

Lights and Shadows of War

British Officer Writes Human Description of Life in the Trenches.

ONE of the most human descriptions yet received from the front is the following story of his experiences from a young officer. We are indebted for it to the Daily Sketch, which very rightly gives it at length and in a prominent place in its interesting pages:

The other day I was, with another subaltern, holding a farm in front of our trenches to prevent the Germans massing troops behind its cover and rushing us.

Well, we held on for perhaps an hour without anyone taking any special notice of us, and then they turned the big guns on us. My hat! we didn't half get a time. Within fifteen minutes they put fifty-five shells (weight about 60lb., and probably 8in. in size) fired from a howitzer into, and around the farm within a circle of fifty yards' radius. We literally "smelt hell."

Found the Target.

Two shells which followed on each other's heels hit the barn, which was at right angles to the farmhouse, and smashed it up completely.

The whole of the farm was covered with dirt, splinters, and vile-smelling smoke, in which we checked and spluttered and cursed. No one was hit, although some of my men were standing with their backs against the barn.

After that we left the buildings and went into the rick yard, where we could dodge shells better.

Another lot of shells came over, and four of my men who crouched round the base of the stack lay close together and got as near the earth as possible. Three shells went on and burst yards away, the fourth landed some fifty yards to our flank. Immediately it burst, and mingled with the clang of the explosion came a shriek which stopped suddenly, began again, and died away with a horrible bubble and gurgle.

A corporal sat up with one arm twisted horribly under and behind. We buried him where he lay in the rick yard, with a rough cross over him, and then we went back to the farm.

Time To Get Some Tea.

The German gunners by this time

had shut up shop for some tea, so we were able to get some tea also.

Two of the men volunteered to milk the cow, and proceeded to do so when, having half-filled a pail, the old girl kicked and booted them both out of the shippin.

One of them fell into the milk pail, and when he came out the sight defied description.

He was one sheet of milk from top to toe, and we simply shrieked with delight at him. So soon in war does comedy follow tragedy.

Nerve-racking.

All our work has been in trenches up to the present, and it is rather nerve-racking work.

These big shells make a sound exactly like the rip or tearing a starched collar and the whistle of a railway engine mixed.

You hear them coming, and you bob down in the trench and wonder with your muscles tight and your lips set, "Will it land on this bit of the trench this time or not?" Then the whistle goes over or finishes in

front with a perfectly hellish crash and you are safe for the next two minutes.

Then, perhaps, when it is dusk you are sent out in front of the trench to see if any Germans are within 400 yards of you.

When you are moving along a beet field with your feet rustling in the leaves there is a sudden crack and you hear a "seeee—ep" as a bullet goes past your head.

On the occasion I am thinking of I did such an inglorious and hasty dive to earth that the corporal with me thought I was hit, and was just preparing to do the V.C. act when I moved.

A Sniping German Blighter.

However, the blighter of a sniping German who fired at me got it in the neck or rather throat, from me a minute later, for we stalked him, and I shot him at about 150 yards range.

He leapt about five feet in the air, and I sent his helmet back home yesterday as a souvenir.

When I landed at Havre I was much amused at two awfully pretty girls (French), who were with their father (a captain of infantry).

The three solemnly advanced on me, my hand was unmercifully pumped by the captain, and I was vigorously kissed on each cheek by the two girls.

Ticked the Men.

The troop (my men) fairly howled with delight, and I never heard the last of it for two weeks.

If ever a girl was seen within a hundred yards the men began to grin at me and nudge each other, and someone would whistle softly "Chase Me, Charlie," or "You're My Blue Eyed Baby," until I had to threaten to knock their heads together for them. They haven't forgotten it yet, con-found 'em.

It's a jolly life and most interesting, but it's a little wearing on the nerves.

One doesn't mind shrapnel—that's harmless—but the "coal-boxes" and rifle fire put the fear of God into you. It's damn lucky that the Germans can't use their rifles well or we would catch it awfully.

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Not so long ago we were holding a line of trenches near a wood, about 300 yards from it. We fixed wire up in front, with tins to rattle on it, and retired to sleep. About midnight the tins began to rattle and we lined the trench.

Then something began to appear in front, and then we saw a solid wall of infantry appear. When they were about fifty yards away fifteen rounds per man of rapid fire was pumped into them, and when it finished you never heard such a pandemonium in your life.

The Germans screamed and shouted, and it sounded exactly like a pack of hounds in kennels at "even-song."

War Is Horrible.

Next morning there were any amount of dead in front of the trench, and we learnt from a wounded man that two companies (400 men) had attacked us, and only one and a bit companies reached home again.

People at home have no idea what war is like. It's horrible. I had never seen a corpse until the other day, and I plumped on a dozen Germans laid out for burial. I should have been sick for a week, if I had seen one at home, but here a dozen didn't affect me at all.

LOOK OUT NOW!

Everybody's doing it now? Do you know what? Why, reading **The Mail and Advocate** of course. It's surely the house paper now! Without doubt the most widely circulated in the country.

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GERMAN EXCUSES NAUSEATING

RECENT German newspapers, copies of which have just reached New York, give prominence to a letter written by a Dutch university professor to a German colleague, in which the writer criticises the proclamation sent by a large number of German "intellectuals" to the universities of the United States, denying German atrocity charges.

The letter was first published in the "Koelnische Zeitung," and a translation follows.

"A certain lack of national pride speaks out of those German defence writers. That, at least, is the impression they make upon us neutrals. We Netherlands have a saying which means, 'Do right and don't look around.' The Germans would make a greater hit with me if they would live up to that theory.

Undesirable Tone.

"Another thing about these defence papers is that they are all written in a broad tone of conviction, scorn and authority, in the style of congressional speeches, that upon the sober Dutch people they make an impression almost humorous.

"What is it supposed to mean, the expression which is repeated time and time again, 'It is not true.' Perhaps, it is not true." But the mere assertion that it is not can be convincing only for those who presumed from the beginning that everything the Germans said or did must be absolutely right and just.

No Argument.

"No German savant would allow himself to be told what he should believe, or not believe, in any question, no matter by what authority. But we neutrals are supposed to believe without question. 'It is not true!' Another feature is that a noted scientist, whose judgment in this respected profession everybody appreciates, certainly is not necessarily a man who can decide such questions properly.

"We Hollanders know very well that armies turn to barbarism. That has been taught us often enough by our colonial army of about 30,000 men. The troops in the field are therefore changed as often as possible, so that brutality is prevented as much as possible, so that brutality is prevented as much as possible.

Unpleasant Impression.

"All the warring nations, however, by acting as if their own soldiers never did anything wrong, create an unpleasant impression. I was very indignant when Germany violated the

AT THE CASINO

Those who attended the Casino Theatre last night saw a very clever little playlet, well presented and handled, and illustrating the fact that there is much dramatic talent in the team of Franklin and Hiatt. "All a Mistake" is the story of a young lady and gentleman who are guests at a reception arranged by the physician in charge of a private sanatorium. They had not been introduced previously, and, in consequence, one takes the other as an inmate of the asylum. There are many very funny incidents before their identity is revealed, and the manner in which they endeavour to handle the situation affords abundant opportunity for the display of talent. Miss Nellie Franklin as Clara Manners and Mr. W. S. Hiatt as George Fielding took their parts with compelling attention, and gave clean-cut renditions of their respective roles.

As usual, the motion pictures were good last night, and were well shown. The films were of an interesting character, and the dramatic feature was especially gripping. Indeed, it can be said that the show at the Casino is well worth attending, and from a variety standpoint is to be recommended to people out for an evening's entertainment.

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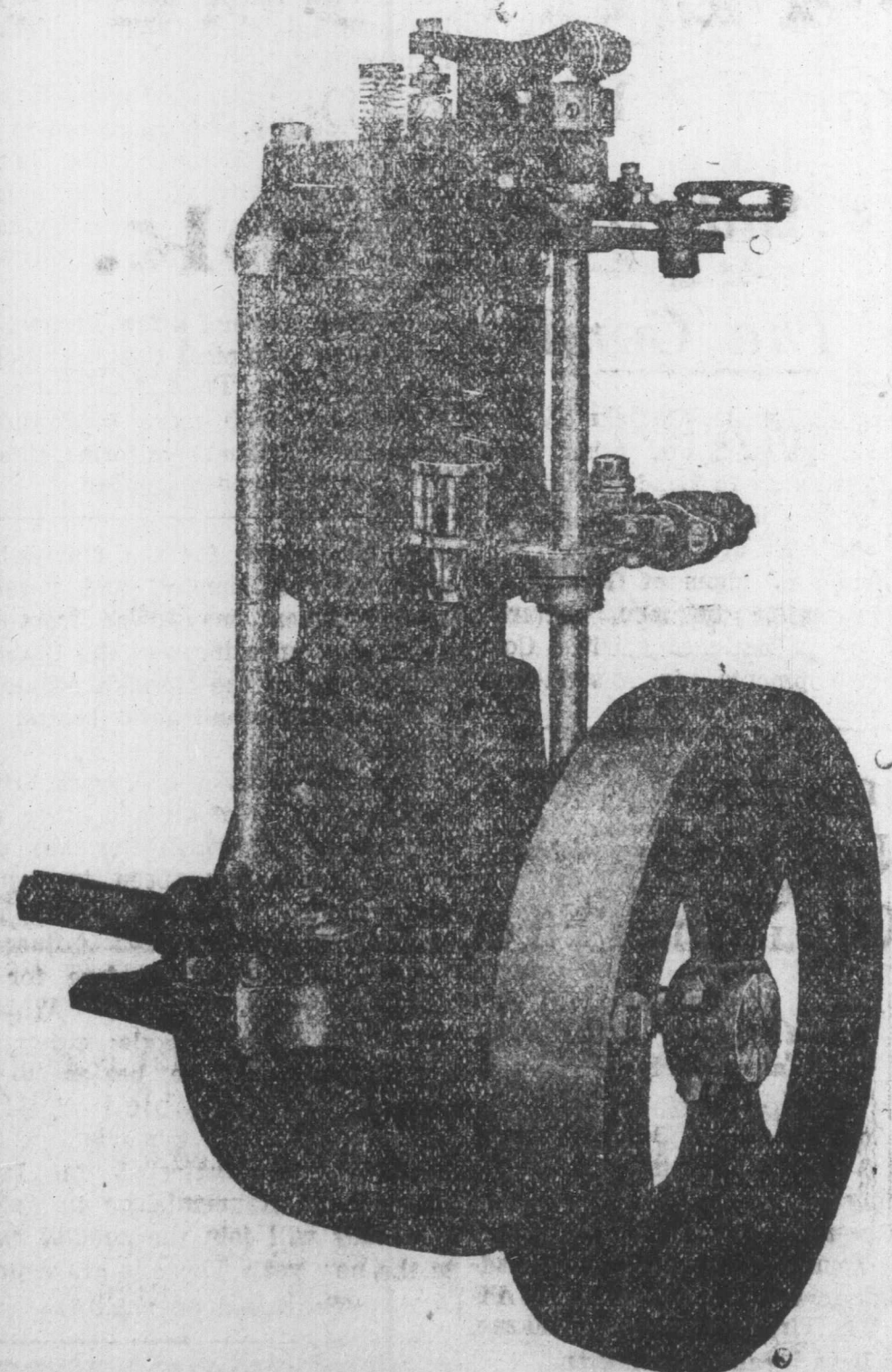
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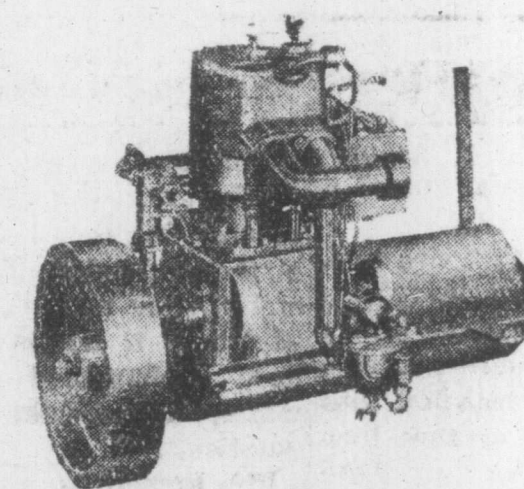


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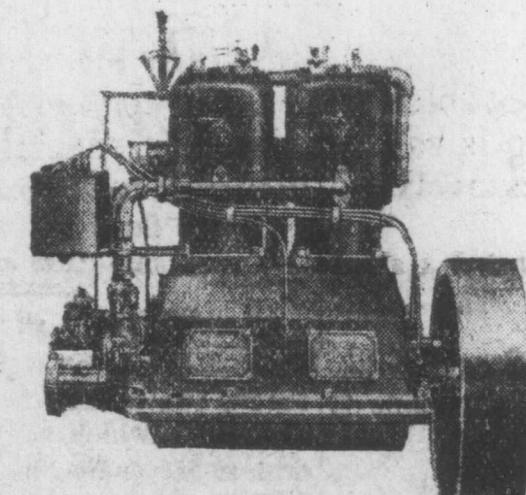
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