The old gentleman sits bent forward in the saddle, as if that forward lurch would help him to see further into the blackness.

No sound anywhere. An icy breeze from the north-east blows in light puffs over us and whistles through the bare branches. Our men move along, silent and patient. Occasionally one lifts his head and scans the sky. Have the heavy clouds which have obscured the night broken at last and will the sun appear? For the sun—that is their greatest longing. They have dreamed of it when the rain beat for hours and hours on the tin of their eating utensils and they have sighed for it in the dampness of the cramped trenches.

To-day the sun is coming. With a pale, iridescent glimmer it announces its imminence on the horizon, gladdening with its first light hundreds of thousands of hard, beard-covered countenances.

Presently day breaks. Again around about the marching column lies the monotonous, melancholy, rolling country which in the last weeks its feet have trodden and into which its spades have dug. These are the same windmills which reach their shattered arms into the air, the same poor frozen birches on the roadside, and on the right hand the same black, cloddy woods which we have so often encountered.

Suddenly there comes a shot—a short, slight report. Not one of our people turns his head. Only one of the munitions train animals which trot behind the company in long teams pricks up his ears for a moment.

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The captain guides his horse up the left bank of the road and inspects the train. His square, creased face, which never smiles, extends to the men an unspoken morning greeting. Every day the company awaits that greeting. And evening never comes without the captain having looked for a second earnestly and curiously into the eyes of every one of his soldiers. His people know that and it makes them strong and tough.

Then the regimental adjutant comes on the jump.

"Herr Captain, take over the command of the battalion! The first battalion will form connection with the tenth division. Clear the wood and drive the enemy eventually toward the north-east!"

Our captain nods and salutes. As he rides on he studies the map and gives his commands simultaneously wherever he goes.

Four scouting patrols separate themselves from the column and swarm over the white and brown patches of open fields to the right. Behind them the companies, bending low to protect themselves, seek their way.

The captain has dismounted and leads. Again and again he signals "Down" with his riding stick to the neighboring detachments and looks through his field glasses. The other officers also inspect the wood's edge, which is now outlined sharply in the purple morning glow.

The patrols become smaller and smaller and vanish behind the first trees.

A minute of waiting and then we go ahead again. Almost at the same moment comes a short, sharp crackling from far ahead of us. The last report sounds like a sort of distant singing in the clear air. Then silence again.

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"Forward," our commandant points with the riding stick. The first company spreads itself out. The others follow slowly in closer order. The situation is not yet cleared up. And again we are rooted for a quarter of an hour to the watery, slippery surface. The wet cold of the earth eats quickly into our bodies. A few of the men lie flat on their backs, using their equipment to protect them from the dampness.

II—"THE WOOD IS FULL OF COSSACKS"

But the sun is now up. With slender, blood-red fingers it grips the tops of the fir trees and casts warm, shining rays over the brown, sun-starved land.

The first news comes back. A lance corporal, with a medal for bravery on his breast, falls flat on the ground before the captain.

"I obediently report: Cossacks. The whole wood is full of Cossacks—all of them dismounted."

"Good!"

Our commander breathes freely. Now we know where we are. We shall soon settle accounts with that pack.

The attack on the wood begins. It is not prepared for by fire, since it is desirable to lose no time. We must strike as quickly as possible, keeping in contact with the neighboring division. And it is marching forward abreast of ours.

With long, hard strides we approach the black fir trees at the forest's edge. A sign from the commandant and the naked bayonets are adjusted to the gun barrels. Many of them have cast for a moment a reflected ray of sunlight into the darkened wood.

The soil clings thicker to our shoes and our pace gets hotter. The faces of the men redden. They know what that means—wood fighting. Either victory at the first dash or a long hand-to-hand struggle—work for clubbed muskets and fists. But the wood lies still before us, as if it is asleep. Only in the tree tops there is a slight rustling.

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Our captain goes on ahead. Now the shadow falls like a curtain drawn behind him. The first company after him. The second in echelon. And still not a shot. My men rush, with necks bent forward, among the first trees. Their countenances are hard and merciless and drawn about the nostrils. Here and there a sharp red spot shows on either cheek.

Suddenly a shot cracks out, and then a volley. And there—opposite the first company—a second, a third volley.

A few soldiers fall groaning against the trees. Here and there one hears the last shriek of a dying man. We sink flat on the soft ground and arrange our front. Before us and both to the right and left of us is the enemy.

But is it the enemy? There some Cossacks shoot singly or in little groups behind the tree trunks and stumps. We see a flat, dirty, green cap appear and vanish again, aimlessly and at random—now very near us and now deep in the wood or sideways in the thicket.

Our captain gives the order: "Both wings bend backward. Fire at will!" And from our skirmish line comes the smothered beating of the Mannlichers—single and separate at first, then more and more concerted, and finally becoming one big volume, with a roaring echo, which envelops the trunks and the tree tops and floats out behind our back into the open.

The shots of our opponents sing over our heads and strike sharply into the timber. The enemy is now here, now there.

Our captain lies on the skirmish line. He has taken the gun of a wounded man and aims long and carefully before he pulls the trigger. Suddenly he springs up. For a moment we see his square, wrinkled face, stiff and impassive as ever; then he swings the rifle butt over his head and shouts: "Forward!"

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The companies are in a narrow, closely concentrated line behind him. An iron rain greets us.

We dash over the first corpses of the enemy. From the soft bed of the fir needles long, blood-stained arms stretch after us—arms of men with yellowish, distorted faces.

Again we are forced to seek cover on the ground. Too many of our people have already fallen. And the enemy, whose front is not yet uncovered, bends around on both sides of us. We must have regard for the safety of our rear. Our first skirmish line takes the form of a shallow, wide-spread curve.

III—"WE DO NOT SURRENDER!"

On the wings the tumult breaks out anew. The captain crawls on his stomach along the front. His people must know that he is with them.

All at once he receives a start. There lies a Russian officer, among our soldiers. His youthful, handsome face is as white as the snow on the branches. His eyes roll and the pale lips try to form a word. The captain bends over him. A file leader says: "Breast and upper leg." They bandage the badly wounded man and give him something to drink.

Our captain wants to go ahead. Then the Russian says to him softly and in correct German, "Don't shoot!"

The captain pushes his cap back on his neck and lifts his eyebrows.

"How so? Will you surrender?"

The other tries to smile. His big, fine teeth gleam white.

"We are Don Cossacks. We do not surrender. But we have had nothing to eat. It is four days already. The horses are dead. And the Russians are already far away."

"How many are you?" asks the commandant.

"We were strong, six sontnias, perhaps. But the woods, the woods! There we stick day and night. And fight and fight. Each for himself, each alone, each without hope."

Our captain presses the wounded man, who seeks to raise his upper body, softly back on the ground.

And while the wood right and left rings with the echoes of musketry he kneels hesitatingly beside the Cossack officer. For the first time something of a soft expression steals over his impassive countenance. There is a slight quiver about the curves of his mouth.

"You must surrender," he says, after a pause, curtly and decisively. "It is an unequal combat."

The Russian shakes his head.

"They will not; we will not. We are Don Cossacks."

"But you must."

The captain springs up and gives the battalion bugler the order, "Cease firing."

The signal is heard with the greatest difficulty amid the thousand-voiced tumult. But slowly it gets the upper hand.

Suddenly the fire ceases along the entire line. Only in the depths of the wood a few single shots still ring out.

Again the captain bends over the injured man.

"We will tell them, you and I. You will give the command to your people. You must give it. And I shall honor your heroes; for they are heroes."

Four men improvise a litter. The Russian is placed on it. He groans at every step of the bearers and his eyes wander from one of them to the other. Our captain goes, head erect, into the darkness of the wood. Behind him go the two bearers with the officer. We wait and wait, clinging breathlessly to the ground. [300]

The sun creeps through the branches and spreads its soft, grateful warmth over us. And of a sudden we are strangely softened, overcome by the light of the day and by the gleam of humanity which, as from another world, for once falls into our hard, hard life.

The minutes pass, slow and noiseless, coming and going without fighting, without bloodshed, without horror.

As the sun mounts higher and higher, the Cossacks gradually gather in our neighborhood. They stream toward us from all directions. The first of them are distrustful and sullen, the last of them storming and hungry.

We are horrified at the nameless suffering in their lean, misery-smitten faces. Then we turn our bread sacks over—and we shudder at the bestial ravenousness with which men can eat.

Our captain and the wounded Russian come with the last group. Both smile a smile such as I have never seen before.

At midday we get in touch with the neighboring division. We bring in 540 Don Cossacks, prisoners.

A BOMBING EXPEDITION WITH THE BRITISH AIR SERVICE

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Daring Adventures of the Royal Fliers

Told by First Lieutenant J. Errol D. Boyd, of the British Air Service

The feats of the British fliers form a thrilling chapter of modern heroism. Their exploits are innumerable. In the defense of London from Zeppelin raids, on the Western and Eastern battle-front, in the Dardanelles, over the deserts of Africa, and along the valleys of the Nile—they are not unlike the crusaders of old in their heroism. We here present one typical narrative—it is the story of a Canadian, from Toronto, who relates his own thrilling experience to a war correspondent of the *New York World* at The Hague. "Boydie," as his friends call him, was shot down by a German anti-aircraft gun from the almost unbelievable height of 12,000 feet. Three cylinders were torn away from his engine. The wings were pierced in five places. His machine dropped two miles, twisting and turning, looping the loop ten times on his way down. It finally landed, right-side up, with the young Canadian safe and sound, just fifty yards inside of Dutch territory. He sprang from his seat and gave brisk battle to the soldiers of Queen Wilhelmina. They overpowered him, and interned him, but not until there'd been a considerable mix-up, in which fists and noses figured prominently—Boydie's fists and some Dutch noses.

I—"BOYDIE'S" OWN STORY OF ADVENTURE

It's the greatest game, the greatest thrill in the world! I used to think that driving a motor car 100 miles an hour was fun. I was in that game in Canada for a while. Then I thought that just riding in a slow old biplane 'bus was a pretty keen proposition. But a chap never knows what real sport is until he's driving his own fast machine, with a pal working a machine gun, and going after the other fellow hell-bent for election. That's the life!

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It makes me laugh now to think of the old biplane "pushers"—with the propellers at the rear—that I used to fool with. Old Farnams and Curtises and Wrights. Why, a chap was lucky to get 65 or 70 miles an hour out of some of them.

It was the proudest day of my life when they gave me my flying ticket and a speedy little Nieuport biplane and said: "Here she is, Boydie. Take her over the Channel. Beat it for Dunkirk. Some of the others are going across this afternoon, so you won't get lost if you follow them. Top o' the luck to you, old Toronto." Half a dozen other machines went sailing over the water, 5,000 feet high, that spring morning doing a leisurely eighty miles an hour and spaced as evenly as a squadron of battleships in parade formation. The leaders were circling about and descending toward an immense open space in front of a long row of hangars at Dunkirk.

It wasn't long after that before I got into my first scrap. I never will forget that, for I made a bally fool out of myself and was mighty glad to get back alive to the station. I had a pretty good machine, a Moran monoplane equipped with a machine gun, and an old chap called Gott, a sergeant, went up with me and sat in the gun seat. I was wild to see the German lines.

"Go and take a look at them," the C. O. said, "but don't cross or you'll probably get jolly well peppered. Those 'Archies' [anti-aircraft guns] can shoot pretty far and pretty straight, you know."

II—"WE FIGHT 8,000 FEET IN AIR"

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I promised to be careful and up we went. At about 8,000 feet I headed her for the German trenches, and in a few minutes we were right over them. Old Gott gave me a nudge then, and right ahead of us, a few miles off, I saw two German Albatross machines coming right for us. Old Gott and I had our telephones on and he said: "What about it, Lieutenant?"

"What do you say if we let 'em have a bit?" I asked him.

"Right-o, sir," said Gott. He was a game chap, that old fellow, and he'd been in many a scrap. I often wonder whether he's still all right. Well, he had a belt of cartridges on the gun, and he got ready to spin 'em out. I stuck the nose of the old bus up in the air and tried to get on top of the Germans. My machine was a better climber than theirs, and so when we passed I was a couple of hundred feet higher. Old Gott pointed the gun at 'em and kept working the trigger. I could see the flames shooting out of the muzzle. But the Boches were pretty busy too. I caught sight of their gunmen working away with their quick-firers as we passed. With the rush of air it was impossible to feel the whiz of any of their bullets; but I knew jolly well that they were pretty close to us, and we found later a lot of holes in our wings.

Well, all of us wheeled, and at it we went again. Gott put on another belt of cartridges and let 'em have it. As we passed the second time one of the Albatrosses dropped a couple of hundred feet. I thought that Gott had winged the pilot, but it must have been only an airhole they struck, for they straightened out and went on.

They're speedy beggars, those Albatrosses. By the time I got turned again and straightened out they were half a mile or so off and driving like the devil over their own country—running away from us.

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"Let's go after them and give 'em what-for, Gott!" I said. "Very good, sir," he answered. So after them we went. I gave the old bus all she had, but I couldn't overtake the Albatrosses, nor even get near enough to have another shot at them. Mile after mile we drove until, finally, we came to

a town—Ghent it must have been—and I thought it was about time to start back. We were only about 6,000 feet high.

All of a sudden there was a little white cloud directly in front of us, a few hundred yards off. We plunged right through it, and I got a sniff of some strong acid-like odor. Then little white clouds began to appear at our sides, and below us and above us. Gott pointed upward and I made the machine climb as hard as she could without standing right on our tail.

I realized then that the Albatrosses had purposely run away from us to lead us into a trap. They had led us right over a long line of "Archies."

There we were, twenty miles or so from home, with every anti-aircraft gun the Germans had peppering away at us. We certainly made a race for it. There was no use circling around and climbing. The only thing to do was to go up as best we could while driving, straight ahead, and trust to luck. To get home was the one thing we wanted.

It took us perhaps fourteen or fifteen minutes to do the twenty-odd miles. And in every mile of that distance there were at least two or three Archies letting drive at us. A couple of minor wires were struck, and old Gott had his clothes torn by a bit of shell. I didn't get hit. But it sure was a hot dash for home, and we were a couple of lucky chaps to get there. I got an awful ragging from the C. O. for being such a fool. Never again did I drive over the German territory so close to the earth as 8,000 feet!

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III—"MY BOMBING EXPEDITION"

I did week after week of scout work, driving over Belgium with observers who noted the movement of German troops from place to place, or took photographs of the trenches and the fortifications back of them, or plotted out the exact location of supply stations and the like, for the purpose of bombing them later.

That's a snappy sport—bombing—but you've got to watch your step, as you say in the States. You mustn't forget to let go all of your bombs before you come down, or you'll be smashed up yourself. I knew one poor chap who made a landing with two bombs he'd forgotten to drop. That was the end of him and his machine. There wasn't much left of either.

It was on a bombing expedition that I met my big adventure—the one that landed me in this country, technically a prisoner.

It was on Oct. 3. Three of us set out with orders to let go a few T-N-T's on some hangars and supply sheds the Germans had at Zeebrugge, some forty odd miles up the coast from our station at Dunkirk. Each of us had six 75-pound bombs under the body of our machine. Pretty deadly things those 75-pounders. They'll make quite a smash. Then I had a dozen or more little hand-bombs, five or six pounders. They're nasty beggars, too. You don't want to be too close to the spot where they land.

We got away in the dark, about 4 o'clock, and, back of our own lines, climbed till we were about 10,000 feet up. Then we headed up the coast and got over the town of Zeebrugge just as daylight was appearing. We located the sheds we wanted, and one after the other of us let go at them. It's a great thing to pull your lever, let the old bomb go whizzing down for nearly two miles, and then wheel around and wait to see what she'll do when she hits. Of course, you can't hear anything, but you see a puff, a burst of earth, and, if you're lucky, maybe you'll see a building go to smash.

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Well, it didn't take long for them to know that we were over them, and they began to let drive with their Archies. The shells began to burst pretty close to my old R. E. P.—a fast, single-passenger monoplane I was driving that day—but I stuck around and let drop all six T-N-T's and hand-bombs. I was separated from the other chaps by this time, and didn't see them, in fact.

I heard in a roundabout way afterward that one of my bombs killed fourteen men and four horses. I don't know whether that's true or not. The story had it that several of the men killed were Belgians. I hope that part of it's wrong. But that's the luck of the game.

Pretty soon a bomb bullet burst only a couple of hundred feet away from me, and right on my level, although my gauge showed me that I was pretty close to 11,000 feet. I said to myself: "You'd best stick her nose up, Boydie, or they'll get you. These Archies must be new ones, for they're throwing steel higher than any I ever saw before." So I climbed and climbed, circling around, until I was a few hundred feet over 12,000. There I felt absolutely safe, and began to look around to see where I was. I had passed completely over Zeebrugge and was pretty well up the coast toward a sort of a strait. I thought I'd best turn around and make back for home while the making was good. So I wheeled and began to think about breakfast. The only thing in my mind at the moment was that I was hungry.

The next thing I knew there was a blinding smash right in front of me. I realized two things—that my propeller was gone and that I was falling like a stone. They'd got me at last. I didn't know whether I'd been hit anywhere or not. I just gave everything up and began to see pretty little pictures of Toronto and New York and my girl in Cleveland, and all that sort of thing. Believe me, I was a scared Canadian. It looked like curtains for J. Errol Dunston Boyd.

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But—you know how it is: if a fellow falls into the water he tries to swim anyhow, even if he can't. He does something instinctively to help himself. So I kept on trying, working my levers without half knowing what I was doing.

You've seen that "falling leaf" stunt that the trick fliers do, haven't you—where the machine just flops from side to side as it comes down, swinging this way and then the other way? Well, that's what my old R. E. P. was doing. Then she'd loop. Some chaps who saw me coming down said she

looped nine or ten times. I'd looped before, but never involuntarily. I was strapped in of course, or I'd have beaten the old bus down to the ground.

IV—"I DROPPED 12,000 FEET FROM CLOUDS"

I don't know how long it takes to drop 12,000 feet. The scientists can figure it out. But, believe me, it doesn't take very long. I was in a sort of a daze from the time I was struck, but it seemed only a couple of seconds before I saw the ground right under me, and—I couldn't believe it then—I was right side up and on a decent angle for landing. I lifted her nose a little bit just before striking, and, so help me, Bob, I got her on the ground with scarcely a bump.

About a quarter of a mile off were a lot of soldiers in gray uniforms. They began to run toward me. "Well, I'll give you German beggars a little row before you stick me in one of your filthy prison camps," I said to myself. As soon as I got the old bus to a standstill I unstrapped myself and jumped out. When the gray-backs got within a hundred yards of me I let drive at them with my service revolver. I slammed all seven shots at 'em, but missed. [308]

I must have been a bit balmy in the bean, for I didn't notice that they weren't firing at me. Then I did a nutty stunt. You know we carry "light pistols." They're things that you use to shoot colored balls of fire with at night, for signalling purposes, when you're going to land, and all that. It happened that I grabbed my light pistol as I jumped out of the seat, so I thought, "I'll give you this, too, you dirty Boches!" And I shot half a dozen beautiful balls of fire at them. I was raging mad.

Then they surrounded me. I'm pretty husky, you see. I've got 180 pounds, and at that time I was hard as nails; so a couple of them, you can bet, took some good wallops before a dozen or so piled on top of me and pinned me down. They began shouting things at me in some language that I didn't understand.

Finally one of them said in English: "We're not your enemies. We're not Germans. This is Holland and we're Dutchmen."

Only then did I stop scrapping with them. They let me up and stood around me with their bayonets ready to give me a jab in case I started anything more. It was some little time before I was able to stop puffing and give a look around at the scenery. Only fifty yards away was the border line between Belgium and Holland, marked by a heavy barbed-wired entanglement and two or three cables through which ran high powered electric currents.

On the other side of the fence were a hundred or more Boches—patrols who had hoped to capture me if I alighted on their side of the barbed wire. But I just beat them to it by a few measly feet. A close shave, what? And weren't they sore. They yelled over the fence at me, and shook their fists and guns; but I swore back at them just as hard as they cussed me. [309]

The Dutch were pretty good to me when I quieted down. They were decent fellows and were only doing their duty in grabbing me for internment. They took me up to a fort in Groningen, and there I stuck from Oct. 3 until the first of this year, when I was instructed by the British Government to give my parole. That meant that I must promise on my word of honor as an officer and gentleman not to try to escape.

I could have got away, I think. I had all arrangements made to make a dash from the fort one dark night, have an automobile waiting outside to rush me to the coast, and I even had a trawler ready to take me and some other chaps back to England. But before we were quite ready to make our dash the word came to give our parole, and we had to abandon the plan.

Story from Lips of a Young Cossack

Told by Lady Glover

The authoress heard this remarkable story from the lips of the young Cossack concerned. It deals with the terrible tragedy that befell the Russian armies in the early days of the war, amid that treacherous labyrinth of lakes, rivers, and morasses known as the Masurian Lakes. This is as she tells it in the *Wide World Magazine*.

I—THE AGED MOTHER WHO REFUSED TO FLEE

"Here I was born, and here I am going to die. It is no use, my son; I am now in the eighty-second year of my age, and I am too old to be transported to a strange place. What is to be will be."

Mooska Zarden took his mother's frail hand in his.

"But I entreat you," he said; "the whole of the Russian population is leaving Dvinsk. There is no time to be lost; even now the German guns are at the door, and the Governor's order is that the whole of the civilian population must be out of the town within twenty-four hours to seek refuge in a safer place, because the Russian army is about to take up the line and make a stand of Dvinsk."

"You are a Cossack," she replied, "and must go wherever you are sent to serve your country; but here I was born, and here I am going to die."

Dvinsk was a fortified town, or "Kerpost," as it is called in Russia, but of late years it has been turned into an arsenal of munitions and material of war, all ready for the appointed day should the enemy try to cross the fair River Dvina. The stream at this point is beautiful and wide; very few bridges span its flowing waters, and these few were now securely held by the Russians. On the southern side of the river the country is flat and low-lying, the land rolling away to the horizon. The approach of an enemy, therefore, would be distinctly visible, while the northern banks are well timbered, and higher than on the southern side, so that an army concealed in the woods, if well supplied with ammunition, could play havoc with the enemy when they tried to cross the river from the opposite bank.

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The Germans have by this time learned the reason why they suffered such an important check at Dvinsk, and therefore I shall not be giving away any military secrets by describing the Dvinsk sector of the Dvina line, which the Russians took up after their retreat from Poland. It was an excellent one from the strategical point of view, and one which they have held ever since.

There are three railway lines available, of great importance for the army—one from Riga to Oriol, which follows the line of the Dvina as nearly as possible; the main line from Petrograd to Warsaw; and a branch line of the Lembo-Rommy railway, with a junction connecting the three together. When the Russian army was about to make a stand at Dvinsk, at the beginning of the war, the civil population of the town received orders to leave, and men, women, and children were sent to seek refuge at a sufficient distance for their safety, out of reach of Prussian guns.

The terror-stricken people had no time to take their household goods or the treasures they so much prized; they simply had to flee, they knew not whither. Vanda Zarden, however, was not among that stricken crowd. With bowed head and prostrate form, she was kneeling before an *ikon* in the home that had been hers for so many years, the home she had been brought up in and where her children were born. Her husband had long been dead, and her sons were all married except Mooska the Cossack, the pride of her life and the comfort of her old age.

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The Cossacks of the Don, the distant Carpathian mountains, and other remote regions are among the most famous cavalry in the world, and it is the ambition of many a Russian mother that her boy will obtain a commission in a Cossack regiment or even a place in its ranks.

Thus it was that Mooska Zarden was only a few hours old when his father registered his name in Dvinsk as a trooper. He was determined that one of his sons should have the distinction of serving the Czar as a mounted soldier; so Mooska was trained for this branch of the service, and learned all about horses. When he joined the regiment it was soon discovered how quickly he could tame the wildest steeds and teach them many things beside their drill. His own horse followed him about like a dog, and would lie down at the word of command. Mooska also taught him to lift a man in his teeth by the belt of his uniform and carry him, which was not a part of the regulation army drill.

And now the hour had come when Mooska must leave Dvinsk, his native town, and the aged mother who refused to flee. His heart was heavy within him at the thought of deserting her in the time of peril; but his regiment was ordered to join the army that was marching towards the Masurian Lake district to oppose the advance of the Huns. This was during the earlier days of the war, when there was not much known about these wilds nor about the lake district that proved so full of surprises for the great Russian armies that were rolling westwards.

There was only one German who knew how to deal with the invasion of East Prussia, and he was soon busily occupied. General Hindenburg had a very intimate knowledge of that particular region, founded upon great experience, and had studied in detail the strategic and tactical bearings of this highly restricted field of operations.

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He had bought large properties in the district, and knew every inch of the ground. He had

secretly deepened fords that were marked on the maps and made new ones that were not marked; he had tested the bearing powers of the quagmires and guns and wagons, and he knew just where men and horses might venture and where they would be swallowed up. Some time before the war, when it was suggested that a big land company should be formed to drain the bogs and lakes and turn them into arable farm land, Hindenburg advised the Supreme War Lord not to let the project be carried out.

"Those lakes," he said, "are more valuable to us than two army corps. No guns will be needed if the enemy advances. You will see when the day comes."

II—HINDENBURG SAT SMILING IN HIS HOUSE

And now Hindenburg's army was on one side of these marshes and the Russians were advancing on the other, and Hindenburg sat smiling in his house, like a spider in its web, stroking his moustache self-complacently. The Huns did not trouble much about the advancing troops, for Hindenburg merely said, "Let them come," and smiled again.

The events that followed were some of the most tragic of the war. Hindenburg watched the results of his calculations surrounded by the *Hochgeborenen*—the princes and generals of the army of the Huns. Can it be wondered that the Duke of Brunswick, who witnessed the tragedy, has since been reported as hopelessly insane? At the age of nine-and twenty he was in command of the German troops at the Russian frontier, and saw the terrible fate of the men who were swallowed up bodily in the treacherous marshes. The cries of the victims and his own helplessness haunted him to such an extent that it is said he lost his reason and, from extreme violence, drifted into a deep stupor of melancholy. [314]

Mooska Zarden was among those who witnessed the terrors of that awful day. Finding the ground soft and muddy, the Russian engineers were sent forward with long planks to make a roadway for the troops to pass over the marshes, little thinking that, owing to the treacherous nature of the ground, the black slime and ooze would soon suck down into the bottomless mire the flower of Russian manhood, and that even the roadway itself would be swallowed up.

The summer sun had dried the surface crust, and reeds and sedge and aquatic plants grew and flourished exceedingly. The Russian army spread out and entered this treacherous zone at different points, according to the disposition of the troops and the branches of the service to which they belonged. Mooska Zarden was riding on the flank of his troop. The sun beat down fiercely, and it grew hazy in the distance as the heat drew up the moisture from the marshes.

Very soon the young Cossack's horse showed signs of uneasiness and alarm. It is wonderful how the human voice can restore confidence and courage in an animal and allay apprehension; but self-preservation is the strongest primitive instinct, and nothing the Cossack could do would soothe the terror of his mount. The horses in front of them were already snorting and whinnying their fears to each other as the trembling brutes felt the marshy land quaking under them.

Suddenly Mooska's horse took the bit in his teeth and bolted back out of the ranks, and bit and spur were of no avail to make him turn and advance again. The panic-terror had come; he was fighting for his life, for now the swamp was giving way and he was sinking at every footstep. Behind them there was being enacted a scene that baffles description as the treacherous quagmire began to claim its toll. The cries and shrieks of men and beasts as they were engulfed added horror to the dreadful situation. [315]

Presently, realizing what was amiss, Mooska dismounted to take the weight off his floundering horse. A discarded plank that he came across enabled him to struggle on by pushing it in front of them, and yard by yard man and beast fought their way to firmer ground, not daring to stop to rest for a moment lest the delay should be fatal. By this time the Cossack was almost exhausted, yet he floundered on with the desperation of despair, for within view was higher ground which he believed to be the edge of the marsh. Could he hold out till then? His panting steed, dripping with sweat and covered with mud, was—like himself—nearly spent, but side by side they stumbled on, with eyes fixed in that goal which was their only hope of preservation. At last the earth felt firmer; they were no longer sinking ankle-deep at every step. Then the Cossack, taxed beyond his strength, fell forward on his face, and everything became a blank to him.

III—THE YOUNG COSSACK IN THE MARSHES

That bit of dry land, as it happened, was the commencement of a low ridge of hard ground on the border of the morass. The exhausted horse stood beside his master, with legs extended and heaving flanks, turning his nose to the wind as he panted for breath. The treacherous marshes stretched away for miles on every side, and the panic-terror ran through the animal like an electric shock. Behind him in the bogs the tragedy wore on to its climax. Maddened horses broke away, men were knocked down and rendered helpless, and animals and humans were sucked down to a dreadful death. The columns in the rear had hardly left the firm road before the darkness of night hid the inferno in front, and only a few stragglers escaped to tell the tale of what befell that day. When the sun was once more high in the heavens, the survivors marched back from that dreadful place with leaden feet, shoulders huddled forward, and red-rimmed eyes; they were thinking of the fearful fate of their comrades. [316]

As they trudged along the dusty road, the weary men stepping slowly under the weight of their packs, they saw a little Cossack horse a short distance from the highway, with drooping head and tired eyes, standing under the shade of an overhanging tree beside a motionless bundle covered with caked mud. The horse whinnied as they drew near, and lifted his odd-shaped burden with his teeth. For a few yards he struggled on with it; then he laid it down from sheer exhaustion.

"It looks like a man; see if he lives," ordered an officer. A sergeant came forward and found that the helpless Cossack was still breathing. How long he had lain there he never knew, for his faithful horse had carried him by his belt little by little, yard by yard, from the place where he had fallen—five weary versts away, they told him—till he reached the shelter of those trees by the roadside. He had never left his master save for a short time to crop the herbage or drink from a pool during that long night and the day that followed. And now, when he could do no more, help had come.

When Mooska Zarden's senses returned to him he seemed to remember lying in the moonlight during that long night, with nothing but the stars above him, and feeling the soft nose of the faithful animal touch his hand; and he would feebly move it to show that he was alive. Then his belt would tighten and he would be dragged on gently for a few yards and laid down again, still only semi-conscious. Now the soldiers were giving him restoratives, but he felt little except the throbbing of his head. He opened his eyes feebly at last, but could not speak or think. When he was placed on a stretcher the horse broke away from the man who was leading him and took his place beside the bearers, every now and then putting his nose against the shoulder of the prostrate figure. [317]

"Let him be till we fall in with a Cossack regiment or some stragglers of his own corps," said the colonel. "He saved the trooper's life."

When Zarden regained his senses he was in hospital, weak and spent by fever; his brain had hardly as yet recovered from the shock. "Have I been ill?" he inquired, but the nurse told him to lie still and ask no questions. As yet he could remember nothing. The sun glinted in through the windows and flecked the white-washed walls here and there with gleams of golden light. There were rows and rows of beds in the long ward, placed side by side, and Red Cross nurses were flitting about among them. It was all very strange to him. After a while his eyes rested upon the *ikon* hanging on the wall. This was the first time he had noticed it, and his memory brought him fitful shadows of the last occasion on which he had seen one. An aged woman, of whom he had but a hazy remembrance, was kneeling before it.

While he was trying to straighten out the tangle of mixed-up ideas in his mind, a cry from one of the beds in the ward held his attention. "Save me; I am sinking!" cried an agonized voice. Then, in a flash, he remembered those pitiful shrieks of despair, and he covered his face with his hands. Memory, that fickle jade, had come back at the point where she had deserted him, and he lay back with closed eyes while pictures floated through his brain of what he had passed through that dreadful day, followed by the starlit night when he could hear the troop-horse cropping the herbage at his side and the strike of the animal's iron-shod hoofs as he slipped over stones, weighted with his burden. Soon it all came back to him. "Bring me a mirror, nurse," he said. It was the first thing he had asked for. He looked at it; then, with a wild shriek, he flung it away. [318]

"It is another—not me! Who am I?" he cried. "My hair and beard are as white as snow! It is not me, Mooska Zarden, any more."

The nurse picked up the fragments of the broken glass hastily, and he lay back raving as he had done in his fever.

"You must dye his hair and beard at once," the doctor ordered, "otherwise he will lose his reason. With care, however, he will recover; it is a nervous breakdown."

IV—AT THE DOOR OF HIS MOTHER'S HOME

Slowly the Cossack pulled round, as the doctor thought he would, and ere long he was sent home to recuperate. The smiling Dvina spread out before him in the early dawn, with the blue, cloudless sky above and the golden sun shining on its shimmering water. On the banks green trees waved in the breeze, and away in the distance the blurred outline of a town was visible in the purple morning haze. As he came nearer to the city, however, and the buildings took distinctive objects of Dvinsk, some of the familiar houses and churches and towers that he knew so well. It was a city shorn of its beauty, a ghost of what it had once been. He thought that his recent illness must have impaired his eyesight, but when he neared the town and beheld great heaps of stones, roofless houses, and walls crumbled to dust a great panic seized his heart. Where was the mother whom he had left there in the house they called their own? Was it, too, a mass of dust and stones? With trembling knees he turned to find the well-known street. A few stray dogs, thin and hungry, wandered about among the rubbish in search of food. A strange silence seemed everywhere. [319]

At last he reached his mother's house. Yes, the roof was still intact; a little broken glass lay about, and there were marks of shrapnel on the wall, but the house stood firm and unharmed. This would be about the hour, he remembered, that his mother would be rising to prepare the morning meal. He put his hand on the latch of the door, and his heart was thumping with emotion. Slowly he pushed it open and entered the little kitchen. Everything was spotlessly clean and neat, and everything stood just where he had seen it last. The kettle was hissing with a welcome sound, and the old black cat was asleep on the hearth, but the bench beside it was empty. He looked round, and the morning sun shone on the polished brasses and lit them up like burnished gold. The pendulum of the big clock was swaying monotonously as of old, and pointing to the hour when the household used to assemble round the oaken table for their morning meal. As the last stroke of the hour ceased to vibrate, a bent figure kneeling in front of the *ikon* raised her trembling hands to it, clasped in an agony of prayer. "Send him home to me, good Lord, that I may see his face once more," she cried.

Mooska Zarden stooped and lifted the prostrate form and folded his mother closely to his heart. [320]

Then he told her the strange story of his miraculous escape, and showed her the well-worn leather belt, with the marks of the teeth of the faithful horse that had saved his life, and recounted to her again and again the tale of the brave animal's pluck and endurance during that long night and those dreadful days of suffering.

"It was the will of God, my son," she said, earnestly. "What is to be, now and for evermore."

ON THE GREAT WHITE HOSPITAL TRAIN—GOING HOME TO DIE

[321]

An American Girl with a Red Cross Train

Told by Jane Anderson, through Courtesy of British War Office

This is a glimpse of a great organization which brings disabled British soldiers from the first line trenches to London. She tells how the wounded who are coming back to England to die—come back smiling. "It's 'eaven, I call it," said a bandaged Tommy of the Great White Train. The story is retold by permission of the *New York Tribune*.

I—"MY CARGO OF WOUNDED MEN"

From a closed British port to London I made a journey in a Red Cross train which, with great scarlet crosses marked on each blind compartment, carried a cargo of ninety-five wounded men—a precious cargo of war that I had seen transferred from the finest of his majesty's hospital ships to the cots of the ambulance train drawn up under the roof of the Admiralty pier.

It was through the courtesy of the War Office that I was permitted to board the hospital ship, to watch the unloading of it, to see each detail of a very complex and splendid organization, and to journey to London in one of the white ambulance trains created and set apart for the grave and pitiful purposes of war. I am grateful for these privileges.

I have come closer to the actualities of this war as it stands—have penetrated the surface of it. For these men who by thousands are returning to England bring with them, each and all of them, the stamp of it. It is in their eyes, the horror of it; it is in their words, in their gestures, the misery and the pain of it; it is written in their faces, borne witness to by every fold of their stained and shabby garments. It is France they are bringing home with them, France and the memory of all the gray and wretched splendor of war. This is in their faces; this and courage.

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At first, when I walked down the concrete pavement at one side of the pier, with its railway lines and great, spreading gray roof, I thought that the hundred men or more whom I saw sitting on benches in a square, inclosed place were but one more unit of the soldiers which throughout England bear testimony to the new army of the King. But as I came nearer to them, saw them sitting there, with on one side of them the white coaches of the ambulance train and on the other, anchored close in, the great white hospital ship with its broad band of green, I knew these were wounded men sent home from France. The slightly wounded men, they call them.

"These are not serious cases," the captain who was in charge told men. "Shrapnel, mostly."

I looked at the long rows of men in khaki sitting on the wooden benches, with their coats drawn loosely over their shoulders, with their bandaged heads and arms and feet showing a very clear white against the dim and gray light of the pier. How patient they were, and how tired they looked! Slightly wounded; shrapnel, mostly. One of them with his arm bandaged from the elbow to the wrist and supported in a wide sling; one of them with his feet wrapped thickly in layers of dressings and covered over with heavy woollen socks; one of them with his left hand in a splint and his right arm wrapped in gauze the full length of it; another man, leaning against the man next to him, with his thin hands folded across his knees, and his head and his face almost covered with fold upon fold of white linen. On his forehead a little round dark stain widened on the clean cloth. Slightly wounded; shrapnel, mostly. Such are the terms of war.

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Then I went with the captain, who was also the disembarkation officer, to stand beside the gangway and see the stretcher-bearers carrying the wounded from the ship. It was such a fine, spotless ship, with her broad band of emerald like a big girdle around her. Her great red cross amidships, that clear and gracious emblem of service, proclaimed her inviolate, symbolized her, transfigured and illumined her; she rested, white, splendid, immobile, the rich sunlight streaming down on her decks.

II—PALLID FACES ON THE STRETCHERS

On the pier the orderlies were waiting.

Sometimes two of the wounded men would come fumbling and staggering down the gangway together, holding to each other. With intense concentration, without any knowledge of what was taking place around them, looking neither to the right nor the left, they progressed step by step, infinitely cautious. They advised each other, admonished each other, argued in an absorbed, gentle monotone, wholly engrossed, set apart, dedicated to this mysterious and immediate moment which lay between them and the harbor of the benches. With each uncertain step, with each circumspect, tentative advance, I think that a new cycle of destiny was spun for them, such was their earnestness and the simplicity of their world.

Thus, slowly, by open magic, the benches steadily filled. I don't know how many men were sitting there, nor how many more men were in the adjoining inclosure. But while I had been watching the unloading of the ship one ambulance train had been filled and had moved out, slowly, silently, toward her nameless destination. For each day, as the new offensive on the Western front fulfills the tragic bartering of men for land, the hospitals of England register toll for victory.

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And this offensive, which has reclaimed territory valuable beyond estimation, was conceived with accuracy and true vision. Men were neither squandered nor offered up in sacrifice. Yet day by day the white ships put into harbor and the white trains come and go, weaving back and forth,

fulfilling the purposes of war.

And I was watching one infinitesimal part of this.... It was moving very surely and precisely, the grave business of transference. I saw with astonishment that the deck was cleared. A little procession of orderlies, bringing empty stretchers, was marching down the pier. I had thought that the ship was emptied, so many men in khaki had passed down the gangway. But I saw, instead, that the work had but commenced.

For from below they were carrying up other men. And these men lay quite still on the stretchers, with their gray blankets drawn close around them. Their faces were very white, that extraordinary clear white of pain. But sometimes when they were carried by they smiled. I think that there were men among these soldiers who had measured the hours of their journey by their own agony. Only suffering could have drawn such deep and searching lines, could have brought such shadings and such contours into men's faces. There was one boy who lay with his hands folded on his chest; his eyes were closed, and the shadow of his black lashes was no darker than the deep circles which furrowed his cheeks. There was neither life nor color in his flesh; his hands had the fine and delicate transparency of a child's hands. Yet, just as he was being carried by, he opened his eyes, made an inscrutable, almost imperceptible, movement with his fingers as if some impulse had impelled him to a gesture which must be unrealized. There was, for one swift instant, the illusion that he smiled. [325]

Yes, there was courage enough among them, these men who were coming home. I marveled at them; I had never thought of that particular degree of courage which lies in the one very simple fact that men—even those men who are coming back to England to die—come back home smiling.

And I marveled more and more at these miracles of war when I went aboard the white ship and saw just what it meant, this long journey of the wounded. I saw all of the splendor of that big ship only as a background for the men who had returned in her. Yet certainly she was both beautiful and splendid. I was told that once in her history she had come into royal favor; be that as it may, whatever the purport of her destiny, she had been fashioned with true understanding. In the wide sweep of her decks, in the very lines and gradations of her, there was that character, that abiding character and personality, which is the inheritance of all good ships of the sea.

It may be that she suffered a little from a certain lavishness, not wholly judicious. For her cabins and her saloons were panelled in woods of many colors and many grains, inlaid according to the obscure ethics of such matters. Not that her fine frescos were not decorative, with their bright cubes and squares and quaint juxtapositions. They shone like satin; in the borders, golden and black, the green, brilliant hangings were mirrored, extraordinarily luminous and rich in texture.

But I liked best her big wards below. I liked their generous proportions and the clean, wide cots, row upon row of them. There was, too, that faint, pleasant odor of antiseptics and new linen. The copper sterilizers, set on shining tables, were resplendent in that cool and colorless interior. The enamelled basins and portable dressing stands were a brilliant and stainless white. [326]

But, above all, there was in this place a certain very fine and definitive individuality. I do not know that there were either details or designs in which it found expression. But indisputably this was a hospital on board a ship. It is true that above each cot, suspended, were two long canvas strips to which were attached a bar of wood, very much like a short trapeze. By means of this a patient could lift himself, so that, with his pillows behind him, he could sit up. Also, there were above certain cots strips of white cloth. These were fashioned like big slings, and they had been conceived by genius. For by the simple means of supporting a bandaged arm or a bandaged foot in them the vibration of the ship, the steady throbbing of her engines, was in a very great measure counteracted. But it was not in these things that the character of this white saloon was revealed. I think, instead, that it was concentrated in one quite simple thing. In this big ward there was but a faint, diffused light; for above the beds, and screening the portholes, was a long, unbroken sweep of green curtains, with black shadows marked in vertical lines. And these shadows, straight, deep bars on the green cloth, swayed a little, changed a little, widened and became narrow with a certain rhythmic, recurrent design. It was the movement of the ship. It was the inflowing and the outflowing of the tide.

III—MYSTERIES OF THE WHITE SHIPS

Then I went up on deck, and there I was shown, that I might savor all the small attendant mysteries of the white ship, the officers' cabins and the staterooms for the nurses. These were, like the saloons, well designed, of good proportions. They were, too, inlaid with stained wood, richly patterned. [327]

And I did not like to leave that ship, but a messenger had come aboard with the word that the train in which I was to go to London would start within five minutes. So I went with the captain and with the doctor who was in charge, and we walked along the platform beside the doctor's train, walked the full length of it, passing coach after coach, each with closed doors and a big scarlet cross painted between the blind windows. It seemed curiously unlike a train, this hospital.

At the door of the first compartment we stopped, and I bade the captain good-bye and thanked him. He said something about hoping that I would not be too late in making London, and there was the conviction in his voice that it was, after all, somewhat of a journey that lay before me.

But to the captain the white ambulance trains and their safe passage to and fro were but just a part of the business of the day. While to me, in this momentous step by which I was to enter the forward compartment, I was achieving a new world. So many, many times I had watched the wounded train passing by, slowly, smoothly, with the clear, broad panels flashing in the sunlight. And I had wondered what mysterious, what grave and splendid facts of war, were concealed

within that inscrutable interior.

And I was to journey to London in one of those great white trains!

I stepped inside; and because the front of the carriage was two broad windows and because it was the first coach, I saw, framed in sills of dark wood, the black, square bulk of the engine, extraordinarily solid and imposing. Outside, on the platform, the doctor was standing with his hand on the frame of the opened door. [328]

The engineer leaned out of his cab. The doctor turned, looked at him, nodded and said, "All right."

The engineer moved back in his seat. The doctor stepped into the compartment and closed the door. Thus, in the most casual and engaging fashion, the ceremony was completed. We were off.

I saw the concrete flooring of the pier moving past on either side and the columnar supports of the pier roof gliding by our windows. Through the open arched space between them I could see the sunlit water and the gray line of a wharf. Beyond, the tall masts of a ship rose very black against a brilliant and intensely blue sky.

There was in the compartment a curious impression of stillness, which I believe was due in great part to the very size of it. Certainly, it was quite the largest carriage I had ever seen. By the windows, placed on either side, were two big couches done in dark blue, with blue cushions; at the foot of one of them stood a square, closed desk, with a continental telephone above. There were also a table and swiveled armchairs, upholstered in gentian-colored cloth, with gold borders. A vase, filled with bright flowers, stood on the table; an opened book, turned face downward, had been left on the couch. And this was a compartment in a train.

IV—STORY OF THE DOCTOR ON THE GREAT WHITE TRAIN

"We have to do what we can with them," the doctor said, standing by the desk and turning over some papers. "We just about live in them, you know."

"This, of course," he explained, "is only a short trip, comparatively. Sometimes they are rather bad."

"Anything can happen, you know. Now, there was a man we had last night—we knew it was a serious case, yes. An amputation—only just got him off the train in time. There wasn't anything to be done. He died an hour after." The doctor sat in the corner of the couch, facing me, looking out of the window where the gray smoke from the engine whirled against it. "I've never had a man die on board," he said slowly. "But there are times——" he hesitated, waited a little, then shook his head. "Yes, there are bad times," he murmured. [329]

He leaned back, took up the book beside him, closed it and placed it on the desk. His khaki tunic and braided sleeves, with their three small stars, showed very dark against the gentian cushions. "It's the responsibility," he said, the even, meditative tone of his voice carrying quite clearly in the curious stillness, "and the uncertainty—the fact that you don't know. Anything can happen...."

"There was the night they stopped us and told us about the Zeppelins.... That was the second time my train had been bombed—there was another night, but that wasn't very bad. But this night the train was filled up, all cot cases, two amputations, possibility of hemorrhage. And what are you going to do? You have to get them to the hospitals. So we went ahead...."

"They were dropping them pretty thick that night—oh, yes, we saw it all right. Quite a thing to see, that!"

Then he smiled, that friendly Scotch doctor, smiled and fumbled with the black cord of his eyeglasses which had caught on the button of his shoulder strap. "Pretty show it would have been," he announced, with a certain gentle causticity, "if they had hit us."

Then he stood up abruptly, waited for a moment to look out the window where the broad fields were wheeling past in great squares of color, and said: "There are one or two serious cases to-night. We'll go back now." [330]

And he walked down and opened the door beside the closed desk. I saw before me a little narrow vestibule with mahogany walls. I stepped into this vestibule, one short step carried me across the threshold; but in this moment I entered a wholly new world. It was, in absolute truth, a world complete, self-sustained; there was not even the illusion of its having any concern whatever with what was not contained within itself. It was war.

There were, in certain cupboards and certain little rooms opening off the corridor, bandages, gauze, linen, instruments, medicines. There was, too, a compartment of some proportions where a man at a typewriter was making up the nominal roll. Also, in this extraordinary world of war there was a kitchen; the cook asked me in to show me the generous pots of broth simmering on his stoves. But it was the dressing room, with its enameled operating table and its brilliant overhead light, which was the axis of this compact and infinitely tidy little universe. It was in this room, this room built in a train, that it had been decided whether or not men were to live or die.

"Yes, it's a bit difficult—operating here," the doctor admitted. "What with the motion of the train and all." But he added hastily that it was not on board ambulance trains that the true miracles of science and of medicine had come. It was in the dressing stations, in the casualty clearing stations, in shabby little rooms under shell fire, where the light was a lamp or a candle or anything, where water itself was at a premium. "Nobody believed," the doctor said, "that surgeons could do what *they* have done."

Then we went down a very narrow corridor and, quite suddenly, I found that we had entered the first coach filled with wounded men. It was deep and narrow, with a white, concave roof. But it [331]

was above all a very long coach, and running the full length of it were two double tiers of cots. The aisle between these tiers was of good width and miraculously clean. The cots were wide, with thick mattresses.

In each of these cots a man was lying. They were lying as if they were asleep, with their faces turned away from the light. The coach was very still.

I walked down the aisle, following the doctor. I was afraid of the movement of the train throwing me against one of those white cots where those curious, inert, motionless things were. But the doctor was hurrying along quite briskly, and explaining to me the amazing new diseases of this war, talking in a low, veiled, professional tone and looking at his patients each one, as we passed by.

"There's, of course, shell shocks," he said. "General collapse. Nerves simply give way—can't stand it. The wear and the strain, and the noise, the horror and the rest of it—"

"They come home like this—" We had stepped by one of the cots where a man was lying with his face turned straight toward the light. His eyes were closed, his thin, nerveless hands lay, palms upward, on the gray blanket. The slender veins in his wrists showed very clear.

"He's been like that perhaps for days," the doctor said. "Doesn't see, doesn't hear, doesn't feel. Absolutely unconscious. Total collapse.

"Yes, oh, yes, he'll be all right. It's just time, you know. Time and care and patience. Like any other shock—only ten thousand times greater. It's wonderful to see how their memory comes back, slowly, slowly.... You wouldn't believe what man can live through. You wouldn't believe it— it's only flesh and bone, after all, you know. [332]

"Then there's this thing of trench feet—pretty bad that. Slow rot. Wholly new disease. And for that matter, there are plenty of them—not yet even named, some of them. But, of course, it's mostly shrapnel. Shrapnel and amazing things...."

And so, like this, we passed through coach after coach—ninety-five wounded men there were on board. And the doctor was stopping every few steps to look at a dressing or to ask a question. And I was walking behind him, filled with wonder and amazement. I had not known it was like this—the getting wounded men back from war. They were so patient and so pitiful and so happy. And I think that they, too, were sometimes filled with wonder.

For when I stopped to talk to them they said always that it was a miracle, a miracle being on that train.

"I never knew I was goin' to be 'ere," a Tommy told me. He was lying, both of his bandaged feet propped up at the foot of his cot. "They got me in both legs," he explained. "Fair an' square. Shrapnel. Two days I was lyin' out. Two days. No, you wouldn't believe—an' I wouldn't either, hadn't I done it. Frightful it was. H. E. spatterin' 'round everywhere. They were rippin' things open, them two days. Oh, I was sorter goin' out o' me mind toward the end of it.... Don't know where I'd got to—we was pushin' on. Down I went. Down I stayed. Wasn't no good tryin' to crawl.... Yes, I was a bit out o' me mind, thinkin' all sort-a things out there. Two days, an' a night of it thrown in. 'In the legs I'm 'it,' I said to meself. 'Wish they'd blowed off me arms.... *I'm done,*' I said. But remember 'em gettin' me hout. Two days I'd 'ad. Two days in 'ell.

"Then I was put in a barn, full up it was, an' they went an' strafed that. Busted out a whole side of 'er. Saw 'er cavin' in—frightful noise. 'That's crocked up,' I said. [333]

"An' now I'm 'ere—'ere in a train. It's 'eaven, I call it." ...

MY EXPERIENCES IN THE GREATEST NAVAL BATTLE IN THE WAR

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What Happened When the "Bluecher" Went Down

Told by a Survivor of the Ill-Fated German Cruiser

The narrator's name is withheld because at the time of this writing he is a prisoner-of-war. His story is related in the *New York American*. Copyright, 1915, Star Company. The armored German cruiser *Bluecher* was sunk in the great naval battle off Helgoland, January 24, 1915.

I—STORY OF THE GREAT SEA BATTLE

We had just had breakfast on the *Bluecher* when a fast British scout cruiser hovered for a moment on the far-distant horizon and then disappeared. We knew at once that our location was being reported by wireless to the nearest British patrol ships. Orders were signalled at once through the German fleet to turn away from the British shore and steer for home. It was Sunday morning.

About nine o'clock columns of smoke could be seen on the far horizon behind us. The enemy were after us—but not yet could we see them. Suddenly from the blue sky above a shell fell near us, with a moaning, groaning whine. We could see no ship. From somewhere below the horizon had come this shot.

Nowhere visible were there any warships of the enemy which our gunners could find for a target. Still out of the skies above us more shells continued to fall in front of us, beside and behind us.

Finally the observers at the masthead were able to make out through their telescopes the tops of the masts of a ship, but our hull was buried out of sight, and yet those British gunners in their turrets, who could not see even the tops of our masts, were rapidly getting the distance and range of the *Bluecher* from the fire-control officers far up in their own mast tops.

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At this moment was beginning a naval battle the like of which had never occurred before in the history of sea power, for never before have ships of such size and speed, with guns of such great range and punishing power, been engaged. This battle, which began between ships more than ten miles apart which could not see each other, continued to increase in fierceness of action until the British pursuers, who had worked themselves up to the astonishing speed of thirty-four miles an hour, began to overtake us and rake us at point blank range. Although the *Bluecher* was protected by six-inch plates of armor and six-inch plates on her turrets, we knew that we were doomed. We were at the mercy of five British battle cruisers, faster in speed, heavier in armament and more powerful in guns.

What happened to the *Bluecher* that Sunday morning is a story unparalleled by anything in the previous history of the world. The *Bluecher* received every imaginable form of projectile, and as a final kick its end was hastened by a torpedo from the British cruiser *Arethusia*.

A curious fact is that our most frightful punishment came in the early stages of the engagement when the British ships were eight or ten miles away from us. This extraordinary occurrence was due to the British thirteen-and-a-half-inch shells that were fired at such a high elevation that they came down upon us from the sky, piercing our unprotected decks and penetrating on through to the bottom of the ship, where they exploded in the very vitals of the *Bluecher*, doing the maximum amount of damage and destruction.

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The British ships, as I have said, were away on the horizon, more than ten miles distant, when they started to fire. Shots came slowly at first. They fell ahead and over, raising vast columns of water; now they fell astern and short. The British guns were finding the range. Those deadly water spouts crept nearer and nearer. The men on deck watched them with a strange fascination.

Soon one pitched close to the ship, and a vast watery pillar, a hundred metres high, one of them affirmed, fell lashing on the deck. The range had been found. *Dann aber ging's los!* Now the shells came thick and fast, with a horrible droning hum. At once they did terrible execution. The electric plant was soon destroyed, and the ship plunged in a darkness that could be felt. "You could not see your hand before your nose," said one.

Down below decks there were horror and confusion, mingled with gasping shouts and moans as the shells plunged through the decks. It was only later, when the range shortened, that their trajectory flattened and they tore holes in the ship's sides and raked her decks. At first they came dropping from the sky.

This was because the British ships were firing from a great distance and must aim high in the air in order that their shells should reach us ten miles away. Thus it was that the shells falling from above on our decks found our most vulnerable spot—for our decks were not protected by steel armor as were our armor-belted sides.

The shells penetrated the decks. They bored their way even to the stokehold. The coal in the bunkers was set on fire. Since the bunkers were half empty the fire burned merrily.

In the engine room a shell licked up the oil and sprayed it around in flames of blue and green, scarring its victims and blazing where it fell. Men huddled together in dark compartments, but the shells sought them out, and there Death had a rich harvest. The terrific air pressure resulting

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from explosion in a confined space left a deep impression on the minds of all of us on the *Bluecher*. The air, it would seem, roars through every opening and tears its way through every weak spot. All loose or insecure fittings are transformed into moving instruments of destruction.

Open doors bang to—and jam—and closed iron doors bend outward like tin plates, and through it all the bodies of men are whirled about like dead leaves in a Winter blast, to be battered to death against the iron walls. In one of the engine rooms—it was the room where the high velocity engines for ventilation and forced draughts were at work—men were picked up by that terrible Luftdruck like the whirl drift at a street corner and tossed to a horrible death amid the machinery. There were other horrors too fearful to recount.

II—SCENES OF DEATH AND DESTRUCTION

If it was appalling below deck it was more than appalling above. The *Bluecher* was under the fire of so many ships. Even the little destroyers peppered her. "It was one continuous explosion," said a gunner. The ship heeled over as the broadsides struck her, then righted herself, rocking like a cradle.

Gun crews were so destroyed that stokers had to be requisitioned to carry ammunition. Men lay flat for safety. The decks presented a tangled mass of scrap iron.

In one casement, the only one, as they thought, undestroyed, two men continued to serve their guns. They fired it as the ship listed, adapting the elevation to the new situation. The *Bluecher* had run her course. She was lagging, lame, and with the steering gear gone was beginning slowly to circle. It was seen that she was doomed, but still the gunfire from the British kept up with relentless, incessant fury. [338]

Some of the men on board were rendered deaf. The ship quivered and rocked under the recoil of her own guns. The deadly British broadsides made her reel. The guns were torn from their settings and whole gun crews hurled to destruction. Men hurtled down from aloft, bruised, bleeding, dead.

Men were swept from the deck like flies from a tablecloth. Everywhere blood trickled and flowed. It was a fever of excitement. Men found blood pouring down their legs, but could not locate their wounds. Men in authority lost their heads and confusion reigned. Their nerves could not stand the strain.

A shell would burst in the interior of the ship in a halo of flame and fire would arise from the deck, though there was nothing on the deck apparently that could burn. During the fight one of the sailors noticed the captain pull up his trousers and search for a wound; no one could then say whether he was wounded or not.

It has been generally believed that a ship fighting end-on stands the smallest chance of being hit. That is what our naval textbooks teach us. But that is no longer the case.

The effective target presented by an armored ship end-on is really much greater than when she is broadside-on, besides, in the former position, losing whatever protection might be afforded by her vertical side armor. This is one of the unexpected lessons taught by the ill-fated *Bluecher*.

We knew we had more than a hundred miles to go before we would reach the protection of our mine fields, and we knew that the *Bluecher* had the poorest chance of any of the German ships, as she was the slowest. Desperate efforts were made to keep the *Bluecher* at her maximum speed, but no matter how hard we tried to get away we saw the big English ships steadily overhauling us. [339]

We knew what was in store for us as soon as our officers were able to make out the outlines of the approaching ships. We knew the armament and the gun equipment we had to face. We knew that each of those oncoming British battle cruisers could throw a weight of metal 10,000 pounds twice every minute—a total of fifty tons of projectiles every minute. Yet through it all some never despaired of their lives; others from the beginning gave themselves up as lost.

As the nearest of the English ships drew closer, the angle of their gun fire became flatter, but still from far off on the horizon came the shells it seemed to drop from the skies. After a time we were receiving literally a hailstorm of shells—some falling from overhead down through our decks, some penetrating through the stern and travelling half way the length of the ship, and still others coming straight through the sides.

And this was not all. The big British battle cruiser that led the British line thundered on past us and then began to rake us with her stern batteries. The gunners in the stern turrets of the British ship had been standing idle and restless, impatient to have a hand in the fight. As this ship drew on past us the rear guns for the first time had a chance at the *Bluecher*, and they tore our bow and forward works with their heavy shells, while the after guns of the secondary batteries raked our decks at point-blank range.

We were the first under fire in the action and we were the last under fire. Practically every English ship poured projectiles into us. I have never seen such gunnery, and there has never been the like of it before in the history of the world. We could not fight such guns as the English ships had, and before long we had no guns of any kind to fight with. Our decks were swept by shot, our guns were smashed and the gun crews wiped out. [340]

One particular shell from a thirteen-and-a-half-inch gun I remember well. I saw it coming and watched it burst in the heart of the ship. This single projectile probably killed and wounded not less than fifty men. We had our floating equipment handy and soon began to put it on. Many of the men leaped into the water, preferring to trust to getting picked up by the British rather than

remain for certain destruction on the doomed and helpless *Bluecher*.

It was early in the action that the concentrated fire of the British guns on the *Bluecher* landed a shell directly over our engine room. This slowed up the ship and we began to drop back. Very soon a second shell reached the engine room, and we signalled the rest of the fleet, "All engines useless." In another half hour the *Bluecher* was a mass of flame from fore bridge to stern. One shell pierced the foundation of a turret and set off some ammunition, causing a deafening explosion and great loss of life within the turret.

In the midst of the infernal noise and carnage a strange incident happened. A reserve sailor who stood unoccupied near one of the gun crews followed the details of the battle as they were telephoned to the turret from time to time by the commander. Finally, unable to keep back his feelings, the sailor produced a violin. While the guns roared in the turrets and pillars of water were thrown up by the falling shells he played "The Watch on the Rhine," and from all sides the men joined in the song.

Battered above decks, the vitals torn and twisted, and with many holes in her sides, the *Bluecher* [341] reeled and stumbled like a drunken sailor. But it was the torpedo from the *Arethusa* that was the final death blow. She drew alongside, and one of the British officers shouted through a megaphone a warning in German that they were about to launch a torpedo. Our men understood, and many of them took headers into the water.

Steaming within 200 yards of the reeling *Bluecher*, the British warship discharged her torpedo, which went home. The explosion had an appalling result, and none would have survived if they had remained clinging to the wreck.

The wounded *Bluecher* finally settled down, turned wearily over and disappeared in a swirl of water.

*The Man Who Captured a Hundred Germans Single-Handed**His Story as told by Himself, set down by A. E. Littler*

"How the dickens did you do it, Jones?" asked King George, when he invested Private Jones with the well-earned Cross; and our readers will echo the question. Here is the answer—"Todger's" own modest account of his amazing feat, as told to our representative at a special interview. It is a story that will live, a record of dauntless pluck and unfailing cheerfulness in the face of death that has no parallel even in the glorious annals of the Victoria Cross. Told in *Wide World Magazine*.

I—"TODGER" JONES TELLS HIS TALE

"If I've got to be killed I'll die fighting, not digging."

It was with these words on his lips that Private "Todger" Jones leaped from the British trenches.

This is the spirit of the soldier who killed several Boches, and by a wondrous piece of bluff, combined with consummate valor, took no fewer than a hundred and two Germans as prisoners. One of the most highly-placed men in London has described it as "the doughtiest deed of the war," and the description is fully merited.

It was with the object of obtaining the story first-hand from Private Jones's own lips that the writer visited the little Cheshire town of Runcorn, a place proud of its historic traditions, but prouder still of Jones, V.C.

Brown-eyed, lithe, clean-cut, and on the slim side is "Todger," keenly intelligent, with a streak of fatalism in his composition that has sustained him through untold trials, modest as the true hero always is, humorously tolerant of the worship he is commanding, lavish in praise of his comrades, yet reluctant to speak of himself.

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"Surely," said he, "there has been 'nuff said,' more than enough, of a thing that was done on the spur of the moment by a man who kept his head and knew how to use his gun. But if you want to know what I did, let the official account speak for me."

And "Todger" handed the cold, matter-of-fact narrative set forth in the *London Gazette* as follows:

—

The Victoria Cross has been conferred upon Private Thomas Alfred Jones (11000), Cheshire Regiment, for most conspicuous bravery. He was with his company consolidating the defences in front of a village, and, noticing an enemy sniper at two hundred yards distance, he went out, and, though one bullet went through his helmet and another through his coat, he returned the sniper's fire and killed him. He then saw two more of enemy firing at him, although displaying a white flag. Both of these he also shot. On reaching the enemy trench he found four occupied dug-outs and, single-handed, disarmed one hundred and two of the enemy, including three or four officers, and marched them back to our lines through a heavy barrage. He had been warned of the misuse of the white flag by the enemy, but insisted on going out after them.

"Won't that fill the bill?" observed Jones, but when told that our readers wanted the story in full, and that it ought to be set down for the benefit of posterity, he resigned himself with a sigh. Then, with a smile like a benediction, he spoke as follows:—

It was on September 25th that we took a village that I am forbidden to mention by name, and were just beginning to dig ourselves in near a wood, when bullets commenced to whiz past us, wounding one of our men in the head, and making things decidedly uncomfortable. I felt the bullets ping-pinging by me, and I said to the officer, "They're going to make it hot for us, sir, if we don't get after 'em. Can I get out and have a packet at them?"

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"My orders are to consolidate this position," replied the officer. "You must not go an inch farther, and you had better get on with your digging."

And dig I did, but as I got up again I saw a chap hit through the head and another through the thigh. Looking ahead, I saw what appeared to be a white flag, and that fairly riled me. My dander was up, and I shouted to the officer, "What do you think of that, sir?"

"You must get on with your digging, Jones," said he; but up I jumped, and called out, "If I've got to be killed I'll die fighting, not digging."

I waited no longer, but dragged out my rifle, flung down my entrenching tool, jumped out of the trench, and went across. The Huns were a couple of hundred yards away, and they could see me coming. One bullet went "sss" through my steel helmet and four more through my jacket. There was a sniper in a tree, but I soon counted him out. On I went, and reached a "bay," or traverse, leading to the German trench. There were three men in it, but, jumping in at the end of the trench, I had only one at a time to deal with. I got my back to the wall, and they whipped round on me. I always believe in firing from the hip, and very quickly number one dropped dead.

Before the next man could recover his senses I had shot him as well, slipped another cartridge in the breech, and got the old magazine going on the third at a yard range. The other men fired at me from the entrance to the dug-outs, but I managed to "get there" first every time, which is a

great thing in jobs of that kind. In the second traverse there were five chaps standing behind one another. One of them made for me with his bayonet, but I bowled him over like the others by the old trick of shooting from the hip.

II—HOW THE GERMANS SURRENDERED

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I got the five of them, and some of them made awful noises, screaming and squealing. I stalked through the trench, storming and shouting, and, hearing the firing and the commotion, the rest of the crowd bolted into the dug-outs. Soon they had all "gone to earth," and I was there alone. When they got into their dug-outs I had them. It was just as if you were in a coal-cellar and I was in the street waiting to pot you as you came up. They were shouting and screeching, and every time I saw a movement I let fly.

Eventually they quieted down, and seeing some of their bombs, a pile of them, on the floor of the trench, I picked up a couple and sent them flying down the first dug-out, and they went off all right. Did I tell you that I was a bomber? I think they felt that the game was up when the bombs began to drop amongst them, for out rushed three fine specimens with their hands up and the usual cry, "Mercy, kamerad!" They had left their equipment behind them to show there was no monkeying, and though I felt like laughing at being there all on my own, I demanded, in a stern voice, if any one of them could speak English.

One of them called out, "I can."

"Well," said I, "what's it to be? Do you want to be killed or taken prisoners? You can have it either way you like, for I'm not particular. In fact, I would rather kill you."

And all, with one consent, actually cried out that they wanted to become prisoners—and with Private Jones as their jailers, too!

I looked round and saw a hollow, so I told the English-speaking German to order his two mates to get in there. They had to climb up to do it, and I knew our chaps would see them from our trench as they got on top.

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"How many more are there down the dug-out?" I asked, and the Boche answered, "About fifteen."

"What about it?" I said, and he replied, "What do you mean?"

"Do they want killing or what?" said I, and he gasped, "I don't know."

"You know they're no use?" I said, and he replied, "Yes, they're helpless now."

"Well, then," said I, "go and tell them what I have told you—that they can either be killed or taken prisoners, and they can bloomin' well please themselves about it."

And, by gum! he went and told them, and came back to say they would all be taken prisoners.

"Well, then," said I, "tell them they can come out when you call, but only one at a time, remember, and any one of 'em that has as much as a penknife on him, or any equipment, will be shot dead straight away. Fetch 'em up one at a time, and tell them that my mates are coming across in thousands in a couple of minutes, and if they find anything wrong with me they'll cut you to bits."

I heard him yowling down the dug-outs what I had told him, and, meanwhile, I got round the cover. Presently he came back, and said, "Are you ready?" "Yes," I replied; "call them up, and only one at a time, and no rushing." He shouted the message, and ordered them out without equipment. There were eight or nine dug-outs in all, and they kept tumbling out, and, as they came, I sent them out of the trench into the hollow I've told you of.

Lord! I'd expected fifteen and out they came in scores, and went into my "compound." When they were all out, I threw some of their own bombs into the dug-outs to make sure that there was no sniper left behind to "do me in." And then I said to myself, "Great Scot! What am I going to do with this little lot?" I knew I could eventually rely upon somebody coming from our trenches, but it was necessary to gain time.

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It's not that I want to brag, but I didn't turn a hair; I just kept my head-piece going. I told them it would be a very cold night at the place where they were going to, and suggested they had better get their great-coats. I graciously permitted them to fetch them—"two at a time, and no rushing." They ran, and came in and out, and each time they passed me they saluted me—Private Jones!—and I sent them to their places. I didn't like the look of one bloke, and kept half an eye on him. "I think I'll shoot that chap," I said to the interpreter.

"Don't," he exclaimed, "he very good man." But presently the "very good man" went for his great-coat, and when he had got a short distance he made a dash for liberty. I swung round, clicked my rifle, and got him fair and square. He rolled over and over just like a rabbit. It was a snap-shot, but I put one through his head. Then I turned to the German by me. "Ask them if any more would like to try to escape," I said. He did so, and they all jumped up—they were seated on the ground—flung up their arms, and shouted "Kamerad!"

III—"HANDS UP! I COULDN'T STOP BAGGING GERMANS"

It fairly tickled me to death, that did, and I couldn't stop laughing. Why? Well, a bit of fun I once saw at a pantomime flashed through my mind. A comedian who played the part of the squire, revolver in hand, rounded up all the servants, male and female, butlers and gardeners, and up went their hands. Then he came to the grandfather clock, pointed his revolver at it, shouting, "Hands up!" and immediately the hands of the clock whizzed round.

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Well, I tell you I roared with laughter at the thought coming into my mind at such a time, when I was playing a lone hand, for it looked so comical to see them all with their hands up—over a

hundred of 'em, hoping against hope that Private Jones, Kamerad, wouldn't shoot.

I wondered what was going to happen next, for it was out of the question that one chap could keep them there for any length of time. But the bowling over of the chap who tried to escape was the best thing that could have happened for me, and it fairly put the fear of God into the rest. The official report speaks of me bringing in a hundred and two, but, though I didn't check their numbers, there must have been nearly a hundred and fifty of them when I got them into the open, including four or five officers and any number of non-coms, or whatever the Germans call them. But before they got into our lines, over forty of them were killed by our shells, which were sweeping the ground and clearing things up generally.

But I'm over-running my story. I had scarcely finished laughing about the clock putting its hands up, when I saw somebody start from our lines. It was my chum coming to look for me. He had been asking where I was, and, when they told him, he said: "If Todger's across there I'm going to fetch him, dead or alive!" They all thought I was a "goner," but, when they saw my chum start, three more chaps—a sergeant-major, a corporal, and a stretcher-bearer—came across with him. Seeing I was alive, my chum gave me a smack on the face, and couldn't stop larking.

They helped me to "round-up" the "bag," and we marched them back to our lines. All the time our guns were knocking the position to bits, and, as I've said, some of the shells dropped amongst the prisoners and killed them. I got a shrapnel wound in the neck from our barrage, but it wasn't much. Strictly speaking, I suppose I ought never to have been in the game, but I wouldn't have missed it for worlds. When I went over my arm was a bit painful, for I was wounded on September 5th, and had refused to go into hospital.

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Looking back, and thinking over the incident, I feel that I must have had what the poets call "a charmed life," for after jumping out of the trench, and before I had accounted for the sniper in the tree, a bullet went through my helmet, and was buzzing round my head-piece like a marble in a basin, finally galloping down my back and burning me during the journey. Four or five other bullets passed through my tunic, but I wasn't aware of it until afterwards. It never entered my mind that I should be killed, and I didn't think my time had come.

Asked if he could explain how he was led into the exploit, "Todger" said, with a grin, "When I saw the first three men in the bay I knew I was up against something, but I had been in more than one tight corner before, and I had learned that the art of warfare—for the individual, at any rate—was to size up a situation quickly, to fire without hesitation, and hit your man."

"And," inquired the interviewer, "was there no period during the incident that you felt that the proposition was too big for you?"

"I should be lying," was the answer, "if I didn't admit that I was glad, jolly glad, to see my pals come over, but I was cool as cool could be, and the lesson I applied was never to lose this (significantly touching his head). The man who loses his 'nob' is done for. I knew if I had to go I should, for everybody has his time, that's what I believe, and I meant to sell myself at a good price. But when I got the first men in the traverse, and drove the others back into the dug-outs, I felt that the game was in my hands. I had them at my mercy; they didn't know I was unsupported; I cowed them into submission to my orders; I pictured the end that awaited them if a hair of my sacred head was singed, and my trump card was played in making them come out one by one without any equipment."

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IV—JONES TELLS ANOTHER STORY

Pressed—and it should be understood that the man whose deed Sir Frederick Norman has described as "big stuff" was terribly reluctant to speak of himself—pressed to recount some other vivid experiences which have been hinted at, Private Jones was compelled to admit that on two or three other occasions prior to the capture of the hundred and two Germans he had been promised special mention, but the officers who had noted him were killed before the opportunity of recommending him for honours arose.

"It isn't every heroic deed that is noticed," said the soldier. "Many's the chap who earns the V.C. who never gets a 'Thank you.' Every lad out there is winning, though not receiving, glory; they are brave, noble, clean-fighting, staunch and true men, and if they haven't had my luck they've deserved it.

"But if you want to know what further part I have played in this war, and my preparation for the big slaughter, I may say I was an old Volunteer of the Cheshire Battalion, and that the skill I acquired as a marksman sixteen or seventeen years ago led to me being employed at the Front as a sniper and bomb-thrower. By trade I am a fitter, and am thirty-six years of age, and I tried to join the Engineers at the outbreak of war, but as a Territorial Reservist was eventually posted to the Cheshire Regiment, and found myself at the Front in January, 1915.

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"Amongst the narrow shaves I have had may be included a bullet through my pouch, the heel of my boot blown away, and an explosion of a shell which lifted me ten yards in the air and lodged a piece of shrapnel in my shoulder and another piece in my knee.

"Hill 60 was one of my hottest trials, and there I had my first experience—second hand, fortunately—of the German poison-gas. We had only been relieved the night before, and wanted a rest badly, but at ten o'clock in the morning we received word that something had happened at Hill 60, and it was up to us to try to set it right. We got through Ypres town to the railway cutting, and there came under heavy shellfire. Bad wasn't the word for it, for they were bowling the lads over right and left, and as we got closer and closer their machine-gun fire was mowing us down something cruel.

"Eventually we took cover in the railway cutting and met the Germans coming along four deep. We received orders to charge, and cleared them off the railway line, and then we had to start with the trenches. No sooner had Colonel Scott given the word, as he stood by my side, than he dropped mortally wounded. We didn't wait for further orders, for we saw red, and cleared the second line of trenches. Then we made another charge, and took the original trench, which had been held by the Dorsets.

"There they sat, staring at us. 'Matey, you're relieved,' we said to one, but there was no answer. 'There's some hot tea waiting for you in Ypres,' we said to another. No answer. They were dead—gassed, and we didn't know then of the diabolical device that had killed them. I was one of forty-three that went out that night to bomb the Germans, expecting that another regiment would take over the trenches from which we had driven the enemy. [352]

"We used up all our bombs, and the Germans began to bomb us in turn. Our lieutenant was the only man with a revolver, and he used it until he had no more ammunition left and was shot. All except three of us and a corporal were either killed or wounded, and the corporal asked me if I could lead them back. I did it, and reported to the company officer, who said he had received reports on which he was going to recommend me for honours. A brave officer—reported from that very day as missing, as was the lieutenant.

"We also went through the Battle of St. Eloi, which lasted three weeks. We were at Hill 60 when it was blown up, and we remained in the trenches for twenty days, and after just one night out put in another forty-three days, which constitutes a record either in the French or British Army for continual fire-trench work. We were even reduced to the necessity of sewing sandbags together to serve as a change of 'linen.' When the hill went up it was a sight one can never forget, while the shelling of Ypres was more like a mighty firework display than anything else."

V—"HOW I GOT A GERMAN CROSS"

"The first trenches I was in were only thirty-five yards from the Huns. We caught a squad of them working in the rear of their trench. We soon downed them, but the others spotted us, and rattled at us for forty-eight hours. We dared not show our heads above the trench, but I was acting as guide, and one night I turned out to look for a N.C.O. who had been sent with a message and had failed to return. He had had to go through two woods in the dark, and I made sure he had lost his way. I took the turn he would have done had he gone wrong, and after going about two thousand yards I stepped through a gap in the hedge and got a nice little shock. [353]

"Lying on the ground about a yard from me were three Huns with helmets, rifles, and full kit! I whipped my rifle from my shoulder and butt-ended it, meaning to make a good fight for it. I noticed they did not move, so I stepped closer in, and saw the frost on their packs. Then I knew they were dead.

"My first thought was souvenirs. I got in between the dead men, and was going to begin collecting, when a star-shell went up, and I soon found I had landed between our own lines and the Germans. They spotted me, opened rapid fire, and sent up light after light. I flung myself into a ditch and waited about ten minutes. I don't know how I escaped being hit, for the bullets struck all around me. All thought of souvenirs had gone out of my head. When they ceased I made a sprint for it. I did 'even time' that night, and was mighty glad when I found the missing N.C.O.

"At another place we had a very rough time of it. Hell seemed to be let loose, for shells were dropping into our trenches, mortars blew the bags down, we were under rapid fire from the German trenches, and to cap the game they had mined the trench and tried to blow it up, but they had gone too deep, and only one or two of our lads were buried, and were safely dug out again."

Side by side on the table Private Jones placed his V.C. and a silver-edged German Cross of the "second degree," one the very embodiment of modest worth, the other blatantly arrogant.

"And yet," said "Todger," looking upon the two emblems, and then turning his eyes upon a large official photograph of himself and his flock of a hundred and two Huns, and anon taking in at a glance a gold watch, a silver teapot, an illuminated address, and other public tributes to his valour—"and yet, next to the V.C., I think more of that Iron Cross than of all the rest, and God knows how much I appreciate all that my fellow-townsmen have done for me. [354]

"But it's quite another story," he protested, when asked for an explanation. "I won that Cross in a single-handed joust with a company commander of the First Prussian Guards. And I don't think the poor chap had ever had the chance to wear it! But he had to go, for there was only him and me for it, and I didn't see why Jones should be turned down.

"The fact is, it was the last scrap I was in before I won the V.C., and it was there that I got wounded in the shoulder. I don't think there's any harm in telling you it was at Guillemont—Mouquet Farm and the stronghold around. The Germans had beaten back all attempts to take it from them. Division after division had tried to wrest it from them and had failed.

"Then they brought up our division, and once again we were told that we had been called out to do what others had failed to do. It was a terrific struggle, and we were repulsed four times. Our company had to take the lead at the fifth charge. The bombers won through and leaped into the trench.

"We knocked the machine-gunners over and helped the following waves to get through with little loss. It was a terrible journey—the worst, I believe, that I have been through.

"Yes, I'm coming to the Iron Cross by degrees. I had a wild three minutes, a rare good do. We got

rid of those about us, and I rushed into the next traverse and met my man, a fine big chap, full of fight, a commander of the swell crowd, the First Prussian Guards.

"He made for me with bayonet, but I knew too many tricks even for a Prussian Guard, and I soon settled him. The Iron Cross, in its little case, fell from his inside-pocket as he dropped. It's new; I suppose he'd just received it from the Kaiser. Poor beggar! I'll never forget him when I look upon the Cross I won from him in fair fight. [355]

"We were then reinforced, and advanced another three thousand yards past Guillemont and dug in, being too exhausted to go any farther. We stayed there until relieved in the early morning, when we went into support about six hundred yards behind, and the shelling was very heavy. It was here I got wounded. It happened in this way.

"A party was lost, and I told them I would take them down for a drink, as they had been without food and water for over sixty hours. I got them to the place they had to stay at, got the water, and was making back when one of the big shells plumped alongside me and lifted me about ten yards, a piece getting me in the right shoulder and leg.

"I refused to go down the line, and though my arm was useless for a day or two, and was a bit stiff and painful when I won the V.C., it was all a streak of luck, for if I'd gone to hospital I should have missed the funniest round-up I've ever seen."

VI—"IT WAS JUST MY LUCK!"

And with this Private Jones was brought back to his starting-point. He simply blushed when reference was made by the interviewer to some of the things that have been said and some of the eulogies passed upon his prowess. He admitted that he was filled with pride when he was ushered into the presence of the King to receive his decoration. "I was a bit flustered at first," said "Todger," "but His Majesty made me at home. One of the first things he said to me when the record was read was, 'How the dickens did you do it, Jones?' I won't tell you what I answered on the spur of the moment, but the King laughed, and so did I. 'It was just my luck,' I said to His Majesty. 'I was like a man with his back against the wall, and I kept my head.' And then I gave him an idea how the thing had been done, and he laughed at the thought of me fetching home my happy little family." [356]

Throughout the recital Private Jones made no secret of the fact that his nickname is "Todger."

"Why 'Todger'?" I inquired, and the V.C. man chuckled just as one may imagine he chuckled when he remembered the pantomimic hold-up.

"I was afraid you'd come round to that," said he, "but there it is, and there's no getting away from it. I was 'Todger' at school, and 'Todger' followed me to France. It's like this. As a boy at school I played football, and I suppose I was a bit tricky or artful when it came to dribbling. My school-fellows nicknamed me 'Dodger,' but my front name is Tom, and it wasn't long before it was 'Todger' this and 'Todger' that. It was 'Todger' with everybody at the Front, and lots of 'em seemed to know me by no other name."

Runcorn feels itself honoured by Jones's wonderful prowess. Thousands of people met him upon his return; a marble tablet is to record his deeds. His employers have provided his parents with an annuity of fifty pounds per year, he has received a gold watch, an illuminated address, framed photographs, a smoker's cabinet, a silver wrist-watch, a silver teapot, a case of cutlery, field-glasses, and a host of other things. He has also had a civic reception at Chester, been entertained at dinner by the Cheshire Regiment, chaired round the Castle square, and been photographed and filmed.

Retold by V. Ropshin, translated from the "Niva," Petrograd, for "Current History"

I shouted, "Forward!" jumped over the parapet, and ran forward over the field of beetroot. I remembered that I was an officer, and must keep in front of my men.

I heard no shots. At the German trench I felt a blow on my shoulder, just as if some one had hit me with a riding whip. But I did not at first realize that I was wounded. Without stopping, we leaped across the trench. When we were across it I felt a sudden catching of the breath, and everything went black before my eyes. On the right was a deep funnel, the crater of a 12-inch shell. I jumped into the crater.

The funnel was wide, with crumbling edges, and with a sticky, clayey bottom. I sat down on the damp earth and felt that my arm was very sore. I struck a match and began to smoke.

Now I heard the thunder of guns; I distinguished the rattle of howitzers and the whistle of bursting shells. I had a feeling of depression. Involuntarily I closed my eyes.

I sat a whole hour unconscious in this way. When I came to myself I saw a German in front of me, a German officer, in a gray-green cloak and with a round cap of the same colour. The officer was standing straight before me, and was looking me in the face. I tried to rise, but he said in French:

"You are my prisoner! Sit down!" and he covered me with his revolver.

I answered: "Shoot!"

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I felt certain that he would shoot me. But he unexpectedly lowered his arm. His face was tanned, with thick, dark hair and wide, blue eyes. After a short silence he said:

"I could shoot you—but I do not want to. We are both prisoners in this hole!"

And he added, saluting: "I am a Captain in the 238th Prussian Regiment; Müller!"

I also gave him my name. We were now sitting at opposite sides of the hole, he a German and I a Frenchman. We remained silent. We both felt awkward, and I tried not to look at him. At last he said:

"You are wounded?"

"Yes."

"Allow me! I shall fix a bandage for you!"

I answered: "Pray, do not trouble yourself!"

But he came over to me and pulled out cotton wadding and bandages. And as he touched me with his hands I experienced a curious transformation. He ceased to be a German, a detested enemy, a man who wanted to shoot me, one of the armed bands whose presence pollutes our land. He was simply Captain Müller, my chance and already kind acquaintance.

He bandaged me skillfully and rapidly. When he had finished he smiled, and said in German: "So!"

I thanked him in French: "Merci!"

Then we sat together, once more in silence. The firing did not diminish, and sometimes the bombs burst near by, quite close to us. The earth trembled, a dark, narrow column rose up, and we were spattered with dirt, with lumps of earth, and smoke. But neither I nor the German stirred. We did not wish to show that we were afraid.

Toward evening the fire grew more intense. The German was now listening to the guns.

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"That was yours; that's mine; that's a 120, that's a 75, that's a 77, that's another 75."

My arm was numb and ached severely. I said: "Will you kindly get a flask out of my pocket? I have some cognac."

We drank some brandy, both from the same bottle. First he, then I; and when we had drunk from the same bottle he blushed and raised his big, blue eyes.

"You are married?"

"Yes; I am married."

"Have you any children?"

"No."

"I have—two."

He rose and said, with a wave of his hand: "I own a brickyard over there, in Hanover. I am a peaceful man. I have managed the brickyard all my life. I wanted peace—and I have gone to war. And now we are living like moles. We sleep in the water. We risk our lives every minute. People have gone mad. Black has become white, and white black. Tell me, why are we fighting?"

"Your Wilhelm wanted it!"

"Ach! Wilhelm! And did my children want war? Wilhelm wanted it and they did not want it. And I obeyed not them, but Wilhelm! And here I am, on French, on foreign soil, beside you, in this hole; and perhaps I shall die to-day. I shall die, or you will. They will kill me or you. Why? What for? For Germany? For my brickyard? When will this war end? When will we go home again? Or shall we not go home? Tell me, why are we fighting?"

I wanted to answer him. I wanted to tell him that we Frenchmen were defending our country, and that the Germans were bandits, not guests! But I suddenly felt that I was thrown up into the air, that it had become hot, that there was a rank smell of smoke, and that everything about me was red. This lasted a second—or it may have been a year—and when I came to myself I saw the blue sky overhead. I made an effort to rise. I noticed that the crater was smashed down at the edge, and had grown smaller and deeper. From beneath the overturned, damp earth a pair of boots stuck forth, worn at the heel; and beside them, close to me, lay an officer's cap, with the brim torn off. I understood—my companion had been killed. My arm ached; I stumbled and lost consciousness. During the night the men of my regiment picked me up.

Transcriber's Notes

Obvious errors of punctuation and diacritics repaired.

Inconsistent hyphenation repaired.

P. 23: ususually cheerful -> unusually cheerful.

P. 26: hands by his accusers -> hands of his accusers.

P. 36: at resturants -> at restaurants.

P. 37: board it without relay -> board it without delay.

P. 96: Would our village we were holding be spared? -> Would the village we were holding be spared?

P. 106: 28 avil -> 28 avril.

P. 142: is a mass of bubbles -> in a mass of bubbles.

P. 147: expostuation -> expostulation.

P. 148: was produced -> has produced.

P. 161: Estaire -> Estaires.

P. 200: I advanced over rooftops -> It advanced over rooftops.

P. 225: in thir retreat -> in their retreat.

P. 226: reconnaissance -> reconnaissance.

P. 232: battle in the clods -> battle in the clouds.

P. 261: You musn't do that -> You mustn't do that.

P. 262: South African forces come -> South African forces came.

P. 291: oboard -> aboard.

P. 315: floundering hourse -> floundering horse.

P. 316: horse whinned -> horse whinnied.

P. 325: brilliant hangings were mirrowed -> brilliant hangings were mirrored.

P. 329: hemmorrhage -> hemorrhage.

P. 353: throught a gap -> through a gap.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK TRUE STORIES OF THE GREAT WAR,
VOLUME 4 (OF 6) ***

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