

KITCHENER'S MOB

By Jas. NORMAN HALL.

CHAPTER VI.—(Cont'd.)

He crept inside and drew his knees up to his chest so that his feet were well out of reach. At his suggestion I tried to use the active service alarm clock on him, but there was not room enough in which to wield it. My feet were tingling from the effect of his blows, and I felt that the reputation for resourcefulness of Kitchener's Mob was at stake. In a moment of inspiration I seized my rifle, gave him a dig in the shins with the butt, and shouted, "Stand to, Shorty!" He came out rubbing his leg ruefully.

"You got the idea, mate," he said. "That's just what they does when you tries to double-cross 'em by pullin' yer feet in. I ain't sure w're I likes it best, on the shins or on the feet."

This explanation of the reason for building three-sided dugouts, while not, of course, the true one, was none the less interesting. And certainly, the task of arousing sleeping men for sentry duty was greatly facilitated with paws of protruding boots soles "sniapply arskin' to be it," as Shorty put it.

All of the dugouts for privates and N.C.O.s were of equal size and built on the same model, the reason being that the walls and floors, which were made of wood, and the roofs, which were of corrugated iron, were put together in sections at the headquarters of the Royal Engineers, who superintended all the work of trench construction. The material was brought up at night ready to be fitted into excavations. Furthermore, with thousands of men to house within a very limited area, space was a most important consideration. There was no room for indulging individual tastes in dugout architecture. The roofs were covered with from three to four feet of earth, which made them proof against shrapnel or shell splinters.

In case of a heavy bombardment with high explosives, the men took shelter in deep and narrow "slip trenches." These were blind alley-ways leading off from the travelling trench, with room for from ten to fifteen men in each. At this part of the line there were none of the very deep shell-proof shelters, from fifteen to twenty feet below the surface of the ground, of which I had read. Most of the men seemed to be glad of this. They preferred taking their chances in an open trench during heavy shell fire.

Realists and Romantics lived side by side in the travelling trench. "My Little Gray Home in the West" was the modest legend over one apartment. "The Ritz Carlton" was next door to "The Rats' Retreat," with "Vermin Villa" next door but one. "The Suicide Club" was the suburban residence of some members of the bombing squad. I remarked that the bombers seemed to take rather a pessimistic view of their profession, whereupon Shorty told me that if there were any men slated for the Order of the Wooden Cross, the bombers were those unfortunate ones. In an assault they were first at the enemy's position. They had dangerous work to do ever since a post of honor, and no one of them but was proud of his membership in the Suicide Club.

The officers' quarters were on a much more generous and elaborate scale than those of the men. This I gathered from Shorty's description of them, for I saw only the exteriors as we passed along the trench. Those for platoon and company commanders were built along the travelling trench. The colonel, major, and adjutant lived in a luxurious palace, about fifty yards down a communication trench. Near it was the officers' mess, a cafe de luxe with glass panels in the door, a cooking stove, a long wooden table, chairs, everything, in fact, but hot and cold running water.

"You know," said Shorty, "the officers think they 'as to rough it, but they got it soft. I'm tellin' you. Wooden bunks to sleep in, batmen to bring 'em of water for savin' in the mornin', all the fags they wants. Blimy, I wonder wot they calls livin' 'igh?"

I agreed that in so far as living quarters are concerned, they were roughing it under very pleasant circumstances. However, they were not always so fortunate, as later experience proved. Here there had been little serious fighting for months, and the trenches were at their best. Elsewhere the officers' dugouts were of ten but little better than those of the men.

The first-line trenches were connected with two lines of support or reserve trenches built in precisely the same fashion, and each heavily wired. The communication trenches which joined them were from seven to eight feet deep and wide enough to permit the convenient passage of incoming and outgoing troops, and the transport of the wounded back to the field dressing stations. From the last reserve line they wound on backward through the fields until troops might leave them well out of range of rifle fire. Under Shorty's guidance I saw the field dressing stations, the dugouts for the reserve ammunition supply and the stores of bombs and hand grenades, battalion and brigade trench headquarters. We wandered from one part of the line to another through trenches, all of which were kept amazingly neat and clean. The walls were stayed with fine-mesh wire to hold the earth in place. The floors were covered with-board walks carefully laid over the drains, which ran along the center of the trench and emptied into deep wells, built in re-

cesses in the walls. I felt very much encouraged when I saw the careful provisions for sanitation and drainage. On a fine June morning it seemed probable that living in ditches was not to be so unpleasant as I had imagined it. Shorty listened to my comments with a smile.

"Don't pat yerself on the back yet a wile, mate," he said. "They looks right enough now, but wite till you've seen 'em arter a 'eavy rain." I had this opportunity many times during the summer and autumn. A more wretched existence than that of soldiering in wet weather could hardly be imagined. The walls of the trenches caved in in great masses. The drains filled to overflowing, and the trench walks were covered deep in mud. After a few hours of rain, dry and comfortable trenches became a quagmire, and we were kept busy for days afterward repairing the damage.

As a machine gunner I was particularly interested in the construction of the machine-gun emplacements. The covered battle position were very solidly built. The roofs were supported with immense logs or steel girders covered over with many layers of sandbags. There were two carefully concealed loopholes looking out to a flank, but none for frontal fire, as this dangerous little weapon best enjoys catching troops in enfilade owing to the rapidity and the narrow cone of its fire. Its own front is protected by the guns on its right and left. At each emplacement there was a range chart giving the ranges to all parts of the enemy's trenches, and to every prominent object both in front of and behind them, within its field of fire. When not in use the gun was kept mounted and ready for action in the battle position.

"But remember this," said Shorty, "you never fires from your battle position except in case of attack." When you goes out at night to 'ave a little go at Fritz, you always tykes yer gun sommers else. If you don't, you'll 'ave Minnie an' 'Bussy Bertha an' all the rest of the Krupp children comin' over to see w're you live."

This was a wise precaution, as we were soon to learn from experience. Machine guns are objects of special interest to the artillery, and the locality from which they are fired becomes very unhealthy for some little time thereafter.

We stopped for a moment at "The Mud Larks' Hairdressing Parlor," a very important institution if one might judge by its patronage. It was housed in a recess in the wall of the travelling trench, and was open to the sky. There I saw the latest fashion in "oversea" hair cuts. The victims sat on a ration box while the barber mowed great swaths through tangled thatch with a pair of close-cutting clippers. But instead of making a complete job of it, a thick fringe of hair which resembled a misplaced scalping tuft was left for decorative purposes, just above the forehead. The effect was so grotesque that I had to invent an excuse for laughing. It was a lame one, I fear, for Shorty looked at me warningly. When we had gone on a little way he said:

"Ain't it a proper beauty parlor? But you got to be careful about larfin'. Some of the blokes thinks that 'edge-rov is a regular ornament."

I had supposed that a daily shave was out of the question on the firing-line; but the British Tommy is nothing if not resourceful. Although water is scarce and fuel even more so, the self-respecting soldier easily surmounts difficulties, and the Gloucesters were all nice in matters pertaining to the toilet. Instead of draining their canteens of tea, they saved a few drops for shaving purposes.

"It's a bit sticky," said Shorty, "but it's an 'an' not 'an' bad w'en you gets used to it. Now, another thing you don't want to forget is this: W'en yer movin' up fer yer week in the first line, always bring a bundle of firewood with you. They ain't so much as a match-stick left in the trenches. Then you wants to be savin' of it. Don't go an' use it all the first d'y or you'll 'ave to do without yer tea or the rest of the week."

I remembered his emphasis upon this point afterward when I saw men riskin' their lives in order to procure firewood. Without his tea Tommy was a wretched being. I do not remember a day, no matter how serious the fighting, when he did not find both the time and the means for making it.

Shorty was a Ph.D. in every subject in the curriculum, including domestic science. In preparing breakfast he gave me a practical demonstration of the art of conserving a limited resource of fuel, bringing our two canteens to a boil with a very meager handful of sticks; and while doing so he delivered an oral thesis on the best methods of food preparation. For example, there was the item of corned beef—familarly called "bully." It was the piece de resistance at every meal with the possible exception of a breakfast, when there was usually a strip of bacon. Now, one's appetite for "bully" becomes jaded in the course of a few weeks or months. To use the German expression one doesn't eat it gern. But it is not a question of liking it. One must eat it or go hungry. Therefore, said Shorty, save carefully all of your bacon grease, and instead of eating your "bully" cold out of the tin, mix it with bread crumbs and grated cheese and fry it in the grease. He prepared some in this way, and I thought it a most delectable dish. Another way of stimulating the palate was to boil the beef in a solution of bacon grease and water, and then, while eating it, "kid yerself that it's Irish stew." This second method of taking away the curse did not appeal to me very

strongly, and Shorty admitted that he practiced such self-deception with very indifferent success; for after all "bully" was "bully" in whatever form you ate it.

(To be continued.)

HOW THE CROSS WAS WON.

Young Alsatian's Brave Deed Was Fittingly Rewarded.

Very soon after the war began a young New Yorker, whose parents were born in Alsace, and who had been brought up to have the passionate devotion to France that is so common among Alsatians, crossed the ocean and enlisted in the French army. A few months ago he was back in New York on a furlough, wearing the ribbon of the Legion of Honor and the Croix de Guerre with palms—the latter one of the most highly valued of service distinctions. He is very modest about his experiences, and he insists that the Croix de Guerre was given him for a deed that exposed him to no serious peril whatever. Here is the story; let us see whether our readers agree with him:

He was one of a squad holding a first-line trench "somewhere in France." A German machine gun, cleverly concealed, was sweeping its fire back and forth and enfilading a part of his trench at every sweep. The French officers were not sure where the hidden gun was, but our young Alsatian was quite sure it was behind a clump of bushes some hundred yards away. He observed also that between the trench and the bushes there was a fairly continuous line of deep shell holes, each ten or fifteen yards from his next neighbor. On these holes he built his plan of campaign.

As soon as the machine gun fire swung away from the trench he swarmed out "over the top" and ran, crouching, to the nearest shell hole. Into it he plunged, and there he lay safe, while the machine gun swept back over his head. He had not asked permission to leave the trench, for, as he naively confessed, he "knew it would be refused."

A few moments later, while the machine gun fire was directed away from his place of concealment, the boy climbed out of his shell hole and dodged into the next one. There he lay for several minutes, and then, at a favorable opportunity, he was out and into the third hole. By this method he worked his way gradually up to the last shell hole, only twenty-five yards from the clump of bushes, behind which he could now see the moving figures of the gun crew. Apparently they had not caught sight of him as he ran, bent low, from hole to hole.

Within striking distance of the gun at last, the lad took one of the bombs he had brought with him. It was a five-and-a-half-second bomb, and he was afraid it might be so slow in exploding that the Germans could get out of its way. So he set off the fuse and then coolly held the bomb while he counted four.

Then he launched it, and so nicely was the explosion timed that the bomb went off just as it landed in the midst of the gun crew. About six seconds after the explosion the young Alsatian, with his automatic pistol drawn, arrived in the midst of the German gun crew. The officer in charge of the gun and another man were dead and three others were lying wounded and dazed on the ground. The young soldier took them prisoners and when they were able to get up he marched them in front of him back to the French trenches. That evening he and a comrade went out and brought in the gun.

"You can easily see that there was no peril at all in this," says the youngster.

CANADA'S TIMBER MARKET.

Question of Dominion's Future Share in British Empire's Trade.

One of the most interesting questions awaiting the close of the war is Canada's future share in the timber market of the British Empire, says the Canadian Forestry Journal. Already a readjustment is in process whereby it is hoped a larger part of the enormous volume of timber orders given to Russia (60 per cent. of the total requirements) will be turned towards Canada. The Executive Council of the Imperial Institute in London has constituted an Advisory Committee for Canada. This committee consists of Sir George Perley, K.C.M.G., High Commissioner for Canada, chairman; Sir Robert Kindersley, K.B.E., governor Hudson's Bay Company; J. G. Colmer, C.M.G., former secretary, High Commissioner's office in London; J. H. Plummer, Dominion Steel Corporation, and Sir Keith Price, of the Ministry of Munitions.

One of the most important matters on which action is being taken by the committee is that of the more extensive utilization of Canadian timbers in the United Kingdom. The Imperial Institute Advisory Committee on Timbers has been taking evidence on this subject. Arrangements have been made for a series of practical trials of selected British Columbia timbers to be carried out by H.M. Office of Works with a view to the inclusion of these timbers in official specifications.

Bran and Shorts for Farmers.

As a result of the Order in Council placing mill feed stuffs under embargo for export, except under license from the Food Controller, no less than 6,640 tons of bran and shorts intended for the use of Canadian farmers.



The Housewife's Corner

WAR AND FOOD SERIES, No. VI.—BACON.

"Keep-a-pig" is the slogan of the hours. Mr. Hanna has been consistently urging upon Canadians the need for increased hog production. Bacon is a prime necessary in Europe which Canada and the United States can alone supply.

A pig means bacon for the men at the front. Bacon has concentrated food value in the highest degree and is better adapted for shipping than any other kind of meat.

The "Wiltshire side," which is the trade name for half a split hog dressed, with backbone removed and ready to ship, has only 7 per cent. bone as compared with 20 per cent. bone in dressed beef, 20 per cent. in mutton and 25 per cent. in veal. Thus it is readily apparent that, with ocean tonnage at a premium, bacon is especially desirable for shipment overseas.

More vital heat and energy are concentrated in a pound of bacon than in a pound of beef, veal or mutton. The fat constituent of bacon is valuable to men working and fighting in the outdoors and fats are by no means plentiful in Europe.

That is why the Food Controller is urging an increase in hog production and a decrease in the home consumption of bacon.

Again it is a question of individual sacrifice and the ingenuity of the housekeeper. There are many substitutes for bacon. It is true that it has enjoyed universal popularity, appearing on the table of the rich and the poor. But it is not now a question of whether or not we can afford to buy it. It amounts to this—that

WHAT I CAN'T UNDERSTAND.

First, I can not see why it is necessary to spend so much time drying dishes. So I have made a draining board from a piece of grooved plank, two feet long, one inch thick and the length of the sink. I attached it to the wall at the side of the sink with brackets, with one end reaching over and sloping a little toward the sink. After washing, the dishes are scalded and stacked on this to dry.

The next thing I notice, is the number of steps taken from the work-table to a drawer on the opposite side of the room for cooking-spoons, paring knives, egg beater and the many little articles used in cooking.

I have set my wits to work and nailed a strip of wood three-fourths of an inch thick over the work-table (which stands next to the drain-board) and inserted small sash-curtain hooks about three inches apart, the entire length of it. Here the kitchen implements are hung close at hand.

The meat grinder is used in the preparation of almost every meal but seemed to be in the way if left attached to the table. I solved the problem by making a strong shelf about a foot square, fastened securely to the wall at a convenient height.

WAR BREAD.

Valuable Civic Service Rendered by These Resourceful Children.

Two years ago the story was told about the honors accorded by President Poincare to two motherless French children of fourteen and ten, Madeleine Daniau and her little brother, for their admirable civic service in continuing unaided to supply the village of Exodum with good bread from their bakery after the departure of their father, the baker, for the front. To the boy the President, addressing him as "My young friend," wrote a letter of thanks and appreciation, prophesying that he would grow up to be a brave soldier, like his father. To Madeleine he awarded the Cross of Lorraine.

Now, once more, and for the same peaceful service, become doubly precious in the stress and disorganization of war, he has had occasion to decorate a brave and faithful little bakeress: this time a little girl of ten, an only child, bereaved of her mother only a few weeks before, and with no helper to share the sudden responsibility or to lighten the heavy task when her father was called to the colors. Mrs. Gertrude Atherton, in the Delineator, tells the story:

The bakery had supplied not only the village but also the neighboring inn, which had been a favorite lunching place for automobilists. Traveling for pleasure stopped abruptly, but as the inn was on one of the direct routes to the front it still had many hasty calls upon its hospitality.

Bread making in France is a science: the work of the expert, not of the casual housewife. The accomplished cook of the inn knew no more about baking bread than of washing clothes, and there was only this one bakery, hitherto sufficient, for the baker and his wife had been strong and industrious. What was to be done? The inn was in despair. A Frenchman will go without meat, but life without bread is unthinkable. No one thought of the child.

It is possible that in her double grief she did not think of herself—for twenty-four hours. But on the second day after mobilization the shop window was piled high with loaves.

we must not buy it except in very limited quantities. In order to maintain the necessary supplies to the Allies two courses are open: (1) to reduce the consumption of pork products; (2) to increase production. An increase in the production of pork fats can be accomplished much more rapidly than in the case of beef or dairy products. As Mr. Hoover has said: "It appears to me that we must concentrate on the increase in the production of hogs if we are to answer the world's craving for fats."

The despised pig was never in the whole course of his existence as much to the fore as at present. The need for him has raised him in the social scale of animals. His usefulness has been recognized as never before. Anyone who keeps a pig at this time, whether in the city or the country, is rendering useful service to the Empire. The British soldier is allowed four ounces of bacon a day. Canada's export of bacon in 1913-1914—before the war—to Great Britain was 23,620,861 pounds of bacon while in the last fiscal year ending March 31, 1917, it was 207,284,673 pounds.

But the number of hogs has not increased in Canada. Better that we go short than the soldiers who are defending us with their very lives.

Beef is second to bacon in food value, percentage of shrinkage, percentage of bone and economy of handling. This is the unanswerable argument, then, for the insistent demand for the conservation of beef and bacon. Canada must send 25 per cent. more beef and bacon to the Allies.

Articles Wanted for Cash
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Food Control Corner

The Food Controller is appealing to the proprietors of restaurants, grocery stores, butcher shops, etc., to discontinue the practice of using perishable foodstuffs for window or counter display in such a way as to render them unfit for consumption or to cause deterioration.

It is stated at the Office of the Food Controller that a very considerable waste of food is caused in this way and that in view of the growing shortage of food and the necessity of saving every possible ounce for export that such display should be stopped as long as the present emergency continues. The public are asked to patronize those dealers and eating-places where this request is observed and to use their influence to reduce such waste to a minimum.

AN ARMY WITH A SMILE.

Tribute Paid to the Unconquerable Cheerfulness of British Troops.

Sir Berkeley Moynihan, the representative of Great Britain in the surgeon-general's office in Washington, said recently, "at the English army is an army with a smile, that it never wears off and that where it is most persistent in the war hospitals, at his ceaseless visits to the bedside of the wounded men at night he could not but be touched by the awful loneliness and solitude and the aching misery of the early hours of the day. But never was there a whimper of regret or surrender."

Never would he forget one boy who had a bad compound fracture of the knee joint which every effort had been made to save. In spite of the efforts gangrene had come on and amputation was necessary.

By blood transfusion, the use of which in surgery was due to Major George Crile, the American surgeon, the boy had been put into something like fair condition. Though still grave surgical risk the boy had to have his chance.

Sir Berkeley had seen him several times during the evening and again half past 11, when he had said, "Well, how are you?" The boy turned his white, weary face to him and said as loudly as he could, "I am tip-top, sir," and at midnight was dead.

Grow Wheat in Quebec.

Professor R. Summerby, of Macdonald Agricultural College, discussing the question of wheat-growing in Quebec says: "Farmers of this province can well afford to devote three to five acres of their land to wheat. Contrary to the opinion held by many, wheat of excellent quality can be produced in all parts of Quebec."

Sweets made from honey should be as far as possible encouraged.

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Now there is just one
WALKER HOUSE
IN ONE TOWN where I
stay,
And, say, you ought to
see me grin
When my trip heads
that way.
The only other time I was so happy,
Goodness knows,
Was when a kid Dad bought me
Red topped boots with copper
toes.
When other travelers hit that
town,
They, too, don't want to roam,
For they say, "At that WALKER
HOUSE
It's just like staying home."
Where is the ONE TOWN where
that
WALKER HOUSE is? Don't
you know?
Why, it's that good old burg spelled
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