

# Love Versus Wine

By  
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"First Call," Etc.

Mr. Empey's Experiences During His Seven-Months in the First Line Trenches of the British Army in France

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The English Lion was roaring, and his growls could be heard all along the western front. No doubt many a German general was stirring uneasily in his large concrete shell-proof dugout, kilos behind the German front line, as the ever-increasing thundering roar reached his ears.

We had a close-up view of his majesty, the king of beasts, and to us he was a sorry-looking specimen. Patches of hide were worn away, while in his tall were two big knots. If these knots had been labeled it would have been easy to read "Neuve Chapelle" and "Gallipoli." The memory and pain of these two disasters no doubt increased the intensity of his thunder.

The British bombardment of the German lines was on a bombardment which lasted over eight days and nights. It was the forerunner of the Big Push, or "Battle of the Somme."

Atwell and I were sitting in a dugout of the support trench. Atwell was a great, big, lovable fellow, and was my mate. We both had been detailed to the divisional intelligence department, and were engaged upon "spy work."

Atwell, although of a naturally cheery disposition, occasionally relapsed into fits of despondency.

In the light from a stump of a candle I was making out my previous day's report to turn into brigade headquarters. Occasionally the entrance to the dugout would light up with a red flare as a shell burst in the near vicinity. Atwell was sitting on his pack, with his back leaning against the wet and muddy wall of the dugout. The rays from the candle lit up his face.

Finishing my report, I got out a "rag," lit it, and with an uneasy feeling listened to the roar of the hell outside. A long-drawn sigh caused me to look in Atwell's direction.

Never in my life have I seen such a dejected and woe-begone countenance. This, in a way, angered me, because I, myself, right then, had a feeling of impending disaster, a sort of unknown dread, perhaps intermingled with a far-away longing for the fields and flowers at home. I wanted to be cheered, and Atwell's face looked like a morgue.

Forcing a smile I slapped Atwell on the knee and said:

"Come out of your trance. We've both got a good chance for Blighty with this bombardment on."

Atwell looked in my direction, and in a tone of voice which from him I had never heard before, answered:

"Yank, I've been out since '14. I've buried many a mate and I've seen many a lucky bloke on a stretcher bound for Blighty, and never gave it a thought, but right now I feel as if my stay in the trenches will be short. I've had something on my mind since September, 1914, and it's been worrying me pink. I'm going to tell you the story, and I'll give you my oath that you're the first one that's ever heard it from my lips; but I've got to have your promise that you'll not judge me too harshly. I've just got to get it out of my system."

Just then a sighing moan could be heard overhead. It was one of our "nine-point-two" shells aimed in the direction of Berlin. We both instinctively turned our eyes toward the entrance of the dugout and waited for the burst. Nothing happened.

"Another bloomin' dud," ejaculated Atwell. "A few more hundred pounds gone to bed," and then again the gloomy look spread over his countenance. I was getting nervous and uneasy. Trying to hide my fear, I said:

"For the love o' Mike, Atwell, crack a smile. Give us that story of yours, or else I'll go bughouse. You had better get it off or your chest, because I'm thinking that Fritz will soon be replying to our strafing, and if an eight-inch shell ever hits this dugout we'll need no wooden crosses for us, because our nazes will appear under the caption 'Missing.'"

With another sigh escaping from his lips, which sent a cold shiver up and down my spinal column, he lit a fag and started in. This is what he told me:

"It was back in September, 1914. You know I came out with the first hundred thousand, the time when all the fighting was done in the open. The Germans were smashing everything before them in their drive on Paris. Our regiment was one of the few opposed to Von Kluck. It was a case of hold them for a few hours and then retreat—always retreat. We didn't even have time to bury our dead. The grub was rotten, and we

were just about fagged out, dead tired, with no prospect of a relief or rest in front of us.

"It was customary for small patrols of ten to twenty men in charge of a sergeant, to reconnoitre on our flanks. One day I was sent out in charge of one of these parties. Oh, yes, I was a sergeant then, but I lost my stripes—disobedience of orders they called it. I suppose I ought to feel lucky I wasn't shot, but I'll leave it to you whether I did right or not.

"At that time I was in for a commission, but, of course, didn't get it. If I had received it, no doubt by this time I'd be pushing up the daisies somewhere in France. In those days officers didn't last long—made fine targets for the Boches.

"This patrol I was in charge of carried rations for three days. We were to scout around just in front of the advancing enemy, but our orders were not to engage them—just get information. If the information obtained was valuable enough, I was to send it in by one of the men. There were fourteen of us, and we were mounted. I was in the Lancers then, and was considered a fair rider.



"For the Love o' Mike, Atwell, Crack a Smile."

"The first day nothing happened. We just scouted around. By nightfall we were pretty tired, so when we came to a village—wasn't a village, either; just five or six houses clustered around a chapel—I decided to go into billets for the night.

"Riding up to the largest house, which had a four-foot stone wall running around its garden, I dismounted at the gate and knocked with the hilt of my sword. Pretty soon a light appeared at the front door—the house was on a sort of a knoll, so this door was in plain view. Then the sweetest voice I ever heard called out in trembling tones, in perfect English, too, but with just the suspicion of an accent:

"Who is there, please?"

"I answered, 'Just a few English Lancers who desire a place to rest for the night. The barn will do. We don't want anything to eat, as we have rations with us. So, if you will accommodate us, miss, I will be much obliged.' I was in love with that girl before I saw her—the voice had done the trick.

"She answered, 'Just a moment, please, until I tell father,' and then the door shut and the light disappeared. We didn't have to wait long before the door opened, and she called to me:

"Father bids you welcome, and so do I, soldiers of England."

"Then she opened the gate. There she stood on the gravel path with the lantern held shoulder high. I trembled all over—thought I saw a vision. I tell you, Yank, she was beautiful. One of the kind you would like to take in your arms, but won't for fear of crushing. No use for me to try to describe her, Yank, it's out of my line; but she captured me, heart and soul. There I stood like a great, big boob, shaking and stuttering. At last I managed to blurt out a stammering 'Thank you, miss.'

"She showed us the way to the stables and stood in the door holding the lantern so we could see to unsaddle. I was fumbling around with the buckles, but for the life of me couldn't get that saddle off. One of the men, with a wink and a broad grin, came over and helped me. That grin got my goat, so on the sly, I kicked him on the back. He let out an explosive 'dam!' After that 'dam!' the silence was painful. The poor fellow felt like a fool. I was sorry for him, even though I could have killed him for his thoughtlessness. But our embarrassment was short-lived, because a silver laugh came from behind the lantern, a laugh that was not loud, but it echoed and re-echoed among the rafters overhead. I can hear it right now, Yank.

"After the horses had been unsaddled and fed, the men looked appealingly at me. I knew what they wanted—they were dog tired, and dying to hit the hay. Just as I was about to ask permission for them to turn in, the angel butted in with:

"Poor, tired soldiers, sleepy and hungry. Come right into the house. Jean has some supper and wine ready for you."

"We stammered our thanks and followed her into the house like a string of sheep. Yank, to me that meal was a dream. She flitted around the table, filling a glass here and there, laughing with us and making us feel at home. The war was forgotten. By this time I was madly in love with her, and she knew it, because when she leaned over my shoulder to replenish my glass with red wine, her hair would brush my cheek, and once she rested her hand on

my shoulder and gave it just the slightest squeeze. I was in heaven.

"It was getting late and the wine was beginning to tell on the men. They were falling asleep in their chairs. I had a hard job waking four of them to go on guard. They got their rifles and were standing around me for instructions, when our hostess came over to me and, resting her hand on my arm, with again the slightest of squeezes and pleading eyes, interceded for them.

"Sergeant," she said, 'let the poor boys sleep. They are so tired. There is no danger. The Germans are miles away. I know this to be true. Do this for me.' And again that squeeze.

"I, like a fool, listened to her, and gave an unwilling assent. The men looked their gratitude. Jean, the manservant, led them out to the barn, where an abundance of hay had been spread for their beds. I was following, when a whisper in my ear made my head swim:

"Don't go yet, my sergeant, stay with me."

"I stayed, worse luck.

"We sat on a settee, talking, and her arm stole around my waist. I wasn't slow, either, and as you know, Yank, I have a pretty good reach. Once, she spoke to me in French, but I shook my head in bewilderment. In a few minutes the servant returned, and Adrienne—she told me her name—called him to her, and said:

"Jean, go down in the wine cellar and get some of that old port and give it to the soldiers of England. Poor boys, it will warm them." She added something in French I could not understand. Then she added:

"Leave a bottle here for the sergeant and me."

"I protested against more wine for the boys. Her pleading overruled my good judgment, and I consented. The servant left to do her mission, and I proposed. Her answer was a kiss. I was the happiest man in France.

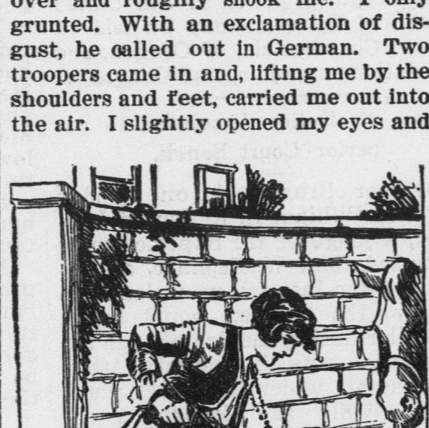
"Presently Jean returned and silently placing a bottle and two glasses on the table withdrew. We were alone. She took the bottle and, pouring out a glass of wine, touched it to her lips and handed it to me with this toast:

"Drink, my sergeant. Drink to our betrothal. Drink to the honor of France. Drink to the honor of England. Drink to the confusion of our enemies."

"I drank with my fool heart pounding against my ribs. Then blackness.

"When I awoke, I was lying on the settee, my head bursting with pain. The gray dawn was filtering through the curtained windows, and there, in the middle of the room, with my Adrienne in his arms, stood a captain of Uhlans. I was a prisoner. I saw it all in a flash. She had betrayed me. Now I knew why she had wanted no guard posted. That wine we pledged our troth in was drugged. What an ass I had been!

"I closed my eyes and pretended to be asleep. They were talking in German. Pretty soon the captain came over and roughly shook me. I only groaned. With an exclamation of disgust, he called out in German. Two troopers came in and, lifting me out into the air. I slightly opened my eyes and



"You Poor English Fool! Make Love to Me, Will You?"

saw that I was being carried out to the gate, where two horses were standing with their reins thrown over a hitching post. By the equipment I knew one of the horses belonged to the captain, while the other was the orderly's. The two troopers dumped me down on the road, one giving me a kick with his boot. I was lying on my left side, and by a certain hard pressure on my ribs I knew they had neglected to search me. That pressure was my automatic pistol. A feeling of exultation rushed over me. I would endure them yet.

"Fate worked into my hands. A hall in German came from the stables, and one of the troopers left to answer it. The odds were even, one against one. I slowly turned over on my face, as if in sleep, and my fingers grasped the butt of the automatic, but just then I heard steps on the gravel walk. The captain and Adrienne were coming toward me.

"She stopped beside me and said in English: 'You poor English fool! Make love to me, will you? Goodbye, my foolish sergeant. While you are rotting in prison think of your Adrienne, bah!'

"My hand gave the butt of my automatic just the slightest squeeze. I was thinking of her hand on my shoulder. Well, two could play that game.

"The captain said something to the orderly, who left in the direction of the house. Now was my chance. Springing to my feet and leveling the pistol at the captain, I grabbed the reins of his horse from the post and mounted. The orderly came running toward me, yelling out in German, and I could see soldiers emerging from the stable. I had to act quickly.

"When I mounted, the captain reached for his revolver. I covered him with mine and, with a shriek of terror, Adrienne threw herself in front of the Uhlan captain to protect him. I saw her too late. My bullet pierced her left breast, and a red smudge showed on her white silk blouse as she sank to the ground. I shot the orderly's horse to prevent immediate pursuit and then away on a mad gallop down the road. It was a long chase, but I escaped them.

"The rest of my men were captured. At our headquarters I had to lie like a trooper. Told them we had been ambushed and wiped out. It was the only way to save my skin. There were no witnesses against me, so I got off with reduction to the ranks and a transfer to another regiment. They smelled a rat, all right, but had no proof.

"So that is my story, Yank. Just forget that I ever told it to you. Enough to make a fellow get the blues occasionally, isn't it? Just pass me a fag, and take that look off your face."

I gave him the cigarette, and without a word, went out of the dugout and left him alone. I was thinking of Adrienne.

Upon reaching the trench I paused in wonder and fear. The sky was alight with a red glare. The din was terrific. A constant swishing and rushing through the air, intermingled with a sighing moan, gave testimony that our batteries were sweating blood. The trench seemed to be rolling like a ship. I stood in awe. This bombardment of ours was something indescribable, and a shudder passed through me as I thought of the havoc and destruction caused in the German lines. At that moment I really pitied the Germans, but not for long, because suddenly hell seemed to burst loose from the German lines as their artillery opened up. I could hear their "five-ines" screeching through the air and bursting in the artillery lines in our rear. Occasionally a far-off rum-rum-rump-rump. Crash! Bru-u-nn-ugg! could be heard as one of their high-calibered shells came over and burst in our reserve. I crouched against the parados, hardly able to breathe. While in this position, louder overhead, every instant getting rougher, came a German shell—hiz-z-z! bang-g-g! I was blinded by the flash. Down I went, into the mud. Struggling with my feet in the red glare of the bombardment.

I saw that the traverse on my left had entirely disappeared. Covered with mud, weak and trembling, I could hear what sounded like far-distant voices coming from the direction of the bashed-in traverse.

"Blime me, get 'is bloomin' napper out th' mud; 'e's chokin' to death. Pass me a bandage—tyke 'is b'yonet for a splint. Blime me, 'is leg is smashed, not 'arf h't 'haint. Th' rest o' you blokes 'op it fer a stretcher. 'Ello, 'e's got another one—quick, a tourniquet, the poor bloke's 'a bleedin' to death. Quick, h'up against the parapet, 'ere comes another."

"Whiz-z-z! Bang-g-g!"

Another flare, and once again I was thrown into the mud. I opened my eyes. Bending over me, shaking me by the shoulder was Atwell. His voice sounded faint and far away. Then I came to with a rush.

"Blime me, Yank, that was a close one. Did it get you?"

He helped me to my feet and I felt myself all over. Seeing I was all right, he yelled in my ear:

"We've got to leg it out of 'ere. Fritz is sure sendin' over 'whiz-bangs' and 'minnies.' Number 9 platoon in the next fire bay sure clobbered 'em. About eighteen of 'em have gone West. Come on, we'll see if we can do anything for the poor blokes."

We ploughed through the mud and came into the next fire bay. In the light of the bursting shells an awful sight met our eyes. The traverses were bashed in, the fire step was gone, and in the parados was a hole that looked like a subway entrance. There was mud and blood.

Every now and then, ducking as a "whiz-bang" or "minnie" came over, we managed to get four of the wounded on the stretchers, and Atwell and I carried one to the rear to the first aid dressing station. We passed the dugout which I had left but a few minutes before, or at least, what used to be the dugout, but now all that could be seen was a caved-in mass of dirt; huge square-cut timbers sticking out of the ground and silhouetted against the light from bursting shells, looking like huge giants. A shudder passed through me as I realized that if we had stayed in the dugout we would have now been lying fifteen to twenty feet down, covered by that caved-in earth and wreckage.

Atwell jerked his head in the direction of the smashed-in dugout, and, as was his wont, remarked:

"How about that fancy report you were writing out a few minutes ago? Didn't I tell you that it never paid to make out reports in the front line? It's best to wait until you get to headquarters, because what's the use of wasting all that bully time when you're liable to be buried in a dugout?"

Turning my head to listen to Atwell, I ran plump into a turn in the trench. A shout came from the form on the stretcher:

"Why in the bloody 'ell don't you blokes look where you're goin'! You'd think this was a 'bloomin' Piccadilly

bus, and I was out with my best girl on a joy-ride."

I mumbled my apologies and the form relapsed into silence. Then the muddled Tommy on the stretcher began to mumble. Atwell asked him if he wanted anything. With a howl of rage he answered:

"O' all th' bloody nerve—do I want anything—only a bloody pair o' crutches, a dish of 'fish and chips' and a glass of stout."

When we came to the first aid dressing station we turned our charge over to some R. A. M. C. men, and ducking and running through the communication trench, we at last reached one of the roomy and safe "elephant dugouts." At last we were safe. Stumbling over the feet of men we came to an unoccupied corner and sat down in the straw. Several candles were burning. Grouped around these candles were a lot of Tommies, their faces pale and a frightened look in their eyes. Strange to say, the conversation had nothing to do with themselves. They were sympathizing with the poor fellows in the front line who were clobbered.

I must have dropped off to sleep. When I awoke it was morning, and after drinking our tea and eating our bread and bacon, Atwell and I reported to brigade headquarters, and were again detailed into the front-line trench.

## 10,000 Porto Ricans Found War Jobs.

Approximately 10,000 Porto Rican laborers have been brought into the continental United States Employment Service in the last two months and have proved a very considerable asset in relieving labor shortage at various construction projects under way for the War Department in southern States.

Delayed at the outset by lack of transportation facilities, the importation of Porto Rican labor went on smoothly for some weeks with two army transports running regularly between the island and Southern ports. As soon as the armistice went into effect the shipments were stopped, in order not to complicate domestic labor problems.

All of the Porto Ricans brought in in this manner have been employed at projects under the control of the army's construction division. They are paid the full wages current in the districts of their employment.

Unwonted prosperity has been brought to many Porto Rican families as a result of this movement. It is estimated that 90 per cent. of the laborers had no steady employment before coming to the mainland. Here they earned an average of \$4 a day, and sent regular allotments averaging half this sum back to their homes.

To facilitate this procedure arrangements were made with the post-office authorities for the establishment of money order stations at the camps where the Porto Ricans are employed.

An interesting feature of the experiment has been the discovery that many of the Porto Ricans, brought in originally as common laborers, are in reality skilled workers of considerable ability. Many of them who worked as carpenters at home brought kits of modern tools with them, and having proved their ability to do the work, received wages which made America seem a veritable land of promise.

## A Pearl Farm.

The New York Mail describes an extensive salt-water farm in Japan where the gardeners encourage oysters to make pearls. The farm has an area of about fifty square miles, and the water varies in depth from five to fifteen fathoms. The pearl farmers select spots where the oyster spawn is plentiful, and plants small rocks and stones. As soon as they are covered with oyster spat he places them in special beds, where they lie undisturbed until the third year.

It is said that an oyster will not produce a pearl unless a foreign substance irritates it. As soon as it feels the irritation, it proceeds to cover the troublesome object with nacre, layer upon layer, until, after a few years, it has made a pearl. When the oysters are large enough the pearl farmer takes them from their beds and, carefully opening them, introduces into their bodies a tiny speck of some foreign substance. After that he replaces them in the sea. At the end of from three to five years the oyster has coated the foreign substance with nacre and has made a pearl.

## Careful Care of the Nickels.

"Careful saving and a careful spending invariably promote success," says Marshall Field. It is not what a man earns, but what he saves, that makes him rich. John Jacob Astor once said that the saving of his first \$1,000 cost him the hardest struggle. As a rule, people do not know how to save. The average young man of today when he begins to earn is inclined to habits of extravagance. He gets the idea that he must indulge in habits corresponding to some other young man, without regard to what he earns; and he imagines he cannot be many without. The 5, 10 or 15 cents a day he squanders, while apparently a trifle, would if saved in a few years amount to thousands of dollars and go far toward establishing the foundation of his future career. Too few realize that in order to acquire dollars one must take care of the nickels. The young man should begin to save the moment he begins to earn. He does so the habit will be of incalculable benefit to him in after life."—Frank Carpenter, in the Record-Herald.

—They are all good enough, but the "Watchman" is always the best.

## FARM NOTES.

—Storing potatoes for abnormally high prices is a very risky proposition. The grower who accepts a fair price for his tubers delivered from the field to market is playing safe.

—More animals should be raised to conserve the surplus crops. The animals will do their own harvesting and relieve the farmer of considerable work. They save the high cost of marketing bulky products and, because of the fertility that crops, if sold, would remove.

—If the old fruiting canes of the raspberry and blackberry bushes have not been cut out, it should be done at once. After the fruit crop is matured the fruiting canes die, and are likely to harbor insects and diseases. Cut out and burn these, and also all small weak canes. Mulch the patch with rotted stable manure or other decayed vegetable matter and work this into the soil in the spring.

—For food purposes pigeons are usually classed with poultry. Culturally they are in a class by themselves, producing meat only, producing it very quickly, and under conditions that do not admit of growing any other creature used for food.

While the ideal arrangement for pigeons is to have their house on the ground, and a small covered yard—called a "fly"—connecting with it—pigeon keeping may be carried on extensively in upper rooms, or lofts, with or without an open-air fly. Many flocks of pigeons are kept in large cities in quarters provided for them in the lofts or on the roofs of buildings used for mercantile and manufacturing purposes.

A space six feet square, and high enough for the attendant to stand erect, will accommodate eight to ten pairs of pigeons for square bedding. The birds mate and begin breeding when six to seven months old. Two eggs are laid by a hen. Then the male shares with her the duty of incubation. The young hatch in about 17 days. At four weeks old average good squabs will weigh about three-quarters of a pound each. Some of the larger ones will weigh over a pound at that age.

A good pair of breeders will produce six or seven more pairs of squabs a year. As many as eleven pairs of squabs have been produced by one pair in a year. When production is high the female lays and begins incubation while she has young still in the nest, leaving the care of them to her mate.

Good breeding stock is necessary to succeed in pigeon raising. It is advisable to buy pigeons from reliable breeders—those who guarantee their stock. Many failures in squab-raising have been due to poor stock—old pigeons past their period of usefulness, or perhaps too many male birds. There are a great many varieties of squabs, but only a few are used in a squab-raising. The Homer is generally considered the most popular variety. The United States Department of Agriculture has a publication on squab-raising, Farmers' Bulletin 684, which will aid the beginner.

Raising squabs has greatly increased in cities in recent years. On farms the tendency has been the other way. Not kept down by killing off the increase, soon becomes a nuisance, destroying grain and doing a great deal of damage, especially on new-seeded ground.

The remedy for this is to keep the pigeons under control and use the young birds, except the few needed to keep up the flock, as fast as ready for the table. By establishing the flock of pigeons in an accessible place, giving them a little feed occasionally in their loft, and keeping them shut in and feeding them when they could damage new-seeded ground, a farm flock of pigeons can be made to contribute substantially to the meat supply, and still be prevented from doing any serious damage.

To make use of a valuable food which has been very much neglected, the Federal Dairy Division is urging dealers to consider seriously the advisability of putting out skim milk on their regular milk routes. Consumers can help the movement by asking for this product.

In the past many dealers have been opposed to the sale of skim milk on the routes, fearing that it would curtail the consumption of whole milk. It is believed, however, that many people, if they had an opportunity, would use skim milk for cooking and drinking, in addition to their customary quantity of whole milk. Skim milk sold in this way should be pasteurized and handled as carefully as market milk. It should also be labeled conspicuously to comply with local requirements, so that the consumer may be fully informed as to its true character.

Skim milk contains all the food elements of whole milk except the fat. It has a little more protein than whole milk, but because of the deficiency in fat, does not supply so much energy. When 4 per cent. whole milk—an average butterfat content of market milk—sells at 12 cents a quart, skim milk is worth 12.4 cents a quart as a source of protein. In energy value, skim milk is worth 6.3 cents a quart when 4 per cent. whole milk is selling for 12 cents.

—The land can be made to produce more by adding plant food directly to the soil; or, by tilling the soil in such a manner that it will yield larger crops with the same amount of plant food. Soils fail because the plant food is not available. If the soil has sufficient plant food for large crops and yet does not produce, something is lacking. It may be lack of moisture, or temperature, or vegetable matter, or tillage. Lack of tillage is apt to make the soil hard and break up cloddy; it may cause the soil to bake, run together and thus evaporate excessive moisture, and the plants suffer during a short drought. Shallow breaking and unsatisfactory harrowing or discing may fail to make a reservoir in the soil for the storage of winter rains and snows, leaving the summer and spring drought to deplete the moisture supply. Where there is insufficient plant food one or more of the essential plant foods—nitrogen, phosphate or potassium—must be applied to the manure or fertilizer. Even then ample tillage will be required to get the soil in a state of good cultivation in order to secure the benefits of these plant foods.