

The Stars and Stripes

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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1918.

THE PRESIDENT

The A.E.F. will welcome President Wilson on his arrival as its partner and backer in the long scrap now ended, as well as welcoming him formally as its Commander-in-Chief. It will not only turn out the guard for him; it will turn itself inside out, for in the person of the President are represented all of the millions of backers and co-workers of the A.E.F. at home.

REVERSING THE ENGLISH

In the old days when Fritz was still dropping over heavy ones and the boys in the line were wearing their gas masks at alert, those boys in the line used to be able to look over their shoulder, figuratively, and, taking the collective S.O.S. in at one broad glance, exclaim: "Pretty soft for you!"

The fact that the S.O.S. had something to say on the subject, apropos of the forcible suppression of their belligerent tendencies and the regrettable military necessity of having to feed and supply an army at the front—and usually said it—didn't mitigate the force of the exclamation.

But time—as time does—and the armistice have changed things. The collective S.O.S. now looks up over the top of piles of corned willy in crates, over desk tops, over the roofs of newly-built warehouses and billets, over charts recording freight handled and the "distance towards Berlin," and, surveying that vast field of kluck which has nothing more to do than drill five hours a day or occupy Germany, murmurs, "Pretty soft for you."

KEEPING THINGS GOING

Last winter, when all outdoors was a sea of mud or sleet or dirty snow, about all the entertainment that the two and three strippers amongst us indulged in consisted in sitting around the old Sibley stove and declaiming that all Gaul was divided into three parts and that we were in the worst. Often we varied it by wittily pronouncing that Sherman was right.

This winter, with the facilities for entertainment what they are, there should be no place for the gloomfest. We know each other better and each other's capabilities for making a good time. For example, we never realized that Alex could sing until we went out with him on our first pay-day night. And we never discovered that Joe was an expert clog dancer until after he got that long-delayed letter from his girl.

There is no public duty more pressing than that which devolves upon the Alexes and the Joes of this Army who can sing, clog, pull rabbits out of tin derbies, box, wrestle or climb trees to do those things for the delight of those of us who have no such accomplishments—or, rather, think that we haven't. The "performers" amongst us should perform continuously and persistently, every night if need be. (Gloom and bad weather and just plain sitting-in-barracks are worse enemies of an Army away from home than the Boche ever was.

HELP WANTED—MALE

STENOGRAPHER—Must have reading-writing knowledge of French or Spanish; good salary. DRY-CLEANER—Must be familiar with modern methods of scientific dyeing; good salary and hours. SALESMAN—Must know practical details of auto manufacture and be able to speak one foreign language fluently; good salary and expenses. CHEMIST—Academic or scientific degree essential; good salary, with growing concern. TEACHER—Modern European History and Civics, in large private school; salary and living. These are just a few samples of the things that we will read in the magazines and trade journals when we have shuffled off the O.D. and stepped into long trousers again. How many of the attractive jobs listed in them can we measure up to—now?

Not many, eh? Well, what are we going to do about it? The Army, with the co-operation of the Y.M.C.A., has already laid the ground-work whereby each of us may, at no cost to himself, measure up to a better job than he had before he left the States. It is all there for the asking, and the work. It is one of the rewards handed out to us for our services overseas—the opportunity to be better off in every way in the years to come, broader in outlook, more expert in our chosen trade or calling. Beginning the first of the year, the courses will be open to us. It is up to us, and to us only, whether we take them or not. But when we think of what we can do with a little extra knowledge tucked away under our

overseas hats, when we think of how we can translate that knowledge into terms of real coin, and pleasant surroundings, and increased usefulness to our country—well, we'll all be plain darned fools if we don't all make the effort.

BOGUS HEROES

There have been a lot of bogus heroes in America since the Army began dispatching men back to the States for sickness, wounds, training and other reasons. Every soldier who has gone back has been a hero until proved otherwise, and the temptation not to prove themselves otherwise has been too much for some.

There is the case of the Air Service mechanic who went back with heart trouble. His home town newspaper printed his "diary," which recounted several stirring fights over the German lines, all imaginary. The nearest he had been to the front was Issoudun.

There is the case of the sergeant who lectured on the battle of Cantigny for the Fourth Liberty Loan (and sold a lot of bonds, too) until he was found to have spent all his stay in France, barring traveling time, at Le Mans.

And there is the case, just to show how hard it was not to be a hero, of the major who returned and, merely obeying military regulations, refused to be interviewed. As far as he had got toward gunfire and danger was a training school at Langres. "Modestly declines to speak of his part in Chateau-Thierry fighting," was the second line of the leading over the story about him in the next morning's paper. The fault was the newspaper's, not the major's.

To date, in the eyes of the people back home, every soldier who has been in Europe has undergone the horrors of the front. Private Johnnie Jones of the S.O.S., whose greatest hardship in this war was taps at 9:30, was pictured in his home journal and captioned, "John Jones, of this city, now battling for freedom in the trenches." It is going to be hard to convince the home folks that of the 2,000,000 Americans in France, half of them, through no fault of their own, of course, never got under fire.

But, once the idea is around, and once we get back with our first-hand knowledge of affairs over here, the bogus hero is going to have a pretty thorny trail.

A HAPPY AUGURY

It will probably be news to several hundred thousand anxious waiters—not meaning garçons—in the A.E.F. to know that some nine by four by threes have already reached France. They have not only reached France, but they have been forwarded to the addressee, who did the addressing himself not very many weeks ago.

So far as we know, none of these boxes bore the rarely heeded legend "Not to be opened until Christmas." They were opened, whether they did or not, and much fruit cake, fudge and other edible matter not found on the Q.M.'s list of subsistence stores immediately set out on its tortuous journey through the canal that divides the Panama and the entire inland waterway system of France—the alimentary.

Those boxes were relatively few in number. But the early arrival of even these few is a happy augury for the speedy delivery of several hundred thousand others of like weight and dimension.

A NEW MASTER OF FICTION

From his safe little retreat on the island of Wieringen in Dutch waters, the ex-Crown Prince of Germany has been giving out interviews, also one abdication. The abdication is satisfying and the interviews interesting for the light they throw on his ex-Highness's mentality.

"Contrary to all statements hitherto made abroad," he says, "I never desired war." This, be it remembered, is the same man who, as heir to the German throne, told Ambassador Gerard that when he became Emperor there would be war, "if only for the fun of it."

The ex-Crown Prince seems to have had his war, all right, without the burden of becoming Emperor and with a minimum of fun. And now, discredited as a general, he seems to be well on his way to become a master of fiction.

"MANNERS MAKYTH MAN"

"Who salutes first, the enlisted man or the officer?" is, of course, a foolish question to be asked in Army circles, because everybody learned the answer long ago. But "Who salutes first, a major or a major?" is something else, and has been the subject of heated debate in more officers' messes than one.

You cannot read in a man's face whether or not his commission antedates yours. He may be a fair-haired second lieutenant, you a gray-tressed one, but, he may outrank you all the same. Therefore, as far as we can find out from official and non-official sources, the best rule to follow is to salute first, anyway—to give the officer of ostensibly the same rank as your own the benefit of the doubt, to err on the side of politeness.

In this connection, the answer made by one major to the all-engrossing question is of interest. Upon being asked, "Who salutes first, a major or—a major?" he replied instantly: "If he hesitated, I wouldn't."

THE SECRET OUT

Run your eye down the table of contents of Songs for the Fireside, Select Hymns, or All the Latest Hits, and you will find that about everything in them has been ragged or choked to death during these past 17 months in barracks, in billets, on the march, wherever a pair, or several pairs, of O.D. lungs have had the chance to let loose on them.

An A.E.F. song book, if it were to be truly inclusive, would have to contain about everything that has ever been sung anywhere by anybody. One song would be omitted. It is the song which the soldier has thought and lived, though he did not sing it; it is the song which now stands for realization. It means a job done, a journey ended. It is called "Home, Sweet Home."

The Army's Poets

'T WAS EVER THUS

Quite frequent, in the evenings, after chow is stowed away, And we sit around re-doin' the labor of the day, Most every subject's mentioned from religion to baseball, But the praisin' of their home State is the one that gets them all.

There's the Top from old I-O-W-A, speaks of fields of 'valler' corn, And he's got a bunch of brothers who are all Iowan born. To our clerk old NORTH DAKOTA is the land of Home Sweet Home, And CALIFORNIA'S blessing shines upon our Looey's dome.

The Blue Ridges of VIRGINIA are oft eulogized by Hank, While to Bill no State at all with ILLINOIS can rank. But Brookie will sit and argify in tones both clear and hold That the dear old State of ARKANSAS he's dying to behold.

Now, when they start a-praisin' of the spot where they were born, I ain't the sort of guy to crab and try to plug their horn. For the guy who lacks the pep to boost for his home town, Is the best of 'em, pretty useless in the chase for Wilhelm's crown.

But—although PENNSYLVANIA'S hills have kept me day and night, I'll never say she holds the only spot at all that's right. I love her very dearly, but she's one of forty-eight, And she stands above no other in a real, just estimate.

So, when Flanders' mud is dried and but a memory, I'll not shout "Dear home State, I'm coming back to thee;" I'll jump and yell with gladness and in my glee I'll say: "Captain, lead me ANYWHERE in the good old U.S.A."

Now think it over pardner, and I know that you'll agree, That you don't give an oo-la-la where you leave the sea. They can put me off at MAINE or on the beach at NEWPORT NEWS, And we'll find a fitting welcome to end our warlike cruise.

Then we'll hie our way to homeland by boat or rail or gas, And we'll find the same fond greeting through every town we pass. We're just Uncle Sammy's Yankees from the land of lot and plenty, And here's a hope that we're all back there by the year of 1920.

Ralph D. Molney, Corp., 308th Butchery Co., Q.M.C.

SOLDIER'S LOVE SONG

Oh, my sweet little maiden, so far away, Do you hear me call at the break of day? Do you hear my voice in the whispering breeze? And my words of love in each move of the trees?

When the moon shines clear and crystal white, And the stars bedeck the lovely night, Do you hear me softly, gently say: "I love you more than life or pay?"

For I miss your self, endearing touch, And that wondrous smile that I love so much; Those sparkling eyes that I so adore, Smiling me welcome as of yore, And I long to hear that beloved voice, (If I heard but the sound of it rejoice); In its tender tones it has told the tale Of Enduring Love that will never fail; It has whispered me words that have brought me peace and cheer.

From the storms of the world a blissed release, At a word from your lips I would gladly give All that I have; I would die for you, But not for the sake of the world, I should miss, Is the touch of the lips that I love to kiss; Their nectar sweetness lingers still Like the look in your eyes when you said, "I will."

And me the nameless, haunting charms Of your fragrant hair, your loving arms; Of communing silences, wondrous hours Spent out amidst the woods and flowers; And all these memories I shall take And carry them with me until I awake From out this dream of troubled strife, With Rampant Death abroad midst life. For soon I shall come again to you, And we'll pick up the threads of our love anew.

I shall listen again to the old sweet song In the voice that to me has been stilled so long, And the star will be dead as an evil dream That is gone at the sign of the dawn's first gleam; And all will be fair 'neath a smiling sky, As the years slip peacefully, happily by.

IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS THAT COUNT

Everywhere wetness and chill, And light fog and grayness, And Private Samarski, sicker adrip, His rifle slant beside him, Sags against the rail.

Truly no martial figure— A sodden cad, His figure blurred by a slicker, With rain trickling down, Through a week-old beard.

With the tender care And the reverence due His mother's picture, Or a lover's amulet, Private Samarski, soldier and human, Puts his hand in his slicker And draws out a cracker.

A soda cracker, And the reverence due His mother's picture, Or a lover's amulet, Private Samarski, soldier and human, Puts his hand in his slicker And draws out a cracker.

ALONG THE RHINE



To Make Sure He Stays Down

"AND WHERE WAS YOU IN FRANCE?"

It was the year 1928, in a quiet little New England village. The D.A.R.'s and the Sons of Veterans and the Loyalty League were holding a commemoration meeting in the parlors of the County Historical Society.

The speaker, a stout, husky, florid individual of some 38 or 40 years, was waxing quite eloquent about the "gurrand old flag." Lovingly he caressed the silken emblem on the reading desk before him as he recounted the deeds of valor done by the men who followed it. Beginning with the Boston Massacre, he gradually wound his tortuous way down to the year 1918, and was still going strong.

"But ah, my fellow citizens," he exclaimed, "those were the days when we saw Old Glory advance against the serried ranks of the Prussian Guards on the old Alsace front; against the minors of the Hapsburgs as they stood massed before us on the fields of Flanders; against the terrible Turks, whom we met and conquered at Chateau-Thierry."

Just then a hardy, weatherbeaten individual in the back of the little hall, an individual who, from the way he worked the cud of the pipe in his mouth, obviously did not "belong" to the select atmosphere of the historical society parlors but had just happened in, stirred in his seat.

Then he arose, pointing a forefinger, the first joint of which was missing, straight at the speaker, he inquired: "Say mister, where was you in France?" The audience visibly fluttered. Interruptions simply don't happen in well regulated historical society meetings. In fact, the female portion of the audience—the majority that is—audibly gasped.

"—in France, my friend?" parried the speaker, sparring for wind. "Where was I in France?" "Yes, mister; where was you in France?" The speaker attempted, but the words would not come.

"I thought so," the burly, weatherbeaten interlocutor remarked drily. "Thanks." The questioner tiptoed out of the hall. When he reached the door he gave one good spit and made the gutter, 80 feet away, with accuracy and precision. Thus relieved, he walked home.

Inside the hall, the speaker endeavored to go on. But his audience was somehow inexplicably restless, and he had lost quite a bit of his old time steam. Finally, he gave up as a bad job, and in haste summoned old Deacon North forward to say the benediction.

UNSUNG

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES: We of the Engineers (Forestry) have read and enjoyed your excellent journal and we have noted the achievements of other outfits with just pride, and we have read of the superb fighting qualities of the Yank dough-boy, and we're glad. But never once have you mentioned the guys—unhonored and unsung—that have produced the lumber for all the docks, warehouses, hospitals, barracks, etc., that the other claps have put up, and that have produced the ties that the Engineers (Railway) have laid down and strewn with steel.

So, in a moment of reckless abandon I sat me down and dashed off this melancholy fragment: THE LAMENT OF THE FORESTRY ENGINEERS.

Say! You know it's a damn long war? We got two service stripes and all that. But they don't make the grub Any better. Mostly it's Slum, and beans, and Salmon.

God! How I hate that fish. We've been down here in the wilderness for A whole year, Making slabs and sawdust and Sometimes boards Out of Logs.

HELLO, SISTER!

Next week's Farmington Valley Courier dismissed the speech in one line. The speaker decided that, after all, his law practice would not permit of his running for the State legislature in the fall.

It was the year 1938, in a thriving and bustling American city whose population ran up into six figures. A monster political rally was being held one evening in the big Beechwood auditorium.

The speaker, a tall, muscular man, well preserved and in his forty-eighth or fiftieth year, was a candidate for the seat in the United States Senate open at that fall's election. He made a splendid figure as he stood out on the rostrum, clad in a Prince Albert open enough to show a gorgeous expanse of white waistcoat girded by a gold watch chain bearing the emblems of every secret society under the sun.

He was a good talker, and made his points well about the industrial growth of the State, the economic policy of the nation, and its foreign relations. The latter subject, however, led him into dangerous waters.

"Why, my fellow townsmen," he exclaimed, "in the stirring days of the summer of 1918, when we beat back the foe from the very gates of the fair city of Meaux—"

Just then, from the rear of the hall, there rose a man. He wore a plain suit of serge, and the right sleeve of his coat was empty. He had the insignia of no secret society on his watch chain—in fact, he had no chain, but still clung to the old wrist watch—but in his button hole he had a little strip of ribbon. Pointing his one remaining hand at the speaker, he inquired:

"Where do you get that 'we' stuff? Where was you in France?" "Wh—wh—wh—" blustered the great man, "why do you ask me that for?" "Because I want to know," replied the questioner. (At this point, something like a snicker emerged from a far corner of the gallery.)

"Yes, where was you in France?" piped up the voice of a wicked and irrepressible small boy in another corner of the gallery; and another snicker broke forth. Profesting volubly against "these unseemly interruptions" and having a great deal to say about the "right of free speech," the great statesman brought his harangue to an unseemly close.

In the confusion attendant on the exit, the one-armed man made his escape. "Guess he's sorter S.O.L.," he remarked to himself, with a grin.

Shum was. A Colonel said We were Born to blush unseen. We don't get no Medals. But we work like hell. We've had a lot of brand new lieutenants. We're taught to saw-mill; and one Wept Because we didn't bow down before him And give him a medal. Because he bought us cabbages and tomatoes Out of our own mess fund. Say! This man's Army A queer proposition? But at that we've had a heap of fun And lapped up our share of This foolish French booze. Lord! but I had one bottle Of real American Beer.

Say, guy— What would you give to see That big old Statue There in the bay And all them high buildings Like they was in the sun? And to slap your old feet Down on that same Broadway For us to know? Gee, guy! That would be hard to take. Damn the Germans Anyway.

Pvt. Richard W. Batten, Engrs. (Forestry).

PREFERENCE

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES: While, of course, it isn't strictly ethical to give out the statement of preferences on individuals' qualification cards, nevertheless, in going over a number of cards one struck me as particularly funny.

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES: This is the first time I have come into touch with any other paper than those of England, Wales, Ireland and Scotland, and a little bird, with a wickedly impudent smile, whispered into my ear last night: "Try America!"

The proposition was so startling that I dropped the brush with which I was brushing my hair onto the toe of a sister Wnac, with lively results. After the air had cleared considerably, I sat down and meditated thus: "Can a Wnac judge an American editor by the 'American boys in the C.R.O., or not?' Upon my horizon dawned the words: "Try him!"

When we came over here, tired, worn out, and travel stained, we got into out huts with conflicting feelings. For we were somewhat shy of our unseen Uncle Sam. What we said was: "Well, these huts are just too comfortable for words! If the Americans are anything like the huts. . . !"

Time told. The Americans were quite like the huts—oh, no! not in appearance please, even though they are so huge, but—well, they are just as comfortable. They are brothers, and such great-big brothers, aren't they? I notice, more than anything, the general atmosphere of "brofector" and the words "little sister" seems to shine from them. 'Tis great, Mr. Editor.

Of course we are considerably amused at each other's ways. There are such heaps of things we do, which, these brothers of ours assure us, our American sisters never do! And such heaps of things we do not do, and which they do.

While we are extremely formal in many ways, we are, so they say, surprisingly informal in others.

Then there is the trouble of repeating sentences over and over before you get the cheery laughing: "Oh ye-es! I get you, kiddo!" Another thing we girls admire is "Yankee honesty." Before one of these boys takes you to a football match, out to town or for a walk after office hours are over, he takes out a case of most enchanting photographs, and, squatting on an office chair backwards, with one hand rubbing his hair, and the other busy sorting the pictures, he tells you which of the four girls in front of that picturesque building called "home" is his, which two are his sisters, and which is his girl's sister.

The other snapshots run thusly: This is my mother over here in God's country. I had a letter from her only this morning. This is my old dad, one of the best! This is self, girl and machine—gee! the jicnies we used to get in: Miles and miles we've run over in that little machine, kid. Here's a better one of my girl, she never makes a good photograph—she's prettier than that." (Pause here to hear all about his girl's talents, etc.)

Oh, it's great, Mr. Editor! Then the dear boy says: "Like to come out and get some tea, kiddo? You're as if you'd like it. I know a jolly old shop down town."

To the jolly old shop we then betake ourselves, and feel we are on an equal footing and enjoy ourselves accordingly. We girls admire this American trait more than anything, because, you see, we rarely all of us retaliate by showing them treasured photographs of the stately homes of England, and our own dear boys, some of whom are over here in France, somewhere some of whom are in England, having been over here, and some, Mr. Editor are photographs of those who gave their all some while ago, for Britain's sake, and ours.

There is much laughing banter, between the whites, too. Somebody comes in with a STARS AND STRIPES. "Wa-ah!" The war's over right now! Kaiser's been shot, or is being shot by his own grandson, at dawn. Austria's done for itself, and we'll all be getting away!" "Back to God's country, old kid!" from the boys.

"Back to Blighty, girls!" from us. "All you girls think of is Blighty—and TEA!" they cry. "All you think of is God's country—and maple syrup!" we retort. Laughter. Your dances are very amusing, too, but we like them. One of the boys runs a very much patronized dancing class, on Rec. Hut, and we are getting quite expert in Castle walking, fox trotting and Yankee gliding. But I am very certain that we could never teach our big husky brothers to dance out dainty dances! They could never concentrate on our waltzes, velleas, polkas, lancers, quadrilles, Str. Rogers, etc., etc. They have such big boots. I told one of them so, and he promptly looked down as if meditating upon the area of them, sank into deep thought for a few seconds, then with a melancholy expression in his big brown eyes, he said, in stentorian tones: "Gee! I don't know that I could, and then, 'I don't know that I couldn't, either!' He wouldn't be walked on, you see!" Then he goes the bugle for lights out. Oh, and I wish so much of those to tell you!

PHYLLIS M. MOORE, Q.M.A.A.C., A.E.F.