

LIFE STIRS AGAIN IN RAVAGED COUNTRYSIDE ONCE BOUNDED BY DEATH-SWEPT VALLEYS

IN the wilderness which the war wrought last summer from the once lovely countryside that lies between the Vesle and Marne, the future is astir.

On all the tortured farms which the Allied troops wrenched back from the Germans in July and August, the soil is beginning to turn and the seed scattered for the harvest of next summer. In all the little villages where the invader sacked and our guns laid low, life is beginning again. Slowly, painfully, almost unaided, out of its own vitality, life is beginning again.

The pussy willows are in bud on the fringe of tattered Belleau Woods, and the violets are reopening their eyes along the roads that skirt the twisting Marne where the 3rd Division braced itself for the shock of July 15. The little sawmill on the edge of Pèren-Tardouin is busy as a bee with the lumber that makes for the shine of the rickety houses there, and, as you walk toward Belleau Woods from Lucy-Bois-Bocage these days, you hear the heavy hum of the threshing machine, at evening hum of the immortal wheat-fields there.

Crop Plans at Meurey Farm

Meurey Farm, which the Rainbow's wild Irishmen from New York captured at the points of their bayonets, has been all patched up and the crop plans of the year have been inaugurated much as they have been from the old farmhouse every year since long before America was discovered. From the high windows of the ancient Chateau de Pèren, which served the 2nd Division as headquarters in the bitter days of last August, the candle-light shines hospitably at dusk, and the great lady who owns the chateau has sent the caretaker that she will soon be back.

There is no town in all the battlefield where hearts are not rekindled. Even those villages which are only ruins have their own way of picking up their way through such a mass of splintered beams and crumbled stone as Fismes, you say to yourself: "Here, surely, life cannot have recommenced." And then, suddenly, from around a pile of stones scrambling, hooting, laughing, will come a lot of French kids, fresh from school that in some way found a lodgment there amid the ruins of the Vesle city which the men of the 23rd, 32nd and 4th Divisions will remember all the days of their lives.

Schools Amid the Debris

The schools are open everywhere, working on the best reconstruction material the world will ever know. The bus of Chateau-Thierry troop camp, returning to the old house where Jean de la Fontaine was born and, from the little building in Bezu-Juery, which served the 2nd Division as a field hospital during the night last June, there comes these days the drone of the children rehearsing the first syllables of the lessons which mean liberty and law.

So Fismes has its school, and even if there is only one house left which really looks like a house, with windows and walls and a roof and everything, you may be sure there are flowers growing and white daisies are blooming in them. Perce-neiges, they are, Madame will explain from the doorway, so called, it seems, because they push up boldly through the heavy snow and insist on being cheerful even when life is hardest. Madame's hand strays unconsciously to the locket which frames the picture of her son in the wall.

"The help she adds, 'and what else is there left for us to do?'"

So she goes back to her work of cleaning, cleaning, cleaning.

The Dugouts of Juvigny

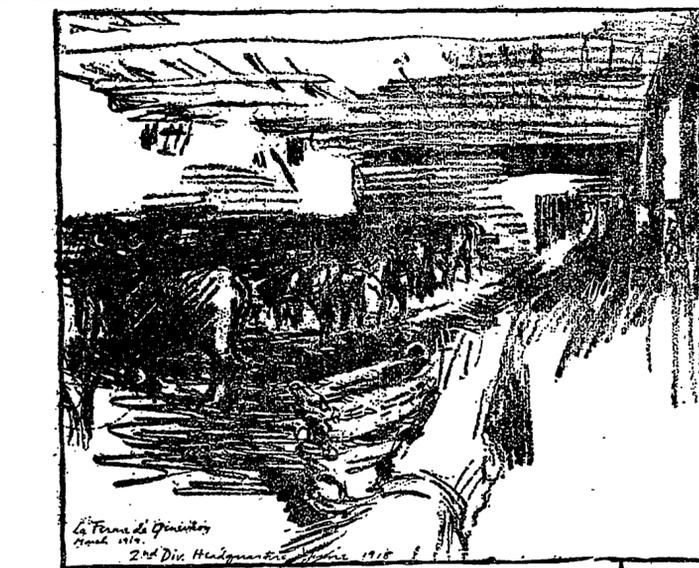
And Juvigny. In all that area, there is no town—not even Vaux which the 9th Infantry stored up in the month of July, which is so utterly demolished as the little hillside Aisne village which we captured when General Mangin borrowed our 32nd Division to help him in the month of July at the end of the summer. Juvigny lies isolated ten kilometers north of Soissons and can be reached only after a painful journey across a bitter country, laid waste by four years of battle.

There is not a house left in Juvigny. Nothing is left standing there save the hill-top crosses and the bones of the dead still piled up in the ruins. The bones of the dead are scattered all over the place. The bones of the dead are scattered all over the place. The bones of the dead are scattered all over the place.

Food Stores in Main Centers

For in Juvigny, six families have crept back across the wilderness and started housekeeping in our old dugouts. While they mourn their dear fruit trees, which the invader saved down, little by little they are starting to cultivate the blasted soil.

They eat what they can carry up hill and down from the distant ravitaillement



Le Terrain de Pèren, 2nd Div. Headquarters, March 1918.

depot in Soissons. In all the main centers the Government has its food stores, and here and there civilian concerns, branches of the big Paris merchants, are reopening hopefully.

Occasionally, on roads once black with the endless processions of our guns and kitchens and ammunition trucks, a peddler's cart trundles along, laden with pots and pans and the other tools of housekeeping, while now and again a camouflet whizzes by, stocked with food and clothing and put out by one of those indefatigable girls who work on the committee which Miss Anne Morgan and Mrs. Dyke direct from Blancourt and Vic-sur-Aisne.

There are all these aids and, in time, big contractors and great Government committees will put their shoulders to the work of reconstruction. But, in the beginning, trust the French peasant to tend to himself. It is pioneer life, as bleak and hard as that which our own forebears knew in the American wilderness, but lived for now by a people who have no interest for the future and ask only to be left alone. Yet, trust the French peasant to prefer a rain-drenched cellar of his own to a palace in which he is merely a refugee. Trust him to putter about the rebuilding of his own home just because it is his own.

In the Train of Victory

Last August, when the wind still brought the thunder of the guns from the Vesle, and the trains were coming back to their poor houses, and each day now the trains to Reims and Soissons and Chateau-Thierry pour out a host of the returning villagers, the same hapless people the misery of whose flight down the troop-jammed Marne roads last spring stiffened the determination of young America on its way into battle.

Some never fled at all, and now, back once more, the women at the washing troughs exchange strange stories as they wring out the clothes, and the things that befell them when the Germans bore them off as captives.

The first people to return are a sort of aristocracy and there is great excitement among the ruins when another family wanders tearfully back. The oldest inhabitant in each town can always tell just how many the colony numbers. Ask him: "Yes, 'One hundred and twenty,' he replies, without hesitation.

"Or in Fismes, 'Four hundred and thirty-six.'"

P.G.'s Toil to Undo Havoc Wrought by German Shells

There is plenty of labor at hand for the preliminary work of reconstruction—for the work that is, of the debris, the rubble, the splintered stone, the shoring of the still wobbly walls and patching the roofs where the shells tore through. This work is being done by the P.G.s, the Pioneers of the G.I.s, upon thousands of prisoners stuffing disconsolately over the acres their country covered.

They are allotted to the different villages, chopping wood, toiling rubbish, digging gardens. Sometimes a little پول, armed to the teeth, makes a shallow pond at standing guard over a knot of 30

Sightseeing Army Already Deploying Along Marne

Bit by bit, such work as this is rubbing out the picture of war which the countryside still afforded at the end of last summer. There are, it is true, plenty of scars that time can never obliterate.

There are some that will stand for years to come, but even the tourists, who will come not singly, but in battalions, this summer, will not see what has been today.

For spring will carpet the blasted fields and the farmers will fill in the shell-holes and cart away for next winter's fires the thick-walled timber which still litters Belleau Woods and Trigny Woods, still clatters the Forests of Pèren and Nesle.

Still a Mass of Wreckage

It is still a battlefield you see today from the high tower of the Chateau-de-Nesle, the thick-walled timber which still litters the Germans yielded up before the advancing troops from Alabama.

Serrières, the town reduced to splinters by the guns behind the Orléans, lies to the west, and to the east is Surry, all desolate still from the battle that raged through its streets between the Prussian Guard and the 23rd Infantry. There, close to the chateau, is an American graveyard, row on row of the Rainbow Division's dead, ranks and honors and faults forgotten, 700 in this one spot. And all the fields around, as far as the eye



General Business filling in old shell-holes, Belleau Woods.



can reach, are again with the pools of water formed by the shell-holes catching the endless winter rains.

The spring rains will gradually effect that hillside of 3,000 fox-holes below St. Gilles, the edge of the depression which the Americans, with good reason, came to call Death Valley. Already the winter rains have eaved in the enormous dugout hollowed in the ravine slope in Coupru for the headquarters of the 23rd Infantry at the end of June. Poor, dingy Coupru, the debris still litters the floor of the village church, and the torn camouflet still flutters from the belfry which served as a lookout when the men of the 23rd went into the fight abreast of their pals, the Marines.

Forerunner of New Invasion

But, swept by the war for only a season instead of, as at Verdun, for four years, this countryside will soon lose its scars, and the tourists must hurry. Already their

training ground for the old American Field Service. Here in Longpont, with the fine de Montesquieu chateau laid low in the dust, Longpont at whose gates the Lafayette Escadrille encamped.

Here, a short distance back through the wonder-forest of Villers-Cotteret, is Pierrefontaine, whose towering chateau looked down on the bloody remnants of the 2nd Division, shattered nearby there on July 21 after its naked rush of 26 hours. That chateau visible for miles and miles, has new scars from bomb and cannon to show. It shows, too, long halls that were built to house the men-at-arms of the Duc D'Orleans, but which housed Yank troops all last summer. The old caretaker is still rosy with his recollections of their Fourth of July dinner, at which he was an honored guest.

The tourist, for instance, is never likely to find that damp, far-reaching cave which burrows into the hill just outside of Coupru on the road to Mortefontaine. Only some still dangling telephone wires are left to tell the passerby that it was once the headquarters of the 1st Division, when prisoners choked the twisting roads and the roads were gray with Scotch troops coming up fresh and hearty to relieve the dog-tired Yanks.

Second's Old P.C.

The tourist is almost sure to miss the sleepy old farmhouse just outside Bezu-Juery, where the headquarters of the 2nd Division was established during the period of the Belleau Woods fighting. Time was then no car could approach the spot and the vast, aromatic manure pile was horridly left undisturbed, lest its sudden appearance should hint something to the photographers of the enemy air-fleet. The pile is still undisturbed.

The tool-shed, which once served as a witness for the long procession of German prisoners, has reopened for business, and the old telephone exchange is packed with new garnered grain. The long stable, once covered with straw and flecked with pellets and the like, is now crowded with pacifists—a long row of them, placidly chewing their cud.

Mme. Bellanger, mistress of the farm, has nothing left to recall the American invasion except her own uplifting memory of having had four generals at once in her spare room and her useful recollection that though the Americans had sworn to her the enemy would never reach her farm, she lost heart in the nervous first fortnight of July and sold all her stock to some Parisian robbers of her acquaintance.

O.D. Still in Evidence Up and Down Marne Salient

Not all the American in the Chateau-Thierry area are the ambulance men and the photographic squads on duty there. There are the occasional line officers back on the terrain to point out the best subjects for the cameras to record. There are the men of the Graves' Registration Service who are gathering the scattered dead into little, neat, fenced, radiating cemeteries. Five hundred here, 150 there, thousands of bare, sodless mounds, each with its wooden cross and metal tag, with here and there a stately funeral urn, with laid there some French friend, or perhaps a cluster of pansies, planted by French hands on the grave of "An unknown American," buried alongside the Paris highway he died defending.

Pacifists Chew Cud Where Colonels Directed Battle

There are some sights, some shrines on the edge of the battle, of which the official guides know nothing and which the tourists are unlikely to see. It seems improbable, for instance, that the tourists will ever find their way in such great numbers to the historic, but little known, heights south of Soissons, where, on the memorable July 18, 1918, one of the most potent of offensive weapons ever forged was thrust forward by Marshal Foch to cut the Soissons-Chateau-Thierry road and thus catch the Germans in the salient that reached to the Marne. Standing on that highland area, which the 1st and 2nd American Divisions, with the Moroccans between them, overran in those sweltering days, the pilgrim can say, "Here, on July 18, 1918, the tide of the great war turned."

Yet, so incredibly swift was the blow there struck and so swiftly did the tide of battle move far beyond that the famous highlands themselves are less scarred than many other areas further east and south, and the villages and towns are less pious with American memories. Yet, Berzy-le-Sac, now all in ruins, and poor, beleaguered Vierzy are American memorials of one of the most dazzling and important engagements in history.

The Land of Quarries

Here is the land of quarries, from which the blinking Germans crawled forth to find the whole surface of the earth overrun with young gun-toting Americans in no mood for soft fighting. Here is Chavigny Farm, the utterly demolished 18th century farmhouse which marked the extreme right of the American jump-off and which had been the

WILD YANK AIRMAN SCARE WILD GEESE

Migratory Birds No Longer Have Monopoly of Old German Sky

Above the valleys of the Moselle and the Rhine, the flocks of geese, winging northward through Germany, are turning affrighted from their courses these days. Their air lanes are crowded with terrifying monsters. Freedom of the skies is theirs no longer.

In their migrations, the big, gray honkers, after the way of their species, ever would follow the winding Moselle into the north. But these bright days, which herald the coming of summer in the land of the Germans and warn the geese to be on their way, have brought into the heavens trespassers who also have a penchant for following the windings of rivers, though not necessarily into the north.

The trespassers are flying men of the American Air Service. There are four squadrons of them. Some of them are photographing hundreds of miles of country in Germany. The work they are doing is preparation against any new war the Huns ever may attempt to wage. The birds, the Moselle and the Rhine, roads and woods, cities and fortifications and strategic military points, manufacturing plants and many other places that form large in the eyes of men in wartime are being photographed and the pictures fled away for study and future reference. They may never be needed, but if they ever were, America would not have to depend on German maps.

Hundreds of Pictures

At Euren, just across the Moselle from Trier, once a German Zeppelin and aviation field, are stationed two Aero Squadrons, and at Coblenz are two more. They have taken hundreds of pictures of Metz and surrounding territory, up and down the valley of the Moselle, Strasbourg, and many towns and cities in Germany and Luxembourg.

While the Army of Occupation is doing squares right and those other things which keep it alert for its watch on the Rhine, the aviators are busy in the air. Even without threatening Archies below and the aerial barrages that only a few months ago were the German barriers in front of Rhineland, the work of Captain Zickmann and his squadron and the other squadrons has its daily hazards. There are accidents, some of them tragic, but the work must be done.

The Air Service is functioning in Germany.

FACTS ABOUT AMERICA

FURTHER INFORMATION FOR A.E.F. TOURISTS TO THE UNITED STATES

One of the principal sights in America which no one should miss is the bridge across the Missouri river between Sedgewick, the capital city of Indianapolis, and Seattle, the birthplace of Christopher Columbus.

Names for American cities and States have been chosen only after much deliberation. Buffalo, N. Y., is so called because of the scarcity of buffalo there; Indiana on account of its lack of Indians; Los Angeles is famed because of its paucity of angels, and so on.

Do not leave your Army socks lying around loose. Someone might step on them and break them.

Among the principal boroughs of New York City are Manhattan, Bronx and Martin.

The interval between the spending of your last Army pay and the receipt of your first civilian wages, don't waste time going through the financial district to visit the so-called trust companies. They won't, in your case, for a nickel.

A few sartorial hints may not come amiss. A collar is a thing that goes around your neck just above where you had the itch. Underclothes are not usually cut out with a cross in the back, but to fit the basement furnace, as in the Army. Caps are made of cloth and worn on the head, but otherwise have no relation to the Army idea of the article by the same name. The Dolly Sisters, the galaxy of Binglings, football shin guard and are held in position by the socks.

If you ever become homesick for a French "express" train, try a New York surface car.

Contrary to general opinion, there are other industries in the United States besides the canning and exporting of salmon. The chief of these is the canning and exporting of corned beef. The other is the canning and exporting of hash.

American policemen are not French, but Irish.

If possessed of sufficient funds, you can buy more than two packages of cigarettes or two cakes of chocolate in American stores.

If your former captain turns up in civil life as your adding machine operator, it might be well to get permission to speak to him from your top bookkeeper before bawling him out.

That America is the land of opportunities is witnessed by the fact that there whole families, instead of single individuals, win fame and fortune. Notable examples are the Seven Sutherlands, the Smith Brothers, the Dolly Sisters, the galaxy of Binglings, the Siamese Twins and the Katzenjammers.

America is divided politically between

NOW HE WANTS A TELESCOPE

"Have you any broken fever thermometers?" inquired a major upon entering an A.E.F. dispensary.

"Broken thermometers?" repeated the pharmacist, surprised at the strange request.

"Yes," answered the major, "I have been promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel and want some mercury to silver my gold leaves."

READY FOR EMERGENCIES

Inspecting Officer: What's the matter with your pack? It looks about four times as bulky as those of the other men.

"Yes, sir, I got one extra suit of issue underwear in there."

"Oh—all right, then."

Ruck: Say, these here new kings of France weren't much on rank, was they?

Corporal: How's that, buddy?

Ruck: Why, they was most of them Louis's.

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