

DELIVERY OF SOLDIERS' LETTERS FACILITATED.

Washington.—Captain Frank E. Frazier, U. S. A., assistant director of the American expeditionary forces postal service at Tours, France, has been sent to the United States on a mission relative to postal affairs, with authority to furnish information heretofore, for military reasons, withheld from the postal officials. The military authorities found it necessary to obtain prompt delivery of soldiers' mail, to provide the military postal officers in France with complete information relative to the location of troops. The military postal officers at the central postoffice in France have now been afforded access to the card-index directory of the Adjutant General's department, located in the same building, and on this arrival in this country Captain Frazier furnished, under seal of secrecy, to the postal officers a directory giving the location of troops in France and a record of those on the way.

Orders have been issued to send mail on every boat destined to dock at any port in France organized to receive mail. This and the adoption of a scheme of designation for groups of unattached men sent from the United States to replacement camps in France, which is recommended by Captain Frazier, will, it is believed, go a long way toward expediting the delivery of letters to soldiers.

MAIL OF 50,000 DELAYED.
The mail of more than 50,000 of our soldiers in France is delayed and perhaps cannot be delivered at all. The reason for this is that letters for a greater number than 50,000, in the aggregate, are improperly or inadequately addressed.

Complaints covering these delays are sufficient to give the public the impression that the soldiers' mail service is bad. But besides the improper addressing of letters, which is woefully common, there are other reasons for delay in the delivery of soldiers' mail which cannot be avoided by the military postal service any more than it could be when this service was conducted by the Postoffice Department.

These delays affect a relatively small proportion of the mail, but the number is sufficient to give rise to a general, if unjust, criticism of the postal service.

Delays caused by military objection to furnishing the civilian postal officials with information relative to the location of troops are now, in a measure, cured by this information being given the army officers directing the mail service. Letters could not be properly delivered without knowledge as to where they were to be sent. Military officials also are provided now with transportation facilities which were not provided by the army for the civilian service.

But at times there is still delay to the mail after it reaches port in France. Some of the delays are absolutely unavoidable if the safety and welfare of our troops are to be given first consideration. Others can be avoided, and steps to that end which were impossible under military restrictions upon civil authorities have been or are being taken.

THREE WEEKS TO REACH SOLDIER.
Only in exceptional cases and in circumstances which will be explained, does it take more than three weeks for a properly addressed letter to reach a soldier in France who is attached to an organized unit of the army. Most of the mail reaches its destination in less time than that. The great mass of letters that are from the expeditionary forces go and come on schedule time.

Yet exceptional circumstances may delay a soldier's mail as much as two or three months, or he may not get it at all. In the extreme case where there are several soldiers of the same name it will be because his letters are improperly addressed and he has failed to correct the conditions by furnishing his proper address. There are no delays, or at most none greater than a few days, when the soldier is located with the organized forces and the letter is properly addressed.

In view of the duplication of names in the American expeditionary forces the absence of any distinguishing designation for groups of casual or replacement men has been a source of difficulty in the delivery of mail. Thousands of soldiers are being sent to France every month from this country for replacement purposes. They come from various cantonments and are usually designated simply, "Camp Pike August Automatic Replacement Draft," or some similar designation, and part of that particular draft may be sent to one replacement camp in France and part to another.

Mail now forwarded to these soldiers who have been scattered among organizations at the front—"floaters' mail"—goes to the central postoffice at Tours and its distribution there is still further hampered by being mixed up with the accumulation of misdirected mail. It is estimated that 300,000 letters a month were delayed from this cause.

DIFFICULTIES BEING OVERCOME.
This delay in delivery will not occur under arrangements which have just been made to have each replacement unit of 250 men or less as it leaves camp in the United States given a distinctive company number which it will retain until it reaches a replacement camp in France. Every member of such a unit will then be one of 250 men instead of one of 1,500,000. The John Jones of the small unit will be easily located.

At each replacement camp in France a directory section of the army postoffice has been established, and mail for a replacement soldier will hereafter follow him to the unit to which he is sent from that camp, the clerks in the directory section of the postoffice using the card records of the statistical division of the camp commander. It still rests with the soldier to immediately notify his correspondents as to his correct address, and with the various cantonments in the United States to see that mail ad-

ressed to him at the cantonment is properly indorsed for forwarding to France. It is equally important for the soldier to notify his correspondents immediately upon his assignment to a definite unit in France.

Delays in the delivery of mail, when cannot be avoided, are liable to occur at any time during a period of great activity and secret movement of troops. Where the success of a troop movement on the front depends upon secrecy mail cannot be sent to members of a mobile force until they are established at the selected destination. Whatever delay is involved in this, whether twenty-four hours or several days, must be accepted as a military necessity. The same is true when shipments of supplies, munitions, fresh meat, etc., are such as to make an extraordinary demand upon transportation facilities from the French ports. Such delays, however, are but for a few days at most. When a divisional postoffice is moved in connection with a big troop movement great secrecy has to be exercised. No word, even to the army postal authorities, is permitted concerning the secret troop movement until the troops have been located permanently enough to permit the sending of mail. Under these conditions a week's delay in the delivery of mail is possible.

Every care is taken in expediting the mail for wounded men in hospitals. The only delay in the delivery of such mail is that which is absolutely unavoidable. A wounded man may be sent from one hospital to another and even to several before reaching a permanent base hospital, and if detained a day or two at each of the hospitals through which he passes in transit his mail will be delayed until he is at a hospital long enough for it to reach him. If he should be but slightly wounded, not being at the hospital long enough to get his mail, and then should be assigned to a new organization, there would be some further delay, but in none of these cases is the delay great. The hospital authorities are required to notify the central postoffice as well as his company commander immediately on the arrival of the soldier there for treatment, and mail is sent to him at once. There is no delay whatever in mail sent home by or for the wounded man. It is only that addressed to him that may be slightly delayed prior to his permanent location.

Only two causes of delay have occurred at the port of embarkation in this country. One is the posting of the letter just too late to make the transport, when a week might pass before another sailing. The remedy for this does not lie with the postal service. The other is the limitations placed upon ocean transportation facilities and lack of information as to the destination of the ship. Unless the military port officer at the American port of embarkation knows that an outgoing steamship is to land at a French port organized to handle the mail, it cannot be sent by this steamship, as the might be bound for a port where there is no American postoffice and no postal employees to handle the mail. This difficulty has just been cured by a War Department order which directs that this information be furnished the military port officer.

PUZZLING POINT EXPLAINED.
One of the most puzzling things to the public has been the frequent occurrence, both as to mail delivered in France and mail received in this country, of a letter of a later date being received before one mailed perhaps a week or more earlier. One explanation of this is that the postmaster of the port of embarkation has been assigned by the War Department a definite limited space for mail, and when the amount of mail has exceeded this the excess has had to be held over until the next steamship. If there were, say, 2000 bags ready for shipment and the postmaster was notified that only 800 bags could be handled, the surplus, 1200 bags, would have to lie over, being included in the mail accumulating for the next setailing.

Such an excess of mail might occur several times and some of the bags missing the first mail might also be among those left over from the second. This situation will be remedied by an order from the War Department that upon proper notice in advance from the postal officer at the port of embarkation as to the number of sacks to be handled the entire volume shall be cleaned up at each sailing.

The possible delay that would be unavoidable, though unusual in the transportation of a letter from New York to a divisional postoffice at the front in France might be twenty-one days—one day in distributing in New York, seven days on account of just missing a boat, three days on account of shortage of freight cars for carload transportation from the port of embarkation in France, seven days on account of secret troop movements and, in case of severe fighting, a hold-up of trains carrying mail of perhaps three days. This exceptional delay would increase the normal time of from two to three weeks for the delivery of mail to from five to six weeks. Normally it takes from two to three days to deliver a letter at the front after its arrival at a French port.

Delay that has occurred in the delivery in the United States of soldiers' letters mailed in France is sometimes due in a slight extent to the censorship. Usually the delay from this cause is not great, but there have been cases, under exceptional circumstances, where it has been as much as three weeks.

1,000,000 LETTERS A DAY.
A complete postal system corresponding to that in the United States is now in operation in France, with central postoffice located at Tours. This service in France, except the distribution and dispatch of mails to the United States, is entirely under military control, the director and assistant directors being commissioned army officers and the entire force being a part of the military service.

It is estimated that a million letters per day arrive in France for members of the American expeditionary forces. There is also a large volume of mail for soldiers—about a third as much as that from home—mailed locally in France.

The War Department has now under advisement a proposition to stop

First Aid Lessons FOR BOYS and GIRLS

By Ruth Plumly Thompson, in Public Ledger.

HICCOUGH—I wonder if you know that the great muscle that separates the chest from the abdomen is called the diaphragm. You can feel it press down when you breathe deeply. Well, hiccupping (which usually comes from overeating or indigestion) is caused by a contraction (and that means "a drawing together") of this big muscle. Holding the breath as long as possible will often cure it because it forces the diaphragm down and holds it there. Drinking a large

glass of water in small sips without taking a breath will do the same thing, or scaring a person will stop the hiccupping by forcing him to take a long breath. If none of these methods cure the hiccupping, get rid of the irritating material in the stomach by drinking lukewarm salt water. If, in spite of everything you can do it is still as bad as ever, you had better see a doctor, for while it is usually harmless, people have been known to die from the effects of a long spell of hiccupping.

all incompletely addressed mail at New York, returning it to the sender. A letter for an American soldier in Europe should be so addressed as to show his rank, his full name, including his middle name, his company or battery and his regiment, as well as the branch of service.

The First Aerial Bombs.
It may be remembered that Garros came to the United States in 1911 and amazed vast audiences by his audacious flights. From here he went to Mexico to entertain the populace there. It occurred to him on arriving that, since fighting seemed to be the favorite pastime of his Latin brothers he would be making a lasting "hit" with them if he could only arrange for an aerial sham battle. To his good luck, he found the general in command of the army, then in Mexico city, a willing listener. Accordingly, one day he was seen flying over the Mexican batteries armed with baskets of juicy oranges that the quartermaster had given him.

Suddenly the batteries opened fire and sent shot after shot at him. The immense crowd became wildly enthusiastic, although they knew, of course that only blank cartridges were being used. Garros then started to let go the oranges upon the artillerymen. To his surprise almost immediately they began to scatter in every direction. The quartermaster had not realized that a juicy orange dropped from so great a height would rival a small bomb. The first aerial fight unquestionably was won by bombs of ripened oranges.—Popular Science Monthly.

—Subscribe for the "Watchman."
—A postal employee, on his honorable discharge from the military service, no matter how long it has been, will be permitted to resume the position in the postal department which he resigned to enter the military service without a new civil service examination or other formality of any kind. This amendment to the postal laws was adopted July 28, 1916.



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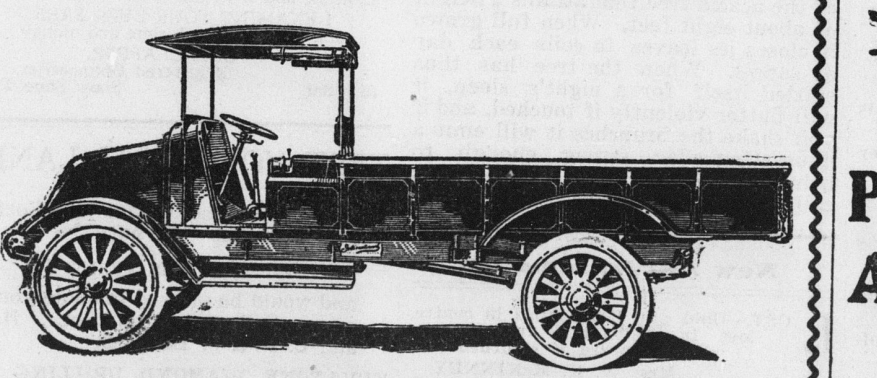
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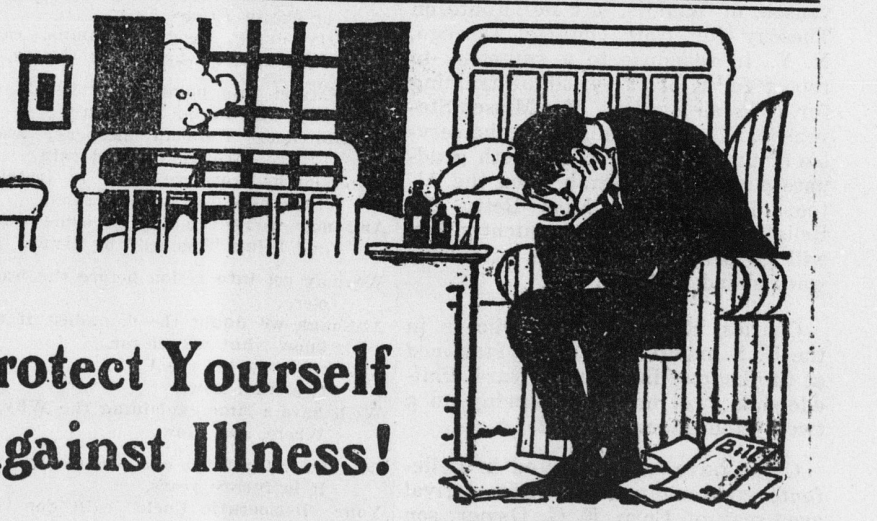
ALL GOODS in our line are thirty to sixty days late this season. Prices are somewhat, but not strongly above the level at this time last season. It is not safe to predict, but it does seem that prices are just now "passing over the top" and may be somewhat more reasonable in the near future.

We Have Received
New Evaporated Apples at 25c and 30c a lb. Fancy Peaches 20c and 22c lb. Very Fancy Evaporated Corn at 35c a lb. or 3 cans for \$1.00. Fancy Selected Sweet Potatoes 5c a lb.—some grades at 3c to 4c a lb. Very Fancy Cranberries at 18c per quart or pound. Almerin White Grapes, Celery, New Paper-shell Almonds, California Walnuts, Finest Quality Cheese.

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