

"OVER THE TOP"

By An American Arthur Guy Empey
Soldier Who Went Machine Gunner, Serving in France

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EMPEY LEARNS THAT SOMETIMES A STREAK OF YELLOW CAN TURN PURE WHITE.

Synopsis.—Fired by the sinking of the Lusitania, with the loss of American lives, Arthur Guy Empey, an American living in Jersey City, goes to England and enlists as a private in the British army. After a short experience as a recruiting officer in London, he is sent to training quarters in France, where he first hears the sound of big guns and makes the acquaintance of "cooties." After a brief period of training Empey's company is sent into the front-line trenches, where he takes his first turn on the fire step while the bullets whiz overhead. Empey learns, as comrade falls, that death lurks always in the trenches. Captain distinguishes himself by rescuing wounded men under hot fire. With pick and shovel Empey has experience as a trench digger in No Man's Land. Exciting experience on listening post detail. Exciting work on observation post duty. Back in rest billets Empey writes and stages a successful play. Once more in the front trenches, Empey goes "over the top" in a successful but costly attack on the German lines. Soon afterwards Empey and his comrades repulse a determined gas attack launched by the Germans. His next experience is as a member of a firing squad which executes a sentence of death.

CHAPTER XXIV—Continued.

On his left, in the darkness, he could make out the shadowy forms of trees; crawling on his hands and knees, stopping and crouching with fear at each shell-burst, he finally reached an old orchard and covered at the base of a shot-scarred apple tree.

He remained there all night, listening to the sound of the guns and ever praying, praying that his useless life would be spared.

As dawn began to break, he could discern little dark objects protruding from the ground all about him. Curiosity mastered his fear and he crawled to one of the objects, and there, in the uncertain light, he read on a little wooden cross:

"Pte. H. S. Wheaton, No. 1670, 1st London Regt. R. F. Killed in action, April 25, 1916. R. I. P." (Rest in Peace).

When it dawned on him that he had been hiding all night in a cemetery his reason seemed to leave him, and a mad desire to be free from all made him rush madly away, falling over little wooden crosses, smashing some and trampling others under his feet.

In his flight he came to an old French dugout, half caved in and partially filled with slimy and filthy water.

Like a fox being chased by the hounds, he ducked into this hole, and threw himself on a pile of old empty sandbags, wet and mildewed. Then—unconsciously.

On the next day, he came to; far distant voices sounded in his ears. Opening his eyes, in the entrance of the dugout he saw a corporal and two men with fixed bayonets.

The corporal was addressing him: "Get up, you white-livered blighter! Curse you and the day you ever joined D company, spoiling their fine record! It'll be you up against the wall and a good job too. Get hold of him men, and if he makes a break, give him the bayonet, and send it home, the cowardly sneak. Come on, you boys, we've been looking for you long enough."

Lloyd, trembling and weakened by his long fast, tottered out, assisted by a soldier on each side of him.

They took him before the captain, but could get nothing out of him but: "For God's sake, sir, don't have me shot, don't have me shot!"

The captain, utterly disgusted with him, sent him under escort to division headquarters for trial by court-martial, charged with desertion under fire. They shoot deserters in France.

During his trial, Lloyd sat as one dazed, and could put nothing forward in his defense, only an occasional "Don't have me shot!"

His sentence was passed: "To be shot at 3:38 o'clock in the morning of May 18, 1916." This meant that he had only one more day to live.

He did not realize the awfulness of his sentence; his brain seemed paralyzed. He knew nothing of his trip, under guard, in a motor lorry to the sandbagged guardroom in the village, where he was dumped on the floor and left, while a sentry with a fixed bayonet paced up and down in front of the entrance.

Bully beef, water and biscuits were left beside him for his supper.

The sentry, seeing that he ate nothing, came inside and shook him by the shoulder, saying in a kind voice:

"Cheero, liddle, better eat something. You'll feel better. Don't give up hope. You'll be pardoned before morning. I know the way they run these things. They're only trying to scare you, that's all. Come now, that's a good lad, eat something. It'll make the world look different to you."

The good-hearted sentry knew he was lying about the pardon. He knew nothing short of a miracle could save the poor lad.

Lloyd listened eagerly to his sentry's words, and believed them. A look of hope came into his eyes, and he ravenously ate the meal beside him.

In about an hour's time, the chaplain came to see him, but Lloyd would have none of him. He wanted no pardon; he was to be pardoned.

The artillery behind the lines suddenly opened up with everything they

had. An intense bombardment of the enemy's lines had commenced. The roar of the guns was deafening. Lloyd's fears came back with a rush, and he covered on the earthen floor with his hands over his face.

The sentry, seeing his position, came in and tried to cheer him by talking to him:

"Never mind them guns, boy, they won't hurt you. They are ours. We are giving the Boches a dose of their own medicine. Our boys are going over the top at dawn of the morning to take their trenches. We'll give 'em a taste of cold steel with their sausages and beer. You just sit tight now until they relieve you. I'll have to go now, lad, as it's nearly time for my relief, and I don't want them to see me a-talking' with you. So long, liddle, cheero."

With this, the sentry resumed the pacing of his post. In about ten minutes' time he was relieved, and a D company man took his place.

Looking into the guardhouse, the sentry noticed the cowering attitude of Lloyd, and, with a sneer, said to him:

"Instead of whinpering in that corner, you ought to be saying your prayers. It's bally conscripts like you what's spoilin' our record. We've been out here high on eighteen months, and you're the first man to desert his post. The whole battalion is laughin' and pokin' fun at D company, had luck to you! but you won't get another chance to disgrace us. They'll put your lights out in the mornin'!"

After listening to this tirade, Lloyd, in a faltering voice, asked: "They are not going to shoot me, are they? Why,



He Betrayed His Country.

the other sentry said they'd pardon me. For God's sake—don't tell me I'm to be shot!" and his voice died away in a sob.

"Of course, they're going to shoot you. The other sentry was just a kid-din' you. Jest like old Smith. Always a-tryin' to cheer some one. You ain't got no more chance o' bein' pardoned than I have of gettin' to be colonel of my 'batt.'"

When the fact that all hope was gone finally entered Lloyd's brain, a calm seemed to settle over him, and rising to his knees, with his arms stretched out to heaven, he prayed, and all of his soul entered into the prayer.

"O, good and merciful God, give me strength to die like a man! Deliver me from this coward's death. Give me a chance to die like my mates in the fighting line, to die fighting for my country. I ask this of thee."

A peace, hitherto unknown, came to him, and he crouched and covered no more, but calmly waited the dawn, ready to go to his death. The shells

were bursting all around the guardroom, but he hardly noticed them.

While waiting there, the voice of the sentry, singing in a low tone, came to him. He was singing the chorus of the popular trench ditty:

I want to go home, I want to go home. I don't want to go to the trenches no more. Where the "whizzbangs" and "sausages" roar galore. Take me over the sea, where the Allemand can't get at me. Oh, my, I don't want to die! I want to go home.

Lloyd listened to the words with a strange interest, and wondered what kind of a home he would go to across the Great Divide. It would be the only home he had ever known.

Suddenly there came a great rushing through the air, a blinding, a deafening report, and the sandbag walls of the guardroom toppled over, and then—blackness.

When Lloyd recovered consciousness, he was lying on his right side, facing what used to be the entrance of the guardroom. Now, it was only a jumble of rent and torn sandbags. His head seemed bursting. He slowly rose on his elbow, and there in the east the dawn was breaking. But what was that mangled shape lying over there among the sandbags? Slowly dragging himself to it, he saw the body of the sentry. One look was enough to know that he was dead. The soldier's head was missing. The sentry had had his wish gratified. He had "gone home." He was safe at last from the "whizzbangs" and the Allemand.

Like a flash it came to Lloyd that he was free. Free to go "over the top" with his company. Free to die like a true Briton fighting for his king and country. A great gladness and warmth came over him. Carefully stepping over the body of the sentry, he started on a mad race down the ruined street of the village, amid the bursting shells, minding them not, dodging through or around hurrying platoons on their way to also go "over the top." Coming to a communication trench he could not get through. It was blocked with laughing, cheering and cursing soldiers. Climbing out of the trench, he ran wildly along the top, never heeding the rain of machine-gun bullets and shells, not even hearing the shouts of the officers, telling him to get back into the trench. He was going to join his company who were in the front line. He was going to fight with them. He, the despised coward, had come into his own.

While he was racing along, jumping over trenches crowded with soldiers, a ringing cheer broke out all along the front line, and his heart sank. He knew he was too late. His company had gone over. But still he ran madly. He would catch them. He would die with them.

Meanwhile his company had gone "over." They, with the other companies had taken the first and second German trenches, and had pushed steadily on to the third line. D company, led by their captain, the one who had sent Lloyd to division headquarters for trial, charged with desertion, had pushed steadily forward until they found themselves far in advance of the rest of the attacking force. "Bombing out" trench after trench, and using their bayonets, they came to a German communication trench, which ended in a blind-sap, and then the captain, and what was left of his men, knew they were in a trap. They would not retire. D company never retired, and they were D company. Right in front of them they could see hundreds of Germans preparing to rush them with bomb and bayonet. They would have some chance if ammunition and bombs could reach them from the rear. Their supply was exhausted, and the men realized it would be a case of dying as bravely as possible, or making a run for it. But D company would not run. It was against their traditions and principles.

The Germans would have to advance across an open space of three to four hundred yards before they could get within bombing distance of the trench, and then it would be all their own way. Turning to his company, the captain said:

"Men, it's a case of going West for us. We are out of ammunition and bombs, and the Boches have us in a trap. They will bomb us out. Our bayonets are useless here. We will have to go over and meet them, and it's a case of thirty to one, so send every thrust home, and die like the men of D company should. When I give the word, follow me, and up and at them. Give them h—! Lord, if we only had a machine gun, we could wipe them out! Here they come, get ready, men!"

British prepare for the "Big Push," the forerunner of the battle of the Somme. Read about it in the next installment.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Striving After Strength. We think that we shall win truth by striving after strength, instead of knowing that we shall gain strength just in the degree that we become true.—Phillips Brooks.

Concerning School Frocks for Fall



All the long procession of maids, from kindergarten tot to college girl, will be fittingly clad this fall in simple and substantial clothes. Whether it is because of the war or for other reasons, the new frocks for children are unusually plain and they are the forerunners of fall styles. It is unlikely that anything very different will follow them for they are tastefully designed. School outfits may be got underway now with success assured since all straws that show which way the winds of fashion blow, point toward simplicity of design as a dominant feature of coming styles.

Furthermore, it is the part of patriotism to make over and use again all woolen clothes. Dresses that cannot be remodeled for grown people will serve in place of new goods for making children's frocks and this conservation of woolen materials is something to be proud of. At the right of the picture above there is a dark serge frock for a girl of eight years or more which has every requirement of a successful school dress and suggests a model for a made-over dress. It has a plain bodice and plaited skirt. It is brightened with white braid and has two very practical pockets. But what will delight its wearer more are its soldierly touches in the shoulder straps and narrow strap that extends

from the belt over the right shoulder to the belt again. Any of the dark colors in wool dress goods will look well made in this way.

The frock at the left is successful in either wool or cotton. It is pictured made of plain chambray with bandings and collar of white pique. Its new features appear in the band on one sleeve in the management of the collar and in the slit pocket at the right side of the skirt.

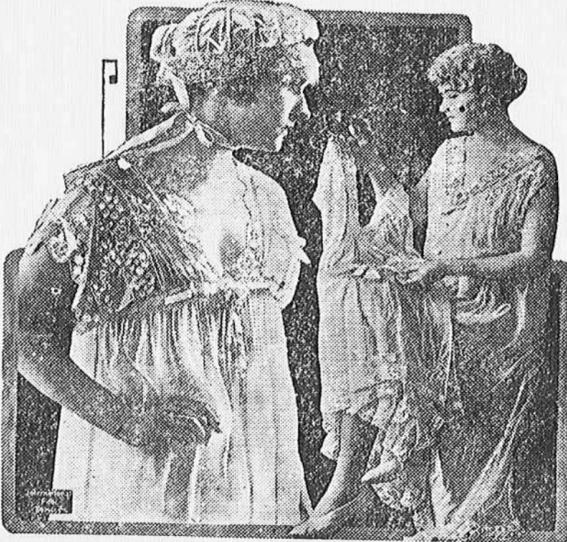
Serge and Georgette.

Very effective are dresses of a combination of navy blue serge and georgette. A brand-new model in this combination is made with a narrow skirt and a sleeveless jacket of the serge, having a full-length panel in the back. Georgette makes the sleeves and fills in the front in a sort of apron effect, and this section is beaded in brilliant colors, a fringe of beads across the front of the apron, which reaches to the knees, repeating the color of the embroidery motif.

In Dyeing Anything.

Remember, in dyeing anything, that to get the best results the things that you dye must be free from dirt. Boil them clean in a boiler of water and then rinse them thoroughly in clear cold water.

Hand-Sewing on Undermuslin



Women who sew well find needlework among the pleasantest of occupations during the long, warm days of midsummer. It is a good time in which to make up undermuslins and grace the sheer soft materials that are used these days for underclothes with hand sewing and fancy stitches. These harmonize with the dainty fabrics used better than machine work.

Only lightweight and sheer weaves of cotton and silk concern the maker of underwear in these times. The choice lies among soft, washable silks and satins, including much crepe de chine and other wash silks, and batiste, cotton crepe and nanosook. In silks, crepe de chine is the favorite and in cottons, batiste. Both these are liked in light pink and flesh color as well as they are in white, and it is likely that the number of garments made in pink exceeds that made in white. The favorite finish for crepe de chine is Val or cluny lace, French knots, hemstitching, fine tucks and a little embroidery. Recently considerable flit has been used in night-dresses.

The long-sleeved nightdress appears to be a thing of the past. Of the two models shown in the picture one has very short kimono sleeves and the other is sleeveless. The gown at the left is of white batiste with a short yoke

made of flit lace and swiss embroidery. The body is hemstitched to a piece of plain bending. The fullness in the skirt is arranged in tucks, very fine and run in by hand and the skirt also hemstitched to the bending. No sort of undermuslin may be called finished without a touch of color in ribbon that is fashioned into rosettes or bows and ends. Pink satin ribbon is threaded through the bending in this slip-over gown and tied in a rosette with knotted loops and ends at the front. Small bows of it are perched on each sleeve.

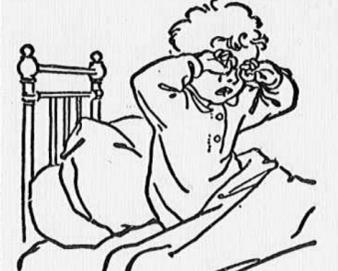
Crepe de chine in flesh color with fine Val edging and insertion makes the simple gown shown on the seated figure. Parallel groups of very narrow tucks in clusters of four shape the garment above the waistline. The neck and sleeves are finished with a wide edging and a narrower insertion is let in at the bust as shown in the picture. An envelope chemise to match engages the attention of its wearer. These garments of crepe de chine are favored by many women because they launder so easily. Cotton crepes are liked on this account and do not require ironing.

Julia Bottomley

A CHILD GETS SICK CROSS, FEVERISH IF CONSTIPATED

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