

IN SHELL BATTERED CHATEAU-THIERRY

Chateau-Thierry was by no means obliterated either by the battle which hit it the Germans there in the first week of June or by the one which drove them from its gates the third week in July.

The town was systematically pillaged, and if more was not stolen, it was because the Boches had to leave so suddenly that they did not have time to take their plunder with them.

The unforfeitable thing was the abundant evidence of malicious vandalism, mirrors and windows smashed, paintings wantonly slashed.

Curiously enough, a restraining hand kept the vandal from the home of La Fontaine, Jean de la Fontaine, France's beloved poet and master of fables, was born in Chateau-Thierry and dwelt there in his days of his maturity.

Now and for many a day to come there will be great howl-wow in the corners as the returning citizens listen to the tales told by the 2nd who stayed—old, old folk, for the most part who managed somehow to live through the one and fifty days of the occupation.

The slight of sights in the scarred city is the famous triple-arched bridge of stone which spans or used to span the Marne and link together the two parts of the city.

Even the most battered house can serve as a billet, and history must record how one detachment of Yanks passing on their way through Chateau-Thierry spent the night sleeping serenely in a great deserted house with many beds in it.

The ruins of the old chateau which gave the town its name are not much the worse for the latest battle to beat against the chateau-walls. It was built in the eighth century, and little is left of it save a part of the ancient walls, a part of a watch-tower, and moss-grown outcrops to its domes.

PHATIGUE-SQUAD PHILOSOPHY

I care not who writes the songs of an Army so long as I can write its guard rosters.

Compensation: The French soldier may not get paid as much as the American, but he has a lot less trouble with the language of the country.

Never was it said more truly than of the old Ontario wagon mules: "They are doing their bit."

Lots of guys write home that they are making rapid progress in French when the truth is that the only words they are really sure of are *oui, non, and bierre*.

In France, if you announce yourself as a Journalist, they think you are a big fish. If you called yourself that in the U.S.A., they'd call you a big stiff.

If a Jock, after five minutes' conversation with you, doesn't lift his knickers to show you where he was layoneted the first time, then you haven't made a bit with him.

The world is peculiar except America; and even some Americans are a little peculiar.

It's not that the Irish don't want to fight; it's simply that they're so anxious to fight they don't know where to begin.

To judge from the reports of things, Russia is just like the girl who has been buzzed off from going to a dance with you because she had a sprained ankle or something—and then turned up at the dance with some other fellow.

HER COACH OF HONOR



HENRY'S PAL TO HENRY

PROVING THAT A MULE SKINNER'S LIFE IS NOT EXACTLY A FLOWERY BED OF EASE

France, July 13th, 1918.

Dear Henry: Well Henry you ain't got nothing on me much. I'm at the front, ossie. Of course I ain't quite as near as you are maybe but I'm so close it ain't very healthy to go out promoting in no quiet country lane with a madamoiselle on your arm like I used to do down in the S.O.S.

Well they was a lot of mules coming up here from down in the S.O.S. town where I wrote to you from and it seems that they needed some mule skinner's right quick to take them up.

Now Henry, what I don't know about mules would fill a fair sized ensiklopedia. I never even hooked one up before, but it's almost like hooking up a tame horse and I would do done anything Henry to get to the front.

Well Henry I got to come alright. We left the S.O.S. about ten days ago and we just pulled in. All we had to do on the way up was to carry water for them pesky rabbits. I can just see you Henry that a mule eat drink twice as much water as a elephant any old day.

Friend Henry: Well Henry I hooked up old Hardboiled and Jennett this a.m.—them's the 2 mules I drew out of the lot Henry—and it was just like pie.

The boys all say old Hardboiled has a bad gill and might be bad if he wanted to but if he is never let on this matter that I have to be as gentle as a kitten.

P.S. Before I turn this over to the scribe I'll tell you some more about old Hardboiled. I went out this a.m. to where I got him anchored down to a captured German cannon and what do you think he pulled off Henry? He laid his old grizzled nose on my shoulder just as though he was a kitten. I ain't no more afraid of him now than I am a cat.

You can say what you please Henry but it takes gentleness to get a animal's goat. Treat a mule right and he'll treat you right Henry. I could handle any kind of a mule the army has got on its books and get away with it because I got a neck of handling them with kindness.

Well Henry there goes mess call. I missed some calls in this Army all right but that's one call I don't miss only here it ought to be called stew call because stew is what we got.

France, July 10th, 1918.

Hollo Henry: Well Henry I guess you are in the big fight and are still alive. If you are you'll get this letter alright. That rumpus the other day was the beginning of the big fracas sure enough.

But I guess the Germans are kind of sorry they started it Henry. I'm about 5 kilometers nearer Germany than I was and I'm from the back of things Henry I'll be about 10 more by morning on acct. of keeping the supplies up to the boys.

But I got a lot of things to tell about Henry. I always maintained being kind to animals was alright and I still do, but that old Hardboiled sure did fool me Henry. He wasn't no common mule though. He was a Boche jackass if there ever was one. He's clean across the Rhine and in Germany by this time if he didn't meet a 2 ton shell on the road somewhere.

Here's what happened Henry. Yesterday morning they told me I could hook up one horse or three Henry the boys. So long about 5 p.m. I started out with the chow and 2 K.P.s.

Well to make the story short Henry we got up to where we could see the smoke quite a ways off and stopped as the K.P. said he would find a M.P. to show us the way through. Pretty soon Henry a little shell about the size of a barnecks bag came along and hit about 50 ft. behind us and Bingo! We was off to the races Henry. I kept pulling on the springs and hollering at old Hardboiled

but I might as well talk to the moon or something.

Well Henry we had one little grand chariot race for about a mile straight ahead. The only difference was I guess is that chariots don't spill out K.P.s and splash stew all over the driver.

GERMAN-BORN SARGE WINS COMMISSION

But First He's Got to Go Home and Get Citizenship Papers

Perhaps there are a dozen A.E.F. men in the know on this, and perhaps a couple of the mules' father doesn't matter so much, but when they get back to the line—after a brief session with the pictures at the Louvre, the beauties of the season and loveliness of earth, etc.—they're going to be long on pity for Fritz.

You've got it—he's going to ally foot sweet pour l'Amérique. All he's shown up so well against the Hun that he's going to be commissioned. But first he has to go home and get his citizenship papers.

Didn't Like Germany

Ten years ago he lived in Germany, but he and his father and lots of others didn't like it, so they came to a good good country. Make believe his name is Bierstube—for truly it's just such a name as that. For the last nine months, along with a lot of other Americans who can't see this Kultur stuff for snar apples, he's been just naturally taking out his spite on his one-time neighbors and friends of yesteryear.

You look at the sergeant and you like his fighting face. His eyes are keen and clear and set at a universal range, for quick sighting. The boys of the Infantry say he has a personal way with a rifle and a technique with the cold steel that turns the nerves of his ex-countrymen to frozen kraut, their spines to limp strings of liederwurst.

When he takes a platoon over No Man's Land, sometimes the gang will stop for all of a half second to wonder what Germany ever did to him to make him love the Potsdamers as roughly as all that.

Even to the Haircut

The funniest part about it is that he's built on squarehead lines, Hindenburg pompadour and all, and he prattles as easily of raiding parties and encircling movements as he does of the fat little pigs he helped his men round up beyond Chateau-Thierry, when the grub wasn't coming up worth a hoop in Halifax.

Der All Highest, who vass hading sooch a fine dime siddink oop on der tower bei Rheims vaiding for dings to habben—and didn't dey habben. Vilhelm?—der All Highest got to vait avlie yet till Sergeant—sergeant us—Shivvold Bierstube gets back on der chob. Of course, things have been bustly quiet on the Crown Prince's sector, and will those considerable German generals please wait a little while until the Yank comes back with his papers and the God-bless-you's of the old folks fresh in memory once more?

About the next thing I remember Henry we hit another ditch and right there's where I quit old Hardboiled forever and I didn't feel I'd lost anything either. The wagon tipped over and the last I saw of it them 2 crazy mules was dragging it toward the Rhine. All the chow that didn't slip out on the way over spilled out there on top of me.

Well Henry I laid there about an hour kind of stunned and while I was there I bet there was 1000 Boches passed me headed towards Germany. Ordinarily Henry they would have stopped and plugged me or run a cootie through me but they didn't have no time for that for pretty soon there was a wave of American doughboys went by after them with their shirt sleeves rolled up and who kept telling the Germans to come back and fight a man's fight and I guess that was I of their main reasons for running.

Well I felt like fighting some myself by that time Henry after having all that stew all over me and everything and besides I was damned mad at Hardboiled. So I copped another fellow's gun who was one of the unlucky ones and away we went.

Well Henry it all wound up by me getting a bullet in the leg. I had a nice long ride on one of them ready made cots that you make with 2 guns and a couple of blouses. I'm in the hospital now Henry.

I know damned well I'll get hell when I get back to that mule skinner's outfit but I'm worrying about it just as much as if a rich mule had died or something. I got a Boche and the fun I had was worth a dozen mules especially one like Hardboiled. Write me 'till sweet Henry.

Always your pal S. T. B.

P.S. Don't ever let anybody tell you this mule skinner's job is a noncombatant job Henry. It's everything but that.

SETH T. BAILEY, Corp. Inf.

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