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ENGINEERS (RY.) FIND THEIR GAME REAL BIT OF WAR

Double-Stripe Men Found Out What Excitement Was Long Ago

BIG TIME IN MARCH DRIVE

Casey Joneses Saw Huns Coming Over the Hill as Last Narrow Gauge Pulled Out

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES: I was glad to note that the lad who panned the Engineers about not doing much worthy of notice up to date...

Nine regiments of us cleared the three mile limit out of New York harbor the 28th of last July and will be entitled to our two service stripes on that day.

My particular regiment has been at the front behind the British line since August 18 last. While we are volunteers, we are being brought up to the new war footing by the addition of drafted men.

We can't resist the temptation to "old head" them a little, however. They want to know all about what we have been doing anyway, so it doesn't make any difference.

Reason to Be Proud We are proud of our Railway Engineering regiments. I believe that we have reason to be. Four of our regiments marched through London last August and were reviewed by the King and Queen.

William the Conqueror made his triumphal entry several centuries back. What General Pershing's men were to the English in London—the visible sign of America's intention to put her shoulder to the wheel.

August 18 found us at the front near Roisel. Here, under constant observation from German balloons and airplanes, my regiment built a complete little system of narrow gauge railways.

We were always in shell range, especially near the batteries to which we hauled ammunition. On several occasions our train crews have been unable to carry their six inch and nine-point-two to their destination and have had to wait until the Boche stopped shelling the position.

For over a month previous to November 20, Company A and a number of detached men worked day and night hauling ammunition to the British batteries in front of Cambrai for the great drive which opened on that date.

Defensive Too Tame for Him During the drive, several of the crews found themselves between the fire of the Boche and the larger guns of the British in the rear of the lighter guns to which they were carrying ammunition.

The counter attack, our men grabbed their guns and fought with the Boche. "Dad" Harper, an engineer on one of the little locomotives, found defensive fighting too tame for him and made his way up to the first line.

"Dad" is an old "possum hunter" and "lowed" that he could set a couple of "them Dutch" as easily as he could a four-footed "possum." "Dad" ought to have had a medal for that bit of work. He has gray hair.

For our services at Cambrai, General Byng sent our colonel a fine letter of commendation and thanks. How in the world the boys came through there without any fatalities, I don't know, for their barracks were right in the middle of the barrage the Germans put up on their counter attack.

The Day of the Dig Stuff We never realized just how close we were to the Germans until the drive started on March 21 of this year. All last winter we slept through the constant roar of the British guns a mile or two from us or the Hun's further away.

Many times our little railway lines would be illumined by the flares from the trenches. But, like anything else, we

TO AID COMMANDERS

An officer is to be designated in each regiment and company to handle all administrative duties under the supervision of the regimental and company commander, according to a new G.I.Q. bulletin.

The announcement is made owing to the fact that some regimental and company commanders have been permitting their administrative functions, that is, supply and office work, to absorb the greater part of their time and attention, sometimes to the detriment of duties relating to operation and training.

got used to it. We never will forget that day when the Big Stuff started. We were attached to the British Fifth Army which had to retreat.

Talk about fight! Those Jocks and Tommies fought like hell. Our men hung at Roisel hauling ammunition to the British batteries until the artillery had all pulled out.

For this work two of our officers have been awarded Military Crosses by the B.E.F. and three of our engineers and conductors Military Medals.

Back on the Broad Gauge We are back in the zone of the broad gauge now doing construction work. Fritz has our toy railroad, which is so essential to getting supplies and troops to the front.

We have "lived and had our being" with the British so long that we feel almost like Britons. We have been with Tommie, Canuck, Aussie, Anzac, South African and Jock for nearly a year now and know them pretty well.

Aussie is a type by himself. They are all volunteers. They are fierce fighters in the line or out and yet they are good scouts. They like the Yanks and you take to them instinctively.

After Your Own Heart Anzac, the lad from New Zealand, is very much like yourself. You won't see him much because there are not many of him over here.

The Germans smiled when the Black Watch came over the top the first time. They thought England had run out of men and was sending the women against them. They call them "The Ladies From Hell" now. They fear Jock's gold steel.

Jock is about the best natured pal you can find, and he won't try to out-bull you as Aussie will. When he talks, you think a machine gun is working.

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Oh, boy! Those campaign hats and that real American slang. We forgot the British lingo that we have become accustomed to use and reverted to the good old U.S. way of talking.

There is none like your own folks after all! E. P. BRADSTREET, JR., —Engrs., Ry., A.E.F.

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BASE PORT MEETING A FAMILY REUNION

Talk of Coincidences Leads to One That Beats Them All.

A group of chance-met, fairly casual officers of the Army and Navy were gathered on the shaded terrace of a cafe in one of the base ports the other evening.

There never was such a place as the A.E.F. for reunions," a second lieutenant observed. "You get into one of these French trains and find you are sharing the compartment with the boy who used to play next you in the line at college.

"I shouldn't be at all surprised," a young ensign chimed in, "if I were to run into a wandering brother of mine over here. I am not sure I should know him if I did. I was only a kid when he left home.

As the ensign was telling his tale, a captain on the edge of the group paused with his glass in mid-air and listened. At the end, he put his glass down and drew his chair a little nearer.

"And what town might you hail from, stranger?" he asked casually. The ensign told him.

"I used to know people in that neck of the woods," the captain said. "May I ask your name?"

"Well, I'll be damned," he said. "Talk about reunions. Shake hands—brother."

It was noon of the following day before the captain reported at camp. He was thereafter confined to camp for a period of ten days. It is not known what befell the ensign.

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CHARLIE'S CUSTARD HALTS IN MID-AIR

And Something Happened to the Movie Works Just Then

With that ghastly accuracy common to the world of the screen the well-known Mr. Charles Chaplin hurled his custard pie, and—

Wait a minute; don't get sore. Honest, this ain't a movie press notice. As we were saying—

Mr. Chaplin hurled his pie, but the pie never reached the victim. Instead, it stopped in mid-air, which is a peculiar manner for even Mr. Chaplin's well-trained pies to behave in.

And then somebody bellowed "Fire!" or, more likely, "Feu!" because this happened in the S.O.S. of the A.E.F., at A.P.O. 711.

True enough the movie theater was afire, the movie machine was on the kibosh and the movie pie was still miraculously suspended in mid-air. Naturally, the fact that Mr. Chaplin was on the screen is equivalent to saying that there were a large number of Americans in the audience, they happening this time to be from the—

Engineers, who are stationed at 711 performing first-aid stunts to busted locomotives. The Engineers were patient enough for a while, but it became apparent that the civilian fire department was asleep, or off on a furlough, or visiting his aunt, or something.

But the Engineers went back inside to see whether the pie ever landed. P.S.—It did, right in the smacker.

WHAT TAPS MEAN

One day nearer the next crack at K.P. One day further away from last pay day.

Eight hours' rest for the bugler. About 28 hours' rest for the cook who's off tomorrow.

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