

The Stars and Stripes

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FRIDAY, MAY 9, 1919.

MOTHER'S DAY

For nearly half the A.E.F., Mother's Day has come, indeed. It was the day it got back home, ran up the steps and into mother's arms. Then, for the first time, the wanderer realized how long he'd been away, what a myriad of things had been happening at home while he was earning one, two or three stripes, as the case might be. A myriad of things that he never dreamed of, not things that he noticed right away, for the clock stood in the corner where it always did, the fifth and eighth steps that he used to dodge late o' nights creaked as they always had, and the picture over the mantel had the same habit of getting just a little out of plumb.

But something had been happening back home, he found, while things were happening to him so fast he couldn't count 'em over here. They weren't written on a service record under "battles, skirmishes and engagements"—for mothers don't have that kind of service records—but to his sad surprise and hurt that he couldn't show, he saw the record of a thousand battles, skirmishes and engagements in long nights of anxious thought, long days of fearful yearning that all the joy of the welcome couldn't hide.

"Ours the great adventure, Hears the pain to bear; Ours the golden service stripes, Hears the marks of care."

And so, when we've dumped discharge, ribbons and medals, if we have 'em, into her lap—we haven't even begun to square things.

THE TRANSFORMATION

The father of Jean Pierre Anatole Exe died for France and liberty at Verdun.

Thus did Jean Pierre Anatole become orphaned, and as an orphan he was adopted by Company X, 3,000th Engineers (Railway). An immediate improvement was noted in J.P.A.'s deportment and intellectual progress. He took on all the youth of the village, laid them low in the dust without regard for the Marquis of Queensbury, learned his catechism forwards, backwards and each way from the middle, became a prodigy at the little school run in the mairie by the mayor's secretary, and then fell into gradual and inexplicable moral, mental and physical decline.

Inexplicable until, after many months of forgetfulness, a letter arrived from his parents of Company X, saying that they still thought of him, would think of him in America, a happy land which they hoped eventually to reach, and would send him souvenir post cards of the Third National Bank block and the Rayner Memorial Fountain in Cooper Park.

Whereupon the youth of the village were once more scattered in the dust, the catechism again got by heart, and the mayor's secretary nonplussed by the resurrection of his class AA scholar.

Moral: Write to your orphan.

TRICK CIVILIANS

Just at present there are running around France a lot of trick civilians decked out in uniforms with red chevrons. The red chevrons indicate luck. The uniforms indicate that state of purse classically referred to as bustiness.

Our sympathy is with them. For them there are no more delicious dinners de luxe of that delectable vegetable known as the goldfish. For them there is no privilege of being called out in the glorious dawn by note of bugle. Closed to them are the gates of the luxurious delousing plant. The poor devils can't even go AWOL. To the A.E.F. they are merely desirable aliens.

But let us be tolerant. We must remember that once they were with us and of us, even though now sunk to the lowest depths of civilianism, which in the minds of some is synonymous with civilization. Let not the most K.P.-ish of K.P.'s, victim of company punishment for 30 days, cast eyes of scorn upon them merely because they are soon to lose the key to the mysteries of the wrapped puttee.

We must not forget that once they were soldiers and had cottees the same as the rest of us. Now, although social outcasts, they are still human beings.

So hesitate before you point the finger of scorn at them and demand accusingly, "What'd you do in the great war?"

AS SHE IS SPOKE

English as she is spoke is going to be a weird and wonderful thing when our 2,000,000 O.D. linguists wind up on their native shores to indulge in a vociferous spree of pidgin foreign. Our grand old tongue of the U.S.A., inherited in all its purity from George Ade and Ring Lardner, went down under the first barrage of language tossed at us from a passing fishing smack or patrol boat almost before the shores of France ever came in view. Corrupted is no name for what happened to our ancient speech. It is blasted beyond all hopes.

For not even the most patriotic Yank could now bring himself to say "helluva lot" when what he really means is "beau-coup." Not the most steadfast adherent to American institutions can deny the inferiority of "P.D.Q." to "toot sweet." Not a single expert lexicographer but admits that "promenade" means something that no single word in our ancient speech can ever signify. And when mademoiselle who has been to alert chercher vin rouge reports that it's "fini," she says a mouthful that defies reproduction. When we get home it is clearly our duty

to help educate the folks, who have been unable to join the Army and see the world. They may have been studying French, but their French isn't our French.

And, clearly, we can stand for a lot of education ourselves. We have much to learn from our brethren who have picked up the spaghetti-far-niente dialect from Italy, or who speak the torador patois of the Spanish border leave area district, or the vodka jargon of Vladivostok, or the kamered vernacular of the Rhineland.

Pretty soon the make-up of the American language will be as mysterious as that of Army slum, than which nothing is mysteriouseer.

MORALE

Two ruined villages in the Argonne. In one, a disconsolate detachment of mis-laid Yanks, sour, sloppy, living in their own dirt and rapidly acquiring therein a profound dislike for various institutions, such as the American Government, France, the human race, etc.

In a nearby and equally devastated village—Varennes, by the way—an extraordinarily lively and resourceful detachment of Yanks, always on their toes and so bent on making the best of things that it is an inspiration to go into the camp they have wrought there amid the ruins. After all, places and outward things do not matter much. It is people who count always.

So, Ste. Menesould, which was scarcely scarred at all by the war, is a dreary town, and the stranger within its gates will try in vain to take the chill off. St. Mihiel, on the other hand, for all its crumbled houses and shell-torn streets, shelters now a colony of buoyant people, all smiles and friendliness and hope. They are that kind of folk.

People are so different. And the passing moralist, without expecting or even greatly hoping to alter humanity in this respect, may at least indulge in the privilege of taking off his hat to the people of St. Mihiel and to the members of Truck 7, 23rd Engineers, United States Army.

RED TABS AND BILLIES

Just as the vaudeville wag back home can always get a guffaw by pulling some mischievous line about Bryan or Brooklyn or Boston beans, so the O.D. actor is playing perfectly safe when he takes a fling at the M.P. The M.P. is the villain of every A.E.F. show and the indignant butt of all their little jokes, "Who won the war?" the chorus demands as musically as possible, and from the wings comes the groaning answer: "The M.P.'s."

And this is a curious thing, because the Military Police Corps is made up, to a large extent, of the very cream of the A.E.F. It comes as near to being a crack organization as any we can boast.

When the man with the red hatband takes the old hat down in after years to show it to his wide-eyed son and heir he can tell that inquiring youngster something like this:

"This, my boy, means that I was an M.P. in France. The other guys used to kid and knock us a good deal, but, shucks, that was natural enough. That was just a normal symptom of youth which (being revolutionary at heart) always has it in for the police. 'Yet, never in the history of American institutions was the police power less abused than it was by us in France. If it's any satisfaction to you, son, you make take this as gospel truth, that your dad belonged to a police force of which at least half had seen combat service at the front. The very fact that he was in it is pretty good evidence that, no matter how he may have decayed since, he then had a good build and a good bean, and that America was proud to have him representing her at the great crossroads of France."

"Of course, there were a few rotten crooks and a fair average of hopeless boneheads in the corps; but, by and large, there never was a police force that had so much quiet dignity, common sense and consideration for others."

The old M.P. will have a right to tell his son that. For it will be quite true. And you know it, too, doggone you.

THE Q.M.

Old Papa Q.M. has been kicked in the pants. He has been kicked so hard at times that he didn't feel like carrying on. But still he did carry on; he went out and rustled candy for little Buck, who almost cried his eyes out because he didn't get it; he went out in the field and gave Sam a better pair of shoes so his feet wouldn't hurt; and he managed in most cases to make a liberal distribution of francs the first of each month. But Papa Q.M. got kicked just the same by his big grown-up sons. He was the subject of many a discussion around the squad stove, in billets and dugouts.

Papa Q.M., however, is now sitting back and wondering if his children are going to love him more as the years roll by. When the final airing came it was discovered that all the other Allied papas didn't provide for their families nearly as well as he did. After all, he says, the kicking he got didn't hurt much.

SPRING FEVER

These twilights are conducive to most persistent thoughts of home. It is a way that spring has of making us human and reminding us that all wars are not fought on the battlefield. There can be quite a wide comparison made between the spring of a year ago, when those longings helped us through the strenuous days that led to the armistice, and the present spring that furnishes us regular reading matter of other more fortunate who are sailing home.

Most of us are sensible about it, and realize that the mills of the gods are grinding out the failures, fortunes and futures of those that have gone just as they would have done had those soldiers taken our places here. But for us the dawn has come. We are in for that last kilometer of time that leads to the last objective.

Last spring we had no idea when we would fire the last shot—that was our objective then. This spring we have a very good idea, with the latest news before us, of when the last soldier will leave the shores of France. But until that day comes we will continue to subject ourselves to the charms of these balmy days and the fever of restlessness they throw upon us.

The Army's Poets

THE FRONT

So you have seen the real front? You haven't—no, a chance— Not anywhere in sight— Nor Italy nor France. It wasn't shell and wire— That aching line of red— The true front? The real front? Where a mother's heart has bled! They write about the real front From Alsace to the sea. A lot of names of towns and hills— All Greek to you and me. She reads the towns, she reads the names, Then one name rings in red— The real front? The true front? Where a mother's heart has bled.

If you want to find the real front Don't look on any map, Just ask the gaunt-eyed woman With the picture in her lap: Now in Flanders and the Argonne Quiet crosses watch the dead— Only God can raise the crosses Where the mothers' hearts have bled. PVT. BAUKHAUSE.

LEST WE FORGET

Heavy her toll to unrelenting Mars; Gold are her service stars; Twin sparrows on their field of white and red, They gleam in heavenly courses for the dead, Behind the window bars.

The glad air trembles to the joyous shout Of welcome all about; The bands blare forth their strident notes of praise, While throats unnumbered exclamations raise, And all the flags are out.

There is no voice her throbbing heart to still; Behind her window sill, Forgotten in the tumult and the noise, She watches them—the other mothers' boys— With eyes that slowly fill.

The wild acclaim but ronds afresh the scars Where stabbed the sword of Mars; The victory cannot soothe, with all its charms, The empty holding of her mother arms; Gold are her service stars, JOHN FLECKNER HALL.

LINE UP! FALL IN!

I wonder if, when I get home To wear a derby on my dome And strut around in civvy pants, I'll e'er get o'er the ways of France— This army style that's always been: For everything, Line Up! Fall In!

Line up to simply holler "Here!" Fall in to show them why, Line up to get your issue stuff, Fall in for what you need here, Line up to get your army chow, Fall in to bed, and then Get ready to turn out next day And do it all again!

I went to Paris for a rest From all such stuff (I thought it best), On the 1st of January, 1919, (No 40 Hommes or 8 Chevaux). To premiere classe I'll climb aloft And bounce along on cushions soft.

Line up to have your pass stamped out, Fall in to board your train, And when, at last, you reach Paroo, Line up, get off again, Fall in to have your pass stamped in And read a lot of con, Line up for Metro tickets and Fall in to be stamped on!

"Ah, well," I sighed, "right here's the Y. Now for a bed—tonight I'll lie On linen sheets, not O.D. wool. Sit, please, a room, if they're not full, And you don't mind if I turn in—" "Ah, no," quoth he, "Right there! Fall in!"

Line up for room and bed and board, Fall in for all you lack, Line up to check your pack or bag, Fall in to get it back; Line up to find out where to go, Fall in to find out when Your train leaves Paris, then line up To get stamped out again!

I wonder if, when I get home To wear a derby on my dome And strut around in civvy pants, I'll e'er get o'er the ways of France! And if 'twill be, as it has been For everything, Line Up! Fall In!

Line up to greet the folks and girl, Fall in for civvy life, Line up to get your old job back, Fall in to get a wife; And when you get the vale of woe To pass to realms on high, Line up to catch your death of cold, Fall in, at last, to die! SER. A. W. BOWEN.

THE SKINNERS

Oh, we're not a fighting unit— All our scrapping's with the mules. We're not handy with the rifle, Nor with shovel-shovels nor such tools. But where the shells are thickest And the Boche is cracking down You'll find the skimmers daring death To get the grub and grub.

We can't fight back, But we don't slack. We take the ammo and hard tack, And you can swear In this La Guerre The Supply Co.'s there Somewhere.

No, we're not a dressy outfit: On parade we're not a hit. The colonel calls us rotten When we try to march a bit. But when the moving order comes And the command to up and do, Then you'll find the transport on the job Getting the grub and grub. We can't drill much, Squads east and such, But we can "skin 'em" thro' the Dutch. With shells we can't turn a hair, The Supply Co.'s there Somewhere.

No, we don't get honorable mention, G.O. citations and such stuff. Croix de Guerre and Honor Medals Are for others' services. Just to keep our limbs moving When our forage ration's short, But you're sure to find us listed When the inspector makes report. He gives 'em hell; He eats 'em well; He can't find words enough to tell, And by all means, air We get our share. The Supply Co.'s there Somewhere. FRED HENNEY, Sgt., Supply Co., 137th Inf.

GOODBYE, M'SIEUR!

You go back home, Monsieur, right queeek! I see you happy in your eye. Ah, now my friend, no need speak—I understand—goodbye.

Goodbye, Monsieur, we've been glad, Because your heart was so glad. And this gentill—we shall be sad When you leave France behind.

La France, Monsieur, weel not forget, Her heart keeps you just so, Pardonne, Monsieur, zee eyes are wet, Zey weep because you go.

Monsieur, you save zee life of France, Zee life of ma patrie. Ah, now, my friend, eet was not chance Zat brought you 'cross zee sea.

Monsieur, you brought your bees, brave heart, Your bees, good smile and song; My friend, all France has one beating heart For you zat fought her wrongs.

Goodbye, my friend—zoo leave behind! Some friend's zee words zee you, Monsieur, your tears, zey fall weeps mine, And France, zee weeps weeps you.

Monsieur, zee graves weep flowers bloom, Zee loveliest zee grow; And in zee heart of France weel bloom Zee love zat weel not go.

Goodbye, my friend, in happy day, Wees your own dear familie, Remember zat, in France away, True hearts beat for you still. B. A. HEDGES, Cpl., U.S.M.C.

JOAN OF ARC



The kiss the wind may bear will stir the tranquil leaf And lay it softly on the wounds we made; And we shall labor in the mart of bird the sheaf; The while thy spirit guards this quiet glade.

And as the blood of them' compingles with the soil Where they died, and theirs have fed the rose her hue, So will our own' turn comrade with the waiting toil That reads our all to prove us worthy, too.

STILL SHE WAITS!

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:

As you sometimes run a queer column, referring to the longest and shortest men and some others of the A.E.F., I will tell you I think that I've the record for the longest enlistment. Maybe you can help me a bit also for none of the General Orders on discharge seem to take care of my case.

G.O. 13 and 60 are nice orders to some, but how about the fellow who promised to marry a girl seven years and five months ago and then joined the Army and never has been footloose since? When do I get discharged, anyhow?

Mine was a voluntary enlistment which started the morning of January 11, 1912, and I seem to be doomed to lifelong punishment because it was not finished up properly. I enlisted, as already stated, at Ft. McDowell, and after my recruit drill was awarded to the 20th Infantry at Ft. Douglas, Utah. Well, I did not like Army life very well and could never get any leaves for I'd not been in the service long enough. Although about May 2, 1913, something told me that my girl was going about with some fellow so I took French leave and went to see her.

Well, there is where I put my foot into it. The girl wouldn't do anything but scold me, saying that the only thing to do was to return at once. I never liked the looks of the guard house and was afraid to return. Finally, I thought that I'd slip one over on them and so about the 23rd of October, 1913, I joined the Navy.

Now, I still like the Navy, but after serving with them for two years and five months and discharged me—I was a petty officer, too—and turned me over to the Army, who had discovered my camouflage, on February 24, 1916. After the horrors of a GCM had passed on me, I found myself down on the border helping to eat up the sand that they have there, as a member of the 18th Infantry. When the first troops came over here, we found ourselves in the 1st Division which, now that all is over, evidently is going to marry and settle down on the far bank of the Rhine. Finally, I got the three years that I had enlisted for finished up on November 4, 1917, but the Division Judge Advocate said that I'd have to stay a while as Congress said something about being held for the duration of the war.

Now, lots of people are getting discharges because they have wives and other things, but if they will let me I'll acquire the same as soon as the train gets in, for she is still waiting. I've no dependents, but give a fellow a chance, will you? When do I get discharged? G.H.Q. will have to frame another order to cover my case. Seven years and four months of waiting. Don't you think that the girl will soon be gray-haired?

I am now at the Farm School of the A. E. F. in preparation for good, old farm life again. RALPH H. HUTCHINS, Sgt., Hdqrs. Troop, 1st Division.

YES, BUT WHERE?

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:

There has appeared in your much read paper notices of all kinds of try outs of the different sports. Now there is one, a little bit different from the rest that I would like to suggest. Why not have a buglers' tournament—the best bugler in the A.E.F. should be awarded a prize or medal.

The design of the medal might be a bugler standing on a hilltop blowing recall. (It might also represent a windstorm in a forest.) Hoping that this will receive attention of some kind, and find room in your precious paper for publication, I remain

HAROLD T. ANDERSON, Co. H, 11th Regt., U.S.M.C. [Suggest this contest be held at the North Pole.—Editor.]

HEADLINES OF A YEAR AGO

From THE STARS AND STRIPES of May 10, 1918.

LIBERTY LOAN'S GREAT SUCCESS DUE TO PEOPLE—Washington Believes Over-Subscription Will Reach Billion Figure.

YANKEE AIRMEN GET FIVE HUNS—OUR LOSSES TWO—Four Other Planes Have Probably Been Brought Down.

PARIS OFFICIALLY IN ZONE OF ADVANCE—Change Announced from G.H.Q. Takes City Out of Our L. of C.

HOME FOLKS WAITING FOR GREAT SHIPLOAD OF "MOTHER'S LETTERS"—Postmaster General Promises Speedy Delivery.

60,000 REFUGEES MOVED TO SAFETY WHEN HUN COMES—American Red Cross Performs Task with Small Personnel.

RANK AND UNRANK

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:

On January 2, 1919, I was transferred from the 423rd Telegraph Battalion, Signal Corps, to the 2nd Replacement Battalion, Signal Corps. A few days later, I was transferred to the 463rd Telegraph Battalion, Signal Corps. The rank I held was sergeant first class.

Upon reporting to the 463rd Telegraph Battalion, Signal Corps, they reduced me to a private, first class, saying that I was automatically reduced on account of the transfer, which I did not request. They had their full quota of non-coms, which they also gave as a reason for reducing me.

I carried a very good recommendation from my former company commander as to character and ability, and have always had a very good record. Will you please tell me whether my reduction was legal or not; and if not, how I can regain my former rank and back pay? Ex-SERGEANT.

[War Department Circular No. 65 says all non-commissioned officers will retain their rank and right to pay until discharged, unless reduced for disciplinary reasons by proper authority. In case of an excess of N.C.O.'s in any grade in an organization, the surplus N.C.O.'s will be carried as extra members. Application for reinstatement, or to be re-made, should be made in writing to the regimental commander or, in case of detachment, to the next highest commander.—Editor.]

A VIN ROUGE SCANDAL

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:

My outfit is billeted near a wine cellar. Last month several hundred bottles of wine disappeared from the cellar and the owners put in a claim for 2,000 francs. When pay day came along we marched up to get our pay and found ourselves fined 24 francs each. This, the paymaster explained, was to reimburse the owners of the wine cellar for the missing bottles.

Now what I want to find out is: Does a private have to pay for wine which was consumed by somebody else? Of course, there is no come-back. I have paid and I am innocent. But with this Army which boasts hundreds of Sherlock Holmeses, why should several hundred bottles of wine rouge vanish in a night, leaving no sign, not even bleary eyes next morning, without a single clew to work on?

A BUSTED PRIVATE, Field Hospital No. 142.

ONE OF THE BUCKS

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:

Having read in the April 18 issue the plea of "One of 'Em," my past acquaintance with "Several of Them" is set forth in contrast.

Who wants to be a mess sarge? Not the buck who is well fed, or the one who knows there is not enough chow issued to satisfy hunger anyway. But the old idea that the boys will kick and growl, cause or no cause, has been used as a dodge too long. I have been in eight different companies (infantry), in France, and have never kicked—nor known any reasonable buck to do so—when, out of M.S.'s issue of macaroni, tin willie and goldfish or the like, we got same in mess line. When it was beans without bread or coffee at Pontaneon Barracks (excuse me, for it wasn't a "rest camp then), or "slum—bread ham" at Chemire, we didn't curse the mess sarge.

"Why," you ask, "are you going to say that said M.S. ever got cussed?" Oh, no. But here is the most usual process of arousing a hungry bunch of doughboys to a temper that brings kicks: Select a detail to carry rations to the company kitchen or store-room. They will count the tins of creamery butter, Karo syrup, canned tomatoes, condensed milk and the jam, sugar, beef, coffee, rice, bacon, etc., will also be noted.

By the time "spongy, soupy" sounds, practically the whole company will have an idea of what is on hand, thanks to the Q.M.C. Then let the bucks pass by and get slum, beans, bread and coffee (the latter without sugar or milk), and after they are reminded that carrots, spuds and turnips are always eaten first they will pass to the garbage can the beans or slum or both, and as they look into the M.S.'s domain and see him and his K.P.'s and personal friends eating steak and French fries, and butter hiding the bread almost, and coffee, as good as canned milk and sugar can make—that is the time to hear Pvt. Buck use pet names for M.S. and C.O. (who allows such stealing), and likely wind up with remarks about the A.E.F. which would never pass the censor.

And the little trip to a vin-rouge parlor, where eggs and pommes de terre await, cannot be indulged in frequently on 62 francs per and they still in the safe-keeping of the paymaster, likely as not.

Just kicking, eh? No, if I wanted to kick, the subject of leave-areas, candies and "when-do-we-go-home?" would make choice subjects. The facts in the Mess Sarge's modern offensive are so out of harmony with the principles of America in this war, that they are not easy to believe, unless seen.

When I said "usual scene at company mess," I meant that it took place day after day, week after week, in several different outfits. On one occasion, a company commander was a member of M.S.'s party. Well, it's only just to give three companies praise for putting it out on the square while blaming five for failure to do so. That it is easier to be crooked than straight, probably explains a lot of the mess-lines' hard luck.

All praise to the honest man, whether he be buck, sarge, capt. or any other rank. Though he gets all manner of evil things said against him now, he will have his reward later, and I am persuaded that even now he is not friendless, nor unrewarded.

ONE OF THE PRIVATES, Base Hospital No. 208.

BACK TO WEBSTER

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES: Is the American word "cigarete" or "cigarette" the same thing in English and French? I've been over France a great deal and I've heard it both ways and I'm at a loss to know which is correct. Can you enlighten me? A Buck.

[In some parts of France we think it is a word of greeting.—Editor.]