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## "OVER THE TOP"

By ARTHUR GUY EMPEY

An American Boy Who Got Into the War Two Years Before His Country.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### I Go to Church.

Upon entering we had identity disks issued to us. These were small disks of red fiber worn around the neck, by means of a string. Most of the Tommies also used a little metal disk which they wore around the left wrist by means of a chain. They had previously figured it out that if their heads were blown off, the disk on the left wrist would identify them. If they lost their left arm, the disk around the neck would serve the purpose. If by their head and left arm were blown off, no one would care who they were, so it did not matter, on one side of the disk was inscribed your rank, name, number and battalion, while on the other was stamped your religion.

C. of E. meaning Church of England; P. C. Roman Catholic; W. Wesleyan; P. Presbyterian; but if you happened to be an atheist they let it blank, and just handed you a pick and shovel. On my disk was stamped C. of E. This I took as my religion. The lieutenant who enlisted me asked my religion. I was not sure of the religion of the British army, so I answered, "Oh, any old thing," and he promptly put me down C. of E.

Now, just imagine my hard luck, out of five religions I was unlucky enough to pick the only one where church parade was compulsory!

The next morning was Sunday. I was sitting in the billet writing home to my sister telling her of my wonderful exploits while under fire—all the details of this. The sergeant-major put his head in the door of the billet and shouted: "C. of E. outside for church parade!"

I kept on writing. Turning to me, in a loud voice, he asked, "Empey, aren't you C. of E.?"

I answered, "Yep."

In an angry tone, he commanded, "Don't you 'speak me. Say, 'Yes, sergeant-major.'"

"I did so," I answered, "I am not going to church this morning."

He said, "Oh, yes, you are!"

I answered, "Oh, no, I'm not!"—But I went.

We lined up outside with rifle and bayonets, 120 rounds of ammunition, and went to church.

After church parade we were marched back to our billets, and played football all afternoon.

### CHAPTER IV.

#### Into the Trench.

The next morning the draft was inspected by our general, and we were assigned to different companies. The boys in the brigade had nicknamed this general Old Pepper, and he certainly earned the sobriquet. I was assigned to B company with another American named Stewart.

For the next two days we "rested," repairing roads for the Frenches, drilling, and digging bombing trenches.

One morning we were informed that we were going up the line and our march began.

For the next three days to reach reserve billets—each day's march bringing the sound of the guns nearer and nearer. At night, way off in the distance we could see their flashes, which lighted up the sky with a red glare.

Against the horizon we could see numerous observation balloons or "sausages" as they are called.

On the afternoon of the third day's march I witnessed my first airplane being shelled. A thrill ran through me and I gazed in awe. The airplane was making wide circles in the air, while little puffs of white smoke were bursting all around it. These puffs appeared like tiny balls of cotton while after each burst could be heard a dull "pop."

The sergeant of my platoon informed us that it was a German airplane and I wondered how he could tell from such a distance because the plane seemed like a little black speck in the sky. I expressed my doubt as to whether it was English, French or German. With a look of contempt he further informed us that the allied anti-aircraft shells when exploding emitted white smoke while the German shells gave forth black smoke, and as he expressed it, "It must be an Allied because our pom-poms are not off their lolly nappers and are certainly not strafing our own planes, and another piece of advice—don't chuck your weight about until you've been up the line and learnt something."

I immediately quit "chucking my weight about" that time on.

Just before reaching reserve billets we were marching along, laughing, and singing one of Tommy's trench ditties:

I want to go home, I want to go home, I want to go to the trenches no more.

Where sausages and whizz-bangs are galore.

Take me over the sea, Where the Allied command can't get at me.

Oh, my, I don't want to die, I want to go home.

When overhead came a "swish" through the air, rapidly followed by other yards. Then about two hundred yards to our left in a large field, four columns of black earth and smoke rose into the air, and the ground trembled from the report—the

explosion of four German five-nine's, or "coalboxes." A sharp whistle blast, immediately followed by two short ones, rang out from the head of our column. This was to take up "artillery formation." We divided into small squads and went into the fields on the right and left of the road, and crouched on the ground. No other shells followed this salvo. It was our first baptism by shell fire. From the waist up I was all enthusiasm, but from there down, everything was missing. I thought I should die with fright.

After awhile, we reformed into columns of fours, and proceeded on our way.

About five that night, we reached the ruined village of H—, and I got my first sight of the awful destruction caused by German Kultur.

Marching down the main street we came to the heart of the village, and took up quarters in shell proof cellars (shell proof until hit by a shell). Shells were constantly whistling over the village and bursting in our rear, searching for our artillery.

These cellars were cold, damp and smelly, and overrun with large rats—big black fellows. Most of the Tommies slept with their overcoats over their faces. I did not.

In the middle of the night I woke up in terror. The cold, clammy feet of a rat had passed over my face. I immediately smothered myself in my overcoat, but could not sleep for the rest of that night.

Next evening, we took over our sector of the line. In single file we wended our way through a zigzag communication trench, six inches deep with mud. This trench was called "Whisky street." On our way up to the front line an occasional flare of bursting shrapnel would light up the sky and we could hear the fragments slapping the ground above us on our right and left. Then a Fritz would traverse back and forth with his "typewriter" or machine gun. The bullets made a sharp crackling noise overhead.

The boy in front of me named Prentice crumpled up without a word. A piece of shell had gone through his shrapnel-proof helmet. I felt sick and weak.

I answered, "Oh, no, I'm not!"—But I went.

We lined up outside with rifle and bayonets, 120 rounds of ammunition, and went to church.

After church parade we were marched back to our billets, and played football all afternoon.

CHAPTER IV.

## TOLD BY LOCAL EXCHANGES

News Happenings in Neighboring Communities.

### CONDENSED FOR QUICK READING

Dealing Mainly With Local Affairs of Cherokee, Cleveland, Gaston and Chester Counties.

**Gaffney Ledger, February 26:** The school teachers of Gaffney are the request of the government, have been assisting the local board in making out the classification cards for the registrants in Cherokee county. As there were over two thousand of these cards the job was a big one but thanks to the teachers, the work has been about completed. C. Y. Allison, rural policeman, accompanied by W. P. Hardin, captured a distillery last Friday morning near the York county line in the Kink's Mountain battlefront section. The officers did not succeed in capturing the operators, but they doubtless were notified of the approach of the officers. Mr. T. G. McCraw has disposed of his Grassby Pond farm, just beyond Providence church, and purchased a home in Gaffney and will shortly move back to the city and make this his home. It will be remembered that about six years ago, Mr. McCraw bought the J. J. Magness place near Grassby Pond, paying for the same, \$27,000. Later he sold Mr. Lester Swafford a slice of this place for \$9,000. Then he sold Messrs. Ottys and D. W. Humphries a few acres for \$1,000, and then a few acres to D. C. Ross for \$400. The last transaction was on yesterday, when he sold Mr. A. Humphries the remainder of the Magness tract for \$40,000, making a total of \$50,500 he received for the property which he paid \$27,000. Mr. McCraw has advertised his stock of goods and a lot of farm tools and implements to be sold on Friday, March 15.

**So Say Prisoners Who Have Returned to England.** All England has been stirred by the return of 250 soldiers and civilian prisoners of war from Rulleben, Germany, some of whom are fishermen who were surprised by the Germans in the North sea immediately after the declaration of war and had therefore been prisoners almost from the beginning of the hostilities.

**AMERICA'S SOLDIER CITIES** Remarkable Task that Has Been Successfully Accomplished in Short While. The enormous task successfully accomplished by the United States government in erecting thirty-two soldier cities for the new National army and for the mobilization of the National Guard troops, is picturesquely set forth by William Joseph Showalter in a communication to the National Geographic Society, a copy of which is contained in the following war geography bulletin:

"There is no record of what Uncle Sam said to the builder of his soldier cities, but the facts in the case would have warranted his giving these instructions: 'I have placed in the treasury of the United States, subject to your order, a sum of money which is equal to all the gold produced by all the mines of the world during the past year. With this money I want you to build 16 great military cities in as many sections of the country. These 16 cities must be capable of housing a population equal to the combined population of Arizona and New Mexico. There must also be stable room to care for as many horses as there are in the state of Oregon.'

"Furthermore, you must establish hospitals to take care of as many sick and wounded people as are to be found in all the hospitals west of the Mississippi river in normal times. 'Nor is that all. You are to provide all of the mess halls and other general buildings for all of the National Guard mobilization camps. And while you are doing that, you will not forget your regular work of expanding and keeping in repair the housing facilities of the Regular army posts.'

"Nor will you overlook the fact that as soon as all that work is under way you will be expected to undertake the construction of two big concentration camps from which the American army will embark for France and through which its supplies will reach the front.

"Yes, I know it is a large order—in fact, a tremendous proposition—but these are tremendous times, and I'll have to ask you to execute it within four months. Of course, I realize that you will, in its execution, spend the money three times as fast as I can give it to you, but at the same time I expect you to render an account which will show that every penny has borne an honest burden."

"Such was the order. It has been executed as the American army always has executed its orders—to the letter!"

"The story of the 16 National army cantonments surpasses anything else in the history of building. Such, indeed, has been the transformation wrought at these cantonments that the world might well have believed it all magic had it not heard the names of the 25,000 men driving home 1,200 miles of rails a day; had it not seen enough lumber go from the country's mills to these camps to make a board walk four miles long."

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## SOLDIERS IN THE MAK NG

How Military Discipline is Taught at Sevier.

### WHERE THE WATCHWORD IS WORK

Lesson in Regulation Dress—Higher Officials Go to Very Great Pains to Teach Privates Just What to Do and How to Do It—How Joe Cudworth Learned His General Orders.

**Correspondence The Yorkville Enquirer.** Camp Sevier, February 25.—Soldiers of the Thirtieth Division, hundreds and doubtless thousands of them, are over thousands of dollars because they have various articles of clothing ultra-regulation, and which they are no longer allowed to wear. I am stuck to the extent of \$40 or more myself by reason of the purchase of leather leggings, "wrap" leggings, a Stetson military broad brim hat, collars and trimmings of one kind and another that I am not permitted to wear any longer. Some of the fellows are stuck for sums ranging as high as \$100. I know one sergeant who invested \$50 in a serge suit and \$18 in a pair of leather leggings recently. Within two days after his purchase an order was published to the effect "that this command must get into uniform," and that sergeant was out \$68 pronto. After Camp Sevier was established last summer—in fact for two collars and months afterward—a great many soldiers were unable to obtain equipment. There was a shortage of olive drab uniforms and other articles and really it was a problem to get uniforms of any kind. Then later Greenville furnishing stores laid in enormous stocks of "wrap" leggings, leather leggings, serge uniforms, hats and other articles which looked better than the regulation stuff. Soldiers fell for them of course and because of the shortage and maybe for other reasons (I don't know) a little like regulation uniform. Thousands of pairs of these "wrap" leggings were bought by men of this division at \$5 per pair; hundreds of pairs of leather leggings were purchased at from \$6 to \$18 per pair and hundreds of other articles of clothing accordingly. These articles looked much better and most soldiers (even rookie soldiers) want to make as good an appearance as possible.

But now there is sufficient regulation issue for every man and every man has his regulation. Those who have leggings that lace up the side (rabbit trousers) the fellows call them; don't look nearly so nice as "wraps" or leathers; but they are the kind Uncle Sam has decided his soldiers must wear. Military Police on duty around camp and over in the city of Greenville, have received orders to arrest any soldiers wearing other than "rabbit trousers" unless that soldier has a written statement from his captain or lieutenant authorizing him to obtain regulation issue. The division is obeying the order. Occasionally some "beau brummed" non-privates tries to get by with his buck-private stuff, but most of them are sorry when they try it. There has been some grumbling—not because the money put out on these articles is lost (because money is the very least of the average soldier's troubles) but because the old "rabbit trousers" don't look so well.

Greenville merchants scores of them are grumbling however; because they stand to lose hundreds of dollars as a result of the prohibitory order. Many of them calculating that the men would always be allowed to wear anything they bought, laid in big supplies of goods ahead. When the order requiring regulation issue came out their sales stopped while they had in some instances large supplies on hand which they can't even give away. I know one Greenville merchant who is stuck to the tune of a couple of thousand dollars and maybe more because he figured too far ahead. And I understand that there are many of them who are "out of luck." Of course none of us are worrying about that—not anymore than I am worrying about my \$40, or the sergeant's \$68.

"The general tells the brigadier general, the brigadier tells the colonel, the colonel tells the lieutenant, the lieutenant tells the captain, the captain tells the major, the major tells the sergeant, the sergeant tells the first class private and he tells the 'buck' who does the work himself because he hasn't anybody to tell. It is an old saying in the army. Maybe it is true that way because the buck's bullocks were chasing him any more. The general tells the brigadier; but he does a good part of the work himself and it is so all down the line in this war. The captain sweats as much as the "buck," and maybe a little more. Fact is there are no "gentlemen's jobs" in this army that is going to France, and the "skippers" (slang for officers) get their hands soiled and their clothes dirty the same as privates.

Before I got in this fracas I had seen quite a number of soldiers—generals, colonels, majors, captains and privates in my experiences as a newspaper man, and to tell the truth I never came in contact with very many who made any impression on me for energy or pep or well, democracy. But my experience with them here (it hasn't been very much) has changed my opinion. I saw a colonel get down off his horse, go into a trench where a buck private was lying down trying to sight a rifle correctly; lie down on his stomach beside that private in an inch of mud, and work with that buck a full half an hour, teaching him how to do it. And the buck lay there without shivering and twisting and declared afterward that the "guy with the buzzards" on his shoulders (a colonel's insignia is a silver eagle on each shoulder) wasn't a bit "harder" (meaning stern) with him, than any of the sergeants of his company. Scores of soldiers witnessed the incident and hundreds who didn't see it were told about it, and without it had a powerful effect for good, because the drafted men and volunteers who knew about it had practical evidence of the fact that this is everybody's war and the colonel or the commanding general or any other "higher up" is willing to perform any

## GENERAL NEWS NOTES.

**Record of Current Happenings Collected from Various Sources.** The United States steamship Kentra, plying between New York and Chilean ports, has been stranded near Coronel and will be a total loss, it is believed. Part of her cargo and all the crew were rescued.

Since last June the New Jersey Library association has supplied a total of 53,000 books to its soldiers serving in the United States armies. The association proposes to supply 100,000 books a year.

An allusion in the Italian chamber of deputies to the entrance of the United States into the war, brought all the members to their feet in a round of applause during the debate on the war aimed at Italy and her allies. The vote of confidence, 340 to 44, was given the government.

The periodical revolution is now under way in Costa Rica, according to advisers now coming in. Several towns have been captured by the revolutionists. The present government came into power in January, 1917, under General Tinoco. The United States government has never recognized the Tinoco government.

Captain David A. Henkes, Sixteenth infantry, U. S. A., has been sentenced to dismissal from the service and confinement at hard labor for 25 years by a general court-martial held at Governor's Island, New York, as of German descent, endeavored to resign his commission, saying he did not care to fight against relatives and friends.

James E. Edwards after serving eight of a twenty year sentence for bank robbery, will probably soon be released from the Colorado state penitentiary, after evidence has been produced proving an absolute alibi. Edwards was in Utah at the time the robbery occurred at Glenwood Springs in Colorado.

Henry Cohen, a groceryman of Newark, N. J., started to the bank this week with 595 one dollar bills in his hand. The wind blew his hat off and he reached for the lid with his hand holding the money. He turned the money loose and saved his \$2 hat, while the wind blew 200 of the one dollar bills away.

Correspondence made public in Chicago by "Frank" Kelly, attorney for the Federal Trade Commission, shows that the Chicago meat packers were in virtual control of the food administration in Washington. According to information given out by Mr. Heney, the meat trust had its own paid representatives holding positions with the food administration at \$1 a year.

An interdenominational church building has been dedicated at Camp Upton, N. Y. Protestants, Catholics and Jews were present at the opening exercises. The building, costing \$10,000, was erected by six co-operating denominations, Baptist, Congregationalist, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian and Protestant Episcopal. It will be used by all in common.

A French woman of modest circumstances, living near Toul, just back of the American front, invited three American soldiers for tea. Her husband said why not tell them to bring their friends. She did so. The Americans turned up, 42 strong. The French couple scoured the neighborhood for extra cups and saucers, never letting the guests know they were not expecting so many.

**CLOTH FROM PAPER.** German Mills are Now Making it in Quantity. Practically all the textile mills in the Chemnitz (Saxony) district, the center of that industry in Germany, were making cloth from paper during 1917, the available supply of cotton and wool for textile purposes having been entirely exhausted. A few establishments were spinning and weaving fabrics of nettle fibre by the process invented by an Austrian scientist during the war.

Profits from the manufacture of the substitute cloth were according to a review of the industry published in a recent number of the Cologne Gazette, by no means small and many plants made good dividends.

Scarcely had the mills been converted to working upon the paper yarns, however, when the manufacturers were unpleasantly surprised by the news of an alarming shortage in the new war material, viz: wood pulp, almost the entire supply of which is required as a base for explosives and other munition purposes and the prospect for the textile plants for the coming year were described in the review as very poor.

Nettle fibre as a possible substitute for paper yarn is available only in limited quantities so that only a few mills can be employed upon that raw material.

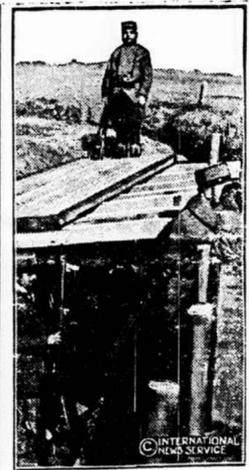
The paper cloth in question is not a regular paper but is made of yarn spun from fibres made of liquid cellulose or woodpulp and woven like cloth, with warp and wool. It is exported in Germany that paper cloth will dominate the market for some time after the conclusion of the war, owing to the difficulty of getting supplies of cotton. As to nettle cloth, regular plantations of nettles upon waste lands to supplement the casual roadside and fence corner supplies, but it will be long before the nettle fibre, which resembles that of flax, can come into general use.

Tulle factories in the Chemnitz districts were well employed during 1917 but the supply of silk was running very short.

Machine works and munition plants, usually converted textile mills, in the Chemnitz district were extremely busy during the entire year and paid good dividends; in addition to laying aside large reserves to finance the return to normal lines of production after the war.

It is estimated that by reason of the four months of measles, days in the United States, this country has been able to ship to the Allies 14,000,000 pounds more meat than would have been shipped otherwise. Altogether during the past four months the United States has shipped to the Allies 155,000,000 pounds of pork and 400,000,000 pounds of beef.

Tuberculosis is preventable and curable, declares the bulletin. It advises every one, in order to keep in a condition in which the best physical and mental efficiency is possible, to make it a practice to chew his food carefully, to ventilate his home and to walk somewhat every day.—Philadelphia Ledger.



A Bomb Proof.

Every now and then a German star shell would pierce the blackness out in front with its silvery light. I was trembling all over, and felt very lonely and afraid. All orders were given in whispers. The company we relieved filed past us and disappeared into the blackness of the communication trench leading to the rear. As they passed us, they whispered, "The best 'to' luck mates."

I sat on the fire step of the trench with the rest of the men. In each hand I held a tin of bully beef and was put on guard with their heads sticking over the top, and with their eyes trying to pierce the blackness in "No Man's Land." In the trench there were only two dugouts,