

OUR BOYS PUZZLE TO FRENCH HOSTS

Californian Writes of Experiences "Over There."

MUCH THEY CANNOT TELL

Uncle Sam's Censorship Most Drastic Adopted by Any Nation—Whistling of Americans Annoys the French Soldiers—Campaign Hats Are the Vogue in Paris Fashionable Circles.

A California soldier with the American forces in France gives his experiences and observations in an interesting letter to the folks at home:

"My Dear —
I have before me, as a precaution, a two-page digest of a new eight-page order, outlining the censorship restrictions. It is an impressive document. Uncle Sam, though a novice in the game of doing something without letting the world know about it, has gone his belligerent associates one better than they ever thought of. This, I suppose, because of the comparative ease with which a spy otherwise could operate in the American army.

"The new order is the most drastic ever adopted by any nation and a blow to the Sammie ambitions to tell 'em about it. It embodies an ocean of 'don'ts' and not a single 'do,' and one is wont to wonder, after a first perusal, what the deuce he can write about. I was puzzled myself until I got the knack of sticking to generalities. A good way to fill up white paper, also, is to devote two or three paragraphs to telling the folks that you can't tell them anything, and why.

"Sorted, and alphabetically arranged these 'don'ts' run from A to Z. After reading down through 'H' and 'I' the newcomer finally decides to sit down and write, merely, 'I am well.' All references or opinions to present or future whereabouts, work or operations is prohibited. The mention of troops in connection with any particular place is forbidden. And this is carried even to military correspondence. I am told, the addresses reading merely Regiment So and So, A. E. F., three initials which will be used a lot in the next few months—or years. Postcards, both of the picture variety and those with messages on them, are taboo. Other subjects I can't discuss are: Information concerning casualties, unless they've been officially announced; the effect of hostile fire, all information about aircraft and the condition, moral or physical, of our own or allied troops. And, what is more, no criticism of any sort will be allowed of our own officers or those of the allies. So I can't, for instance, tell you what I think of my corporal. As a matter of fact, however, I haven't got one. I'm the clerk of my company, and spend most of my day fighting the Germans with a typewriter—no casualties yet. I felt no conscientious pangs about being armed with so innocent a weapon as a typewriter, however.

More Than Guns Needed.

"There are many things besides guns which figure in this war. Over here, the side rule, the surveyor's transit, the cross-cut saw, the electrician's pliers, are a few that are as honorable as the Krag, and the baker and the cook, the dentist and the barber, the store clerk in the quartermaster's, and the cobler, the woodsman and the bridge builder, the track layer and the road builder, all are useful—and essential—in their place. And their work is regarded as being as honorable as that of the man who goes down into the first line trenches. Or, rather, will go down.

"There is a lot of speculation as to when Uncle Sam will start things. Every soldier has an ear open for the latest rumor—and there is one every few minutes—and a deep curiosity as to the immediate future of his troop, but there is no answer to the question, 'When do we go?' And the constant repetition of this question has had but one result, a special order, prohibiting the discussion of probabilities as to when we will take over a stretch of line. It is a punishable offense for an officer to debate with his men, for example, the question. Of one thing only am I certain—that the United States will not start until everything is ready. I used to think that all an army had to do was to march up to the firing line and go to it, but this trip has produced realization of the elaborate preparation necessary before we even begin to fight. There must be hospitals behind the lines, manned by nurses and doctors and attendants, railroads to convey troops and food, automobiles, bakeries, bath houses, laundries and a hundred other things, and all these must be in readiness before the actual fighting begins. There must be a pretty efficient organization perfected merely as a preliminary. And that is why there is a dignity to the man with the shovel, the ax and other tools I could enumerate. He already is at work while the fighter is waiting until the stage is set.

"The liquid refreshment question here is an interesting one. Of course, there is not even the hint of any liquid prohibition on the part of the French government. The French viewpoint would not even admit of a conception of such a thing. The Frenchman fights on wine. I ordered water in a restaurant here one night, and created great excitement. 'American drink water?' the waitress asked in amazement.

Relaxation is Violent.
The American soldier arrives in France ripe for a 'time.' He has traveled in seclusion as near absolute as possible for from three to five weeks, and his first relaxation is usually rather violent. The policy followed, judging from my observation, is to give incoming soldiers as much liberty as reasonably possible with few rules of restraint. Then, as privileges are abused, restrictions are made. There is one town near here, for instance, in which members of the regiment are forbidden to drink. The government of troops thereby evolves into a sort of local option proposition—with the option in the hands of the commanding officer. Regiments are sometimes like individuals. They have a character of their own—and a reputation. And the intimation is that rules and orders will be applied, locally, as needed for special cases. The system, I believe, will work admirably. If a regiment should go too strong on the liquor, I suppose its drinking privileges could be taken away altogether.

"The policing, insofar as Americans are concerned, is in the hands of Americans. The United States soldier is answerable, at present, only to his commander. This was illustrated the other day, when an officer went down to the police station to see if he could get the police of a nearby French city to apprehend a member of his company who had wined too well and forgot to return for two or three days. He finally got the plan through the head of the El Capitan de Police.

"What! exclaimed that official (through an interpreter), 'we arrest no one that fights for France!'

"Hence Uncle Sam is doing his own policing. The marines are doing it here. There has been no trouble of any consequence, though. Once in a while the genuine and wholesome good will of the French gives way to exasperation at the strange demands of the Americans. The slight friction there has been is all due to differences of language and custom. This gives rise to many embarrassing situations. One I may cite.

"Don't Like Whistling.
"At a small town near where I was stationed a few days ago we were wont to gather in front of the emporiums for an evening for social purposes. A French soldier train bound for the front goes through every evening. Invariably the Americans greeted the Frenchmen with hearty cheers and whistling. The French at first appeared to be enthusiastic enough. That is, when the cheering began. Then they seemed to get riled and not infrequently they were suspected of calling us names. Come to find out to whistle at a person is to insult him in this country, and the French thought we were hooting them. Result—an order against whistling. I remembered that in evening strolls when I had been absent-minded whistling, persons had looked at me rather strangely, with a kind of 'Are you doing that to me?' look on their faces.

"Then, too, we landed here with a splash. The Australian and the Canadian makes as much money as we do, but they don't know how to spend it. The American is the best spender on earth; I don't mean merely in the amount that he spends, but in the obviousness with which he distributes it. He seldom haggles, and it may be his last five-franc piece that he gives to the cabman for a two-franc ride, but he doesn't holler. He stopped in the best hotels and ate at the best restaurants.

"I dined at the 'swellest' restaurant in the aforesaid nearby city one night. Present were two French generals, half a dozen lesser officers, a couple of English captains and six buck privates of the U. S. A. (with their coats off and hanging on a hook). This is a common sight. The advance reputation of the Americans and the way in which they have lived up to it caught the eye of French femininity—the abundance of which cannot be overestimated—and, I suspect, that naturally enough there was just a tinge of jealousy on the part of the Frenchman home from the trenches. Moreover, the American hasn't done anything yet—proven his steel, as it were. But that doesn't amount to much.

"Hats Are in Demand.
"The world of skill is certainly ours, however. The Americans hadn't been here two months until society in Paris had adopted the American campaign hat for this season and the vogue has spread all over the country. A hat is worth a home any day. They sell at the quartermaster's for \$1.04, and are as good as a widely advertised \$5 brand in the States. But there have been so many 'lost' hats to be replaced that the A. M. has shut down here. A young lady with an American campaign hat is the envy of the city.

"The wiles and the black hair and the smile and the eyes of the maiden are not luring in vain, however. A lot of the fellows will get married over here undoubtedly. That is, maybe. Nobody knows whether it will be permitted or not. I heard of one young fellow in another company, Robert J. Duncan of Denver, who announced his engagement, proud of the distinction of its being the first on this side. He was advised to wait until he got permission from the colonel. He hasn't received the permission yet, and I wouldn't be surprised if it has gone up to General Pershing for settlement."

WOMEN OF CHICAGO TRY TO "DO THEIR BIT"

Willing to Work in Executive Capacities for Salaries Men Would Consider Large.

War's demands for women in industry are meeting a ready response, but the trouble is too many women want to be generals and there are not enough privates to go around.

This, at least, is the conclusion of officials in charge of the women's bureaus of employment agencies in Chicago. Women who are willing to work in executive capacities for salaries that most men would consider munificent are plentiful, but applicants for just plain jobs are scarce around the employment agencies.

"Have you a position to take charge of girls in a large place?" was the modest request of a recent applicant at an employment agency here. "Nothing that is confining, you know, or to keep me in one place and be irksome, as I have never worked before."

"I feel equal to earning one hundred dollars a month," another declared, "although I have had no experience in running an office. I manage my house beautifully, though."

A woman from a farm in Michigan appeared a few days ago and specified her qualifications for the sort of position she wanted. She was sure of her ability to manage a law office and if emergency demanded she could boss several hundred girls in a factory. She would not accept a salary of less than \$50 a week, however.

The position of diplomatic buyer for the government at a salary of \$50 per week was just suited to the talents of one applicant. This was the lowest salary she would accept and even then opportunities for promotion must be rapid.

ARMY OFFICER WHO BLINDED ROOSEVELT



Col. Daniel T. Moore, now commander of the 310th Field artillery, who as a "husky young captain of artillery," walloped Colonel Roosevelt when the latter was president, causing him to lose the sight of his left eye.

The captain was at that time aide to President Roosevelt and frequently engaged his chief in boxing bouts. An unusually sharp counter landed, injuring blood vessels in the eye. Captain Moore never knew that he had blinded the former president until the colonel disclosed that fact last week while at a health training camp in Connecticut.

The man who blinded Roosevelt is over six feet tall, and built proportionately. When he doubles up his fist it looks like a ham.

TO STORE ISTHMIAN CROPS

Storage Plant to Cost \$1,000,000 Will Be Built at Cristobal.

Ground is being broken for a \$1,000,000 cold-storage plant for the Panama canal near Cristobal at the Atlantic terminal. The need for abundant storage facilities has arisen partly as the result of the arrival of so many troops and partly from the need of storing supplies in anticipation of possible war needs.

The canal zone is raising large quantities of vegetables and fruits which must be kept for some time after being harvested until consumed.

The plant will be operated by electricity from the hydro-electric power station at Gatun dam, seven miles distant.

MARRIED IN DUGOUT

Wash Stand Serves for Altar When Coast Artillery Man Weds.

A military wedding took place the other evening at the home of Mrs. Gertrude H. Woodward, when Miss Dorothy V. Pearce became the bride of Sergt. James G. Caplinger of the Sixth company, California Coast artillery.

A trench dugout was the "church," while the altar was the rough washstand of the soldier, minus the wash basin, soap and towels.

BIG GUNS BEAT THE "PILL BOX"

Concrete Forts No Longer Are Decisive Factors.

HARD NUTS FOR INFANTRY

Took Heavy Toll in Lives Until British Heavy Artillery Found Them—Accurate Observation and Good Shooting Puts German Device on the Shelf—Were Deemed Impregnable.

The "pill box" has come—and gone. Like the submarine, the giant Gotha biplane, the liquid fire and gas and other German inventions which were to turn the tide of battle in Germany's favor, these much-talked-of concrete forts have been laid on the shelf—as far as settling the war is considered. They are not ineffectual, but they are not decisive factors, writes Frank W. Getty in the New York Tribune.

The "pill box," or pillar box, as the German communico have it, is a rectangular structure, built generally by piling boxes of concrete one upon the other, like children's toy blocks. They are then allowed to form into a solid mass of concrete about a yard thick, which affords the gunners inside protection against anything except a direct hit by something over nine inches.

In action they bristle with machine guns, which are thrust out through numerous cracks and loopholes, the gunners, safe behind their thick walls, being able to rake advancing infantry without exposing themselves. Each "pill box" holds from 40 to 50 men, and becomes a veritable deathtrap if a British heavy does land a shell on it or a cloud of poison gas sweeps that way.

Were Hard Nuts for Infantry.

The Boches have shown great adaptability in placing these pill boxes where they will be most effective. They had sowed them in and out among the little hollows on the western slopes of Passchendaele ridge, frequently running up a rim of concrete around a shell crater, leaving the top uncovered. Where they did this, of course, a high trajectory British barrage quickly made the position untenable, but such pillar boxes as escaped the hail of steel and lead which preceded the British advances were difficult nuts for the infantry to crack.

The German high command instituted the pillar boxes for two reasons. First, the terrific barrage fire which the British guns of all calibers sent over before an attack rendered even the deepest and most carefully constructed front line trenches untenable. The second and chief reason why the general staff turned its attention seriously to these concrete structures was that the mud of Flanders is no place for trench warfare. Whenever the Germans went down six feet in their trench systems they found themselves standing in water. Troops could not live under such conditions, and something had to be devised above ground.

It was this same jelly-like mud, however, which solved the fate of the German pill box, even as it was responsible for its institution. Because, in most places, the mud was so soft, and because, in many places, water was only about two and a half feet under the surface, foundations for these concrete structures could only be sunk to a depth of about two feet. Consequently, when a British high explosive shell struck anywhere in the vicinity there was imminent possibility of the "pill box" collapsing like a house of cards and a few tons of concrete coming down on the gunners packed inside.

When the "pill box" was first discovered in the German line of defense east of Ypres I had an interview with a military authority, who informed me that they would be tremendously difficult to overcome. He was frankly pessimistic over the prospect of having to advance through this new form of defensive warfare.

Today that same authority told me how the "pill boxes" had been conquered.

Accurate Gunnery Wins.

"You will remember that at the time the pill boxes first made their appearance," he said, "I told you that they represented a very serious obstacle to our advance in Flanders. This seemed so at the time because only a direct hit from a big gun could put them out of business."

"We have overcome the menace of the 'pill box' by good military strategy. Our success is mainly due to our accurate observation and good shooting! We knew that only a big shell would put one of the beggars out of commission, so we deliberately set out to make it possible for our big guns to find their marks, small as they were."

"Our aviators furnished us with the most perfect, detailed photographs of the whole area which was sown with these structures. Maps on a large scale were constructed, and the science of artillery has become so exact these days that our gunners were able to score many direct hits on these small objects. When a direct hit was scored, that was the end of the 'pill' box and everyone inside it. Even when a high explosive shell failed to land squarely on the structure, but exploded near by, the concussion was so great that the occupants were put hors de combat."

WILSON CONTRIBUTES TO RED CROSS POT

Donation of Precious Metal Goes to Help Democracy Overcome Kaiserism.

There's a melting pot for the Red Cross in Washington and its latest contributor is President Wilson. He has directed through devious channels that a contribution of precious metal "to help democracy overcome kaiserism" should be placed in the pot. The contribution came to the White House and it consisted of a small envelope of tiny platinum filaments—five times or more the value of so much gold—taken out of electric light bulbs by the donor with much patience. He did not know where to send it and therefore put it up to the president, as many other Americans who have problems they do not know how to solve.

The president sent the contribution to the artillery ammunition section, gun division, office of the chief of ordnance, United States army. Thence it was transmitted to the American Red Cross, which in turn sent it on to the District of Columbia branch of the Red Cross, next going into the Red Cross melting pot.

The donor is George A. Dressel, a postman of Salem, O.

LADIES TAKE UP ART OF HOUSE PAINTING



Mrs. P. J. Simmons of Flushing, L. I., finds time despite her cooking and housekeeping duties to help her husband who is a painter. She has formed a class and bosses several girls who are taking the places of men called away from their occupations by war. The girls get \$4 a day. Photo shows her wielding the brush. She wears painters' overalls, and a cap to protect her hair.

OLD ICE FOUND

It Was Formed Many Years Ago, But Coal Companies May Dig It Up.

Ice that formed in the winters of the sixties and seventies is being uncovered by coal companies of Hazelton, Pa., in running the culm banks of the region through the breakers to meet the demand for anthracite created by the war.

This is especially noticeable at the big Cranberry and Yorktown banks, which show the seasons in the strata of the fuel. That which was dumped in the summer is dry and dusty, while that which was thrown out in winter still has great cakes of ice and snow in it. This occurs in regular layers and excites great curiosity.

Coal men declare that the contention of people that culm is weathered to a worthless point is disproved by the existence of the ice and snow. They claim if the fuel had been decarbonized by the weather, the ice and snow would have melted. Some of the culm banks are 60 to 70 feet high and are worth millions of dollars. Years ago they were regarded as a total waste.

CHOKED WANTON SLAYER

British Officer Disdained to Use Rifle on German.

A German who deliberately bayoneted a young British soldier, lying helpless with wounds, was choked to death a moment later by an infuriated sergeant major of a Lincolnshire regiment. The incident happened during the recent fighting in Flanders.

When the British officer saw the German attack the helpless boy he was convulsed with horror and loathing. Disdaining the use of his rifle or bayonet he pounced upon the German like a bulldog. The Englishman's fingers tightened around the throat of the German and literally choked the life out of the man. The Briton flung the body aside and knelt beside the wounded boy. The German bayonet wound already had proved fatal.

Girls Ban Fudge Until War Ends.

High school girls at Steubenville, O., have agreed to refrain from making fudge until the war ends, thus helping the food administration to overcome the sugar shortage.

LION CUBS SAVE YANKEE AVIATORS

"Whisky" and "Soda" Mascots of Lafayette Escadrille.

FIGHT ATTRACTS THE FLYERS

While Animals Scap in Woods German Aircraft Drop Bombs, Wrecking Buildings and Destroying Airplanes—Puts Unit Out of Action for More Than Week.

"Whisky" and "Soda," the two lion cubs which are mascots of the Lafayette escadrille, probably saved the lives of some of the volunteer American aviators flying with the French army, for it was because "Whisky" and "Soda" were fighting furiously in a wood near the airdrome of the Lafayette escadrille on the Meuse river near Verdun that all of the pilots, their mechanics and even their cook rushed from "camp" and so escaped the bombs and aerial torpedoes dropped a few seconds later by a squadron of German bombing machines which flew overhead.

Flag First Time Under Fire.

Incidentally, this marked also the first time that the United States flag has been directly under fire on the western front, as the Stars and Stripes were floating from the flagpole at the edge of the aviation field when the German raiders appeared. The flagpole was struck by a shell fragment, and, although it swayed and toppled perilously, it did not fall and "Old Glory" waved triumphantly throughout the bombardment. It was the presence of the American flag that denoted to the Germans that that particular airdrome was the home of the Lafayette escadrille.

More than a score of airplanes—S. P. A. D.'s of the latest type—were destroyed by the great high-explosive bombs which the German Gothas sprinkled over the camp. The cantonments in which the pilots were housed were blown to pieces and the cook-house and mess tent were also hit. The American aviators were lodged with a French escadrille stationed nearby.

It was late in the evening—after dinner—when the aviators heard the snarling and roaring of the lions. The noise proceeded from a patch of wood close by the aviation field. The aviators ran to the scene immediately, fearing that their mascots were chewing up some dogs—mascots, perhaps, of other units.

Instead they found "Whisky" and "Soda" locked in their first real battle since they have been "attached" to the Lafayette escadrille. Soon the whole escadrille was gathered around the two biting, snarling, spitting lion cubs, and there was the sound of a swish and a boom, and the first German bomb exploded.

The pilots looked up and descried half a dozen great Gothas circling overhead at an altitude of nearly 20,000 feet. They were raining down bombs, and the huge projectiles were detonating all over the camp. The first bomb dropped struck a hangar and made matchwood and scrap iron out of half a dozen of the fighting single-seater airplanes it housed. The next bomb struck the barracks where the aviators slept. The frail, temporary building collapsed like a house of cards. The next bomb hurled a splinter into the flagpole and set it swaying like a reed. Two more bombs then struck other hangars, demolishing more airplanes.

There was not a single casualty, however, owing to the fact that everybody had left the camp and had rushed to the wood to watch the lions fight. But nearly every airplane was a total wreck.

The next day, however, the escadrille shifted its position to another sector of the front, near Soissons. The unit was inactive for more than a week through lack of machines.

AMERICAN IN FRANCE PUTS WAR IN VERSE

College Ambulance Driver Records Poilus Plight and Wonders If Bosch Is "Soie."

The American field service, under which thousands of American college youths are serving in France as ambulance drivers and ammunition carriers, prints the following poem by its workers in its monthly Service Bulletin:

C'est la guerre (It's the war)
Oh, the sky is bright and clear,
Strain you may your eager ear,
Nearer disturbance can you hear
In the warm, delightful air.
'Tis the first time you are out,
Not a poilu is about,
Saddy you begin to doubt;
C'est la guerre!
Later, by the "abri" door
Comes a sudden hiss and roar
—Can the Boche be getting aces?
—Sure you're needed more in there—
Follow more, all speeding fast;
As the fourth ninth sails past,
You regain your wind and gasp
C'est la guerre!
Then from out the heavy din
Two tired "braves" come stumbling in,
And—what the devil has this been,
This bloody mess of rags and hair?
Can your guess-be really true
Was this once a man like you?
Sorry, boy, this time you knew;
C'est la guerre!
Down the valley inch by inch,
On the wheel your fingers clinch,
Or else he's trying to play you fair—
Still no murmur—God he's worse—
You stop to look—and then to curse—
Your ambulance is now a hearse;
(C'est la guerre!)