

The Stars and Stripes

The official publication of the American Expeditionary Forces, authorized by the Commander-in-Chief, A.E.F. ...

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1918.

3,444

The end of the War Orphan Adoption Campaign finds the A.E.F. poorer to the extent of nearly two million francs—something less than a franc a man—but infinitely richer in those qualities of good-will and loving-kindness which cannot be reckoned in centimes or cents.

And the good-will? It is capital invested in two places at the same time, which cannot ordinarily be done. It is a cable system more powerful than that which Cyrus Field paid out behind him—a cable system of exactly 3,444 strands, with every strand leading straight to the heart of a child in France.

AT THE OLD GAME

Old John Boche, though he knows in his heart that he has been beaten, is living on in the fond hope that the Allies will beat themselves by getting into squabbles both before and during the peace conference.

That is why a goodly number of his right-hand men and women are amongst us today, telling us what fair-weather friends those professing Allies of ours are, telling our Allies what fair-weather friends we are, recounting and magnifying a lot of nebulous anecdotes out of the misty past, so forth and so on.

It is Old John's old game. He is using the only weapon he has left. And he will make hay with it with a vengeance if he can only get some people among the Allies to pass along his propaganda for him—to remove, as it were, the Boche label from his line of talk.

THE LOST LEGIONS

It was a pleasure to announce last week the names and locations of those A.E.F. units which, instead of coming to France or England, were sidetracked into Hungary, northern Italy and the inhospitable Arctic snows of Russia. It is a pleasure—and also something of a coincidence—that we are this week about to print, in another part of this page a letter from a member of the A.E.F. who belongs to one of the lost legions, a most lost of all, except for the boys in Siberia, and some of them are nearer home than we in France or Germany are.

Our cartoonist, when asked if he could not accede to Corporal Knight's request for a series of sketches on life around Archangel, replied that Siberia and Russia were all one to him, and that if he were to draw any Russians they would only be Siberians in disguise. Rather than attempt this nature-fake on an easily roused world, he prefers to stand on his earlier productions.

Art aside, though, we are glad to hear from Corporal Knight and the 339th. To them we extend the glad hand of A.E.F. fellowship—not hands across the sea, exactly, but, rather, if we remember the map correctly, hands across Germany.

THE FIFTH VIRTUE

Cowardice, selfishness, stinginess and bragging—these are the four vices of the soldier as the soldier himself decided by plebiscite some months ago. The fact that fighting is over does not alter their applicability. The good soldier is still the courageous, the unselfish, the generous, the modest soldier.

There remains to be added a fifth virtue, the virtue of patience. It is good any time. It helped to beat the Germans, both in the whole grand strategic scheme of victory and in the plan for every minor patrol between the lines. It has made the most competent K.P.'s; it has made the best generals.

It took patience for men to save themselves when they were caught in shell holes and had to wait many days and nights before they could effect their own liberation. It takes patience, these days, to wait for the boat. It is just as fine a kind of patience—and a whole sight harder kind to practise.

THE GRAND REVIEW

The topic of post-armistice discussion that crops up most often in these discussion-full days (after "When are we going home?") is, "Are they going to have a big parade for us when we get back, and where is it going to be?" The launching of that question can start a good two-hour wrangle around the old issue stove, a knock-down and drag-out sectional squabble, in any barracks or billet in France or Germany.

The Bostonians, of course, want that parade to go down Tremont Street and débouch upon Boston Common, scene of America's earliest struggle for liberty. The New Yorkers, of course, want it to start from the Washington Arch and proceed up Fifth Avenue to Columbus Circle, thence across town and up Riverside Drive to Grant's Tomb—which is quite a hike. The Chicagoans, of course, want it to go down Michigan Boulevard. And the Podunkers, of course, want it to start from the Eagle House and go down Main Street as far, at least, as Mason's Block. While we are rather inclined to take the side of Podunk (which is a general term) against its bigger sisters, we have just a bit of a suggestion, which we put out here just to see, how it takes. There

are a lot of fine old gentlemen in the United States who will remember all their days the review of another great Army held in the national capital more than 50 years ago. The name of that Army was—or, rather, is—the Grand Army of the Republic.

Over the same route there marched in July, 1917, a lot of fine old gentlemen who wore the Gray—and proud they were to march there. For that reason there can be nothing sectional in the idea that, after all, perhaps the most appropriate place for the A.E.F. to receive the plaudits of its grateful fellow-countrymen would be along the sweep of Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D. C.

THE NAVY

"The Navy in European waters has at all times most cordially aided the Army, and it is most gratifying to report that there has never been such perfect co-operation between these two branches of the service." Thus writes the Commander-in-Chief of the A.E.F. in his report to the Secretary of War.

"During the last twelve months we have learned to know each other very well. We have learned to respect each other. I want you to take back a message to the Atlantic Fleet that you have left, a very warm place in the hearts of the Grand Fleet, and I hope that you will not forget your comrades of the mist and your pleasant associations of the North Sea." Thus spoke Admiral Beatty of the British Navy to the Yankee tars of the Sixth Battle Squadron.

We who are here by grace of the protection afforded us by our Navy know that it made good, that it was everlastingly on the job. We are proud to belong to an Army that boasts such a backer and helper as our Navy has proved to be. Now that we have before us the prospect of going home, our thoughts turn again to the Navy and its transport service. Though the Navy, by the mutiny and surrender of the German fleet, was denied its longed for chance of battle, it made its weight felt mightily in the great struggle and hastened for all of us the day of our return. We, one and all of us, tender it our thanks and praise.

THE SPORTING PAGE

After being absent with leave for 21 issues, the Sporting Page comes back this week. It will have to make a modest re-beginning, like a man from replacement, and its destiny depends largely upon the co-operation it receives.

There was considerable comment when THE STARS AND STRIPES expelled the Sporting Page last July. There was more in the States (possibly because there was more time for it there) than there was here. The comment in the A.E.F. was divided, but divided unevenly. Encouragements of the decision were far more numerous than complaints. Along in August, when the A.E.F. got up to its ears in the engrossing game of war, there was nothing apropos of sports but silence, deep and profound, which confirmed the justice of the decision.

This paper's opinion of sports is the same as ever. Proper recreation, exercise and amusement are prime necessities. The fighting over, sports in the A.E.F. are of high importance.

There is just one thing more. This paper's opinion of the leading figures of the world of sports is unchanged. On July 26 it was stated of sports:

"Its leading stars are either in the iron harness of war—or forgotten."

Some of the professionals—most of them—have been in the iron harness. Of them we can say nothing, except that they are of us and that we are for them.

Of the others it can be said that, so far as this paper is concerned, they will continue to be forgotten—and unnamed.

CORPORALS—CENTER!

Once again the cry of "Squads right! Rrrrrrrrrrrrr!" is heard in the land. It is what we might refer to sardonically as a familiar cry. Quite a few of us have heard it, off and on, even though these past few months have kept us so busy in trenches, well-built or hastily dug, in offices, in the hundred places where the voice of duty bade us linger, that the cry has lost something of its proximity. It had become ancient history, and lo! it is modern again.

This intensive drilling business, of which there will apparently be rather more than less in the days immediately ahead of us, brings a familiar figure into view. Look at him closely. What mean those two chevrons on his right arm? Can it be our old friend the corporal? It is none other. There he is, in all his pristine glory, looking over his shoulder at Number Three in the rear rank, who never would keep step, and employing the old familiar dodges to impress upon that same Number Three the fact that he is still, despite his obvious incapacity therefor, a microcosm in the military machine.

Were there corporals in Shakespeare's day? Of whom else, then, was he speaking when he said that all the world was a stage, and that among the roles came that of the soldier.

Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard, Seeking the bubble reputation Even at the cannon's mouth.

We don't know about the beard. And, now that the war is over, we don't know about that cannon's mouth stuff. But what of the platoon sergeant's mouth?

THE DIGGERS

As is perfectly fair and proper, the plan now is that the Australians are to be among the first of the British forces to be sent back to their home on the other side of the world.

Most of them have been out since 1914, going through the hell of the Dardanelles and later being transported to France, where they have earned the right, if ever soldier did, to wear that natty bonnet of their. At such a cocky angle.

Without exception, the Aussies all hope to be sent home "by the other way, so that we can see America." We hope they will be sent home that way if they want to. Besides wishing to have their sea America—which we are pardonably proud of—we should like to have America see them.

The Army's Poets

BALLADE OF THE WEST WIND Over the vineyards that cover France, Brown in the cold December days; Edifying, making the wind leaves dance; Parting the curtains of misty haze; Locking the boughs in the forest ways; Bringing a tang of the salty foam; Steadily, softly, a southerly play; And the West Wind blows from Home.

Over the wastes where the war lingers lance Splintered and broken in furious frays; Over the ruins of Prussia's chance, Scene of an Empire's hopeless craze, The late-made desert where Freedom's rays Shine on the shell-buried chalk and loam; Send the breezes, a soldier prays, And the West Wind blows from Home.

Aiding a Riviera France, Warm in the azure southern bays; Lashing Atlantic shores, its glance Rolling the fog from the soaking clays; Touching the Rhine, though its chill dismay The sated burger, far may it roam; An Army is minded of whence it strays And the West Wind blows from Home.

LE ENVOI

Prince, it is little that serves to enhance Visions of hearthstones in Key West or Nome; Why does a campfire quicken and prance When the West Wind blows from Home? JACK BARRONS, F.A.

THE ADVENT

(Inspired by the true flight of the first Liberty plane to be flown in France, May 17, 1918.)

"Compe!" The pilot, peeping from his cock-pit, Grimaces, and tries again. "Contact!" Three mechanics tug, chain-like, at the huge propeller; The engine roars, insane. The ship moves forward, her nose lifts grace-fully into the air. And as the swaying, expectant crowd Cheers, and cheers again, the Chaplain Bowed.

MURPHY, A. PRAYER, B. C. CLARK, CAPT., 46th Aero Squadron.

SOMEWHERE FROST IS ON THE PUMPKIN

"When the frost is on the pumpkin" doesn't often come to mind In this land of early harvests where a corn sheaf's hard to find; But the crispness and the tingle of the frosty, snappy days 'Minds us serious, hard-boiled Yankees of our boyhood autumn days.

Starts us thinkin' of persimmons 'nd of winter apple trees; 'Nd of sippin' through th' clearin' when the ground begins to freeze; After squirrels—maybe rabbits—dog-a-stickin' at our heels; Nippy, crisp old autumn weather—how outlandish good it feels!

Somehow folks get close together 'nd a feller's life means more; When we have to stifle firewood 'nd to shut the outside door; When we hate to get up mornin's 'nd around the fire we flock— Somewhere frost is on th' pumpkin 'nd the fudder's in the shock. MELVIN RYDER.

HOMESICKNESS

Gotta be a soldier. Gotta stick 't biz— Gotta keep on marchin' while the marchin' is; Gotta keep on marchin' while the marchin' is; Gotta keep on marchin' while the marchin' is; Bugle keeps on tootin'; Home looks mighty dim; Gotta keep on marchin' while the marchin' is; Gotta feller like a lamb— But, boy, my feet am itchin' 'For th' feel of Alabama.

Gotta answer recallin' Gotta stand retreat; Gotta be K.P. sometimes—soldiers has 't eat; Gotta keep a-workin' Jes! like there was war; Ain't no time for thinkin' Lots o' jobs in store; Ain't no time for stovin' 'Er lettin' things go slim— But, boy, my feet am itchin' 'For th' feel of Alabama.

Mummy writes she's 'waitin' with a possum pie. My doggone mouth keeps waterin' till by there's no more. 'Watermelon's handy— Sugar cake am hot— 'Ere's a love from Mandy— 'Ere's a love from Mandy— 'T' sweat here in a kitchen— It's all for Uncle Sam. But, boy, my feet's sure itchin' 'For th' feel of Alabama.

Sometimes, my lips get twitchin'— Baby, that I am— But, boy, my feet's done itchin' 'For th' feel of Alabama. E. BURCHGROVE, JR., CAPT., TOURS.

FRIENDSHIP

At last the war is ended And we're off for the U.S.A. For over the silent battlefields The rain is falling away. We think of all the months have brought, Their trials and their joys, And of the many friendships wrought Among the soldier boys. Some of us met, 'twas parting time, But parting is a sad way. True friendship lies in all clime 'Remain the same forever.

Our hearts beat high as we return To the land to which they fought, Those heroes tried, who died and died, 'Nor for themselves cared aught. Yes, we return to our native land, To sweetheart, wife and mother; For the world has changed and we understand What it means to be a brother. And the banner fair that's waving there, With honor to those behind us, Like a voice from the skies speaks of sacrifice For Freedom and Truth. "Will remind us Through life's glad morn' and sunset's glow, When skies are bright or clouds hang low; 'Not what we gain, but what we give Measures the worth of the lives we live."

Then let's be off to our native land The country of God and mother. For the world has come to understand What it means to be a brother. RAY V. SOWERS, SGT., U.S.M.C.

ALBERT IN THE ARGONNE, OR, OVER THE TOP WITH A BOOK-CASE

(Delivered with pathos upon presentation to Sgt. Albert Dietrich, 15th Personnel Section, of a tin medal in recognition of his great services in the recent Argonne offensive, when he went over the top with his book-case on his back, service records and field desk in one hand and a bottle of ink and a pen in the other.) Listen, my friends, and I will tell How Albert Dietrich went through hell. 'Twas up in the Argonne, where we put on our tin hats, That Albert went through hell and came out alive.

It was early on the morn of September two-six That we started out the Germans to fix. Some had Eddystones and some a Chauchay. But Albert, he carried a book-case that day. 'The cry of the boys was "On to Berlin!" Still some were in doubt about Albert getting in. Jack Davis, he said, "It's Berlin or Bust." And Dietrich's book-case fell in the dust. 'Tis said that the sergeant then filled the air; We were calling for help from the boys back there. Albert shouted, "I'm doing all that I can— My little son Otto says I'm a brave man." We battled the Hun for the next five days Going over the top wave after wave. Cheppy, Very and Charpentier fell— And then we came back our story to tell. Many asked Albert just what he did. He was smeared with mud and had lost his tin lid. Then Albert told of his part in the fight, How he carried his book-case and records day and night. The question is asked in the Personnel "What would have happened if Albert had fell? Would the Germans have whipped us and pushed us back to the sea? Or if Albert hadn't been there with his book-case on his back?"

REBUILDING MATERIAL



SO THIS IS RUSSIA!

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES: Sometimes, about once or twice every now and then, copies of THE STARS AND STRIPES find their way up here to No Woman's Land and are instantly devoured by the news-hungry gang, searching for information regarding our comrades and general conditions in France, where we belong, but through Fate were sent up to this part of the world to quell Bolshevism and guard the Northern Lights. We are so far north that the doggone sun works only when it feels inclined to do so, and in that way it is like everything else in Russia. "Oh, how isn't so particular, and comes up, usually backwards, at any time of the day or night, in any part of the sky, it having no set schedule, and often it will get lost and still be on the job at noon. Yes, we are so far north that 30 degrees below will soon be tropical weather to us, and they will have to build fires around both cows before they can milk them. Probably about next month at this time some-one will come around and say we will be pulling out of here in a day or so, but then, the days will be six months long.

In one issue of your very popular paper we noticed a cartoon, "The Boys in Siberia," but what about us, Ed? Now, up here in this tough town there are 260,531 inhabitants, of which 61,329 are human beings and 298,502 are dogs. Dogs of every description, from the poodle to the St. Bernard and from the wolfhound to the halfbreed dachshund, which is half German and half Bolshevism, are everywhere. The wind whistles across the Dvina river like the Twentieth Century Limited passing Podunk, and snowflakes are as numerous as retreating Germans were in France a few weeks ago. We have good quarters, when we are here, thank Fortune for that, and good food, but it is hard to get. In the winter we will be all jake, for a Yank can accustom himself to anything if he wants to. But just the same, we would like to see your artists busy on "The Boys in Northern Russia" and tell them not to leave out the word "Northern."

We also read in THE STARS AND STRIPES that the boys in Italy had some tongue twisters and brain worriers, but listen to this. Centimes and sous and francs

may be hard to count, but did you ever hear of a rouble or a kopeck? A kopeck is worth a tenth of a cent and there are a hundred of them in a rouble. As you will see, that makes a rouble worth a dime, and to make matters worse all the money is paper, coins having gone out of circulation since the beginning of the mix-up. A kopeck is the size of a postage stamp, a rouble looks like a United Cigar Store Certificate, a 25 rouble note resembles a porous plaster and a 100 rouble the Declaration of Independence.

When a soldier in search of a meal enters a restaurant, he says to the waitress, "Barishna zolotaya solodka, pozhalysta." This means, "An order of beefsteak, lady, please." You see, you always say "barishna," which really means "girl," and until a young lady is married she is always a "barishna" and is always addressed in that manner. She will answer the hungry customer with "Yah ochen sojalayta shto nuzhno nyet yestimk prepasov, syechas" (a simple home cure for lockjaw), meaning, "I am very sorry, but we are right out of food today." He will try several other places, and if he is lucky he is apt to stumble across a place where he can get something to eat, but when he looks at the bill of fare and learns that it will cost him about \$1.50 for a sandwich and a cup of coffee, he beats it back to the barracks.

Every time you get on a street car ("dramvay") you have to count out 60 kopecks for your fare, and most of us would rather walk than be jammed in the two-by-four buses and push for the meter. Before boarding a car each passenger usually hunts up a couple of five gallon milk cans, a market basket or two, and a bag of smoked herring, so they will get their kopecks' worth out of the ride, besides making the atmosphere nice and pleasant for the rest of the passengers. If you should see a soldier walking down the street with his nose turned up and his mouth puckered in apparent contempt you would be wrong in thinking he was conceited, for if the truth be known he has probably just got his shirt back from the wash-woman, and she has used fish-oil instead of soap, and he is trying to escape the fumes.

When you take your clothes to have them laundered and tell the woman to please omit the odor, she'll tell you that she has no soap

and if you want them washed to your satisfaction, please send in a cake. Anything in the world to keep your clothes from smelling of fish-oil, so you double time back and get her soap, and then she gives the kids a bath, and that's the end of your soap.

When a Russian meets another man he knows on the street, both lift their hats and flirt with each other. If they stop to talk, they always shake hands, even if they haven't seen each other for fully 20 minutes. Then they simply must shake hands again when they leave. When a man meets a lady friend he usually kisses her hand and shows her how far he can shake hands with her, bringing his suspenders. "Ah," he will say, "yah ochen rrad vasvedyet, kak vvi pazharvayete" (which in United States means, "How do you do?" to which she will reply, "Bogodaru vas, yah ochen korosho," or "Very well, thank you. It is the knockout. A fellow has to shake hands so much that some of them are getting the habit around the company.

And another thing, Ed, are they really holding a separate war up here for our benefit? Just because we weren't in on the big doughs in France is no reason why they should run a post season series especially for us. We know on the street, both lift their hats and flirt with each other. If they stop to talk, they always shake hands, even if they haven't seen each other for fully 20 minutes. Then they simply must shake hands again when they leave. When a man meets a lady friend he usually kisses her hand and shows her how far he can shake hands with her, bringing his suspenders. "Ah," he will say, "yah ochen rrad vasvedyet, kak vvi pazharvayete" (which in United States means, "How do you do?" to which she will reply, "Bogodaru vas, yah ochen korosho," or "Very well, thank you. It is the knockout. A fellow has to shake hands so much that some of them are getting the habit around the company.

Now don't think, dear old Ed, that we are kicking—American soldiers never do. We just wanted to have something to write you about, to remind you that we ARE a part of the American E.F., although "isolated."

With best wishes to your paper and a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all the boys, I'll close with the consoling assurance in my heart that we'll meet you back on Broadway, anyway.

C. B. KNIGHT, Corp., 1st, 339th Inf., American E.F., Archangel, Russia.

CHRISTMAS, 1917—LOOKING BACKWARD

They were five soldiers, and they were seated about a table in a round table in an attractive little restaurant in an equally attractive little French city. It was Christmas Day, 1918. Good things had been set before them, including turkey with real stuffing, and there was a prospect, along toward the dim and distant end of the meal, of coffee with real sugar in it.

The first of the five sighed pleasantly and let his eyes linger on the white tablecloth. "A year ago today," he said, "things weren't exactly like this. And yet it was one of the most pleasant Christmases I ever had. I had been in Tours for five weeks—my first five weeks in France—where it had been so mild that we used to go around the barracks grounds without our blouses. Then, two days before Christmas, they sent us up to a high hill near Chaumont. It was like changing from Florida to Minnesota. For Haute-Marne was a single sheet of snow; the air was beautifully crisp and cold, and it made you want to go out of doors and stand up straight and fill your lungs with it.

"The first day up there I was picked for K.P. When I went into the kitchen, the cook, a real old-timer, told me that K.P. tricks up thataway lasted a week. So I resigned myself to seven days of it—including Christmas. "I didn't like the prospect at first. But when, on Christmas Eve, I saw the cook laying out a hundred and sat down to turkey, and I've forgotten how many kinds of vegetables, and apple pie—a piece to a man. Before they began a young aviator offered prayer. I guess he wasn't used to praying, for his prayer was a familiar, offhand kind of thing, but it was so genuinely sincere that if ever a prayer was listened to, that prayer was.

"That was my Christmas. Oh, yes, and I forgot to tell you that, being K.P., I knocked down four pieces of that apple pie—the best I ever tasted." "A year ago today," said the second man,

"I was aboard the good ship Tusculum, lying in the harbor at Liverpool. For a Christmas gift, I found in my sock a piece of hard, dry bread that a rat had feasted upon, a bone—no meat on it—from the leg of a chicken, and an empty can of sardines. For Christmas dinner I had a piece of corned willie for turkey, and for cranberries I had tripe.

"And then, for entertainment, a second lieutenant came along and bewled me out for not having cleared up the mess by me but that I had made two nights before when one of those sickly little waves got funny with the ship and skidded up a couple of miles out of our course.

"Now that was a year ago, mind you, and many things have happened since then. The Tusculum, as you know, went down. But the second lieutenant, who bewled me out went up. He's a major now."

"A year ago today," said the third man, "I thought I was the luckiest guy in the world, because three of my Christmas packages—we got man size ones in those days, you know—came on Christmas Eve, and when I got up for a delightfully hot 7:30 reveille, I postponed an hour in honor of the day—there they all were, smokes and cats and socks and all the things I had been hankering for ever since my arrival in France two months back. Right there I decided to pass up Cook Louie's breakfast, and beat it back to the billet with the rest of the squad just as soon as we were dismissed, and to dejecter on coconut cakes, and all the other well known indigestibles. It was some breakfast.

"All this happened in the little town of Mont-le-Neufchateau, in the department of Vosges, just above the well-known Yank town of Neufchatel. Some of the gang went down there in the afternoon after Christmas dinner in the mess shack, but I didn't. Reason? I was confined to the limits of Montey for having gone AWOL up to Nancy with a bunch of Y.M.C.A. men.

"Well, like every other outfit that was well quarantined, we had a tree up in the square, and presents for all the French youngsters, and those of us who were good went to mass in the little cold stone church and tried to keep warm by helping the wavering choir out on its 'Venite, adoremus.' And after that the

battalion had a great get-together party, in the course of which the major—let's a lieutenant now and a D.S.C.—read a speech in French, to which the mayor, who was my landlord, responded in much better French. In the course of the proceedings I made a speech, too, in which I took a slam at the major (he had confined me personally)."

"A year ago today," said the fourth man, "I was in a training camp at Langres with the snow a foot from the ground and the mercury trying to get out through the bottom of the thermometer to meet it. The features of the previous three or four weeks had been squads right, cold, candlelight, beans, slum and sore feet in generous overdoses. The afternoon before, until 8 o'clock at night, we had chased an imaginary enemy several kilometers across plowed fields and through woods, with the snow dropping from the trees down our backs—and melting.

"I answered reveille at 6 a.m. and went back to bed because the stove wouldn't burn. The Q.M. fell down and for Christmas dinner we had beans, for which there wasn't room after we had eaten the ground and the

"In the afternoon a friend and I decided we ought to mitigate the human atrocity with champagne. We went into town and found the places where champagne might be bought greatly outnumbered by M.P.'s, but we finally got a bottle with the understanding that we could drink it on the premises.

"For two hours we hunted for a place to drink it comfortably, eventually consuming it standing in the snow behind the Army Staff College, drinking out of one mess cup by turns. After eating deux oeufs—omelette—et pommes frites—oui, oui—oui, oui—I went back to the barracks. The stove was as cold and the room as dismal as the rest of the day had been. The whole room—20 men—went to bed at 8 o'clock to keep warm."

"The fifth man was silent. "Well," they said, turning to him, "how about you?" "I haven't anything to tell," said the fifth man. "Nothing extraordinary happens in my young life just Christmas. But if you must know—"

"A year ago today," said the fifth man, "I was home."