

LETTERS WRITTEN HOME.

Tell How Three Philadelphia Boys, Two are Penn State Students, Dodge Hun Shells.

How three young graduates of the West Philadelphia High School for Boys are dodging German shells, driving ambulances in France, is told in letters written home. The three chums are Fred Philip Smith, 14, William Bartlett Byers, 14, and Charles M. Ashton Jr., 15.

With all the recklessness and dash of the famous trio of Dumas' romances, these three youths are bringing honor to West Philadelphia High. Every week brings letters to their former schoolmates, written with a grim humor.

A letter received a few days ago by H. Brooks Harvey, of No. 5300 Girard avenue, a classmate from young Smith, relates how a German shell exploded under the engine of one of the motor ambulances and "scattered it over the landscape," leaving the drivers unhurt but without means of returning to headquarters.

FROM "OUT AMONGST 'EM." "Out Amongst 'Em, Thursday, July 26, 1917. Dear Brooks: 27th reached me last Monday. All mail, no matter from whom, is welcome over here, and when it comes from one of the old guard, why, it makes life different for a couple of days.

"Last Saturday's Paris papers had a small item to the effect that Charles Ashton had been wounded on the night of July 14th. In the same mail with your letter there came a note to me from Charlie, telling me that at 2 a. m. on the morning of July 15th, he and a German shell played that little game of 'You chase me and I'll chase you,' and he lost. The shell exploded right beside his car, one of the fragments entering his back, just below the left shoulder blade, shattering his shoulder blade and coming out through the neck muscles just below his right ear. The other piece tore his left toe off and lodged in his left leg.

"He was pretty well done up, and had his lieutenant write the letter for him. His letter, however, was cheerful, and he said that as soon as he got strong enough to start the trip he would be moved to the American Ambulance hospital, just outside of Paris, at Neuilly.

OF INTEREST TO MOTORISTS. "With his letter was a note to me from his lieutenant, saying that Charles was seriously but not dangerously wounded, and that his progress so far had been wholly satisfactory to the doctors.

"Well, Brooks, I hardly know what to tell you, except that war is hell. The farther this bird keeps away from Boche shells the better it will suit him, although me and some of the aforementioned shells have had some speaking acquaintance. By the way, Charlie is attached to Section 28, and Bart and I are in Section 23, and all the Ford sections were filled, so we were put in a section of Berliet cars. I need hardly tell you that as cars and ambulances these Berliets have the Fords shaded to a finish. They have lots of guts and pull well, even when loaded heavily.

"The only thing I have against them is that they are built too near the ground, so that you really have to be careful when driving over rough roads. They have wire wheels, but no self-starters. And that leads me to remark that self-starters are unknown in France; even on the 1917 models of pleasure cars I have yet to see a self-starter. They just don't have 'em. Also, they don't have vacuum feeds.

"Everything has a nice little pump, which you work like — (censored). You know Herb used to have one of 'em. Outside of these two little defects, though, the Berliet car is a (censored) good car, and I'll stick up for it any day in the week.

BELLS OF MANY DANGERS. "Being as large as they are, each car has two drivers, and of course, Bart and I drive together. Our car is No. 551,647, and No. 7 of Section 65. There are 20 ambulances, two staff cars, a kitchen truck, a repair car and a gas and oil car in our section.

"The section is in command of a lieutenant of the French army, and second in command is the American chef or chief. The chef, however, is the real commander as the French lieutenant is merely a figurehead. Our chief is a handsome duke from Indianapolis, named Jimmy Thompson. He is a Lehigh man and used to be quite a football player there. Our section has been out here at the front for about four weeks now, and the sector in which we are stationed has seen some of the hardest fighting of the war.

"We have had marvellous luck. Charlie's section, No. 28, has been out only a week longer than we have and yet already they have lost two killed and two wounded. So far all of our section have escaped unscathed, although it has been a matter of good luck rather than good management. The first day we were out a Boche shell lit on the road right under the front axle of one of our cars.

"It ripped the motor completely out and scattered it over the landscape, but both drivers got off without a scratch. Last Sunday night another of our boats ran into a shell hole and while the repair car was trying to pull it out a shell lit on it and as the result the repair gang couldn't find enough of it left to tow home. Yet no one in the gang working on it was hurt. Speaking of luck, you'll have to pass us the brown derby.

"Night driving did you say. Oh, yes, very much yes, and it's the love-

liest ever. We cannot use a light, not even a pocket flash, and whenever we drive at night we have to just crawl along, as the roads are jammed with artillery trains and provision wagons and staff cars, and it is almost impossible to move faster than six or eight miles an hour.

"Do we ever get lost? Quite often. Night before last, Bart and I got halted up, took a turn to the right instead of to the left, and didn't discover our error until we saw trench lights and star shells bursting over our heads.

"About this time out of a dugout comes a lieutenant, wildly waving his arms and yelling French at the rate of 200 words a minute. We couldn't figure out what ailed him, but soon he ran away and brought back a sergeant, who said in perfect English: 'It's not good the Americans should be here. These are the second line trenches and we are expecting an attack in five minutes.'

"Did we move? Oh, no, Brooks! Oh, no! We just turned that old boat of ours around in half the time it ever was turned before and tore down that road so fast that the Boches couldn't see us for dust—and it had been raining all day.

"Well, Brooks, old kid, I guess I have spread enough for this time. We go on duty at 4 o'clock in the morning, and I'm going to eat now and turn in. Hope these letters get through to you O. K., and that you will write whenever you can. Always glad to hear from you. You will remember me to your father and mother, please. Also give my regards to any of the bunch when you see them.

"FRED." The trio have been in France since last November. Ashton went with a unit from Dartmouth College, where he was a student.—Philadelphia Record.

Labrador Perils.

Few Labrador fishermen can swim. "You see we have enough of the war without goin' to bother wit' when we are ashore," a man said to Dr. Grenfell, the Labrador missionary and physician. Yet this very man had fallen overboard in the open sea no less than four times, and had only been saved on one occasion, writes Dr. Grenfell in "Down to the Sea," by catching a line thrown to him in his teeth and holding on until he was hauled in. His hands were too numb to be of any use.

One spring the two sons of a fisherman who lived in a lonely bay were out on the ice after seals, when suddenly it gave away and let the boys through. The father, seeing the accident from the shore, seized a fishing line, hastily fastened one end around his body and, giving the other end to his daughter to hold, ran out to the hole through which they had fallen. He jumped into the water, went down and brought up the bodies, too late, alas! to restore life.

There are many heroic tales of women. Early one fall the arm of the sea just north of the missionary's hospital was frozen over enough to allow dog trains to travel over it. In the early morning two men started off to cross it on a komatik to cut firewood on the far side. As they rounded a headland the whole of the team fell into the water where an eddy tide had kept the ice thin. The komatik followed into the water, carrying the men with it. One disappeared under the ice and was drowned. The other got free of the boat and held onto the ice edge although he was unable to crawl out.

From the shore his sister saw the accident and at once ran to aid him. As she drew near she heard shouting and saw several men pulling a boat down to the ice some distance away. They shouted to her to keep away from the hole, but instead of stopping she had the presence of mind to throw herself full length on the ice and glide along until she got near enough with outstretched arms to reach her brother's hand. Already he was half frozen to death; but she managed to get him upon the surface near her and, although one of her own legs was through the ice, to hold him until the boat came.

When Dr. Grenfell asked her how she had dared to go out to almost certain death, she replied: "I couldn't see him drown, could I?"—Youth's Companion.

French Comments on "Sammies."

A writer in the September Everybody's who was in Paris when that city received its first glimpse of American troops says:

"I listened with all my ears to the comments that were made, and as everybody was talking at the top of his voice to be heard above the din, I caught a good many, some of them amusing. A great many times they said: 'Oh, ils sont fameux—they're fine. I heard several times: 'How tall and thin they are! Once or twice, with a hearty emphasis, almost of admiration: 'Heavens, how ugly they are.' (And this was really true. I didn't realize until I saw a mass of them together how the Lincoln type of powerful raw-boned, sincere ugliness has persisted in many Americans.) And of course a thousand times 'Vive les poilus d'Amerique!'

"One working woman walking in front of me, carrying a baby, kept saying: 'It makes me want to cry when I see their flag here,' and an old man said: 'I hope there is a German spy on every street corner.' One woman, jumping up and down with excitement said: 'Oh, I am so glad I am going to see them; I never saw any Americans in my life.' I gathered from her accent that she expected them to wear feathers and paint their faces with war paint. I cannot begin to tell you the atmosphere of genuine friendliness and evident good feeling which permeated this enormous crowd. I never felt anything like it in my life. But what pleased me most of all was that a middle-aged, middle-class woman on the street car going home said to me after she noticed John's uniform. She said: 'Every time I see the American flag it makes me think: 'No, the Germans were wrong. Ideals are the real things there are.'"

—Put your ad. in the "Watchman."

PICKING MEN FOR WAR.

The Selective Draft Was Known In the Time of Moses.

Registration for a selective draft was known thousands of years ago. The first chapter of Numbers tells how Moses in the second year after the exodus from Egypt was commanded to choose from among the various tribes men to tabulate the names of the males over the age of twenty who were able to go to war. The passage, in part, follows:

"Take ye the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel by their families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of the names, every male by their polls; from twenty years of age and upward, all that are able to go forth to war, thou and Aaron shall number them by their hosts. And with you there shall be a man of every tribe. (Here are mentioned the men who are to assist in the registration.)

"And Moses and Aaron took these men that are mentioned, and they assembled all the congregation together on the first day of the second month, and they declared their pedigrees after their families by their fathers' houses, according to the number of the names from twenty years old and upward."—Chicago Tribune.

DIET AND DISEASE.

Rickets In Children Is Caused by the Wrong Kind of Foods.

"Beware of giving young children too much pasteurized milk, proprietary food or even cereals to the exclusion of brown bread and butter, stewed fruit or roasted apple and a little meat once a day," writes Dr. Beverley Robinson of New York in giving a warning note about rickets in the New York Medical Journal.

He adds that he is "considering especially children two or three years old who are healthy and vigorous unless rickets develops unawares by reason of faulty dietary." And he quotes the following from Osler:

"Like scurvy, rickets may be found in the families of the wealthy under perfect hygienic conditions. It is most common in children fed on condensed milk, the various proprietary foods, cow's milk and food rich in starches."

Rickets is the cause of knockknees and bowlegs. It is due to too little animal fat and protein in the dietary, together with too little lime salts.

Curious Choice of a Wife.

Some years ago an English curate surprised his parishioners by marrying a widow considerably older than himself. The astonishment was still greater when the cause was known. The curate had become engaged to a young girl whose frivolous conduct soon led him to regret the step. He offered a settlement for his release, but it was refused. He endeavored in every way to break the engagement, but without success.

"Is there nothing I can do to escape this?" he exclaimed one day in despair. "Yes," remarked the girl's mother, who was present and who had been the prime mover in the marriage negotiations, "by marrying me."

The curate decided if he had to marry one of the two he preferred the mother and accepted her. The young girl married a wealthy stockbroker.

Unkind Wit.

The desire to shine by delivering himself of a crushing repartee all too often leads the witty individual into excesses that seriously offend charity and not rarely justice as well.

A wit that is unkind is not a gift to be proud of. It usually belongs to a discontented and spiteful person who apart from these failings would be a very nice friend, but the biting wit on which he prides himself keeps everybody at a distance. While one dislikes the person who is ready to agree to anything one may say, it is rather better to have that than continual disagreement and stinging wit.—Exchange.

Fattening Snakes.

There are ranches in the great southwestern part of the United States whose whole business is the fattening of rattlesnakes and other reptiles for market. The market for these creatures is an active one, including museum proprietors, circus men, side show actors, zoological devotees and also chemists who are after the various snake poisons.—Exchange.

Inconsistent Teachers.

"And how do you find school, Harold?"

"Rather difficult, sir. The teachers are inconsistent. In English composition we are told to be original. In arithmetic we are all expected to get the same answer."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

The Same Argument.

"I don't see why you complain about the size of my bill," said the doctor. "It is not as big as it might have been."

"That's all right," replied the man. "I wasn't as sick as I could have been either."—Detroit Free Press.

Awful Thought.

"And you ought to be made to eat humble pie."

"But don't you try to make it yourself, dear. Spare me that."—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Giving Her Credit.

"Giddings willingly gives his wife full credit for what he is."

"What is he?"

"Bankrupt."—Chicago Herald.

He that would have his virtue published is not the servant of virtue, but glory.—Ben Jonson.

GIRLS WHO DISAPPEAR.

Tragedy of the Thousands That Sink Into Oblivion Yearly.

Police statistics of New York city show that at least two girls disappear from home every day in the year.

They vanish into oblivion. Soon they are forgotten, but the heartache of the mother left behind is never stilled. It will ache on through the remaining days of her life.

And what becomes of the girls who disappear?

That is a problem that we will not attempt to solve. We only know that they are swept away by the great whirlpool of life.

The federal statistics furnished by the bureau of vital statistics show that 50,000 persons disappear each year. They vanish into oblivion. A greater proportion of these are young girls. The men who disappear turn up sooner or later in most cases, but the girls, as a rule, are forever lost. Having cut away from their social ties, having burned their bridges behind them, these disappearing girls abandon usually all thought or hope of returning and become isolated members of the social colony of which they once were members. They prefer to struggle on as best they can.

It is one of life's tragedies.—Memphis Commercial Appeal.

THE BANK OF ENGLAND.

It is a Private Company, but Acts as the Nation's Banker.

The Bank of England is not, as most people think, a government institution. It is a private company, but reaps a good profit by acting as the nation's banker. The remuneration paid to the Bank of England for the management of the national debt was fixed in 1906 as a yearly sum of the rate of £325 per million pounds and at the rate of £100 for every million pounds above this amount.

Before any of the government money that goes into the Bank of England can be spent a certain procedure has to be followed. First of all an order signed by the king and countersigned by two lords of the treasury has to be forwarded to the comptroller and auditor general of the exchequer and audit department. Then the comptroller hands an order to the treasury authorizing the Bank of England to debit the exchequer account and credit the account of the paymaster general, who makes all payments on behalf of the various departments.

Afterward the comptroller scrutinizes all the accounts paid to see that the money has been spent in accordance with the wishes of parliament.—Westminster Gazette.

Training Naval Gunners.

When England trains her gunners for the sea she sends them to Whale Island in Portsmouth harbor. Here the entire island is given over to steel sheds which are built like gun turrets on a battleship. The great guns projecting from these sheds are dummies, though they are exact counterparts of those on a battleship. The prospective officers and men are made to go through the exercise of range finding, loading, aiming and "firing" these guns as rigidly as if they were in a real battle at sea. The heavy steel projectiles are hauled from the magazine by hydraulic and electric cranes, just as in an actual ship. A real breech mechanism locks the projectile and its powder charge in the gun, while an intricate swivel mounting of steel swings the gun into the firing position.—Popular Science Monthly.

Remarkable Luck.

In Gold Hill, Nev., in 1877, one of the mining bosses—Tole by name—had trouble with some of the laborers in his mine. One night three of them attacked him in a barroom. Two of them pinned him down, while a third stood over him with a revolver. The muzzle almost touched his stomach. Once, twice, three, a fourth and a fifth time the weapon snapped. Tole closed his eyes. Each moment he expected to be his last. The disgruntled ruffian threw his disappointing weapon on the floor with an oath and, joined by his aids, left the place. Tole wiped the cold sweat from his brow, mechanically picked up the discarded weapon, went to the door and fired off every charge, remarking that it was just his luck.

How He Cleared Himself.

While passing along a busy street in Dublin a lady was relieved of her hand bag, and Sandy was arrested on suspicion of having snatched it. He was placed among a group of men, and the lady was asked to single out the culprit. She passed down the line till she came to Sandy.

"Officer," she said, "I think that is the man, although I did not see his face, but his clothes appear to be similar."

"The lady's wrong, sir. I was wearing a different suit. Can I go now, sir?" said Sandy.

Very Formal.

"Are you on very friendly terms with your neighbor in the apartments?"

"Well, no. She's rather formal—always sends her card when she wishes to borrow flour, and if she wants both flour and sugar she sends two cards."—Washington Herald.

Stunning.

"Oh, Effie, your new gown and hat are stunning!"

"Yes, Alfred hasn't recovered yet from the shock the bill gave him."—Exchange.

A Good Rule.

Do all the good you can to all the people you can as long as ever you can in every place you can.

Our deeds determine us as much as we determine our deeds.—George Eliot.

EVERYTHING HAS NOT GONE UP IN PRICE

All the goods we advertise here are selling at prices prevailing this time last season.

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Our deeds determine us as much as we determine our deeds.—George Eliot.