ECHO OF FATAL STATION CRASH

Compensation Claim Filed For the Results of Engine Mishap on Feb. 22

Chester W. Cummings, workmen's compensation referee of the Harrisburg district, is hearing to-day at the Masonic Temple building, two death claims for compensation, two claims for compensation for disability and a petition for modification of a compensation agreement.

The big case is the claim of Elizabeth K. Schell, 1512 State street, Harrisburg, filed against the Philadelphia and Reading Railway Company, for compensation for the death of her husband, Joseph P. Schell, who died March 3, 1918. The petition alleges that the accident occurred February 22, 1918, when an engine ran into the Harrisburg station and Schell died of his injuries nine date later.

Kate A. Martin, 122 East Emaus street, Middletown, has filed claim against the H. S. Kreider Company, Middletown, for compensation for the death of her husband, Benjamin G. Martin. The accident occurred March 18, 1918, when it is alleged that he sustained serious injuries as a result of a fall and died March 30, 1918.

The claim of Frank L. Creager, 1827 Rudy street, Harrisburg, against the Philadelphia and Reading Railway Company, for compensation for the loss of an arm has been filed. The accident occurred December 26, 1917.

C. M. Kopenhaver, 736 North Sixth street, Harrisburg, has filed claim against the Austin Company, of Philadelphia, for broken bones in instep and ankle sustained January 13, 1918, while employed in construction work at the plant of the Harrisburg Pipe and Pipe Bending Works. Kopenhaver claims that he was unable to work from January 13, to February 5, 1918, and that he has not fully recovered.

The case of J. H. Balsbaugh, of Swatara Station, against Walter T. Bradley, of Ninth and Thompson streets, Philadelphia, for a modification of an existing compensation agreement will also be considered.

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TOURING THE FRONT

LETTERS FROM A DAUPHIN BOY TO HIS MOTHER

Somewhere in France
May 1, 1918.

Dear Mother: We left the pace with the drunken name (Boozy) Monday and are now visiting at "Fme. Alger." The handle to that name means "farm" and not knowing how to spell it, I abbreviate, but there is quite a farm here and the aviators use one of the big fields all of which is owned by "une dame" living in a "petite chateau" nearby.

We like to get ourselves in Dutch the first day we arrived, for we ran away to Chalons, without permission, having become heartily sick of the escadrille visiting and watching the rain fall. Chalons it was for us, if we spent the rest of our days in prison. One of the Frenchmen here decided to go with us, so we started walking down the road, stopping the first auto which came along, which fortunately, one of our number knew the driver. He gave us a lift to the railroad and there the Frenchman lost his nerve and went back, but we bought tickets and continued, getting through the station without being stopped.

Nothing was too good for us, so we went to the best hotel in the city, ordered a 25 franc room, with double bed and bath, and having rounded up three American girls, absorbed a good dinner with their help.

Hard On the Eyes

To be exact, one girl was English, and a Quaker at that, which same I was afflicted with. The memory is rather painful so I won't give details, but although I come from a Quaker state, my curiosity regarding the feminine portion of that sect is entirely satisfied. I like to see girls make the best of their charms no matter whether few or dazzling, and an ugly gray uniform certainly don't bring out any good points, besides it's awful hard on the eyes.

Anyway, we had dinner and even such a feminine disappointment didn't hurt my appetite. And there the hot bath—first one in a month—was worth any amount of punishment for running away without permission, besides crawling into a bed so soft that one sunk in two feet and felt it fold right around one. 'Twas indeed a relief after these springless, mattressless and sagging army beds. In fact, one of these same army cots collapsed one night with me. The significant part being that it was the head of the bed, and I had no idea my head was so swelled, or perhaps the ivory is growing thicker. And then to wake up in the morning, have another bath and breakfast too, what with bacon and eggs, "cofe" with milk and sugar, and toasted bread with cherry jam. Sounds sort of filling don't it? Well, it was, and goodness knows we needed it, for we started to walk back to our temporary home right afterwards. Not however, with any idea of walking the whole way, it being twenty miles. We had hopes of getting a lift on an auto that came along, and we did not hesitate to stop anything that passed. We were in luck too, as American ambulances came along just when we needed them, so by changing cars three times we finally reached "home."

Never a Peep

The commandant of the escadrille never said a word about it and hasn't yet, and I am beginning to wonder if we were even missed. Anyway, if he did know, it didn't break any of his plans for us, as the next morning at the ungodly hour of 7 a. m. we set off in a staff car, with a lieutenant for guide to go in the trenches. To be on the safe side we were given steel helmets and gas masks of which none of the former fitted.

Our heads seemed to be large but after we had worn them awhile, the uneven geography of our heads either smoothed out or the hair was rubbed off the bumps, for they fitted fairly well. Nevertheless, I felt certain that a mighty small top would dislodge my armored garret, besides considering how much worry my head consists of, the helmet was really only needed for "camouflage."

I have never ridden much in autos but even I could mark the difference between the driver who showed us Rheims and the one we went to the trenches with. Whereas the former would take a turn on two wheels and dodge between two wagons doing it, the latter wriggled all over the road and nearly ran us into the gutter several times on a straight road, in fact, I still think he was learning to drive. The scenery was very interesting, if not from beauty, certainly from curiosity, for as we peared the trenches, the country assumed that aspect so much spoken of as "blighted" and "uninhabited." Everywhere could be seen the havoc of shells, forests stripped, ruined or absolutely blotted off the face of the earth. In fact, our guide showed us a place which was nothing but white shell craters. That, said he, "was once a thick forest." The road ended several miles from the trenches, and then we donned steel helmets placed the gas masks within easy reach and began walking.

Seeing Things

Our course lay along a very narrow gauge railroad, used to bring ammunition up I presume. Then it was we began to see things we had heard so much of. No matter which direction one looked there was barb wire. Ye gods!! I bet there was enough wire stretched around that small portion of the front to fence in the United States, with enough left over to go half around Canada. It generally ran in four rows, with every conceivable kind of "bob" and "wire" interlaced between rows and up and down and cross ways, and every which way. And they followed no general direction either, seeming to zigzag like a calf on a ramble—or probably a better comparison would be a loving couple on a moonlight night. They didn't know or care where they were going, but they were on their way. Anyway, I gave up trying to discover what the idea was, where it all led to and why there was so much of it going so many different directions. It may have been to make the Boches dizzy trying to figure it out, and truly there were enough "wiggles" to do it. The weather was very bad, with a low hanging fog, which was why there was no shooting going on, so the lieutenant told us anyway, for we were beginning to wonder where the war was when we had not heard a shot since we arrived and we were rapidly coming to the trenches. Speaking about barbwire, much of the ground in this sector had been retaken from the Germans, so we came on many patches of wire entanglements which had been blown flat by artillery fire.

Shell holes were every where with many unexploded shells lying around of all caliber and shapes. From the size I even think I saw some "Big Berthas." We also passed lots of barracks. That may convey to your mind at least a house, but they were nothing of the kind, being simply caves going down to a depth of 30 feet with an opening carefully "camouflaged," so small, one had to stoop to get in. In such quarters as these do the soldiers live, and indeed after seeing these things I personally think every infantry man should have a "Croi de Guerre," for merely living there.

No Other Way

No other way, however, is possibly, for even if barracks could be built they would quickly be discovered by the enemy and destroyed. Destroying these caves is nearly impossible, as a shell could land right on top of one and never harm either the cave or the occupants—see?

Then we came to the third line trenches and discovered what mud really is and having no hobnails in our shoes, walking was rather difficult—two steps forward and one back. This unusual exercise soon had us in a healthy, albeit "chand," perspiration; but we contipued to follow our lieutenant, slipping in the mud, sometimes wading through several feet of water and our steel helmets growing heavier and more uncomfortable every second; so much so that Putman and I finally removed and carried them under our arm, much to the amusement of the Poilus we passed.

We were still interested as we passed along the white colored trenches, for this is the Champaign district looking down in the opening to the living quarters which showed in the side of the trenches here and there, noting the unexploded shells lying around or ammunition displacements cut in the side but we had not seen any war yet and were somewhat disappointed, for all the shooting we heard was a machine gun popping away in front some where and that didn't make enough noise to sound warlike. But soon we were in the second line trenches and were shown an observation post, which was only big enough to contain two persons. A three-inch opening was all that was used for light, air and observation. Given a pair of excellent glasses we had pointed out to us the Boche trenches some hundred meters distant, and what interested me more—"No Man's Land."

The latter could be distinguished by its green aspect, as green grass marks where it started at the French lines and where it stopped at the Boche. I don't know who used the lawn mower, but it was not high. This was so noticeable because every where else was white and brown dirt, shell craters, trenches and masses of barbwire. I may have seen barbwire back of the lines further but it was nothing compared to what I beheld now. Wire was scattered around here like rolled up snowballs, every bit as big only not so soft ,and the Boche had even more of it and thicker. I can still understand why artillery must first knock down the wire before an attack, for the only way a man could get across that wire would be a spread eagle dive and that probably end on a Boche bayonet.

Turns and Twists

We were in the second line trenches then, you know, and the way those trenches turned and twisted would make a snake envious. So after we had ambled along awhile I lost all sense of direction and didn't even know which way the Boche trenches were. I soon found that out though for we next passed two guns which shot torpedoes by compressed air. We were all interested, and naturally stopped to look it over, seeing which the two soldiers in charge obligingly fired half a dozen times. Rather hard on the Boches, I admit, but we were having a wonderful time, for we could watch them sail through the air, follow them nearly to the ground and see them explode, for they were not shot with a lot of force.

Watching these little torpedoes going up, coming down and exploding, sure did tickle us, and then we wondered how soon the Boches would send an answer back, and promptly put on our steel helmets. The lieutenant called us away just then and we continued our personally conducted tour to the front line trenches, right out to the furthest point, some 75 meters, we were told from the Boches. Here was situated what they called a listening post, being simply an iron cage holding one man, who used a glass to watch for suspicious moments through a small crack. One after another we were allowed to go in this cage, which by the way, was covered with dirt to hide its position, and see what we could see with the glasses.

Furthermore, we were given careful directions to be sure and close the small opening we looked through before opening the door to come out. I'll be doggoned if I could see anything but barbwire and dirt, and I could see right down in a German trench too. After we had all had a peep at Fritz's home, we stood in the trench looking down over the country we had come through to get here and then it was we suddenly heard a whining and singing sound overhead coming nearer and nearer. Even us, with no eperience, knew a German shell was coming and stood with curious and open-mouthed wonder as it passed overhead and struck a mile below us, sending trees and dirt in every direction. There was a French battery near there some where, for it immediately answered.

The Answer

The answer wasn't long in coming—five of them. It was quite easy to distinguish their separate whines as they went singing overhead. The curious part of it was we could still hear the whistling song after they struck and exploded. The Boches, I don't suppose, ever knew what a kindness they did in putting on such an exhibition for us, for it sure was wonderful to hear those big shells come whining overhead and see them hit with a mighty explosion. But it was nothing new to the lieutenant, so he called us away and we started back. We went because the shells had stopped coming for the moment.

The return trip proved so muddy in spots that we climbed out of the trenches and traveled "cross country" thereafter. I don't know whether they were kidding us or not, but we were made to walk 40 paces apart because they said we were in sight from the Boche trenches. In sight or not whenever we heard that peculiar whining song coming, we promptly stopped and watched it land. It sure beat any Fourth of July I ever saw—or caused, so you can believe I didn't want to miss any thing. Incidentally, we kept coming closer and closer to the scene of the "Busy Berthas," in it, but when we got to within a hundred meters or less the lieutenant turned off into a trench, a very low one fortunately, so we could still see the explosions. Therefore, the expedition halted every time we heard one coming to gaze in awe as the whistle changed to a mighty roar and earth, smoke and debris flew far and wide. Once one came whistling over but did not explode, and we heard it sink into the ground with a loud thud, and we were quite a distance away at the time too. Another time we heard the song of "Bertha" and were much amused to see two Poilu dive head first into an old trench. 'Twas well they did, for the shell was coming their way and landed some 30 meters away. What made it so amusing was the fact that they had been jogging along so slowly before this particular shell galvanized them into action. As we walked back along the narrow gauge, batteries of 75's would go off suddenly nearby, which was uite startling at first, for their position was so well "camflouaged" it was impossible to see where they were. Finally we discovered one battery by the flash of the gun. They sure do make a terrific noise. Taking it all in all, we had a mighty interesting time and being under fire made it more so.

WALTER.

SERVICES AT BAUGHMAN

New Cumberland, Pa., June 21.—Services at Baughman Memorial Methodist Church on Sunday, June 23, will be as follows: Sunday school, 9.15; peraching, 10.30; Junior League, 1.30, in charge of Mrs. Linebaugh; Epworth League, 6.30, when the drive will be on between the Red and White teams; preaching by the pastor, the Rev. V. T. Rue, at 7.30. A series of sermons will be preached on the Fourth.

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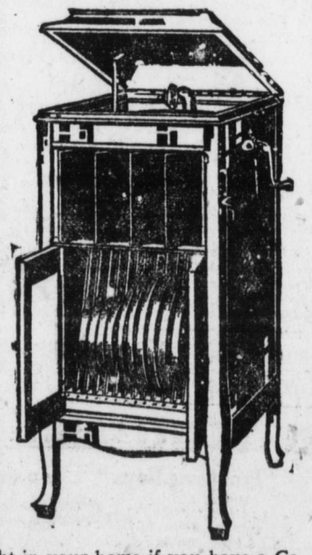

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