Third Week at Camp Mills Brings Practice in Trench Fighting

Musty Textbooks Give Place to Serious Training in the War Game as It Is Played in France.

By JOSEPH H. FUHRMAN

CAMP MILLS, LONG ISLAND, Sept. 1, 1917.

"The infantry, the infantry—with dirt behind their ears,
"The infantry, the infantry—who lap up all the beers,
"The cavalry, artillery and the bloomin' engineers,
"Can never whip the infantry in a hundred thousand years."

If you are an early riser—that is to say, if you get up in the morning before 5 o'clock, eat your breakfast, take a fifteen-minute run at double-quick time, spend ten minutes on setting-up exercises, then bathe, shave, wash your clothes, clean your tent, brush your teeth, oil and polish your gun, clean your company street, air your bed and roll up your tent flaps—all this before 7 o'clock in the morning—and then if you appear in the vicinity of Camp Mills at that hour you will hear a tuneless blast from 2,000 sturdy pairs of lungs shouting this verse as the men swing down a lazy country road on their way to drill.

"Hep! Hep! Hep!—Left! Right! Left! Right! Keep in step there!" shouts the captain as he glances down the line of squads. "Number 1 of the rear rank, you are out of step! Hep! Hep! Hep! Chins up, men! Throw your chests out! There, that's fine! Swing your arms! Straighten out your pieces (guns)! Let's get some pep into this! Hep! Hep! Hep! Hep! S-cooaahds, r-r-r-right! Hurch!"

A perfectly straight wall of healthy humanity lines the road. There is a gleam of pride in the captain's eyes as he takes in each ruddy face. "S-cooaahds halt! Rest!"

A Rest Is Welcome

Although the morning is cool, the fast march has made the men perspire, and at the command "Rest!" a groan of relief goes down the line. Dozens of clean white, blue, red and green handkerchiefs are jerked out from tight pockets and applied to damp faces. The Man-Who-Never-Gets-Tired falls out of ranks and turns a handspring on the green. Some one starts up the chorus, "The infantry, the infantry"——. Another joins; three more voices chime in, until, in a few seconds, the entire command is once more bellowing out its favorite tune.

"Com-pa-nee 'ten-shun!" The captain's voice is heard again. Every man scrambles for his place in line. In less than ten seconds the line is once more perfect, the men absolutely rigid and quiet. A meadow lark trills its clear notes near by. An automobile honks in the distance.

Private Kelly is wrinkling his nose. His expression is one of pain and rage, but he dares not move. A mosquito, taking unfair advantage, has planted himself right between Kelly's eyes. The more Kelly wrinkles his nose, the faster does the voracious mosquito fill himself with Kelly's blood. A smarting tear rolls out of Kelly's eye, but he does not move. In two short weeks of army life it has been pounded into his head that moving in the ranks means punishment. And so we leave them—Kelly at pained attention, wrinkling his nose, and the mosquito, tail in air, still quenching his horrible thirst for blood.

Drill Twice a Day

When the men are finally brought to camp at 10 o'clock they are tired and dusty and hungry. With the exception of those who are suffering punishment, every man can do what he pleases until 3 o'clock in the afternoon, when the companies are taken out again to drill until 5.

A visit to Camp Mills reminds one of a busy antpile on a fair spring day. Near the kitchen ten or twelve soldiers are helping the cook. Pots are boiling over the field range. Three men are peeling potatos. Two more walk by, bearing a huge quarter of beef on their shoulders; another pours several quarts of sugar into a 100-gallon can where coffee boils merrily.

Further down men are tossing a medicine ball; a small group is carpentering a wooden floor for their tent. A redhead peeps out from behind a flap, and shouts: "Hey, Jim, have you gotta butt?—my smokes them Janes gave me is all gone."

Some one is strumming a guitar. Private Thomas O'Kelly sings a song in Italian. A few tents further down the company street a fiddle strikes up a tune; it is an Irish melody commanding a quick step.

As you walk on you are suddenly attracted by the queer buzz of voices emanating from one of the tents. You investigate and discover Private Frank Curtis teaching French to about twenty soldiers.

At the end of the company street fifty or more men are enjoying a showerbath. Half of them are washing their clothes at the same time. An officer passes by and fifty glistening bodies stand at attention and salute.

"You couldn't find a finer body of men in the world," remarked Captain William Kennelly, commander of C Company, at the end of a tour of inspection. "They are eager to learn and quick to understand. And we have them here from all classes and every nationality.

Fists Teach Cleanliness

"Take, for instance, the case of R——. This man is a writer and lecturer of repute. His education has been complete; his manners are perfect. He is everything a gentleman should be. He enlisted in the 69th as a private and was assigned to my company. When we arrived at Camp Mills R—— was shifted into a tent with ten other men. One man was a Jew, another a Pole, two were Italians and the other six were Irish.

"All the men came from the proletariat classes, and I was very keen to see what R—— would do. I watched him.

"Three days later the first sergeant came to my tent and reported a fight between R—— and one of his tentmates. I investigated the matter, and discovered that R—— had threatened to thrash the fellow if the latter did not take a bath within twenty-four hours. And he did. He had both eyes closed as a result.

"I immediately promoted R—— to be a corporal, and I find that the men not only like and respect him, but that he hobnobs with them in the clubbiest manner."

Captain Kennelly is a fine type of soldier. Although he is known as one of the strictest disciplinarians in the 165th Infantry (formerly the 69th), he does not hesitate, out of drill hours, to play ball or go swimming with his men.

As a result every soldier in Company C is trying his very best to win the captain's praise, and it is probably because of this that C Company is known as the star company of the regiment.

After two weeks of hard drilling, with the greatest stress laid on teaching the men to obey commands, the new 165th Regiment has caught its second wind and tightened its belt. From now on the game of war as it is being played in France will be practised each day on the fields near Camp Mills. The old school of the soldier will be relegated to the musty background of pleasant memories. The scores of weighty books written by military experts of the old school are destined for the waste basket.

Beginning Monday, the entire regiment will start advancing upon imaginary enemy under a curtain of imaginary fire to the screeching and whining of imaginary shell.

Over in France the men stage their charges under the protection of real artillery. A company deploys and advances a certain number of paces at full speed—by the clock. They are then ordered to throw themselves flat on the ground, while the curtain of fire is advanced another twenty yards or so, when the men charge again to within a few feet of the bursting shell. This formation is kept up until the demoralized enemy is engaged in his own trench. The men of the 165th will find much of their time from now on taken up with instructions in this new form of attack.

They are going to make the most of the airplanes from Mineola at Camp Mills from now on. At the blow of a whistle every man is to stand rigidly at attention, regardless of what he may be doing. It is the sign that an enemy plane is hovering overhead, ready to send its winged death to earth and that no man, under penalty of death, must reveal his unit's position by his activities.

When these instructions are obeyed to the letter all that is left to the view of the airman is a drab hat, almost indistinguishable against the green and brown grass weeds. By the time the men reach France they will know this primary rule of modern warfare and will already have learned to stop dead in their tracks when the warning of an impending air attack is given.

Machine gun squads are being formed in each company. The members of these units will be taught how to handle a machine gun as well as they do a rifle. Bomb squads are being organized, too, and tin cans filled with stones will be thrown by the men into ditches several yards away, where an imaginary enemy lies in waiting. This will whip them into shape for the hand grenade attacks they will have to carry on abroad.

The Germans have perfected a system of covering effectively a retreat by quickly throwing up nasty wire entanglements in the enemy's path. The men of the 1st Rainbow Division will soon be learning how to get through such entanglements. Every man will get a set of wirecutters. He will be taught how to go through the ugliest of wire obstructions in a few minutes' time and with a fair degree of safety.

They are planning a school of "crawlers," too, in the old 69th. "Over there" they need brave men to crawl out far beyond their own first line trenches into No Man's Land at night and from their fire-swept point of vantage observe the enemy's strength and position. These men must learn the art of tying ropes to their own wounded who have fallen close to the enemy's lines.

Human Rattlesnakes

These crawlers must glide close to the earth like rattlesnakees, neither lifting body, arms nor legs. It will take weeks to develop an efficient squad of crawlers. They will begin this most important work next week. The various company commanders are scouring their units for double-jointed men. Men adapted to this business of crawling are at a premium, for it is they who must take the place of the picturesque scout of bygone days.

The battalion commanders are trying to get away as much as possible from the trying, deadening, routine drills that used to take up all their time. About two-thirds of the drill periods are being used for setting up exercises and general gymnastics.

And the men like the change. They no longer come back from the field with the heart out of them. Watch them as they jauntily swing down Clinton Road at 5 o'clock in the afternoon. Note the springy step, the smiling faces. They seem almost as fresh as when they first marched away from camp in a swirling cloud of dust.

Five Hundred in Wrestling Match

Nothing is being left undone which might tend to develop each man's individual initiative. They have ceased staging the old sham battles, the prize exhibit of National Guard cantonments of the past. Now the men stack their muskets, peel off their shirts, line up two hundred and fifty on a side and charge each other. This is to accustom them to the impact of flesh against flesh, body against body, that is soon to come abroad.

They are training for one big day ahead, a day when they will have to put forth a supreme effort. One company has already started boxing bouts, and the other day Private William Hurley ("Battling" Hurley they used to call him when he fought in the professional ring) gave an opponent a love tap and broke three bones in his right hand doing it.

To Entertain Visitors

The officers and men of Company C have arranged an entertainment on the company street in honor of the friends and relatives of the men who visit camp to-morrow afternoon. Private O'Kelly, the "John McCormack" of the 165th, will sing some of his favorite Irish tunes, while a set of Irish fiddlers will scrape out merry jigs and one-steps for those who wish to dance. There is still time to mix a little fun with the serious business of learning to do the deeds that will be expected of them in the land where fun is no longer known.

THE FIRST STEP TOWARD FRANCE

Brave smiles and hard-fought tears mingle as the New York Guardsmen leave for Spartanburg

British Watch U. S. Sailors Play Ball

A BRITISH PORT-BASE OF AMERICAN NAVAL FORCES, Aug. 23.—British naval officers and sailors, interested spectators at the championship baseball series being played here by crews of American destroyers as they come in from patrol duty on the shipping lanes, rapidly are learning the fine points of the great American game. They have even witnessed the customary row with the umpire.

The champions of the American forces have just suffered their first defeat of the season, after winning eight straight games. Incidentally the champions' grip on a large silver cup bestowed at Guantanamo last season by the Navy Department was loosened. It was a ninth-inning rally that decided the contest.

Two runs were needed by the opposing team when it faced the champions' pitcher in the last half of the ninth. They were secured by a long hit down the third base line, which the umpire called fair, but which the champions were certain was a foul. The umpire stuck to his decision despite a friendly quarrel, and the vanquished champions returned to their ship confidently believing that they had been robbed.

Student Officers Only Rookies To Indifferent Plattsburg

By F. F. VAN DE WATER

PLATTSBURG, Sept. 1.

Hep, hep, hep-hep-hep!
Rookies full of beans, and they can't keep step.

A half dozen of the children of the post, here, born and brought up in the atmosphere of things military, chanted this roundelay as they stood along the road leading to mess hall on the opening day of the camp and watched the student officers tramp by.

There were men of importance in the civilian world in the dust-hued companies marching past—lawyers, physicians, millionaires and powers in business—yet there was no hint of respect in the irreverent chant.

These men may have been of importance. Probably many of them would eventually achieve posts worthy of consideration in the world of soldiers which the children knew. But, for the present, they were only rookies—although the authorities here have banned that word—and they manifestly couldn't keep step. Therefore, the triumphant song continued until the last company had filed past.

Some of those at whom the gleeful ditty was directed grinned sheepishly. Others apparently did not notice it. Their minds were wholly occupied with the serious business of keeping step and interval. And when you are in the midst of one hundred men who know little more of this art than you do yourself, concentration is an essential.

Uniforms at the camp are still scanty. Until last week there was a glaring shortage of hats. There was something rather startling in observing candidates setting out to defend democracy in khaki clothing of military cut, surmounted by a straw "kelly" with a glaring hatband. Yet those who strode along beneath panamas, fedoras and even golf caps saw no humor in the situation.

Last of Volunteers

And there was no humor, when you stop to think for a moment. This is the most serious and responsible business on which any of the candidates have ever embarked. They are fitting themselves to lead men into and out of danger. If they prove themselves worthy, they may eventually achieve power of life and death over hundreds of their fellow countrymen. They realize this, and although their ranks resembled somewhat the redoubtable force once marshalled by the mighty General Coxey, they neither smiled nor cavorted, but went where their officers told them as efficiently and quickly as they could.

The men who have come to this camp may have in the future many claims to fame. One they have achieved already, though it is doubtful if any of them realize it. They are the last of an old, obsolete system which the nation is cutting away as fast as possible; the last of the men who in years gone by have fought our wars, most inefficiently, although at times valiantly. They are the last of the volunteers.

Other camps there will be, if this war drags on. But their members will not be those who have come forward willingly and without individual bidding to aid the country. Future candidates for the officers' training camp will be picked from the wealth of raw material offered by the draft army so soon to be in the field.

Those who struggle through the simplest military tactics here this week are the last of a vanishing type. They are the men who have been allowed to devote their lives to the work of the nation, at their own volition. Henceforth the United States will not ask that her citizens serve her. She will take them as she wants them. She will sort them out and test them in the draft cantonments, and those whom she judges worthy may be sent here to learn to command their fellows.

So, the Plattsburg idea, initiated as a voluntary training school for civilians during their vacations, has passed through its secondary stage of a voluntary training school for officers, and will soon enter upon a third phase. Both here and elsewhere the "Plattsburg camps" are destined to become the West Points of our National Army, which no one may attain without a competitive examination.

Town Is Indifferent

It may be that the idea, conceived by a few ardent souls who believed in preparedness, and born in this sleepy little town on the shores of blue Champlain, may save the world for democracy and instil a better, clearer, more dutiful vision into the nation itself. But it is doubtful, even if such fame should ever be thrust upon it, whether Plattsburg would ever really wake up. The town has a determinedly indifferent atmosphere, which acts as a salutary antidote upon the spirits of those who come here, eager for the slaughter and dreaming of dashing uniforms displayed amid the admiration of the "hick" population.

In the first place, Plattsburgers are not "hicks," but shrewd business folk. The embryonic officers get their shock the first time they make a purchase anywhere. Witness the story of the farmer of this vicinity who, seeing a company approach his home, parched by a long hike, hung out on his well house the sign "All you can drink for a nickel," and reaped vast profit thereby.

Shock number two comes when the candidate realizes that uniforms and all the feeble glitter that military science has left to warlike apparel are old, old stories to Plattsburg. The town has seen them come and go for years. It has seen regulars by the thousands and student officers by the ten thousands. A new influx of raw material is looked on as promising for business, but it is regarded in much the same way as the farmer views the rain of which his garden stands in need, or as the tradesmen in a college town greet the incoming freshman class.

On the day when a new increment of candidates is to arrive Plattsburgers who own motor cars paste up new "To Hire" signs on their windshields, while shopkeepers refurbish their windows and then sit calmly down to wait behind placards advertising scores of various essentials which no real soldier can do without. The men arrive, and Plattsburg yawns. Presently they leave, and Plattsburg yawns again, and then waits for the next crop.

Feminine Awe Lacking

On the day camp opened here the candidates flocked to town by the hundred, some of them to make legitimate purchases, others merely to tramp the streets, with martial tread, looking sidelong into the shop windows to catch glimpses of their warrior forms. And no one shrieked, "Oh girls, the soldiers are coming!" and no one marvelled audibly at their brave display. There was no awed respect in the eyes of youthful Plattsburg, masculine or feminine, and presently they went out for a soda together and let the candidates tramp the streets in their panoply of war, without an audience.

The shop windows are the most open observers of the fact that a new increment of would-be soldiers is in town. Were the candidates possessed of sufficient funds and ambition to purchase all of the "soldiers' necessities" for sale here, each officer would go to the front attended by several pack mules loaded with equipment. There are countless volumes on military science, from aeronautics to zoology. There are field glasses, and puttees, and wrist watches, and notebooks with leather cases, gauntlets, ponchos, footease powders, and innumerable types of "marching shoes," each better than all the rest. Officers are apparently regarded by salesmen here as quadrupeds, at least.

There was little difference in the reception accorded by Plattsburg to this camp from that received by previous gatherings. But there was a change in the type of men who arrived here last week. The first officers' training camp was afflicted with youth. Most of those who responded to the nation's first call for officer material were still in their early twenties.

Atmosphere Changed

The members of the second camp are older. Their average age is only slightly under thirty. And there are many who will never see the thirty-fifth milepost again. They are graver, too. The first camp became grave after they had labored under the driving power of Regular Army officers for a few weeks, but the members of the second camp came here gravely, and are taking up their work seriously and steadily from the first. In them is exemplified the change that has come over the nation's attitude toward the war in the last four months.

The first camp came as if to a picnic. The second arrived to face a stern, solemn duty.

There are men of all types and all walks of life in this camp—college athletes, slim and deep chested; older men, heavier of limb, with the smooth, round faces of those whose bodies have begun to pay the penalty for too much sedentary work. There are even a few bearded candidates, who look strangely out of place in the youthful, clean cut of the army uniforms.

Some of the men have come here because it seemed right to them and also because they had little that held them to civilian life. But others have made big sacrifices to serve their nation. These have given up not alone considerable salaries, but also even stronger ties—children and other dependents—medical or legal practices, which may melt away before they return. Middle-aged men who have whirled to and fro from their offices in their own automobiles now tramp the hot parade ground in the broiling sun. Stomachs which have waxed noticeable on good living are now being compressed and tortured by the merciless setting- up exercises. Men who have made an entire office force jump when they spoke now leap as quickly and agilely as possible when an officer barks a word of command.

And what for?

Go to Plattsburg at sunset, when the waters of the lake, down beyond the parade ground glitter red in the hush of late afternoon. Candidates, with the work of the day almost over, skylark and shout to each other about the low, ugly barracks. Their voices carry strangely in the quiet air.

Then, presently, somewhere, a bugle calls.

The sound carries far, and each man stands at salute, facing toward where something is creeping down the tall whitewashed staff. It is the flag. It also is the answer.

Greenville Saves U. S. $5,000,000 on Draft Cantonments

South Carolina Town Main Factor in Obtaining Reduction on Price of Lumber for Camps

By H. W. Francis

GREENVILLE, S. C., Sept. 1.—Not only does this city repudiate any intention to profit abnormally as the result of the establishment here of Camp Sevier, training headquarters for the Thirtieth Division, U. S. A., but it claims that the government saved at least $5,000,000 by its selection of this city as the training place for the division. Correspondence made public to-day shows that the activities of the local Chamber of Commerce resulted in the government obtaining a reduction of $3.50 per 1,000 feet on the price of lumber required for the sixteen cantonments throughout the country.

When Greenville was picked as a camp location the Chamber of Commerce began a campaign for the establishment of a permanent wooden camp instead of a "canvas" camp, such as was planned. But the military authorities pronounced a wooden camp impossible owing to the high price of lumber.

The lumber committee of the General Munitions Board had fixed the average price of lumber required by the government for the construction of the cantonments at $23.50 per thousand feet. Investigation by William G. Sirrine, representing the Greenville Chamber of Commerce, showed that a large supply of suitable lumber was available to the government at from $17 to $18 per thousand feet. Mr. Sirrine carried his information to Major General Leonard Wood, then chief of the Department of the Southeast, who presented Mr. Sirrine with a letter of introduction to Newton D. Baker, Secretary of War, which read in part:

"I am satisfied, after inquiry covering the general situation in the department, that there are vast amounts of lumber immediately available and that it can be purchased with profit to the holders at not to exceed $17 to $18 per thousand, and further that a concerted effort is being made to boost prices $8 to $10 per thousand. I believe this can be avoided if we handle the lumber situation as I am informed the navy handled the coal situation.

Lumber Cheaper, He Says

"Mr. Sirrine also wants to talk with you about the importance of local contractors handling the work, so far as possible, as they will for obvious reasons avoid putting up local prices for labor, and this is most important, as the labor market is already disturbed here incident to movement of labor North due to high wages. As a very large amount of land is under cultivation, it is important to cause as little disturbance as possible, as every advance in the price of lumber is going to add to the embarrassment of the situation. There is plenty of lumber to be had at reasonable prices, and it should be used instead of canvas, which has a short life. Moreover, at the end of a year canvas will have cost more than the lumber buildings, and we shall have nothing to show for it. These cantonments will probably be needed for years, making lumber far cheaper in the end than canvas."

Mr. Sirrine presented this letter to Secretary Baker and made the following recommendation:

"Taking into consideration the large quantity of lumber the government will require within the next ninety days, estimated by R. H. Downman, chairman of the lumber committee of the General Munitions Board, at 80,000 carloads, and that the committee is prepared to submit to the quartermaster general's office firm price on this material, according to the schedule recently promulgated, in the nature of an option to the government, which, if exercised, binds the lumber organizations to supply absolutely and at fixed dates the sizes and grades specified, and further considering the increasing cost of labor and sawmill supplies, and the statements of the gentlemen present at the inquiry, I am of the opinion that $20 a thousand feet is a fair price for the government to pay."

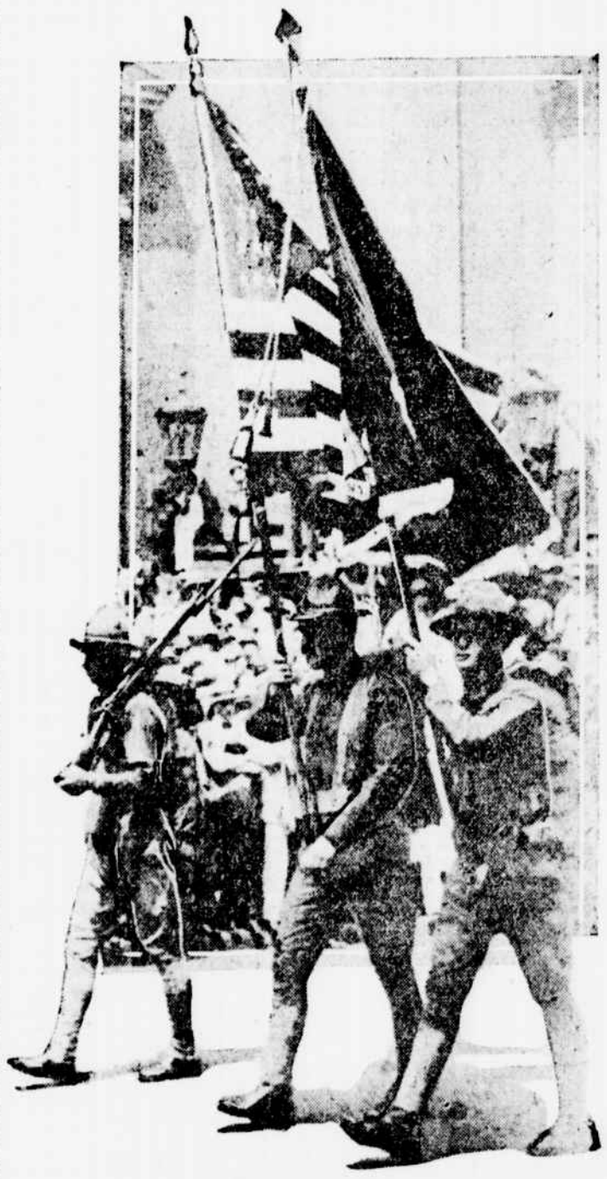
Munitions Board Confers

Secretary Baker called for an inquiry into the matter by the General Munitions Board. Several conferences were held, the conferees being F. A. Scott, chairman of the board; R. H. Downman, chairman of the lumber committee; Dr. Wilson Compton, lumber expert of the Federal Trade Commission; Major Palmer E. Pierce, of the General Staff; Mr. Sirrine and others. Mr. Downman, after explaining the difficulties facing the lumber trade, finally expressed the opinion that it might be possible to procure from the lumbermen of the country a voluntary reduction of $3.50 per thousand feet, making a firm price of $20 per thousand feet. He was asked by Chairman Scott to telegraph the interests concerned and see if the price would be acceptable. On the following day the reduction was formally announced to the War Department.

It was estimated at the hearing that approximately 1,600,000,000 feet of lumber would be required by the government for the army cantonments. At a saving of $3.50 per thousand, the reduction of the cantonment cost would be $5,600,000, but the Chamber of Commerce here points out that the figures are only approximate. The organization, however, takes pride in the fact that the saving covers at least the entire cost of the Greenville and Spartanburg camps, which will stand the government about $2,000,000 each.

Camp Sevier is practically complete and Guardsmen from various sections of North and South Carolina and Tennessee are arriving daily. Major General J. F. Morrison, in command, estimates that his full command will have assembled here in ten days and will be ready for service in France within three months.

WHAT FOR?



This is the answer

Little Farm Tractor Proves Big Factor in World War

Much has been said about American ingenuity as a factor in the world war. A little contrivance known as the farm tractor is one of the devices made in the United States that is certain to figure largely in the present emergency, and also in the future of agriculture. If all the horses in the United States have to go to war, these farm tractors will do their work at home, and may be more than horses have ever done.

Not much is yet generally known about the machine, since it has not fully emerged from the experimental stage, but its work is giving eminent satisfaction. It is said that, as a human and horse labor saving invention, it has come to stay. In that case the farm labor problem has apparently been partly solved.—Christian Science Monitor.

Story of American Soldier In the Trenches in France

Veteran of Spanish-American Conflict and Boxer Rebellion Hears the Call in World War, and Fights with Canadians—He Sees It All

This is a soldier's story. J. F. Newman was born in New York City in 1877. He was brought up by a farmer in Monroe County, Mich. When the Spanish-American War broke out he enlisted in the cavalry, but got only as far as a muddy cornfield, five miles from Huntsville, Ala. In the fall of 1899 he re-enlisted in the 9th Infantry and served through the Boxer Rebellion, becoming a member of the American Legation Guard, which was left in Peking after the trouble subsided. After his discharge in 1902 he sold life insurance in Illinois.

He fought the war fever for two years after the Great War swept over Europe, but the fever was in his blood. He arrived in this city a few days ago, after being discharged from a Canadian hospital. He tells the story of his bit at the front in his own words.

By J. F. NEWMAN

In 1914 when the European War broke out and the Germans took Belgium and the Lusitania was sunk by a German submarine later, my fighting blood began to boil, but I held back until June, 1916. I then went over to Canada and enlisted in the 19th Infantry, Canadian Army.

I was sent to Camp Borden, Canada, to get toughened up for the trenches. I surely was toughened up, drilling in the hot sand six hours a day, during July and August. The Canadians used the English drill manual, the direct opposite of the American drill, carrying their rifle on the left shoulder, instead of on the right. Their drill seemed very odd and awkward as compared with the American drill. Of course, I tried to tell them that the American drill was much more convenient and easy, which some of them admitted; that is, the Canadians would admit it, but not the English, who wouldn't have it that way.

The Canadian Army is composed of one-third Americans, the other two-thirds English and Canadians, and, believe me, the English soldiers didn't have much use for the Americans before we entered this war. As soon as we came in they became very friendly and everything went fine, but before that we had many a spat and I have never seen an American soldier in the Canadian Army that wouldn't fight at the drop of the hat if you said the least thing against the United States, because when a man volunteers to fight he is generally there with the goods.

Toughened in England

After I was in Camp Borden three months a unit was ordered to England. I was transferred to that unit. After being in England three months we were sent to France, tough as an ox, because after you go through that English war drill you are either broken down or as tough as an ox. Thousands of men that were sent to England never went to France, because they could not stand that hard drill, and were sent back to Canada. But now they harden them up in France, assigning each man to the task he is most fitted for.

After we were in France three weeks we were ordered to the trenches for the first time, something I will never forget. There are three grades of trenches—a front line trench, a second line trench and a communication trench, with a dugout behind the first and second line trenches. Some of the trenches are quite convenient, except the front line one, which is never convenient, wet or dry, because the German bullets are singing so loud that you can't sleep, and when it is raining hell couldn't be any worse than the front line trenches.

The second line trenches are the same, except the observation post. Then there are reserve dugouts, and first-aid posts and barb wire entanglements in front of the first line trench. All trenches are dug at night, while you are resting; however, most men would rather dig trenches than be in the first line trenches firing at the Huns or Fritzes, a trench name for the Germans.

I remember my first day in the first line trench. I was weak in the knees, and I expected to drop every minute, and when a bomb would explode my nerves would jerk straight up. But this only lasted for a few hours. Most every man has a different reaction for his first time in the trenches, then he begins to think, "Oh, well, I have only got once to die," and he settles down to business.

Five Days in First Trench

I was in the first line trench five days on our first relief, as men can only stand it four or five days in a trench in cold weather or in the rainy season, but in warm weather one could stand it ten or twelve days.

You sit up nights to sleep, if you can, but as a rule you are scratching yourself, because after you are in the trench a few days you are covered with "cooties," and the rats in the trenches do not hesitate to take a piece off your nose if you go to sleep, so you are compelled to sleep with your head covered, or take a chance. You can scare the rats away if you stay awake, but you can't scare the "cooties;" they stick like glue, even the Germans can't scare them—they are also covered with them, as we found trenches taken from them with more "cooties" than ours.

One thing I hate worse than German bullets is the German gas, for when you are well gassed you will surely go to heaven, or wherever you belong. They have gas helmets, but they are not gas proof. Many of the men become overgassed and report to St. Peter. When gassed it gives you a weak sensation and you become as soft as a rag. You feel sort of hopeless, with a desire to desert and to be shot by your own men, for that is a sure thing. That was the effect it had on me. It made me hate war, and I don't believe that I could ever get used to it, and I wonder why such things should be necessary among civilized nations.

Coming back to the trenches, a fine place to be is on a front line trench in an outpost, when you can't see a German bullet, and a German sniper is liable to kiss you with a bullet between the eyes 'most any minute. Another comfortable place to be is cutting the barbed wire at midnight about thirty feet in front of a German first line trench, for if the Fritz listening sentry should detect you it's good night for you.

Never Volunteer for the Job

Men never volunteer for this job, but they get it in turns, and when you get it the next man will say, "Good luck to you, Yank," or the Irish might say, "God bless you." But those blessings are not always heard by St. Peter, as they are generally said at midnight, when St. Peter is sound asleep. Or you might have a bad record up there, and St. Peter wouldn't answer your call.

The space between the front line trench and the German front line trench is called "No Man's Land," a strip of land that no one cares to go prospecting on, even though it were covered with diamonds. The Germans are experts at cutting the barbed wire with a new shell they have, which the Allies have not yet invented. Cutting these wires before the trenches is a very slow job, because you are not allowed to make any noise. Some of the hardest battles have been fought at midnight.

As I speak German, it enabled me to enjoy myself with the German prisoners. The Allied and German soldiers are not enemies after a battle, because we know that they would be glad to lay down their arms in a minute if they could.

In some cases the Germans have a machine gun behind the front line trench and the men are told that if they surrender they will be mowed down by their own machine guns. German Socialists do not want to fight, but are forced to under penalty of death. I heard many of the German prisoners thank God after they were taken prisoner because they knew their troubles were over. They may have to work hard, but they get their sleep in safety and get plenty to eat. They are kings as compared with the men in the trenches.

A German prisoner told me that they were not any more afraid of the American soldiers than they were of a bunch of schoolboys, but that they were afraid of the American money and food. I wonder what they will think of the American boys when we get about a million of them there? Some of them might look like a lot of schoolboys, but they look good to me, and I believe that after they get hardened up and get to France they will make the Kaiser say, "Gott im Himmel, was ist los?" which means in English, "God in heaven, what has happened?"

Wounded on Second Trip

On my second trip to the trenches we made a charge on the fourth day over "No Man's Land" to the German trenches, but before we got half way I was hit in my right hand and shot four inches above my right knee. I dropped my rifle and fell to the ground; three other men dropped not far away from me. One man next to me was shot through the stomach and was all doubled up. I could do nothing for him, but I said, "Where were you hit?" and he said, "I got it right in the bread basket." He said, "I'm lucky; I'm only hit once."

The rest of the men were now in the German trenches, fighting any way and every way. After I dressed my right hand with my left one the best way I could I crawled over to the man who was shot in the stomach. He had a glanced shot along his stomach into his left hip. He said: "Let me alone; I'm all in." Then he lay flat on the ground, and as I could do nothing for him with one hand I lay flat on the ground beside him. We expected a bomb to drop almost any minute and send us to St. Peter's for rollcall.

We had thirty-four men wounded and eleven killed; some had their legs shot off, some their arms, some part of their face, so I considered myself lucky with only a broken hand and a flesh wound in the right leg. We laid there for six hours after the charge, but it seemed like six months. Then the stretcher carriers came along and gave us a drink of rum and carried us down to the communication trench at the first aid post. My wounds were dressed properly; then I was put in an ambulance and sent to the base hospital.

After being in the hospital for two months the doctors thought it best to send me back to Blighty on account of my broken hand, rheumatism and flat feet, but the wound on my leg was only a flesh wound and had healed up nicely.

I have found all the Red Cross nurses in Europe perfect ladies, and they could not do enough for the soldiers. In fact, many of the boys get so attached to the nurses that they hate to leave the hospitals, and I believe the nurses hate to see them go.

It costs the Allied governments from $30,000 to $35,000 to kill or wound a soldier.

It may sound heartless and inhuman, but it is a fact, nevertheless, that from a military standpoint it is far better to be killed than wounded. It was the same in the Philippines and in China in 1900. If a man is killed he is buried back of the trenches and the responsibility of the government ceases, but if a man is wounded it takes two men to carry him through the firing line and the wounded man makes three. Then it takes a man and a nurse to take him in an ambulance to the base hospital; it takes from three to four people again at the hospital when he is operated upon; then later he is sent to the casualty clearing station, where a number of doctors are kept busy; then to the ship; then to the hospital again at home for six or eight weeks.

French Trench Slang

Big Push—What all good soldiers long for.
Big Stiff—Large 18-inch shell.
Big Willie—Kaiser Wilhelm.
Billets—A house or barn, resting place for tired soldiers behind trenches.
Blighty—Home, an Indian term meaning "over the sea," but the soldiers adopted it for the word "home."
Bomb throwing—Throwing bombs from the Canadian trench to the German trench. In case the bomb does not explode the Germans will throw it back to the Canadian trench, sometimes killing six or eight men. This was a very common occurrence at the beginning of the war, when the "can-made" bomb, which the soldiers made themselves in the trenches, was used. But now the "mill-made bomb" is used, which insures perfect safety to the thrower, because it does not give the Germans a chance to return it.
Carry-on—Keep on with what you are doing.
Carry-in—Taking ammunition to the front line trench.
Click-it—Getting killed.
Coming-it—Trying to put something over.
Communication trench—A zigzag ditch leading from the rear of the front line trench, through which reinforcements, ammunition and food are brought up.
Conscript in—The man who tried to wait until the war was over before he enlisted, but was forced to enlist by the government.
Covering party—A number of men detailed to guard working parties and to prevent surprises while others are digging a front line trench; a job all soldiers love (I don't think).
Counter attack—An attack by the second line of trenches on the first trench after its capture by the enemy. The hardest thing is to hold a trench after it is captured.
Dinner up—Dinner ready. A call all soldiers like to hear—at least after they have been in the trenches twelve hours.
Dug in—A German bomb which has not exploded on account of defective fuse.
Dugout—A deep hole in the trenches dug by the army engineers. The safest place on the battlefield, but not very safe at that.
Firing step—A ledge in the front line trench which enables the soldiers to rise above the parapet. This they do not like to do unless they are ordered.
Gas gong—An empty shell hung up in the trenches and in the billets. A sentry is always near it, so that the moment he detects the poisonous gas, he can give the alarm by striking the gong with an iron bar. But if the sentry happens to be asleep, which very seldom occurs, it would be disastrous to the soldiers.
Going West—Being killed, and coming home in a wooden box.