

KITCHENER'S MOB

By Jas. NORMAN HALL.

CHAPTER V.—(Cont'd.)

As we came within the range of rifle fire, we again changed our formation, and marched in single file along the edge of the road. The sharp crack! crack! of small arms now sounded with vicious and ominous distinctness. We heard the melancholy song of the ricochets and spent bullets as they whirled in a wide arc, high over our heads, and occasionally the less pleasing ptt! ptt! of those speeding straight from the muzzle of a German rifle. We breathed more freely when we entered the communication trench in the center of a little thicket, a mile or more back of the first-line trenches.

We wound in and out of what appeared in the darkness to be a hopeless labyrinth of earthworks. Cross-roads and alleys led off in every direction. All along the way we had glimpses of dugouts lighted by candles, the doorways carefully concealed with blankets or pieces of old sackings. Groups of Tommies, in comfortable necks and corners, were boiling tea or frying bacon over little stoves made of old iron buckets or biscuit tins.

I marveled at the skill of our trench guide who went confidently on in the darkness, with scarcely a pause. At length, after a winding, zigzag journey, we arrived at our trench where we met the Gloucesters.

There isn't one of us who has not a warm spot in his heart for the Gloucesters; they welcomed us so heartily and initiated us into all the mysteries of trench etiquette and trench tradition. We were, at best, but amateur Tommies. In them I recognized the ideal descendants of the Atkins; men whose grandfathers had fought in the Crimea, and whose fathers in Indian mutinies. They were the fighting sons of fighting sires, and they taught us more of life in the trenches, in twenty-four hours, than we had learned during nine months of training in England. An infantryman of my company has a very kindly feeling toward one of them who probably saved his life before we had been in the trenches five minutes. Our first question was, of course, "How far is it to the German lines?" and in his eagerness to see, my fellow Tommy jumped up on the firing-bench for a look, with a lighted cigarette in his mouth. He was pulled down into the trench just as a rifle cracked and a bullet went zing-zing from the parapet precisely where he had been standing. Then the Gloucester gave him a friendly little lecture which none of us afterwards forgot.

"Now, look 'ere, son! Never get up for a squint at Fritz with a fag on! 'E's got every sandbag along this parapet numbered, same as we've got 'is. 'Is snipers is a-lyin' fer 'im, same as ours is a-lyin' fer 'im." Then, turning to the rest of us, "Now, we ain't arskin' to 'ave no buial parties. But if any of you blokes wants to be stiff, stand up 'ere this guy 'it the gas."

There were not any takers, and a moment later another bullet struck a sandbag in the same spot.

"See? 'E spotted you. 'E'll keep a-pottin' away at that place for an hour, 'opin' to catch you lookin' over again. Less see if we can find 'im. Give us that biscuit tin, 'Enery."

Then we learned the biscuit-tin-finder trick for locating snipers. It's only approximate, of course, but it gives a pretty good hint at the direction from which the shots come. It doesn't work in the daytime, for a sniper is to clever to fire at it. But a biscuit tin, set on the parapet at night in a badly sniped position, is almost certain to be hit. The angle from which the shots come is shown by the jagged edges of tin around the bullet holes. Then, as the Gloucester said, "Give 'im a nice little April shower out o' yer machine gun in that direction. You may fetch 'im. But if you don't, 'e won't bother you no more for an hour or two."

We learned how orders are passed down the line, from sentry to sentry, quietly, and with the speed of a man running. We learned how the sentries are posted and their duties. We saw the intricate mazes of telephone wires, and the men of the signaling corps at their posts in the trenches, in communication with brigade, divisional, and army corps headquarters. We learned how to "sleep" five men in a four-by-six dugout; and, when there are no dugouts, how to hunch up on the firing-benches with our waterproof sheets over our heads, and doze, with our knees for a pillow. We learned the order of precedence for troops in the communication trenches.

"Never forget that! Outgoing troops as 'e right o' way. They ain't 'ad no rest, an' they're all slathered in mud, likely, an' dead beat fer sleep. Incomin' troops is fresh, an' they stands to one side to let the others pass."

We saw the listening patrols go out at night, through the underground passage which leads to the far side of the barbed-wire entanglements. From there they creep far out between the opposing lines of trenches, to keep watch upon the movements of the enemy, and to report the presence of his working parties or patrols. This is dangerous, nerve-trying work, for the men sent out upon it are exposed not only to the shots of the enemy, but to the wild shots of their own comrades as well. I saw one patrol come in just before dawn. One of the men brought with him a piece of barbed wire, clipped from the German entanglements two hundred and fifty yards away.

"Taffy, 'ave a look at this 'ere. Three-ply stuff wot you can 'ardly get yer nippers through. 'Ad to saw an' saw, an' wot I'll but 'ad it, lummy! if they didn't send up a rocket wot blew 'im near 'im in the 'end!"

"'Eard 'im s'y 'e's wanting a bit to show to one of the artillery blokes. 'E's got a bet on 'im that it's three-ply wire. Now, don't forget, Bobby! Tough 'im fer a couple o' packets o' fags!"

I was tremendously interested. At that time it seemed incredible to me that men crawled over to the German lines in this manner and clipped pieces of German wire for souvenirs. "Did you hear anything?" I asked him.

"'Eard a flute some Fritzie was a-playin' of. An' you ought to 'ave 'eard 'em a-singin'! Doleful as 'ell!"

Several men were killed and wounded during the night. One of them was a sentry with whom I had been talking only a few moments before. He was standing on the firing-bench looking out into the darkness, when he fell back into the trench without a cry. It was a terrible wound. I would not have believed that a bullet could so horribly disfigure one. He was given first aid by the light of a candle; but it was useless. Silently his comrades removed his identity in a tin disk and wrapped him in a blanket. "Poor old Walt!" they said. An hour later he was buried in a shell hole at the back of the trench.

One thing we learned during our first night in the trenches was of the very first importance. And that was, respect for our enemies. We came from England full of absurd newspaper tales about the German soldier's inferiority as a fighting man. We had read that he was a wretched marksman; he would not stand up to the bayonet; whenever opportunity offered he crept over and gave himself up; he was poorly fed and clothed and was so weary of the war that his officers had to drive him to fight, at the muzzle of their revolvers. We thought him almost beneath contempt. We were convinced in a night that we had greatly underestimated his abilities as a marksman. As for his all-round inferiority as a fighting man, one of the Gloucesters put it rather well:—

"'Ere! If the Germans is so bloomin' rotten, 'ow is it we ain't a-fightin' 'em sommers along the Rhine, or in Austria-Hungary? No, they ain't a-firin' at you s'y, Jerry? Not wot, I give you my word! Not around this part o' France they ain't! Wot do you s'y, Jerry?"

Jerry made a most illuminating contribution to the discussion of Fritz as a fighting man:—

"I'll tell you wot! If ever I gets through this 'ere war; if I 'as the luck to go 'ome again, with my eyesight, I'll never feel s'yfe w'en I sees a Fritzie, unless I'm a-lookin' at 'im through me periscope from 'ind a bit o' cover."

How am I to give a really vivid picture of trench life as I saw it for the first time, how make it live for others, when I remember that the many descriptive accounts I had read of it in England did not in the least visualize it for me? I watched the rockets rising from the German lines, watched them burst into points of light, over the devastated strip of country called "No-Man's-Land" and drift slowly down. And I watched the charitable shadows rush back like the very wind of darkness. The desolate landscape emerged from the gloom and receded again, like a series of pictures thrown upon a screen. All of this was so new, so terrible, I doubted its reality. Indeed, I doubted my own identity, as one does at times when brought face to face with some experiences which cannot be compared with past experiences or even measured by them. I groped darkly, for some new truth which was flickering just beyond the border of consciousness. But I was so blinded by the glamour of the adventure that it did not come to me then. Later I understood. It was my first glimmering realization of the tremendous sadness, the awful futility of war.

AN ELIZABETHAN PRAYER.

Equally Fitting Supplication in These Modern Perilous Times.

The following prayer offered by the English people in the perilous days of Elizabeth's reign is peculiarly appropriate for use at the present time of national stress:

O Eternal God, Lord of the whole world, and guide by sea and land, Who by Thy mighty power doth direct to what effect Thou wilt the counsels and actions of all men: graciously vouchsafe to bless and order unto happy issue the work of our men-of-war now sent out by seas to withstand the enemies of this people. Let it please Thee mighty Lord of Hosts, as guide and general to go in and out before them, with straightest course to speed and prosper them in the way. In a pillar of fire give them light to direct their steps; in a pillar of cloud defend them. Put upon them the spirit of counsel and fortitude and under the banner of Thy power and protection let them meet their foes. Encourage and embolden them in the day of conflict to stand undaunted and without fear. Make way and opportunity for them, and for Thy name's sake grant, O glorious God, happy success in battle, to their battle a joyful victory, and to their victory a safe and triumphant return. So will we, the people of Thine inheritance, together with them ascribe both our cause and the glory of their success not to our own strength, but unto Thy power, who alone givest victory in the day of battle. Hear us, O Father, even for Christ's sake. Amen.

Cut pickles into tiny bits and add to potato salad to give relish.

ENGINEER IS JACK OF ALL TRADES

HUNDRED TUNNELS BORED THROUGH RIDGE.

Maps of the Battleground Showing Every Detail Are Prepared By the Engineers.

During my intimacy with the Engineers I heard some very interesting stories, writes an Australian officer. During the battle of Ypres some of our engineers were excavating a sunk-in road, when they were suddenly surprised by a patrol who tried to break through our lines. The Boches chased them, and the few who were hit dropped in the shell holes. They stayed there all night until they could get back. Others picked up their rifles, spades and picks and rushed at the enemy, using their tools as they would use a sledge hammer.

One engineer said: "I hadn't a steel hat handy, so I picked up a patrol tent and put that on my head and thought it might be better than nothing. Then I saw the Germans and said to myself, 'This is a queer kind of a fix for a fellow who had been an engineer at Oxford,' so I crouched down behind some excavations and hoped the Germans wouldn't see me. They didn't; otherwise I wouldn't be here. Some of the construction teams had their trap blown up ahead of them by the forward patrols of the Germans. These boys told me they thought it time to quit. But afterward, taking courage, they formed part of a platoon and volunteered to drive back the Huns. They saw some very hard fighting as a result."

One of the engineers told me that this surprise was the most dangerous experience he ever had.

A Hundred Tunnels.

Before the Messines drive could be successfully undertaken it was found necessary to remove the ridge of the same name, as it was honeycombed with concrete and heavily entrenched positions which the British had been trying for two years to reduce. Too many lives were being sacrificed, however, in attempting to destroy the ridge as it then stood. It was found advisable, in the end, to blow up the elevation—an engineering feat truly stupendous.

The engineers started work early in 1915 and bored a hundred tunnels, in some places a mile in length, running underneath the ridge. I have heard many an interesting story from the engineers who participated in this great venture. As our boys were mining and boring their way through a listener on duty heard a counter-boring from the enemy lines. The officer in charge, on receiving the report, gave the order for a small hole to be drilled toward the Hun tunnel. He then charged the hole with a great amount of high explosive and blew away part of the rock which separated the Hun tunnel from our own. Before the smoke of the explosion had died away our engineers, picking up whatever tools they could put their hands on, dashed into the tunnel, overpowered the Huns and automatically lengthened their tunnel, thus saving a little labor.

I am told it took two years to bore these hundred tunnels. When the psychological moment had arrived in March of 1917 hundreds of pounds of ammonal and other explosives were used, and the whole ridge was blown sky high.

Engineer Makes Maps.

Many of the advances on the western front are methodically rehearsed by the engineers with the aid of models of the ground to be fought over and by practice and manoeuvres under conditions that reproduce the actual terrain. The infantry was prepared for the battle of Messines Ridge by a wonderful model covering more than one acre of ground, which told every detail of contour and adornment. All the units taking part in the attack were studying the battlefield for more than a month.

The villages of Wytschaete and Messines, with their many little farms and with the fantastic names bestowed on them by the inventive "Tommies," were plainly shown on the model. Winding woods, German trenches and even the stumps of splintered trees where the enemy bunked behind concrete barricades also were marked.

Generals and their staffs and hundreds of officers passed hours in mastering every detail of this monster bit of landscape gardening constructed up earth and bits of broken brick, the result of the ingenuity of the master of all trades, "the engineer."

While much of the work of the engineers is done by the time the word comes to go over the top, they closely follow up the attacking troops. One of their tasks in an advance is to bridge the trenches so as to permit a maximum of speed on the part of the supporting waves. They carry "duck walks," or small platforms, which they drop from side to side over a trench. Cavalry, if need be, can go across these walks.

Before washing ebony brushes smear a little vaseline over the backs. This will prevent the soda in the water from injuring the ebony. Carefully rub the vaseline off afterwards, and polish with a dry cloth.



The Housewife's Corner

WAR AND FOOD SERIES, No. IV.—WHEAT.

Canada is pre-eminently a land of wheat. Her fields of waving grain have become symbolic in all parts of the world. She is a wheat exporting country.

Between now and next harvest it will be necessary to deliver on the other side of the Atlantic from 450,000,000 to 500,000,000 bushels of wheat. Millions of men have been taken from wheat raising and sent into the trenches. Fields have been laid waste by the enemy. Ships bearing precious freights of food-stuffs have been sunk by submarines. Crops in other countries have fallen short. Europe is threatened, gravely threatened, by famine.

The responsibility, therefore, rests upon the North American continent to make good the deficiency of Europe. The United States has not a bushel of wheat to spare over and above her normal consumption. Canada has only from 100,000,000 to 110,000,000 bushels of exportable wheat.

The people of the United States and Canada are asked to liberate one-fifth of their normal supply of wheat or flour to make up part of Europe's deficiency.

This means that consumption must be decreased; that less white bread must be eaten; that substitutes must be adopted. In the simplest analysis it means that three slices of white bread should take the place of four in everyone's diet.

Wheat is undoubtedly the best bread cereal but other flour can readily be mixed with wheat flour to make bread. People in Canada can scarcely realize what the shortage of wheat means to Europe. The people of France are almost absolutely dependent upon wheat bread. Bread constitutes 52 per cent. of their total food supply. In no better way can Canadian women help their heroic kith and kin in Europe than by being sparing in their use of white flour.

PRACTICAL KITCHEN SUGGESTIONS.

An Excellent Hard Soap.

Pour twelve quarts of soft boiling water on two and one-half pounds of unslaked lime. Dissolve five pounds of sal soda in twelve quarts of soft water. Then mix, and let it set for twenty-four hours. Pour off all the clear fluid, and be careful not to allow any of the sediment to run off. Boil three and one-half pounds of clean grease and four ounces of rosin in the above lye. Boil until all the grease disappears. Pour into molds, and let stand one day to harden. Then cut in bars. Making soap provides a way for using excess fats which must be carefully conserved these days.

Tools for Mother.

"Mother, where did you put that hammer? The boys say you had it last when you were putting up those hooks."

Of course I had put the hammer back in the tool shed, where it belonged, and it was found later on the ground where my husband had left it after he had finished repairing the gate hinge. Similar incidents had happened many times, but this time his remorse took concrete form. A few days later he brought in an oblong wooden box and presented it to me. It was full of tools, small enough for me to handle easily, but all of them strong and useful. Among them were a tack hammer, a claw hammer, a small saw, an awl, a screw driver, a gimlet, and a variety of nails, screws and tacks. I have had a great deal of comfort out of them and have never since been accused of losing my husband's or the boys' tools.

System in the House.

Naturally I am very unsystematic. I married rather young, and have never had any experience in the business world. Consequently, during the first years of my housekeeping I had no idea of the value of keeping records. I soon learned, however, that it was absolutely necessary to take care of receipts, and it would save a vast deal of time and many mistakes to have some method of recording addresses.

Gradually I began to keep an address book, a file of catalogues, and a box especially for receipts. This method had disadvantages, however, for the address book frequently disappeared just when it was needed, and I had to search through a whole box to find the particular receipt I needed.

A little drawer filled with 3x5-inch cards solved my problem. This tiny filing cabinet is divided into various compartments: Addresses, filed alphabetically; recipes, in subdivisions, such as bread, cake, meats, etc.; accounts, and entertainment, with suggestions for parties of all kinds, pasted or copied on the cards. For the receipts I have a vertical letter file with an alphabetical index. I simply slip the receipts into the proper place as each comes in, and occasionally go through the file to take out the old papers.

I like the system especially because I can destroy a card easily when it is no longer wanted, without spoiling the other records, and the cabinet is always neat and in its place.

Durable Kitchen Sinks.

Besides being at a convenient working height, the kitchen sink should be durable, easy to clean, and made of a non-porous material. These sinks may be made of enameled iron, soapstone, or copper.

Cleaning powders that contain rough scouring agents are poor articles for cleaning sinks. Kerosene or other substances that cut greases should be applied with a cloth and followed by a cleaning with soap and water. This method will be found particularly effective.

Enameled iron sinks are durable, and will last for years with proper care. They should not be cleaned with abrasive cleaning powders, as the enamel will wear off and cause a roughened condition of the surface. A sharp blow will chip the enamel and cause rust to attack the exposed iron foundation. These sinks come in a variety of styles, making it possible to get them in almost any dimensions and with or without drain boards.

Soapstone sinks are less expensive, and are desirable where much dirty work is done. The soapstone, however, absorbs grease and wears away by constant scouring.

Copper sinks are attractive, easily cleaned, and sanitary. Because of cost these sinks are seldom found in kitchens of the average home, but are satisfactory in butler's pantries for dishwashing purposes.

The average sink should be from 30 to 36 inches in length, 20 inches wide, and 8 inches deep. The drain boards should be at least 24 inches long, and if there is but one it should be on the left side. The drain board made of the same material as the sink is most desirable, but a hard wood, such as oak, ash, or hard maple, may be substituted.

It is best not to enclose the plumbing under the sink with a closet. This is apt to be dark and damp, hard to clean, and not at all a good place for utensils. If there is one place in my house that I want to be shining with cleanliness it is my sink.

MINE SWEEPING.

Dangers Confronting the Men Who Clear the Seas of German Mines.

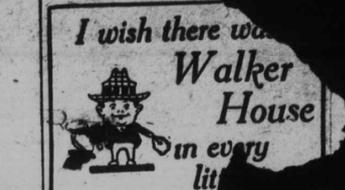
Imagine yourself trying to walk through a dense wood at midnight without a light, the penalty for touching a tree being death. That will give you some idea of the dangers that the men on mine-sweeping trawlers face when their vessels are steaming through a freshly sown mine field.

The mine sweepers are divided into groups, each of which is commanded by a naval officer. The vessels leave harbor about daylight and steam out to the area that they are to sweep for mines.

They work in pairs abreast of each other. Between the vessels swings the "sweep wire," sunk to the necessary depth in the water by means of towed kites—wooden arrangements acting on the same principle as ordinary air kites. These wires can be regulated to travel at any depth beneath the surface. When mines are caught they are dragged to one side and destroyed by rifle fire. If the bullets hit the detonator the mine generally explodes at once; but if, on the other hand, water enters the buoyancy chamber and floods it, the mine goes to the bottom like a stone and becomes innocuous.

As the trawlers themselves may draw as much as twelve feet of water, they may come into contact with a mine laid at or above that depth. If a mine sweeper is struck and the resultant explosion occurs forward in the bows, it may keep afloat and eventually be towed into harbor by one of her consorts. If the detonation takes place amidships or in the stern, however, it is unlikely that the ship will survive, and the men in the engine room or boiler room will probably perish with the vessel.

Bacon is always a means of adding flavor to made-over meat dishes.



I wish there was a Walker House in every little town.

In every little town Then I could travel in peace and comfort, and always sit me down, Happier than king with crown, If there was just one Walker House In every little town.

I wish there was a WALKER HOUSE In each place where I go. In the comfort of my dear old home While on the road I'd know. The meals—the Cheerful Service, too, Would leave no cause to frown, If there was just one Walker House In every little town.

The Walker House
The House of Plenty Toronto Geo. Wright E. M. Carroll

Food Control Corner

Benefits amounting in the aggregate to many thousands of dollars have been secured for the public by the Food Controller's regulations governing the sale of cereal products in packages. The prohibition of the sale of such products in packages of less than two pounds except under license, has caused the issue licenses if the consumer's portion to the consumer has kept the price down from advancing, despite the cost of most of the bulk. There has been no increase in the price of the cereal products since the Food Controller's price order of the package cereals on the market would have been increased, in cases by as much as five cents a package.

A number of applications for licenses have been refused or delayed pending changes by the manufacturer to comply with the Food Controller's regulations. One firm selling products in two-pound packages agreed to increase the net contents from two to two and two-thirds pounds, leaving the same, as a result of the controller's ruling that the portion to the consumer was out of proportion to the cost of bulk and his refusal to until a satisfactory reduction in the price and other selling expenses.

In the case of a number of specialties it has been found that public welfare being championed, which, in the opinion of the controller, was too high. The controller's policy to the consumption of cereal products in the simplest form in which they are available for direct human consumption should only represent the cost of the selling price, without including expenses, too, which are considered as a justifiable cause for a excessive price.

Very important advantages promised to the consumer by the requirement that the weight of the net contents must be stamped on each package. It has been found that in many cases there was a wide difference in the contents of packages of the same size. Under the new regulations, however, the manufacturers will be required to guarantee that the package contains at least the amount printed upon it.

There is reason, also, to believe that purchase of cereal products in bulk has been stimulated by the report of the Special Committee of the Food Controller's Office. The report emphasized that even at today's prices, which are closer to the bulk prices than they were before the war, cereals in bulk are still cheaper to the consumer than those sold in packages.

"Everything in the world is his for long for knowledge and appreciation, and not for possession."—Retina von Hutten.

Do not use soap in washing dishes. Clean, soft water and a little alcohol poured on the cloth for the final polish will make the glass brilliantly clear.

Hotel Del Coronado

Coronado Beach, California
Near San Diego

MOTORING, TENNIS,
BAY AND SURF BATHING,
FISHING AND BOATING.

18-Hole Golf Course

Hotel is equipped throughout with Automatic Sprinkler System.

AMERICAN PLAN

JOHN J. HERNAN, Manager