

# Love Versus Wine

By  
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"First Call," Etc.

Mr. Empey's Experiences During His Seventeen Months in the First Line Trenches of the British Army in France

The English lion was roaring, and his growls could be heard all along the western front. No doubt many a German general was stirring uneasily in his large concrete shell-proof dugout, kilos behind the German front line, as the ever-increasing thundering roar reached his ears.

We had a close-up view of his majesty, the king of beasts, and to us he was a sorry-looking specimen. Patches of hide were worn away, while in his tail were two big knots. If these knots had been labeled it would have been easy to read "Neuve Chapelle" and "Gallipoli." The memory and pain of these two disasters no doubt increased the intensity of his thunder.

The British bombardment of the German lines was on, a bombardment which lasted over eight days and nights. It was the forerunner of the Big Push, or "Battle of the Somme."

Atwell and I were sitting in a dug-out of the support trench. Atwell was a great, big, lovable fellow, and was my mate. We both had been detailed to the divisional intelligence department, and were engaged upon "spy work."

Atwell, although of a naturally cheery disposition, occasionally relapsed into fits of despondency.

In the light from a stump of a candle I was making out my previous day's report to turn into brigade headquarters. Occasionally the entrance to the dugout would light up with a red flare as a shell burst in the near vicinity. Atwell was sitting on his pack, with his back leaning against the wet and muddy wall of the dugout. The rays from the candle lit up his face.

Finishing my report, I got out a "rag," lit it, and with an uneasy feeling listened to the roar of the hell outside. A long-drawn sigh caused me to look in Atwell's direction. Never in my life have I seen such a dejected and woe-begone countenance.

This, in a way, angered me, because I, myself, right then, had a feeling of impending disaster, a sort of unknown dread, perhaps intermingled with a far-away longing for the fields and flowers at home. I wanted to be cheered, and Atwell's face looked like a morgue.

Forcing a smile I slapped Atwell on the knee and said:

"Come out o' your trance. We've both got a good chance for Blighty with this bombardment on."

Atwell looked in my direction, and in a tone of voice which from him I had never heard before, answered:

"Yank, I've been out since '14. I've buried many a mate and I've seen many a lucky bloke on a stretcher bound for Blighty, and never gave it a thought, but right now I feel as if my stay in the trenches will be short. I've had something on my mind since September, 1914, and it's been worrying me pink. I'm goin' to tell you the story, and I'll give you my oath that you're the first one that's ever heard it from my lips; but I've got to have your promise that you'll not judge me too harshly. I've just got to get it out o' my system."

of ten to twenty men in charge of a sergeant to reconnoitre on our flanks. One day I was sent out in charge of one of these parties. Oh, yes, I was a sergeant then, but I lost my stripes—disobedience of orders they called it. I suppose I ought to feel lucky I wasn't shot, but I'll leave it to you whether I did right or not.

"At that time I was in for a commission, but, of course, didn't get it. If I had received it, no doubt by this time I'd be pushing up the daisies somewhere in France. In those days officers didn't last long—made fine targets for the Boches.

"This patrol I was in charge of carried rations for three days. We were to scout around just in front of the advancing enemy, but our orders were not to engage them—just get information. If the information obtained was valuable enough, I was to send it in by one of the men. There were fourteen of us, and we were mounted. I was in the Lancers then, and was considered a fair rider.

"The first day nothing happened. We just scouted around. By nightfall we were pretty tired, so when we came to a village—wasn't a village, either; just five or six houses clustered around a church—I decided to go into billets for the night.

"Riding up to the largest house, which had a four-foot stone wall running around its garden, I dismounted at the gate and knocked with the hilt of my sword. Pretty soon a light appeared at the front door—the house was on a sort of a knoll, so this door was in plain view. Then the sweetest voice I ever heard called out in trembling tones, in perfect English, too, but with just the suspicion of an accent:

"Who is there, please?"

"I answered, 'Just a few English Lancers who desire a place to rest for the night. The barn will do. We don't want anything to eat, as we have rations with us. So, if you will accommodate us, miss, I will be much obliged.' I was in love with that girl before I saw her—the voice had done the trick.

"She answered, 'Just a moment, please, until I tell father,' and then the door shut and the light disappeared. We didn't have to wait long before the door opened, and she called to me:

"Father bids you welcome, and so do I, soldiers of England."

"Then she opened the gate. There she stood on the gravel path with the lantern held shoulder high. I trembled all over—thought I saw a vision. I tell you, Yank, she was beautiful. One of the kind you would like to take in your arms, but won't for fear of crushing. No use for me to try to describe her, Yank, it's out of my line; but she captured me, heart and soul. There I stood like a great, big boob, shaking and stuttering. At last I managed to blurt out a stammering 'Thank you, miss.'

"She showed us the way to the stables and stood in the door holding the lantern so we could see to unsaddle. I was fumbling around with the buckles, but for the life of me couldn't get that saddle off. One of the men, with a wink and a broad grin, came over and helped me. That grin got my goat, so on the sly, I kicked him on the shin. He let out an explosive 'damn.' After that 'damn' the silence was painful. The poor fellow felt like a fool. I was sorry for him, even though I could have killed him for his thoughtlessness. But our embarrassment was short-lived, because a silvery laugh came from behind the lantern, a laugh that was not loud, but it echoed and re-echoed among the rafters overhead. I can hear it right now, Yank.

"After the horses had been unsaddled and fed, the men looked appealingly at me. I knew what they wanted—they were dog tired, and dying to hit the hay. Just as I was about to ask permission for them to turn in, the angel butted in with:

"Poor, tired soldiers, sleepy and hungry. Come right into the house. Jean has some supper and wine ready for you."

"We stammered our thanks and followed her into the house like a string of sheep. Yank, to me that meal was a dream. She flitted around the table, filling a glass here and there, laughing

with us and making us feel at home. The war was forgotten. By this time I was madly in love with her, and she knew it, because when she leaned over my shoulder to replenish my glass with red wine, her hair would brush my cheek, and once she rested her hand on my shoulder and gave it just the slightest squeeze. I was in heaven.

was beginning to tell on the men. They were falling asleep in their chairs. I had a hard job waking four of them to go on guard. They got their rifles and were standing around me for instructions, when our hostess came over to me and, resting her hand on my arm, with again the slightest of squeezes and pleading eyes, interceded for them.

"Sergeant," she said, 'let the poor boys sleep. They are so tired. There is no danger. The Germans are miles away. I know this to be true. Do this for me.' And again that squeeze.

"I, like a fool, listened to her, and gave an unwilling assent. The men looked their gratitude. Jean, the manservant, led them out to the barn, where an abundance of hay had been spread for their beds. I was following, when a whisper in my ear made my head swim:

"Don't go yet, my sergeant, stay with me."

"I stayed, worse luck. We sat on a settee, talking, and her arm stole around my waist. I wasn't slow, either, and as you know, Yank, I have a pretty good reach. Once, she spoke to me in French, but I shook my head in bewilderment. In a few minutes the servant returned, and Adrienne—she told me her name—called him to her, and said:

"Jean, go down in the wine cellar and get some of that old port and give it to the soldiers of England. Poor



"You Poor English Fool! Make Love to Me, Will You?"

boys, it will warm them." She added something in French I could not understand. Then she added:

"Leave a bottle here for the sergeant and me."

"I protested against more wine for the boys. Her pleading overruled my good judgment, and I consented. The servant left to do her mission, and I proposed. Her answer was a kiss. I was the happiest man in France.

"Presently Jean returned and silently placing a bottle and two glasses on the table withdrew. We were alone. She took the bottle and, pouring out a glass of wine, touched it to her lips and handed it to me with this toast:

"Drink, my sergeant. Drink to our betrothal. Drink to the honor of France. Drink to the honor of England. Drink to the confusion of our enemies."

"I drank with my fool heart pounding against my ribs. Then blackness. When I awoke, I was lying on the settee, my head bursting with pain. The gray dawn was filtering through the curtained windows, and there, in the middle of the room, with my Adrienne in his arms, stood a captain of Uhlans. I was a prisoner. I saw it all in a flash. She had betrayed me. Now I knew why she had wanted no guard posted. That wine we pledged our troth in was drugged. What an ass I had been!

"I closed my eyes and pretended to be asleep. They were talking in German. Pretty soon the captain came over and roughly shook me. I only grunted. With an exclamation of disgust, he called out in German. Two troopers came in and, lifting me by the shoulders and feet, carried me out into the air. I slightly opened my eyes and saw that I was being carried out to the gate, where two horses were standing with their reins thrown over a hitching post. By the equipment I knew one of the horses belonged to the captain, while the other was the orderly's. The two troopers dumped me down on the road, one giving me a kick with his boot. I was lying on my left side, and by a certain hard pressure on my ribs I knew they had neglected to search me. That pressure was my automatic pistol. A feeling of exultation rushed over me. I would euchre them yet.

"Fate worked into my hands. A hail in German came from the stables, and one of the troopers left to answer it. The odds were even, one against one. I slowly turned over on my face, as if in sleep, and my fingers grasped the butt of the automatic, but just then I heard steps on the gravel walk. The captain and Adrienne were coming toward me.

"She stopped beside me and said in English:

"You poor English fool! Make love to me, will you? Good-by, my foolish sergeant. While you are rotting in prison think of your Adrienne, bab!"

Springing to my feet and leveling the pistol at the captain, I grabbed the reins of his horse from the post and mounted. The orderly came running toward me, yelling out in German, and I could see soldiers emerging from the stable. I had to act quickly.

"When I mounted, the captain reached for his revolver. I covered him with mine and, with a shriek of terror, Adrienne threw herself in front of the Uhlans captain to protect him. I saw her too late. My bullet pierced her left breast, and a red smudge showed on her white silk blouse as she sank to the ground. I shot the orderly's horse to prevent immediate pursuit and then away on a mad gallop down the road. It was a long chase, but I escaped them.

"The rest of my men were captured. At our headquarters I had to lie like a trooper. Told them we had been ambushed and wiped out. It was the only way to save my skin. There were no witnesses against me, so I got off with reduction to the ranks and a transfer to another regiment. They sneered a rat, all right, but had no proof.

"So that is my story, Yank. Just forget that I ever told it to you. Enough to make a fellow get the blues occasionally, isn't it? Just pass me a rag, and take that look off your face."

I gave him the cigarette and, without a word, went out of the dugout and left him alone. I was thinking of Adrienne.

Upon reaching the trench I paused in wonder and fright. The sky was alight with a red glare. The din was terrific. A constant swishing and rushing through the air, intermingled with a sighing moan, gave testimony that our batteries were sweating blood. The trench seemed to be rolling like a ship. I stood in awe. This bombardment of ours was something indescribable, and a shudder passed through me as I thought of the havoc and destruction caused in the German lines. At that moment I really pitied the Germans, but not for long, because suddenly hell seemed to burst loose from the German lines as their artillery opened up. I could hear their "five-nines" screeching through the air and bursting in the artillery lines in our rear. Occasionally a far-off rum-rum-rump-rump. Crash! Bru-u-nn-u-gg! could be heard as one of their high-calibered shells came over and burst in our reserve. I crouched against the parapet, hardly able to breathe. While in this position, right overhead, every instant getting louder, came a German shell—hizz-z-z! bang-g-g! I was blinded by the flash. Down I went, into the mud. Struggling to my feet in the red glare of the bombardment.

I saw that the traverse on my left had entirely disappeared. Covered with mud, weak and trembling, I could hear what sounded like far-distant voices coming from the direction of the bashed-in traverse.

"Blime me, get 'is bloomin' napper outa th' mud; 'e's chokin' to death. Pass me a bandage—tyke 'is byonet for a splint. Blime me, 'is leg is smashed, not 'arf h't 'aint. 'Th' rest o' you blokes 'op it for a stretcher. 'Ello, 'e's got another one—quick, a tourniquet, the poor bloke's a bleedin' to death. Quick, h'up against the parapet, 'ere comes another."

"Whizz-z! Bang-g-g! Another flare, and once again I was thrown into the mud. I opened my eyes. Bending over me, shaking me by the shoulder was Atwell. His voice sounded faint and far away. Then I came to with a rush.

"Blime me, Yank, that was a close one. Did it get you?"

He helped me to my feet and I felt myself all over. Seeing I was all right, he yelled in my ear:

"We've got to get it out of 'ere. Fritz is sure sendin' over 'whizz-bangs' and 'minnies.' Number 9 platoon in the next fire bay sure clicked it. About eighteen of them have gone West. Come on, we'll see if we can do anything for the poor blokes."

We plowed through the mud and came into the next fire bay. In the light of the bursting shells an awful sight met our eyes. The traverses were bashed in, the fire step was gone, and in the parapets was a hole that looked like a subway entrance. There was mud and blood.

Every now and then, ducking as a "whizz-bang" or "minnie" came over, we managed to get four of the wounded on the stretchers, and Atwell and I carried one to the rear to the first aid dressing station. We passed the dugout which I had left but a few minutes before, or at least, what used to be the dugout, but now all that could be seen was a caved-in mass of dirt; huge square-cut timbers sticking out of the ground and silhouetted against the light from bursting shells, looking like huge giants. A shudder passed through me as I realized that if we had stayed in the dugout we would have now been lying fifteen to twenty feet down, covered by that caved-in earth and wreckage.

Atwell jerked his head in the direction of the smashed-in dugout, and, as was his wont, remarked:

"How about that fancy report you were writing out a few minutes ago? Didn't I tell you that it never paid to make out reports in the front line? It's best to wait until you get to headquarters, because what's the use of wasting all that bully time when you're liable to be buried in a dugout?"

I murmured my apologies and the form relapsed into silence. Then the muddied Tommy on the stretcher began to mumble. Atwell asked him if he wanted anything. With a howl of rage he answered:

"Of all the bloody nerve—do I want anything—only a bloody pair o' crutches, a dish of 'fish and chips' and a glass of stout."

When we came to the first aid dressing station we turned our charge over to some R. A. M. C. men, and ducking and running through the communication trench, we at last reached one of the roomy and safe "elephant dug-outs." At last we were safe. Stumbling over the feet of men we came to an unoccupied corner and sat down in the straw. Several candles were burning. Grouped around these candles were a lot of Tommies, their faces pale and a frightened look in their eyes. Strange to say, the conversation had nothing to do with themselves. They were sympathizing with the poor fellows in the front line who were clicking it.

I must have dropped off to sleep. When I awoke it was morning, and after drinking our tea and eating our bread and bacon, Atwell and I reported to brigade headquarters, and were again detailed into the front-line trench.

## DAZED BY HUN ATROCITIES

Emotional Faculties of Afflicted Belgians Probably Paralyzed by the Horrors They Had Witnessed.

Mr. Brand Whitlock, former American minister to Belgium, has been talking about the horror of Louvain in the London Daily Telegraph:

"I was struck by the lack of passion displayed by all those who had so terribly suffered. I seldom heard any of them express hatred of the Germans or any desire for revenge. 'None of them, as far as I could learn or observe, even acted in the tragic manner. There were no heroes and no histrionics; they did not even demean themselves as do people in the cinema or the romantic novels.

"In moments of great danger, or great strain and tragedy, people are simple and natural; they do not act in the theatrical sense of the word." To say that a play could be acted without gesture or other expression of what we feel is absurd. Nor would, I think, history support Mr. Brand Whitlock's inference, whatever may have been the story of unhappy Belgium.

When Mme. du Barry died upon the scaffold in Paris, her shrieks delighted the knitting women. The Duc de Guise ran wildly from his assassins to throw himself at the feet of Henry of France. Pitt wept for his country's misfortunes—the family of the ill-fated Louis XVI did not cease their lamentations all night when they heard that he was to be guillotined at dawn.

The cholera of Judge Jeffreys found expression in the ravings and rantings of a madman. Boothill wept when he was driven from Granada. Henry VIII could swear like a fishwife—Catherine Howard shrieked at Hampton court, and the superstitious hear her shrieks to this day.

In my view, the unhappy Belgians were dazed by the very horror of the circumstance. The atrocities committed by the Hun were too awful. Shall we wonder if the emotional faculties were paralyzed?—London Dispatch.

## Prussian Guard Long Famous.

The history of the Prussian Guard, cream of Germany's fighting men, which was smashed by the headlong attack of American troops at the Second Battle of the Marne, dates back to the latter part of the Seventeenth Century, when men believed in the divine rights of kings, and the troops of the guard could be depended on to protect the sacred body of their sovereign when all other supporters fell away.

The Prussian Guard was once a company of archers, known as the Trabant Guards. It was transformed into a real fighting force by Frederick William I. Drill with him was a ruling passion and he lavished much attention on his guard; scouring Europe for giants, as no man under six feet in height could enter his pet regiment. This requirement was abolished by Frederick the Great, who cared only for fighting ability. The stirring example of Napoleon's Imperial Guard caused the Prussian organization to be increased in size, and it now comprises a complete army corps. Into its ranks go the cream of each year's class of Prussian recruits.

## Mount Rubber.

"Remember Mount Rubber when you come to Newton," urges the Kansan. Mount Rubber is a heap of rubber rubbish on East Broadway, near Main street, which, when it assumes the desired proportions, will be sold to old rubber collectors and the proceeds turned over to the Red Cross. The nation needs the rubber, the Red Cross needs the money and the public needs its riddance. "Anything like an old auto tire, bicycle tire, rubber boots, old garden hose, rubber out of your neck—in fact, anything in the form of rubber—can be chucked into the pile and it will be a jolt for the Kaiser," says the Kansan.

## Peculiar Cause for Divorce.

In a divorce case at London, England, the petitioner, a lance corporal in the Gordon Highlanders, said his wife, an Englishwoman, refused to be seen with him on the street because she did not like him in a kilt. When he was on leave later she greeted him with "Oh, those d— kilts!" The husband was granted a decree.

# MAKE YOUR FUTURE SECURE

Easy Farming Methods in Western Canada and Certain Financial Benefits.

With your crop harvested and marketed, with the disposal of your cattle and hogs completed, you are ready to prepare your financial statement for the year. You will soon know what you have gained, and if the gain made in your farming operations has been up to your expectations and will meet your requirements. Probably you may have been the loser. Your land may have been productive, but it may have been too high priced. The cost of production has been too great. If you have had the remuneration you sought and are satisfied this article may not interest you. If your returns have not been satisfactory, or if your ambition leads you to the laudable desire of bettering your condition, if you have dependents for whose future you have anxiety, you will naturally look around for some place, some opportunity that offers greater advantages and brings satisfactory returns. To the north and west of you lie hundreds of thousands of unbroken acres in Western Canada awaiting the husbandman, and ready to give of its richness to place you where you desire to be placed. For thousands of farmers from nearly every state in the Union the prairies of Western Canada have afforded wealth beyond what they had been led to expect. The excellence of the soil of Western Canada, which comprises the Provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, can only partially be told by the knowledge of some facts.

Every year for some years past the world's highest prizes for wheat, oats and barley have been carried off by grain grown on Western Canadian Prairies. Beef fattened on the grasses of these same prairies recently brought the highest prices ever paid on the Chicago market. Throughout the entire world the quality of Canadian grain, and Canadian beef and mutton, is recognized. To recite what individual farmers have done, the riches they have acquired would fill volumes. The case of James Wishart of Portage la Prairie is not an exceptional one. His wheat crop this past season yielded him forty-five bushels per acre, and the land upon which it was grown was broken forty-four years ago, and it has been continuously under crop except for an occasional summer fallow. At Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, samples of the wheat of 1918 weighed 68 pounds to the bushel, others 66 and some 65½ pounds. Wheat crops at Coaldale, Alberta, went as high as 28 bushels an acre, while wheat crops near Barons, Alberta, had yields of from 25 to 30 bushels.

Records such as these speak in glowing terms of the excellence of the soil of Western Canada.

The war is over, and we are all settling down to a peace basis. There is a great world beyond the seas to feed and clothe, and thus is afforded the opportunity to lend a hand in the great work. Aside from the philanthropy in which you can play a part, there is the satisfaction of knowing you are amply providing for yourself and for the future of those who may be dependent upon you. Greater progress can be made in this and your own development by availing yourself of the advantages that Western Canada offers in its low-priced lands and high yielding values. There are good schools, desirable social conditions, low taxation (none on improvements) with an enjoyable climate, and the satisfaction of possessing a well tilled soil capable of producing abundant crops for which good prices prevail, at easily accessible marketing places.—Advertisement.

## Diek Was Charitable.

At the funeral services for an elderly negro of Richmond, Va., the following colloquy was overheard:

"There ain't no use in talkin'," said Miss Barker; "Diek Williams, he was the most charitable man dis town ever seen."

"I reckon dat's so," said the darkey to whom Mr. Barker imparted this information. And he paused as if waiting for evidence on this point.

"Yessuh," continued Mr. Barker; "Diek Williams, he always owned a plev hat, and durin' my time I ain't never heard that Diek ever refused to lend dat hat to anybody."

## Relics of Aztec Era.

Near Phoenix, within the Salt River valley, are to be found seven communal settlements of the same pre-Aztec era, with central buildings that were far larger than that at Casa Grande, a writer in the Christian Science Monitor states. To the northward and northeast every river valley retains evidence of the passage of at least a portion of these peoples, for some reason leaving their cities and their irrigated fields on the plains and seeking the mountains and the upper plateaus.



"For the Love o' Mike, Atwell, Crack a Smile."