

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1918

Eight Months at the Front With the American Army

THE POWER HOUSES OF THE ARMY.

How Division Headquarters Directs an Advance Explained in To-Day's Story, Third of a Daily Series, Also a Description of Remarkable Adaptability Shown by American Artillerymen in Learning to Serve Unfamiliar Captured Guns in Record Time, Turning Upon Germans Artillery Captured From Them in the Same Engagement.

By Martin Green

(Staff Correspondent of The Evening World)

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In the news of the current American advance in the direction of Metz the chief interest centres, naturally, on the movements of the soldiers at the extreme front—the men who are in actual contact with the retreating enemy. They are delivering the hammer blows, and the details of their operations are pretty thoroughly covered by the correspondents.

An army is a machine. It cannot move without direction. Back of the lines of battle are what might be termed the power houses from which flow the currents of operation. These are the headquarters of the various units, all functioning along carefully prepared plans formulated by the General in supreme command.

A division headquarters during a battle is a veritable hive of effort. When the field of operations is some distance away the headquarters is located in a chateau or a farm house. If the operation is an advance, the headquarters follows the soldiers and locates in a dugout or a cellar. The enemy devotes a lot of attention to locating a headquarters, and when he has located it he showers it with high explosive shells and shrapnel, and sometimes gas. The high commanding officers located back of the lines are always in danger and do most of their work underground. An officer at a headquarters in a supposedly quiet sector invited some correspondents one day last spring to walk down to the bank of a river about three hundred yards away and inspect some new shower baths he had installed. The members of his staff went along. While we were looking over the shower bath plant a German shell dropped into the building we had just vacated, blew the commanding officer's office to pieces and seriously wounded a field clerk, who was the only occupant of the place. That headquarters was immediately relocated in the cellar of a building half a mile away.

During our first advance in force in July the headquarters of one of our divisions was located in a great cave cut into the upper part of a high hill overlooking a valley. The entrance was through a sort of cut leading from the main road. The cut was camouflaged by skillfully placed branches of trees. There were many chambers in the cave. One of them would have accommodated the New York City Hall, and in this chamber was located the general in command and his staff and working force.

Outside the entrance was a dynamite, hidden in a sap cut into the hill, which furnished power for electric lights. The officers slept when they had a chance, which was not often, on cots or bedding rolls alongside the boxes or ledges which served as their desks. In the centre of the chamber was a long table upon which were spread out the detail maps showing the country over which our soldiers were advancing, some three miles away.

Two telephone exchanges were in operation, one for the infantry, the other for the artillery. As the soldiers went ahead Signal Corps men, close behind, laid telephone lines which kept the front in constant communication with the headquarters. Additional communication was furnished by runners and motorcycle and mounted messengers moving continually between the regimental headquarters in the advance and the General Headquarters.

A VISIT TO AN AMERICAN BATTERY AT THE FRONT.

At noon on the second day of the advance the Brigadier General in charge of the artillery gave an order that the batteries were to cease firing at 12:40 o'clock and resume at 1:35. He told his Adjutant, who sent the orders by telephone to instruct battery commanders to feed their men during the brief respite, and then he dropped down on his cot, murmured "Call me in an hour," and fell asleep. He had not closed his eyes in sleep before for sixty hours. He was called at 1 o'clock and immediately left on a tour of inspection of his battery positions. Two correspondents accompanied him.

The first objective was a regiment of light artillery located alongside a road across the valley and the trip involved a ride of a couple of miles over a densely packed road. At 1:35 o'clock we were still some distance from the first battery. All at once the artillery opened up, in accordance with the orders the General had sent out at noon, and the comparative quiet which had endured in that vicinity for fifty-five minutes gave way to the barking and roaring of big and small guns.

We left the automobile on the roadside and approached the battery on foot through a clump of trees. Hundreds of American soldiers forming reserves were asleep in the shade. They had marched in a couple of hours before. We saw five men sound asleep within ten feet of our guns which were firing about ten seconds apart. The concussion actually

stirred their clothes. "Those boys," said the General, "could sleep right on top of the guns."

A battery of 75s was placed in a ditch at the side of the road which, at this point, was cut through a hillcock. Firing the first gun of the battery was a lad of about twenty who had discarded his tunic and khaki shirt. His face, arms and chest were black from smoke and dust. He was sitting on the ground with his back against the side of the ditch and toward the enemy and he didn't see us as we approached through the bushes. He was singing at his work, crooning a song which has spread through the army called "Poor Boy." The song relates the experience of a young negro who despite the warnings of his parents got into bad company and finally wound up on the gallows and as he stands there, waiting to be hanged, he sees his father approach. The gunner was singing the chorus descriptive of this episode in the song and as he sang he fired the gun as rapidly as his loaders inserted the shells. The song went like this:

"Oh, daddy, ain't you got no silver? Oh, daddy, ain't you got no gold?" (Pow!)—and a shell would start in the direction of the German lines. "Or is you goin' to see your poor boy hung upon dis hangman's hold?" (Pow!)

"Oh, son, I ain't got no silver; oh, son, I ain't got no gold." (Pow!)

"So I guess I got to see my poor boy hung upon dis hangman's hold, poor boy, upon dis hangman's hold." (Pow!)

ACCURACY OF OUR HEAVY ARTILLERY FIRE SHOWN.

Some distance to the left we came upon heavy artillery placed in a depression in the woods. The General told us that the shells from this battery were landing on a bridge in Soissons, eight miles away. Close by was a battery of German 75s which we had captured, with plentiful supplies of ammunition, the previous morning. Under the direction of French artillery officers our gunners had learned to operate the German guns in twelve hours and we were plastering the retreating foe with his own shells, fired from his own artillery. A French liaison officer who accompanied us said that he had never seen such rapid assimilation of instruction as our men had shown in learning to operate the captured pieces. This same artillery outfit is now working in the St. Mihiel salient; attack and, doubtless, using captured German cannon. As we progressed into the territory



CORNELIUS VANDERBILT



Maj. THOMAS HITCHCOCK



BRIG. GEN. CORNELIUS VANDERBILT



Maj. Gen. WM. S. GRAVES



Maj. SIDNEY GRAVES



Left to Right: Maj. Gen. WM. M. BLACK, Lieut. WM. M. BLACK and Col. ROGER BLACK



Lieut. THOMAS HITCHCOCK



Maj. Gen. LEONARD WOOD



Maj. OSBORN WOOD

abandoned by the Germans we came upon many evidences of the accuracy and destructiveness of our artillery fire. In one German machine gun nest we found 35 dead Germans and seven disabled machine guns, all blown to pieces by shells we had dropped there the day before. The Germans are wonderfully efficient in hiding their machine gun positions, but the blanket of shells we had shed over the country had picked out many which could not have been observed by approaching troops.

"The Germans have taught us something about placing machine guns," explained the General. "Our principle was to hide them away as a miser hides his hoard, in spots where we thought the enemy wouldn't look for them. The Germans place their machine guns, under camouflage, in the most obvious positions, with the result that soldiers trained to hiding tactics are surprised in finding enemy machine guns bursting as it were, right in front of their faces."

On our return to headquarters we witnessed one of the most dramatic incidents I observed at the front. As I have said, the headquarters was at the top of a hill. All about the entrance were rows of rows of automobiles and auto trucks, and hundreds of soldiers were moving in the vicinity. On the slope of the hill, just above the headquarters entrance, about 200 German prisoners were lined up in command of one of their own officers, who was giving them instructions, dictated by one of our German speaking officers, as to marching to a prisoners' camp five miles away. An observation balloon

floated lazily in the sky directly above the headquarters entrance, the wires holding it brushing against the tops of a grove of trees in a draw between us and the main road.

All day American and French planes had been passing to and fro over the headquarters position. In the waning afternoon they disappeared, probably because of a cull from another part of the line. The attention of nearly everybody outside headquarters was centred on the German prisoners. Suddenly we heard the sound of sirens and automobile horns, warning of either a gas attack or the approach of German planes. Anti-aircraft guns on the peak of the hill began to speckle the sky with white clouds of smoke marking the explosion of shrapnel shells. Officers shouted commands that everybody should get under cover. All eyes were directed aloft.

GERMAN AVIATOR'S DARING ATTACK ON A BALLOON.

Suddenly, back of our lines, coming down almost perpendicularly from a great height, we made out a German fighting plane. The aviator had probably been up three or four miles before he began his downward swoop. Straight and true he held his course downward and forward in the direction of the observation balloon over our heads. The air about the plane was literally alive with exploding shrapnel shells and pieces of shrapnel fell like hail on the hill. Everybody armed with a rifle or a pistol began to shoot at the German airship. The enemy aviator kept right on coming, passed over our heads at a height of about 500 feet, riddled the observation

balloon with machine gun bullets and, rising rapidly, disappeared to the outward before the blazing balloon reached the ground. The observer in the balloon descended with the aid of a parachute, landing almost at the headquarters entrance.

The German prisoners were plainly delighted at the show their countryman had put up before their eyes. Their officer marched them down in irregular formation to the main road. There he lined them up in platoons of twenty and shouted a command and away the Germans started marching the "goose step."

A great hoard of derision and amusement went up from the American and French soldiers. The Germans marched stolidly on, raising clouds of dust as their heavy boots hit the ground in unison, and disappeared around a bend in the road. They passed a group of us and on the faces of most of the Germans were unmistakable grins. The officer in charge was laughing. In his German way he was "joshing" us, celebrating with an exhibition of the "goose step" and a daring daylight destruction of one of our observation balloons right over the head of the Major General commanding the forces in that sector.

NOT HIS FUNCTION.

"I want to know," said the grim-faced woman, "how much money my husband drew out of the bank last week."

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How Citizen-Soldiers Feel When Killing Their Foes In the Business of War

War Book by Lieut. Antoine Redier, an Editor Before He Became a Soldier in the Big War, Describes Effect of Battle on Men Who Came Under Arms From Peaceful Pursuits of Everyday Business and Professional Life.

By Marguerite Mooers Marshall

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HOW men feel in the actual business of war, which is killing, is something which is omitted from most of the war books but about which the person who does not go to war wonders considerably. What is the psychology of the citizen-soldier, who is the backbone of the Allied Armies, when, for the first time in his life, he is ordered and encouraged to slay?

The most interesting analysis of this moment is to be found in Lieut. Antoine Redier's fine war book, "Comrades in Courage," written in the trenches of the Somme. It is a book filled and running over with proofs of the unselfishness, the generosity, the devotion to duty and the other high spiritual qualities of the soldier. Yet it has remained for Lieut. Redier, before he was editor of the Revue Francaise and a trained writer, to express succinctly and truthfully the way the average, kindly natured soldier reacts to the business of putting his enemy out of existence.

"There is among us a good fellow with a kind and calm appearance," instances Lieut. Redier. "At the outset of the campaign his section was caught in a tight situation at a very short distance from a line of enemy sharpshooters. He threw himself into a huge shell-hole from where he could, without great danger, shoot at the devils in helmets as they advanced. The rest of the section—condemned to an inglorious inactivity until the order came to show themselves on the ridge—sought shelter in a ditch a few yards to the right from which they could watch their comrades.

"He was shooting as if on the target range—loading, aiming, and firing with exactly the same precision. He said afterward that he had made wonderful scores. But the remarkable thing was the expression of greed and pleasure he showed each time a man fell. His mouth opened in a smile from ear to ear and his eyes sparkled. He looked like a little boy sitting down before a mountain of cakes. That man, who in civilian life perhaps never even wanted to see death, was actually laughing while killing Germans."

Here is another of Lieut. Redier's examples of the psychology of killing in war:

"One evening in camp I made the acquaintance of a little Sergeant who had just returned to the front after being wounded on the Meuse in the great retreat.

"His thin face surmounted by blue clouds of smoke, the young brigand told me horrible stories of the war. I remember chiefly the story of a great, big Saxon officer who had suddenly appeared, revolver in hand, ten yards away from a French soldier. "He was sheltering his fat body behind a big tree," related his executioner; "he protruded a grimacing face and aimed at us. I was in front, I brought my gun to my shoulder and fired. He fell with a horrible cry. Then, mad with joy, I ran to him and turned him over to see the wound my bullet had made. I assure you it was

a large one, it had done its work well."

"I looked at him, his eyes were turned toward the sky and he seemed to be experiencing an almost supernatural joy.

"Do you work for a butcher in civilian life, my friend?" "He answered that he was a student of theology. Since that story I never feel assured when I ask people their profession."

Lieut. Redier adds: "There is not a soldier at the front who could not recount twenty similar anecdotes. They prove only that we are fighting mercilessly an enemy who has been pointed out to us. We are here at the war to kill the Bocher; so we kill them and that is the end of it.

"We have been given knives, great big knives. Many among us who were familiar with the use of the rifle, revolver, bayonet, or sword were, at first, surprised to find these new weapons in their hands. They were the weapons of murderers, and it was necessary to get accustomed to them. They are useful for fighting in the boxcars, and for that barbarous operation known as 'cleaning the trench.' Oh, it is not pretty! We are soldiers, but we have never been butchers. Yet the only thing to do is to accustom ourselves to it; it is the German way!

"They claimed that in war might creates right. When a unit of troops, rapidly advancing, has taken a first line of trenches and has to go on to the next, there is not time enough to disarm and render powerless the prisoners they are going to leave behind. In the olden days the rules of war would have forced the defeated people to remain harmless. But to-day our knowledge that, obedient to the laws of German civilization, they will be treacherous. It is therefore necessary to slaughter them."

There is, therefore an Allied will to kill, but it is a reflex of the German will to kill. And this is inevitable. "Comrades in Courage" is published by Doubleday, Page & Co.

How I Began My Stage Career

LAURETTE TAYLOR

When the "Child Entertainer" Changed Her Name She Became Ingenue in a Western Stock Company, but New York Made Her a Star.

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ONCE upon a time there was a child entertainer. You know— one of the kind that comes into a parlor and, urged on by the family, recites "Mary Had a Little Lamb." Her mother thought her talented enough to go on the stage, so an engagement was obtained for her in a dingy vaudeville theatre in a small Massachusetts town. There the little girl sang a song, imitated George M. Cohan and did a little dance—seven times a day for a week. Then her mother took her home and put her back in school, thoroughly convinced that the stage was a delusion and a snare.

That little girl was myself. I was born in an apartment house in West 15th Street, New York, and was named Loretta. When I got old enough to pester the callers with "Mary Had a Little Lamb" I developed ideas. One day I decided that "Laurette" would be a much more bossy name and forthwith I adopted it. But come on back to the original theme of the story with me!

After a year and a half of school I received an offer to play ingenue roles in a stock company in Seattle. It was a ten, twenty and thirty organization and we played every melodrama we could and lying around loose.



MISS LAURETTE TAYLOR

through an accident. I was rehearsing in a melodrama at the First Regiment Armory. As I was going through a death scene a representative of the Messrs. Shubert saw me and told his firm I was "a comer." They obtained a promise from me to play under their management. For some time they had nothing for me, but just the same I had to turn down offers from Henry Miller and David Belasco. Finally my first Broadway chance came. It was a part in "The Green John Ganton," written by J. Hartley Manners, whom I later married.