

SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE WITH EMPEY

By Arthur Guy Empey

The Trip Around Cape Horn

But to get to my first real adventure. In Public School No. 78 I had three chums, "Bill," "Charlie," "Jim" Fleming and "Charlie" Unger.

Bill was full of wild ideas and schemes. He had the "set-rich-quick" mania. About every two weeks he would call us aside and in a mysterious and important manner carefully unfold some daring scheme to get rich quick giving his personal guarantee that it could not fail. At first we were very enthusiastic over his schemes and wanted to go in "with both feet" and would carefully work out the details of how to proceed, when, however, Bill would introduce another project absolutely different from the preceding one. When we asked him what became of his wonderful proposition of two weeks ago, he unblushingly told us that unforeseen circumstances which no one could prevent had interfered. Then he would unroll another wild dream of fortune.

And so it went on, one scheme after another vanishing like smoke, until we became very skeptical. Personally, I had no faith in any of Bill's daydreams, but I admired, and perhaps envied, his spirit of adventure. At last I decided I would take a chance, success or no success.

One night Bill came around to the house with four tickets for a blood and thunder war play entitled "Cuba's Vow." His brother was playing the villain. This play greatly impressed me; in fact from the first act to the last the footlights were gushing blood. I was captivated and rotten acting. Bill's brother was awful.

Bill was a pretty good judge of human nature. He had taken us to this play to get us worked up to a pitch of enthusiasm, and thus getting us in the proper frame of mind he could unroll his latest scheme.

That night, after the show, he proposed a trip to South America, which took our breaths away. We were to run away and ship on a tramp steamer, for a passage of about nine months. With the money thus earned we were to equip ourselves and start out for Port Lemon, Costa Rica, and go into the coffee plantation business. We all fell for this and took a solemn vow to stick. The scheme especially appealed to me because here was my chance to follow Dana in his "Two Years Before the Mast."

The next day, after sleeping it over, Charlie and Jim decided that there was more money in New York, and decided not to go. I admit I had a sinking sensation in the pit of my stomach when we worked up the proposition in the sunlight, but I stuck. Then Bill and I made a tour of the docks in New York, trying to find the ship we wanted. We fell in with several "boarding masters." These men infest the waterfronts of large cities and are nothing but bloodsuckers playing on sailors. One of these parasites took us on board an old tramp steamer lying in Erie Basin, called the "Cushko." Here we met the steward, a "lime juicer," John Royal-Minnis, with the emphasis on the hyphen. The wonderful ease, luxury and "getting paid for seeing the world" stuff that the steward and the boardingmaster unrolled

before our eager eyes carried us into the seventh heaven of expectation. This was five o'clock in the afternoon. The ship was to sail at 3:10 the following morning, but they did not tell us this. The steward said that we were just the two he wanted, there being vacancies on the ship for South America. A barragosa after that night, and then in the morning, after seeing what it was like, we could go home and decide whether we wanted to ship or not. I demurred at this, because I had to go home first, so he gave Bill and me permission to go, but said we had to get back at midnight. We hurried home and on the sly I packed a grip with my belongings.

That night I exploded a bombshell in my family. After dessert had been served, puffed up with importance, I declared: "Well, I'm going to South America." A barragosa of laughter rippled around the table. This got me sore, and I shut up like a clam.

It was February, and very cold. About 7 o'clock that night a great storm came up and the streets were soon covered with sleet ice. I turned into bed with my clothes on, that howling blizzard, and I was waiting for 4 o'clock in the morning, when we were to go "over the top" in a charge. Oh, how I wished that Bill would change his mind!

About five minutes to 10, crack! came a couple of pebbles against the windowpane, sounding like the crack of bullets on the western front. With my shoe in one hand and my grip in the other, I softly tiptoed downstairs, put on my shoes and heavy overcoat, and opened the front door. I was greeted by a rush of wind, snow and sleet. Bill looked like a snowman.

We ploughed through the blizzard, got on a trolley car and reached Erie Basin at a quarter to twelve, went up the gangplank and reported to the steward.

The ship looked like an ice palace. You could hear the creaking of winches and the straining of cables, and could see dark forms sliding and cursing on the slippery decks under the glow of the cargo lights.

The steward greeted us very cordially and I viewed the first man I had ever met. Bill was shipped as second steward, and I got the billet of second cook.

My "glory hole" was aft on the main deck, while Bill slept amidships. I piled into a little two-by-four bunk and was soon fast asleep. I had a horrible dream: a giant had me by the heels and was swinging me around his head, trying to dash my brains out against the side of the ship. I awoke in terror. The "glory hole" seemed to be looping the loop, and I could hear heavy thuds as immense waves broke against the side of the ship, the water hissing and rushing around the porthole. Reaching for the electric button I turned on the switch. An awful mess met

my eyes. The deck of my room was awash. The grip and all my belongings, which I had unpacked before turning in, were swimming and floating on the deck, now in the corner, now in that. The ship was rolling like a log in the trough of the sea. I held on to the sides of my bunk in terror. A wave would smash against my door and water would pour in through the cracks. I felt deathly sick and I thought I was going to die. I was experiencing my first touch of seasickness.

About six o'clock in the morning (3 o'clock) the door opened and the standing in the opening was a huge Swede encased in oilskins. The icy blast sent a cold shiver through me. I wondered what he wanted, but did not wonder long.

"You bans get tea and toast on bridge for mate, damn quick!" I was bewildered. The door slammed and once again I was alone. Fifteen minutes must have passed when the door opened again and in rushed the toughest-looking seaman I have ever seen. "One-eyed Gibson," a "bluenoser" from Nova Scotia, and a man with a grumpy expression.

Without a word he stepped into the glory hole, grabbed my shoulder in a grip of steel, and yanked me out of my bunk into the icy water which was awash on the deck. This was my first introduction to him.

"Get out o' that, you landlubber. There's no fire in the galley, and I want my tea on the bridge, and I want it now, or I'll put out your deadlights!"

I meekly answered "Yes, sir" and started to put on my wet socks. Seeing this action, he shouted, "Never mind that damned rigging. Get into the galley and set that fire alight!"

My feet were blue with the cold and my teeth were chattering. I timidly asked, "Where are we, sir?" With a look of contempt he answered, "We're outside o' Sandy Hook, bound south for the Horn, and she's blowing big guns." Then he left.

I stepped out of my glory hole onto the deck. We were dipping our caps, and huge seas were breaking over the weather side. One minute the after deck would appear like a steep hill in front of me, and a horrible churning sound would come from the racing propeller. Then the deck would slant away from me and a loud chug and a shiver through the ship as the propeller sank again into the water.

Benumbed and wet from the icy spray, I managed to steer a course to the companionway, and dragged myself to the upper deck. A sailor was in the galley and had started a fire. The ship was rolling, pitching and lurching. In that galley it sounded like a bombardment. Pots and pans were rattling in their racks, a few of them had fallen out, and were chasing each other around the deck.

Cold and miserable, I crouched in the corner, keeping myself from falling by holding on to the rail in front of the stove.

The sailor took compassion on me, and made the toast and tea. How he did it I became a very expert myself.

Following the "lifelines" on the upper deck, I at last managed to reach the bridge with my pot of tea and two slices of toasted bread. There were two men at the wheel. In the darkness I went up to them and asked for the mate. They did not answer. Just then I received a resounding smack on the back which made my teeth rattle, and that dreaded gruff voice of the mate reached my ears through the wind: "Damn you, you hell's spawn, keep away from the men at the wheel or I'll throw you over the side!"

I mumbled my apologies, and following the mate into the chartroom, he greedily drank the tea, and in about four bites disposed of the pieces of toast. The toast was soaked with sea water, and inwardly I wished that it would poison him; in fact, I prayed that the ship would sink with all on board. Such is seasickness.

I managed somehow or other to make my way back to the galley, and I met my "superior officer" for the trip, the "cook." He was about five feet nothing in height; a shriveled-up Welshman about forty-five years old. He reminded me of a mummy in the Museum of Natural History at Paris. If he had ever smiled I am sure that his face would have cracked. It seemed frozen into one perpetual scowl. He gave one look at me and let out a howl.

"Blawst my deadlights, an' this ere (pointing to me) is what I'm to work with on this bloomin' passage. I'm lucky, I am, not 'arf, I ain't." He looked like some gorilla. The rolling of the ship affected him not in the least. He seemed to sway and bend with every movement of the ship.

The next two or three days were a horrible nightmare to me. How I lived through them I do not know. I had a deadly fear of the cook. As soon as he found out that I could not even boil water without burning it, he started in to make my life a misery. He had a habit of carrying a huge butcher knife in his belt. Between meals he would sit down on a bench and constantly feel the edge, at the same time telling me what an expert he was at carving. Later on I found that there was a reason for his carrying this knife. He and the crew were at dagger-points, he never daring to go forward except in case of necessity, and then he was careful always to carry his butcher knife. Down in my heart I realized that if the occasion should arise he would not be backward in demonstrating his art of carving on his opponent. That Welshman was no better cook than I was, and the crew soon became aware of this fact; hence their hostility.

The "Cushko" was a "lime juicer," sailing under the English flag. The skipper was a "lime juicer," the first mate a "bluenoser," the first engineer a Scotchman, while the crew was composed of Spaniards, Italians, Squeabheads, Finns, Swedes and Russians. The boat was Irish, and a firm believer in home rule. A work-gang of cutthroats could hardly be conceived; a nice, polite bunch they were not. Believe me, Bill and I had our troubles.

Bill and I were the only two Americans on board. The engineer's name was a Prussian, Karl Tatzner by name. I nicknamed him "Fritz." He was only twenty years old, but was clumsy, strong as an ox and about six feet tall.

After weathering the gale, we at last came into the Gulf Stream, and off the coast of Florida it was warm and pleasant.

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On Board

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Bomb Damages Home of California Governor



GOV. WM. D. STEPHENS

After he had delivered at Los Angeles a scathing attack on enemy agents and enemy propaganda in the United States an attempt was made on the life of Governor William D. Stephens of California at the executive mansion in Sacramento. A bomb was thrown against the building or planted so it exploded tearing away a part of the rear.

Pittsburgh Threatened by Disastrous Fire

Pittsburgh, Dec. 27.—The business section of the South Side was threatened with destruction late last night when fire destroyed a large furniture warehouse and many residences. A general alarm was sounded soon after the blaze was discovered, and it was five hours before the department had the fire under control.

An explosion in the furniture warehouse, it is said, started the blaze. Many persons were injured and over a million dollars' worth of property was destroyed. The damage will exceed \$100,000.

CENTRAL POWERS ACCEPT RUSS TERMS

(Continued from First Page.)

ations and indemnities is agreeable to the central powers and they will conclude a general peace immediately on conditions equally just to all the belligerents. The central powers share Russian condemnation of a prolongation of the war for the purpose of conquest. Count Czernin agrees that people have the right of self-definition, but says that subject nationalities must solve their problem under the laws of the countries under whose sway they live.

The United States and the entente

allies up to this time have not recognized the lawful right of the Bolshevik government to rule Russia and they have not agreed to the terms Russia proffered at the beginning of the Brest-Litovsk conference. Recent utterances of responsible allied leaders have expressed opposition to a German-made peace. President Wilson and Premier Lloyd George recently have declared that peace with Prussian military autocracy still in power was impossible.

Meanwhile the Bolsheviks are taking measures to placate their opponents. Seven members of the Social Revolutionist party, which has a majority of the constituent assembly, have been admitted to the council of national commissioners, as the ruling body in Russia is called. The Bolsheviks retain members in the council. Envoys of the Bolsheviks have failed in their attempt to effect a compromise with the Ukrainian rada.

Chairman Ioffe, of the Russian delegation, expressed gratification at the willingness of Germany to annexations, no indemnities and the self-definition of peoples but pointed out that the self-definition of peoples within the limits granted by constitutions, as stated by the German reply, was not complete.

Regarding compensation for the maintenance of prisoners of war, the Russian chairman said it might be construed as an indemnity. He insisted that an international fund be established to pay damages against private persons. He had no objection to Germany's request that

her colonies be evacuated by entente troops.

Russia's delegation, he stated in conclusion, notwithstanding differences of opinion, thought the German offer of peace was a step in the right direction. He proposed a ten days' recess until January 4, "so that the people whose government have not yet joined in the negotiations for a general peace may have an opportunity to acquaint themselves with the principles of such a peace as now is being established."

"At the expiration of the indicated time," he declared, "the negotiations must be resumed disregarding whether or not other belligerents have joined in the negotiations or how many."

Military operations are confined generally to the Italian front. The British front in France and there have been only patrol and artillery activities on the French front.

After recapturing lost positions on the Col Del Rosso and Monte De Val Bella, the Italians were unable to hold them on account of enemy pressure and were forced to retire. The Austro-Germans have been unable to follow up their initial success in the region west of the Brenta.

Admiral Sir John B. Jellicoe has been removed as British sea lord and is succeeded by Admiral Sir Rosslyn Wemyss, who has been sec-

ond sea lord. Admiral Wemyss is not as well known publicly as the former commander of the British grand fleet, but has had a varied war experience.

British merchantshipping losses for the past week show the lowest total since the week ending November 11 when six vessels were lost. The loss of 12 ships, eleven of more than 1,600 tons and one of less than that tonnage, compare favorably with the loss of 17 the previous week and 21 in the week ending December 9, in each of which 14 of more than 1,600 tons went down.

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