

SINGLE SPY EFFORT IN 50,700 LETTERS

Chemical Tests by Base Censors Reveal One Case of Treachery

SOME INNOCENT ATTEMPTS

Search for Codes in Suspected Documents Another Laborious but Fascinating Job

Evidence of the loyalty of the American soldier is contained in the records of the Base Censor of the A.E.F.

Out of 50,700 letters held up by the Base Censor for various reasons and submitted to chemical tests to determine whether they carried information of value to the enemy concealed by the use of invisible ink, only one case of actual treachery on the part of a member of the A.E.F. was discovered, the records show.

There were traitors or spies in the American Army attempting to get military information to the enemy during the great Allied offensive that crushed Germany, they did not, apparently, attempt any tricks with the mails.

Examination of the 50,700 letters was made in the laboratories of the Base Censor and covered the period from September 23, 1918, to February 6, 1919.

The work in the laboratories of the Base Censor, which, for obvious reasons, cannot be described in detail, is performed by a staff of four officers and five enlisted men, all experts in their line.

Secret Chemical Test

This force closely examines all mail addressed to neutral countries and selected letters directed to the United States. Some of the suspected letters are subjected to a simple test which requires only a few minutes; others are put through a secret chemical test which is infallible in the detection of the use of invisible ink.

WINTER DAYS ALONG THE RHINE

Now that the Third Army is settled, dentists with the various outfits have more engagements than even the Red Cross nurses and telephone operators. Often their appointment books—the dentists—are filled weeks ahead of time.

Two Yanks were hooked recently for a scrap at Coblenz, and they got to talking about it in the afternoon. Then they started to argue, and before their friends could separate them they had become embroiled in a good old fashioned catch-as-catch-can fight. The result was that they lugged in the prize that night, while substitutes fought in the big ring at Coblenz in their stead.

The 146th and 148th Field Artillery Regiments had been working hard all morning and fighting wherever they were sent. Now they are taking life more or less easy and their attention is attracted to some of the finest of German pottery works, so that the Yanks are enabled to lay in a large stock of beautiful pipes which, after all, are some of the things for which Germans are noted. And the best part of it is that they don't cost as much as a helmet or a luger or even an Iron Cross, and they make the best souvenirs in the world.

Up at Dierdorf, headquarters of the 128th Infantry, some members of the command are bathing in a brewery—no, not in beer.

He was a big, fat, unusually jolly mess sergeant who relieved himself of his feelings in a very dignified mess shack on the side of a hill, prey to all the icy winds that blow, and had just been ragged by his superior because his lanky, smoky field rations failed to hit 300.

"Why don't you fellows give us a write-up?" he demanded as he came out of his inferno, surrounded by a mob of men and his hot kitchen and other swill places where the Third Army cooks are working and make everyone else there eat. "You write about the whole damned bridgehead. And look at that." He pointed dramatically toward his abode, which resembled Strambell's eruption.

"And," he continued with a final vicious dig at his eyes, "we ain't sleeping in no beds where you have to come up for air, either."

The Yanks are piling history on top of the historic Kaiserin Augusta Gymnasium, at Coblenz, founded in 1552. The sprawling, at various times, of Poles, Russians, French and Swedes, it finally fell to the Germans; and now Americans are going there to school every night.

The Roman amphitheater at Trier is proving a great Mecca for Yanks on leave in the ancient city which is serving as headquarters for advanced G.I.'s. They like best to climb down the narrow steps leading to the noisome space beneath the big arena, where the wild beasts were kept in cavernous hewn out of the rock. They are shown other caverns where the Herculean sons of Gaul, captured by Roman legions, were imprisoned and kept for months, to meet their death in the arena while applause or shouts of disapproval echoed from the ring of hills about the city.

In the center of this smelly dungeon is a wide pool of water, crossed by a narrow wooden bridge. And, fastened to the railing of the bridge, at its center, is nailed a square board. Just why it was put there is a mystery. The first Yanks passing through on the way to Germany paused and wondered. The top was smooth and white. One invited something which one dough boy supplied. He whipped out his knife, and in a few minutes had carved his initials at the top, in one corner (history is uncertain as to whether it was the left or right hand corner). Those first initials settled the fate of that board for all time. Now its surface is either hashed with the initials or covered with the hieroglyphics of wandering soldiers.

Fly the Signal Corps men, among others, in these cold days in the Rhineland. Like the Engineers and others, they're out along the roads a-working, but, unlike the Engineers and others, they're on top of high, breezy poles, clinging there dizzily, testing circuits and stringing wires. Their mode of climbing furnishes unending interest to the Germans. The latter, by means of a wide belt going round them and round the pole, and it takes them some time to negotiate the summit. The Yanks, with their climbing irons, make it in a matter of seconds.

A.E.F. CENSORING UP TO DATE



Mixing the Preparation That Will Decide Whether a Suspected Letter Contains an Invisible Message

LONGEST, SHORTEST, SOONEST AND SOME OF THE REST OF THE—ESTS

Are you a record breaker? Who is the shortest man in the A.E.F.? Who weighs the least? Who is the youngest? Who is the oldest? Who has been longest in the Army?

Pvt. Eugene L. Kelley's recently published claim to have made the journey between enlistment and France at record speed has been shot all to pieces. Private Kelley did the business in 21 days, but many others beat that figure all hollow.

Of course, the returns are not all in, but it looks as though the record would be held by Pvt. Alexander W. Stephens, Medical Detachment, 50th Pioneer Infantry. In his report he says: "Received orders to report to the adjutant at Camp Meade, August 28. On August 27 I went to camp to get some dope on the Army game. Saw my friends who were in the 50th Pioneer Infantry and who were leaving the next day. I immediately joined the 50th Pioneer Infantry, and on September 7 was on French soil—exactly ten days after joining the Army."

It figures up more like 11 days to us, but at that it is the best yet. Sgt. Maj. Harry Cohn, Headquarters Army Artillery, First Army, did pretty well. He reported at Camp Upton on April 1 last and arrived in France April 16.

Then Base Hospital No. 4 from Cleveland can prove that its personnel arrived overseas only 12 days after enlistment, although it took them another week to reach France. A negro battalion of the 539th Engineers enlisted at Camp Gordon August 30, reached Liverpool September 17 and got to Le Havre five days later.

Sgt. H. W. Struhmeyer enlisted August 5, 1917, joined the 2nd Telegraph Battalion, Signal Corps, the next day, and reached St. Nazaire on August 20—a little matter of 16 days, but Musicians Shullie and Spear, of the 46th C.A.C., beat him by one day.

Pvt. Warren W. Hamilton, of Company A, 125th Engineers, really has them all stopped. He joined the Allied colors on two occasions and made two trips to France in a total elapsed time of 29 days. These 29 days were divided as follows: Two in training camp, five in embarkation camp, and 22 on shipboard. It happened this way, according to Private Hamilton: "I enlisted in Company E, of the 57th Engineers, at Camp Laurel, Md., on September 13, 1918, and landed at Brest on September 20—18 days. In case some speed artist gets under my record, I have another record trip across the pond to face you, namely: On June 20, 1917, I enlisted with the French Army through the American Field Service and sailed the same day. Reached Bordeaux July 1, and immediately was in Paris on July 4, 1917, for general Federal reception. I then departed through the streets by American troops."

Sgt. Leslie W. Claxton, of the office of the Provost Marshal General, is reported to have enlisted on February 11, 1918, and was in France on February 14, 1918.

Yes, but he enlisted in London. What about the considerable number of men who were in France within less than one minute after enlistment?

The present riddled condition of Private Kelley's speed record compares favorably with the record of Mechanic Mock, whose claim to distinction was recently set forth in these columns, as follows: "If Mechanic Troy R. Mock, six feet eight inches high, of Kansas and the 24th Aero Squadron, is not the tallest soldier in the A.E.F., he would like to be shown. He weighs 215 pounds and invites a controversy."

Pvt. Benjamin F. Davis reports from the Casual Camp, Hospital Center, Savenay: "I am six feet 11 inches and weigh 220 pounds."

The photograph he encloses makes it seem plausible. Meanwhile, Charles Brady, 114th Infantry, four feet 11 inches, and Earl Perkins, 53rd Infantry, six feet six inches, challenge the A.E.F. at a longer and shorter friendship.

The mail contest shows that some people have all the luck. Pvt. Leo J. Hoofling, of the Motor Transport Corps, for instance, had, by January 17, received from one person—his brother—61 letters, all written since Armistice Day. Five more written since he arrived under date of January 12, complaining of his long and mysterious silence and protesting that they had been writing him regularly. He himself has written dutifully three times a week.

In behalf of Ice Plant Company No. 301, of Givres, some one whose initials cannot be made out takes the liberty of denying Butchery Company No. 310 the championship of the A.E.F. at handling beef. "Twenty men at our system of throwing the bull are capable of handling 120 tons a day. We have averaged that for nine months." No. 310 also gets this crushing comment from Butchery Company No. 301:

"With the exception of Refrigerator and Ice Plant Company No. 301 at A.P.O. No. 713, Butchery Company No. 301 has handled five times as much meat as any other organization in France. As to Butchery Company No. 310, we desire to call their attention to the following figures taken from our office records for July, 1918: "During July, 1918, we received in refrigerator cars, American and French, and transferred to French box cars in this yard 5,253,489 pounds of beef. During the same period, and in addition to the above, we reorganized from this station 1,241,003 pounds of beef. On our record day we transferred 309,855 pounds of beef from refrigerator to box cars. We handled every quarter of this beef by hand, and our crew consisted of three crews of six men each and two checkers to the crew, a total of

BUCK HEADS PARADE, BUT NOT FOR FUN

Robbed Company of Its Passes by—Well, They Got Even

There is a private in the Headquarters Company of the 79th Field Artillery at Camp Meade, France, who will remember for the rest of his days a parade of his company which he led.

It was a most unusual parade. The private in question didn't want to lead it, but he had to. He was the cause of it. He returned last week with venereal disease from a seven-day leave. His outfit was down the line with a haul on all passes for a month if the cases of venereal disease among its members reached a certain figure. His case made the number which brought his judgment comrades, determined to punish him made him march at the head of the company carrying a large sign reading: "G. O. M. I. ROBBED MY COMPANY OF ITS PASSES."

With a band following the culprit, and with the company in column of squads, the parade formed. The march was up one side of the regimental street and down the other and through the grounds surrounding the officers' quarters. The parade lasted an hour.

720-MILE ROAD JOB ON

Thirty-five hundred Engineers in Base Section No. 2—far and near about Bordeaux—are starting to repair 720 miles of French roads. Their work is a part of the effort through the whole A.E.F. now being made under agreement with the French Government whereby American units will restore highways damaged by American traffic.

One hundred miles of road will be entirely resurfaced in this base section, while the rest will require only general repairs. The work will require 175,000 to 200,000 tons of crushed stone, which will be obtained mostly from quarries leased by the A.E.F.

The working force at present consists of six companies of the 311th Engineers and five of the 312th.

"What would you call three K.P.'s all under 21 years old?" "Till bite. What would you?" "Fah, huh. A minor detail."

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Moi aussi!

"Just met a couple 'birds' I usta know back home," said Pvt. Yank, with a grin.

"So did I," said Corp. Yank, with another, "have one!"

OWL

TWO DEPENDABLE CIGARETS

FRIENDS OF THE ARMY AND NAVY SINCE 1876

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You can't make a mistake in any home of Hart Schaffner & Marx clothes

Hart Schaffner & Marx

LANGRES SCHOOLS FAST CLOSING UP

Made Lots of Noise While Going, Asserts Prominent Farmer

The school area around Langres is no longer a modern battlefield. A "ferme" sign decorates the front door of almost every barracks that was occupied by enthusiastic aspirants two months ago. The windows that once told travelers of the midnight oil episode are now as dark as night itself.

For the straggling aspirants, troubled lieutenants, and even the brigadier-generals who pursued their lessons into the wee hours of morn have all gone. The area is quiet as a graveyard, and the old farmer on the hill above the gas school, who used to run by the gas house holding his nose for fear of being suddenly put to sleep by a deadly odor, now walks or drives by peacefully and predicts a quiet season.

The Turenne Barracks where young aspirants used to sit up late at night awaiting vengeance on the non-com instructors, is now occupied by French infantry. All the modern improvements installed by the Americans have disappeared, while the place is slowly but surely becoming a real French institution, with canteens dangling from the musette hooks on the walls and a faint color of pines in the atmosphere.

The General Staff School, Army School of the Line, Army M.G. School, Anti-Aircraft School, Intelligence School, Army Infantry Specialty School, French Artillery School, Army School of Artillery Studies, Army Engineer Candidates' School and Gas School are closed. The Army School of Artillery Studies has been moved to Trier, Germany. The Tank Corps School is closing by degrees and will hang out the "ferme" sign sometime next month.

The barracks in the school area are being taken over by the French and will be occupied by French troops who are to be demobilized. If the predictions of the old farmer come true, the largest target range will become pastures and drill grounds garden spots by the middle of next June. "The Americans were not a bad lot," the old farmer says, "but they made a hell of a lot of unnecessary noise."

Tarvia

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The great increase in heavy motor traffic is disturbing all road authorities. They know it will quickly disrupt ordinary roads, because they are not built to withstand such wear and tear.

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