The Stars and Stripes

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Editorial: Guy T. Viskniskki, Capt., Inf., N.A. (Editor and General Manager); Franklin P. Adams, Capt., N.A.; Charles P. Cushing, 1st Lieut., U.S.M.C.R.; Alexander Woollcott, Sgt., M.D.N.A.; Hudson Hawley, Pvt., M.G.Bn.; A. A. Walgren, Pvt., U.S.M.C.; John T. Winterich, Pvt., A.S.; H. W. Ross, Pvt., Engrs., Ry.

Business: R. H. Waldo, Capt., Inf., U.S.R.; William K. Michael, 1st Lieut., Inf., U.S.R.; Milton J. Ayers, 1st Lieut., Inf., U.S.R.; Adolph Ochs, 2nd Lieut., Cav., U.S.R.; Stuart Carroll, Q.M. Sgt., Q.M.C.; T. W. Palmer, Corp., Engrs., Ry.

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FRIDAY, MAY 3, 1918.

THEIR EPITAPH

"There was the gun, still in position, and beside it two dead gunners. In front of one lay two dead Huns; in front of the other there were three. Our fellows had sold out dear, and held out long, as the heaps of cartridge shells around the gun showed plainly."

They sold out dear, they held out long. You might write a biography of those two Yankees, fill it with citations of their sterling conduct, recount the whole story of the short, sharp, bitter encounter northwest of Toul in which they died, and in the end all your fine words, all your fair-phrased tribute, could express nothing finer than those two simple statements of fact. They sold out dear, they held out long.

Their epitaph? It was there beside the two bodies, written in those heaps of cartridge shells that had brought five Huns to their doom right at the gun-muzzle, and who shall say how many more beyond?

THE LUSITANIA

Three years ago, on May 7, a German submarine shot a torpedo into the Lusitania, a passenger liner which was not (despite frantic German claims to the contrary) carrying munitions of war to a belligerent country. In so doing the German government, through its orders to the submarine commander, sent to the bottom of the sea more than one hundred Americans, the majority of whom were women and children.

They had no chance to escape; the age-old law of sea warfare, which provides for the removal of non-combatants to a place of safety before a ship of an enemy country can be scuttled or blown up, became, at the hands of the ruthless German seafarers, simply another scrap of paper. Germany slaughtered American women and children in cold blood.

Bells were rung throughout Germany to celebrate the great "victory" achieved over *the bodies of the innocent*. In almost every *Kaiserkeller* and *Hofbräu* in the United States the faithful gathered, to hi-lee-hi-lo and *hoch* the greatness of the German navy "invincible" when combating the helpless. It was then that the mask was lifted from the leering face of Prussianism; then it was that we saw what manner of thing it was that professed to be so sorry for its "mistake." From that May day in 1915 dates the awakening of the American people to the task before them, to the utter faithlessness and pitilessness of Imperial Germany.

The story of the Lusitania is old, but it well bears retelling. There is no need to point a moral from it, for it points its own. There can be no peace in the world worth having until the government responsible for that foul murder of the innocent totters ignominiously to its fall. It is our task and our privilege to hasten the coming of that fall with all our might and main.

THE MERRY MONTH O' MAY

That title, as we write it, seems out of place in the midst of a war like this, but really, it isn't at all. We're playing all the old May time games of our childhood all over again, only instead of dancing rings around the Maypole, we are dancing rings around the Boche. And instead of weaving vari-colored streamers together into a kaleidoscopic mass at the top of the pole, we are weaving the red, white and blue in with the red, white and blue of our Allies, forming a harmonious *ensemble* pleasing to everybody except the common enemy.

We are hanging May baskets, too. Every once in a while our aviators and those of our Allies go over and decorate some German general's doorknob with a posy of bombs. Then, having some left over, they scatter them about among the gaping Heinies, wishing them a merry May morning. It's a pretty game they play, these aviators, and they must love it. So do we of the line.

This isn't a bad May season at all. True, we are a bit removed from those May morning breakfasts, with strawberries and cream and all, with which the good ladies of the parish used to welcome in the merry month, and which we used to be permitted to attend, in tow of our mothers, if we were really good and didn't play hookey to go fishing too often during April. But we can *look* back at them with smiling reminiscence. And as long as we can smile over those memories and others, and tackle our jobs with another smile, it surely is "the merry month of May."

"THE OLD COUNTRY"

We started when we first heard an American soldier use it with reference to the United States; but yet, after all, why shouldn't he, if he wanted to? For it is for him "the old country," the one he's left behind, the one from which he derived his education and his livelihood, the country of his ancestors. And there's an affectionate lingering over the words that makes the phrase mean a very great deal.

After having been separated from the United States—some of us for nearly a year, a great many of us for half a year or more (as the gold service stripes bear witness)—we can, all of us, have a great deal more sympathy than we ever have had in the past for the man who speaks of "th' ould counthree," "da old-a country," and so forth. We now know just how he must have felt when he first arrived on our shores, and was attacked by that undoctorable malady of homesickness. We get his point of view; and it's a mighty good thing for all of us that we do.

"The old country." It's some country, isn't it? And one of the things that proves its greatness is that men who have formerly talked of "th' ould counthree" and "da old-a country" are now to be found fighting its battles on a foreign soil side by side with the men whose ancestors helped to settle "the new 'old country.'" Rather it is not "the old country" at all; it is the ever new country, the ageless country, that draws all manner of men from all manner of races to itself, and makes them proud and glad to champion its cause, to give their toil and blood to that cause's furtherance.

YOU LITTLE GUYS

You may be little and all that. The whole company may call you "Shorty" and may make a lot of remarks about Mutt and Jeff whenever you go out walking with a squad mate of six foot proportions. But don't you care. You're just as good a soldier as the next man, and perhaps better. Size isn't everything in this game of war.

You may have seen in last week's issue of your newspaper the story of a half-portion doughboy up front who went through the wire with a company he didn't have to go in with, and skewered his three Huns to the Queen's taste. You may have heard of a little red-headed runt named Julius Caesar, who conquered at one time about all the country you're traveling over now, pitched his camps all over the island of Great Britain, and generally raised hob with the map of Europe. Jule was a great soldier, all right, and he wasn't a husk by a long shot.

You know about Napoleon, "the little corporal." You know about old Grant, who made them all sit up and take notice; he was a little man, too. You know about Lord Roberts of Kandahar—"Little Old Bobs." You know, even if you haven't been in the Army very long, about the late General "Fighting Fred" Funston, who was chucked out at a West Point exam because he was too little, but who went down to Cuba on his own and had the nerve to eat a message that would have condemned him to death, so as to hide it; and who afterwards swam a stream in the Islands with the bullets plopping all about him, and made the other shore and drove the insurrectos out.

Oh, the big guy has his uses, and is a mighty valuable citizen, but he hasn't got it all. What the little guy lacks in beef he makes up in nerve and staying power and bean work. He can hike with the best of them, fight with the best of them—he can hold up his end in every way.

So, if you're one of the innumerable "Shorties" in the A.E.F., don't worry. You'll get there just the same—and maybe sooner.

THE GOLD CHEVRON

He was a husky lad of 19 or thereabouts. He lay on the deck of the transport and looked at the stars and fretted because he was going to a base hospital to work and there would be no glory in it.

A week after he had landed, fresh from a never-to-be-forgotten encounter with the submarines, he found himself one of fifty sent on detached duty to a new, overworked port hospital. That day spinal meningitis had shown its ugly head in a camp near by and two cases were isolated like lepers in a barracks far off in the wooded grounds.

It was this boy's task—his first in the Army—to take charge of that lonesome, candle-lit shack at night. He would have to do it alone because, at first, the nurses flatly refused to cross the threshold where that dread disease was housed. That first night, from twilight to dawn, it was his job to stand guard over the sick men and hold the raving one in bed.

That vigil, which ran on through the weeks, was in the uttermost part of the S.O.S. But, under the new ruling, he is entitled to wear the gold chevron, for Washington has found how impossible it is to separate the combatants from the non-combatants like the sheep from the goats. They have found it impossible to divide valor into zones, to find any geography in the heroism of war.

IT PAYS

The plenary commission of the German Reichstag last week discussed at great length the presence of American troops in France. The minister of war stated that it was impossible to estimate their exact number. Whereupon the interrogating deputy caustically expressed his regret that the minister could not give further information.

This news proves one thing: That it pays to stick by the censorship rulings. Censorship, and censorship only, kept that desired knowledge from the German minister of war. Censorship, and the compliance with it by the men of the A.E.F., and the correspondents serving with the A.E.F., resulted in the inability of that official to satisfy the legislative body that was questioning him.

In this incident we may read the inability of the German intelligence bureau to estimate the number of the troops we have now in France. In other words, our censorship has obviously beaten and baffled the Hun informers on an important item.

A series of captured or intercepted letters of American soldiers, containing information about the strength and disposition of units—even a single captured or intercepted letter from a well informed officer or man—would have sufficed to give the German minister of war the information he sought, and which the legislators demanded. But no such letter, or series of letters, got through to Germany.

Censorship may seem irksome at times. It may seem foolish and unnecessary. But it has one clear aim in view—the keeping of useful information out of the hands of the enemy. In the case cited above, it seems to have realized its aim. It is up to every one of us to see that the good work goes on.

The Listening Post

GIRLS I LEFT BEHIND

III

ELSIE

When war waged its wide desolation,
 Among the young ladies I kissed,
On leaving our glorious nation,
 Your name led the lachrymose list.

Some girls I forgot as I kised them;
 Some lingered a week—maybe two;
But, Elsie, I never have missed them
 The way that I've hankered for you.

I miss not your wit nor your beauty—
 You never could class as a queen;
And, sticking to truth, as my duty,
 You never had much of a bean.

But when you did tricks to the batter,
 And Doughnuts came out of the pan,
Dear Elsie, that there was a matter
 That called for the utterance "Oh, *man!*"

They shone with a glow and a polish,
 They dulled with a sugar sublime.
(*I think that I used to demolish*
 A dozen or two at a time.)

And so when they told me to come where
 The shell is commingled with shot,
I found myself billeted Somewhere
 In France; and I missed you a lot.

I yearned for the doughnuts you'd fried me
 Till—Elsie, I'm not going to stall.
The truth is—whatever betide me!—
 I don't miss your doughnuts at all.

For—though in the future you bar me—
 The doughnuts I'm getting these days
Turned out by the Salvation Army,
 Have yours beaten seventy ways.

By the way, a couple of those Salvation Army doughnuts make you think there is a good deal in the "Food Will Win the War" slogan.

Our letter writing friends in the United States would do well to have their envelopes equipped with all-weather treads. The last envelope we got had gone 4900 miles—about 1000 of them in France—without a puncture or a blowout.

BLESS HIM!

A friend of all
 Is Charlie Cutts;
He never asks
 To save him butts.
 E. J. B.

A guy we love
 Is Joe McGurld;
He never springs:
 "I'll tell the world."
 JAYEM.

A gink we like
 Is Dave McGee;
He utters "Yes;"
 And never "Om."
 G. S. M.

Our favorite dough-
 Boy's Al McGuck;
He never uses
 "Out of luck."

A corporal who has a bad case of typewriter shock writes that he doubts whether the long-range gun can carry 75 miles. "Why," he says, "it's simply Hunthinkable."

THINGS WE USED TO BEEF ABOUT

III

Having to get to work at 9 a. m.

Of all the things we have lamped in this country, the shelled streets alone have aroused in us a feeling of homesickness. They remind us acutely of Seventh Avenue, New York.

Speaking of Seventh Avenue, a correspondent for a New York paper was talking to a doughboy the other day. As he left, "Good-bye," he said, "remember me t' N'Yawk."

"What part of New York are you from?" asked the correspondent. "Forty-second Street?"

"I should say not," replied the indignant soldier.

"Where then?"

"Forty-third," said the local-prideful Gothamite.

A LETTER

From: The Allies.
To: W. Hohenzollern, Germany.
Subject: Travel order.
1. Proceed plumb to hell.
2. The travel directed is necessary in the military service.

By direction of
GENERAL GOOD.

Things here have a way of reminding you of things at home. Our billet, for instance, *these warm mornings* isn't a bit chillier than the Yale Bowl or the Harvard Stadium in late November.

IT NEVER RUNS

In France the bravest thing that I've seen
Is the usual Y.M. victrola machine.
 E. J. B.

One is impelled to pin a sharpshooter's medal on Private E. J. B.'s gifted chest. He hit The Listening Post twice out of a possible two.

FRANCE FLICKERINGS

***Lots of news this week in these environs.

***Straw hats are beginning to be seen on the boulevards of Paris, but most of our boys forbear to rush the season and stick to the more conservative tin derby.

***A warm spell of weather is expected next month. tf

***Quite a little rain fell yesterday, and it was pretty cold. tf

***It is pleasant to report that our Art Department is off the sick list and is almost as merry as he was when he was in the hospital.

***Some of the houses hereabouts would look better with a new coat of paint is the opinion of ye scribe.

***Charley Hindenburg, the w.k. night editor of the Potsdam Offensive, has a little cold. Gossip has it that Charley is suffering from insomnia also.

***Lt. ——— of ——— handed in a pair of socks for 3 mos. subscription last Wednesday. Come again, ———.

***Ye scribe enjoyed his April bath yesterday afternoon.

The difference between American and French automobile driving is this: In America when your tire blows up, you say, "Good Heavens! There goes our tire!" and in France you say, "Hooray! That was only the tire!"

Speaking of names, which is a habit hard to jettison, B. Worthy is a Y.M. secretary in New York, and will soon sail for this sunny, as they call it in the fairy tales, nation.

"Soldiers who are married and do not state the fact are subject to penalties," says an American dispatch to the *Daily Mail*. Especially, we surmise, if certain parties find it out.

The esteemed Boche should take Ham with mustard gas, as somebody has suggested. And then, if his commissary department is any good, lay siege to the Sandwich Islands.

You absorb a good deal of scientific knowledge up front.

For example, what is meant by the mean temperature?

"FROM: TO: SUBJECT:" —By WALLGREN

"YANK"

Special Correspondence of THE STARS AND STRIPES

LONDON, May 2.—There is both rhyme and reason for calling Ay-Ee-Effers in Europe "Yanks," say those-wo-twitch-their-noses-at-the-sound-of-"Sammy" who have been long enough in this comfortable part of the Great Arena to make up their minds.

Any reliable theosaurus will show that Yank has a rhyming affinity with many such words as

Bank	Hank	Sank
Crank	Lank	Swank
Dank	Rank	Tank

"And Yank is the name applied to us by England and France before the war, though the French made it 'Yanqui'," said Captain Q———. What is important about Captain Q———'s opinion in the matter is that he has been over here, as an American observer with General Haig, long before the first boat loaded with American fighting men reached these shores.

"I'm from Virginia," continued Captain Q———, "and there was a time when a Virginian would have felt he was being called a foreigner if anyone applied 'Yank' to him. But I rather like Yank now, and when it comes to a choice between Yank and Sammy, there can be only one answer.

"Maybe a few battles will evolve something else, but I'm afraid we'll stay Yanks just as the British fighter has remained Tommy Atkins."

"Yank" is the unanimous vote at the base section here.

THE RIFLE

They said the rifle's day was over. They said there was no place for it in the age of giant guns and gas shells and hand grenades. It could gather kindly dust on the wall over the mantelpiece, a relic of ancient wars, a companion in limbo of the long bow and the tomahawk and the flintlock, but it would be in the way of the modern soldier.

With their minds made up in the mud and monotony of the trenches, they said all this and some of us believed it, and it is well that long ago, General Pershing, talking to the men who were then going into their first rehearsal of trench warfare, bade them have faith in the old American weapon and keep keen the markmanship in which American soldiers would be expected to excel.

For the rifle has been reestablished in honor during the historic weeks just passed. It was always the most personal of weapons and a soldier who could not warm up to a cannon nor develop any sentiment whatever for a hand grenade would grow tremendously fond of his Springfield, which lived with him and was a part of him. It was his own. Now it rests with a new confidence and a new pride on every shoulder.

The Americans in the fighting that followed the recent attack launched on their sector northwest of Toul found chances innumerable to do devastating work with their rifles. It was with rifles and machine guns that the German infantry of three armies swarmed out of their pits when the great offensive was launched at dawn of March 21, and above all else the battle which followed on the plains of Picardy was a rifle battle. The soldiers found that the newer weapons which might serve best in trench skirmishes and in the muddy shell-pit fighting of months gone by must give way during such mobile warfare as, late in March, held the whole world breathless. The men who were carried hurt or exhausted from the thick of that battle were wide-eyed with the tidings. The rifle had come back into its own.

"A GLOOM DISPELLER"

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:

I am one of the readers of your gloom-dispelling sheet (eight sheets), and if there is any other war sheet that can make us laugh as each line is read, I would like to see it. I guess there "ain't no such competitor" of THE STARS AND STRIPES.

MEYER E. EISENBERG,
—Aero Squadron.

THEY LIKE US, TOO

(*From the Hartford, Conn., "Times."*)

Copies of the first issue of THE STARS AND STRIPES, the official newspaper of the American Expeditionary Forces in France, have arrived in this country. In size and makeup it is a typical metropolitan newspaper; and in its news contents it is, if anything, more so.

"SPICK-AND-SPAN-NESS"

By A PRIVATE

The Germans captured in the course of the first days of the great attack that began on March 21 were, it was noted, all equipped with new uniforms—all "gotten up" for parade."

At first thought, that might seem like a useless waste of good clothing material, to put on men that were going out to do work that in any case was bound to be hard on clothes as well as men. Yet when one comes to think it over, there was sound psychology back of it, a might good reason for so equipping those men.

Every man in the ranks feels better and more "fit" when he is gotten up well than when he isn't. He feels more like fighting, he feels more like tackling any job ahead of him when he knows that he is neat in appearance, that he can "stack up with the best of them."

Good clothes, clean clothes, well fitting clothes, equipment well polished, arms well looked after, shoes as neat and clean as the mud or dust of the region will permit—all these things make a man think more of himself, make him prouder of his right to wear and bear them.

If a man knows he looks like a soldier, the chances are decidedly in favor of his acting like one. That, of course, is the way all of us want to act. It's the way all of us have got to act if we're going to see this job through as it ought to be seen through.

The British Army long ago realized the value of neatness of dress on the part of its officers and men. In the field now, no matter what the conditons, every man is required to shave once a day, and to clean his shoes and brasses of all the mud and slime and dust they may have accumulated. No matter how justly and righteously tired a man may feel, he has got to clean up. Clean up he does then, until he is, in the words of the soldier's own poet, "smart as a bombardier for five o'clock parade."

After he is cleaned up, he feels all the better for it, and is ready to "Up, Guards, and at them!" again. Try it yourself, and be convinced.

There have been great soldiers who were also "sloppy" soldiers, but they have been few and far between. The reason that their sloppiness has come down through the ages is because of its unusualness, because of its direct contradiction of the soldierly tradition.

Grant happens to have been caught in an unguarded moment by one Civil War historian while he was clad in his old slouch hat, muddy hip boots, and even muddier jacket, with the inevitable cigar tucked securely between those iron jaws. The late General Funston, known and loved as "Fighting Fred," was caught by another historian entering Vera Cruz in such a state of *déshabille* that a military observer of a friendly country queried, "And who, pray tell, is the little Chinaman in the slicker up at the head of the column?" Napoleon's weather-buffeted old greatcoat was notoriously at variance with the brilliant uniform of his dashing Guards.

But it takes a pretty big soldier to be able to get away with it, and certainly not all of us can aspire to the titles of Grant, of Funston, of Bonaparte. On the other hand, who ever heard of Washington—even at Valley Forge—when he was not spick and span, "cold and mighty as his name and stern as Freedom's story?" Or who can imagine Henry of Navarre without his well groomed horse and that waving plume? Or Richard Coeur de Lion without his inimitable kingly "just-so-ness"? Or the Black Prince? Why, the tradition of the innate neatness and cleanliness and orderliness of the soldier is as old as the profession of arms itself.

Cleaning up isn't all the game, but it's a mighty important part of the game. It makes all the rest of the game come easier. To run the risk of overworking the old football simile, why does a trainer see to it that his men take the field for the second half, clad in clean new jerseys and canvas pants? To buck them up? Of course. What works in the game of football will work in the game of war.

The British Grenadiers finish up their rousing song by bidding all to

". . . fill a bumper, and drink a health to those
Who carry belts and pouches, and wear the looped clothes."

Instinctively, the spectacle of the well equipped, well appearing soldier rises before the mind's eye of the singer. That is just as it should be. Cleanliness, we are told, is next to godliness. Even more so we may say that spick-and-span-ness is not next to soldierliness. It is the very essence of soldierliness itself.

AS WE KNOW THEM

THE SUPPLY SERGEANT

He's always out of overcoats, he's always out of belts,
He's always out of blouses, so how *can* we hide our pelts?
He's always out of undershirts, he's always out of drawers—
So he is not the candidate for much "prolonged applause."

He's always out of laces and he's always out of pants,
No matter if a doughboy pleads and swears and raves and rants;
He's always out of spirals and he's always out of shoes—
To hear him talk about it sure would give a saint the blues!

He's always out of license-tags, he's always out of putts,
And if we clamor for 'em, it's "Git out, ye bunch o' mutts!"
The only thing he's plenty of is hope, and, if you please,
That awfullest of headgear—yes, the cap called "Overseas!"

"THE SUN" IS BENIGNANT

(*From an article by Harry Esty Dounce in "The Sunday Sun," New York.*)

THE STARS AND STRIPES is a healthy young newspaper man's notion of the ideal sheet to work on just at present. This eight page seven column regular man's size newspaper is about as solidly full of live and compelling matter as a newspaper ever has been since Milton or Defoe or some enterprising Chinaman founded the Fourth Estate.

Five francs, which will buy a civilian the paper for three months, is a dollar. But any one of the first three numbers, published February 8 and on the two Fridays following, is a dollar's worth in itself at current rates of genuinely good reading about the war. The advertisements, of which there is a wholesome looking acreage, are as interesting as the columns they adjoin.

THE STARS AND STRIPES is a real newspaper. The general tone, in both seriousness and frivolity, is one of ungloved vigor. The editors don't overstep military or other proprieties, but they seem in no mood to cater to any one's beautiful eyes and factitious dignities. Only Marse Henry among editors at home makes quite as forthright use of the unvarnished English tongue.

The poets are in great form. Really, as occasional war verse goes—and it goes to weary lengths, heaven knows—nobody writes it much better than the bards in O.D. and tin hamlets, who scribble their lays on the backs of envelopes where and when they can. THE STARS AND STRIPES, of course, gets the pick of those in France, and encourages them editorially to do their—ah—their most Miltonic.

THE STARS AND STRIPES is, soberly and literally, a wonder. May its circulation never grow less!

"GOOD CHEER"

(*From "The Evening Sun," N. Y., Feb. 27.*)

Good cheer is characteristic of THE STARS AND STRIPES, the official organ of the American Expeditionary Forces in France, which was being examined here today with interest. The paper is the size of the regulation city newspaper and contains eight pages and 14 columns of American, French and English advertisements. The news of the American forces in France is covered thoroughly and with an air of cheerfulness which makes both the soldier and American citizen feel that "our boys" are not surrounded by the dire difficulties and dangers some have pictured.

The editorial page expresses this attitude in an article headed, "To the Folks Back Home." It attacks as fabrications stories published in American newspapers of immoral conditions among American soldiers in France. . . . Figures showing that the American forces have the lowest record known for drinking and immorality are shown.

CAMP SHERMAN LIBRARY