

The Enemy Within; or, Rounding Up Spies on the Western Front

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

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We were in rest billets in the little French village of S—, about ten miles from the front-line trench. Number Two's gun crew were sitting on the ground in a circle around their machine gun, while a sergeant, newly returned from a special course in machine gunnery at St. Omer, was expounding the theory of scientific machine gunnery. He himself had never actually been under fire with a machine gun, but from the theoretical point he sure could throw out the book stuff. I must confess that his flow of eloquence passed over my head like a Zepplin, and I noticed an uneasy squirming among the rest of our crew.

Happy Houghton, who was sitting next to me, leaned over, and with his eye on the sergeant, whispered in my ear:

"Blime me, Yank, isn't it awful the way he chucks his weight about?"

I agreed with Happy. Across from me sat Ikey Honney, with our mascot, Jim, in his lap. Every now and then Jim would take his hind leg and furiously scratch at a spot behind his ear. Honney, noticing this action, would reach under his armpit and also scratch.

Sailor Bill was intently watching Jim and Honney; he, too, started scratching.

In a minute or so Hungry Foxcroft started on a coodle hunt; and I had an irresistible desire to lean back against the barrel casing of the gun and also scratch.

It is one of the chief indoor sports on the western front, especially during a monotonous lecture by some officer or noncom, for one of the fed-up listeners to start scratching himself. This generally causes the whole gang to do the same, the instructor included. It is just like a minister in the midst of a very dry sermon suddenly stopping, stretching himself, and yawning, this action causing the rest of the congregation to do likewise.

As the whole circle scratched, our sergeant instructor commenced to shift his weight from one foot to the other in an uneasy manner. We all gazed at him intently and each began to scratch furiously. Sure enough, the sergeant gave in and started unbuttoning the front of his tunic to get at some real or imaginary coodle. A nudge went the rounds of the circle. We had accomplished our purpose. The sergeant's mind took an awful drop from the science of machine gunnery to that of catching that particular coodle.

We constantly glanced at our wrist watches. Fifteen minutes more and the lesson would be over. The sergeant was becoming confused, and was trying to flounder through the rest of his talk. We had no mercy on him, but kept up the scratching. At last, in desperation, the sergeant said:

"You men have actually been under fire with machine guns several times. Can't one of you relate some incident of how, through some ruse, you put it over on the Boches?"

Ikey Honney, grasping this golden opportunity to break up the lecture, and slyly winking at us, started in and told how a certain gun's crew located and put out of action a German machine gunner by playing a tune on their gun, which the German tried to imitate, thereby indicating to them by sound the exact location of the German gun, which was later put out of action by concentrated machine-gun fire from their section.

Of course we all listened very intently, but it was an old story to us, because we were the gun's crew which had accomplished the feat that Honney was describing; but anything was better than listening to that sing-song ironing of book knowledge which the sergeant had been pumping into us for the last hour and a half.

The sergeant glanced at his watch and dismissed us. We dismantled our gun, put it in its box and stored it away in our billet; then we reassembled under an apple tree in the orchard, and, while the rest of us indulged in a shirt hunt, Hungry went after our ration of tea. Hungry was sure on the job when it came to eating. Pretty soon he returned with a sixte one-fourth full of tea, two tins of jam, a loaf of bread, a large piece of cheese, and a tin of apricots which he had bought at a nearby French estaminet. He dished out our rations, not forgetting a generous share for himself. After we had finished, out came the inevitable fags, a few puffs from each man, and the ball of conversation started rolling.

Curly Wallace cleared his throat and started in with:

"Remember that village we passed through on our march up the line

about two weeks ago; you know, the one where that big church with all the shell holes in it was right on the corner where we turned to the left to take the road at St. A—?"

We all remembered it and turned inquiring glances in Curly's direction. "Well, this morning, when I went down with the quarter (quartermaster sergeant), to draw coal, I met a fellow at division headquarters who told me a mighty interesting story of how he and another fellow rounded up a couple of spies.

"This bloke, through modesty, and to cover up his own good work, tried to make me believe that it was only through a lucky chance that he stumbled over the clue which led to the spies' arrest, but I'm a-thinkin', and I know you'll all agree with me, that it was not so much luck as it was clever thinking. I'm not much at telling a story, but I'm going to try and give it, as far as I can remember, just the way he handed it to me.

"It seems that this fellow, who told me the story, and another chap, had been detailed to the divisional intelligence department, and were hanging around division headquarters waiting for something to happen.

"Now, here's the story as he recited it off to me:

"About three kilos behind division headquarters was the old French village of B—. One of our important routes ran through it. This road was greatly used by our troops for bringing up supplies and ammunition for the front line. It was also used by large numbers of troops when relieving battalions in the fire sector.

"Of course, on account of this road being in range of the German guns, it could only be used at night; otherwise the enemy airplanes and observation balloons would get wise and it would only be a short time before the road would be shelled, thus causing many casualties.

"For the last ten days reports had been received at division headquarters that every time troops passed a certain point on this road, marked by an old church, they were sure to elck heavy shell fire from the Boches. On nights when no troops passed through there would be very little shelling, if any, but if a battalion or brigade happened to come this way they suffered from heavy shell fire.

"Upon receipt of the first two or three of these reports we put it down as a strange coincidence, but when the fifth report of this nature reached us it was evident to us that a spy was at work, and that in some mysterious way the information of the movements of our troops were communicated by him to the enemy.

"Myself and another bloke, who had been working with me for the last two weeks, were assigned to the task of discovering and apprehending this spy. To us it seemed an impossible job, as there were no clues to work upon. As is usual, our general, 'Old Pepper,' called us in, and said:

"'There is a spy working in the village of B—; go get him.'

"'Foolishly, I butted in and asked for further information. I got it, all right. With a lowering look which made me tremble, he roared:

"'Go and dig up your own clues. What are you with the intelligence department for? Intelligence department! It ought to be called the 'brainless department' if you two are a sample of the rest.'

"'Somehow or other we didn't stop to argue with 'Old Pepper.'

"At this point Sailor Bill butted in: 'Blime me, he's just like an admiral we had in our navy, this 'Old Pepper.'

A chorus of, 'Oh, shut up, you're in the army now,' cut off Bill's story. We knew Sailor Bill. If he ever got started talking navy, nothing short of a gas attack could stop him.

Sailor Bill, with an indignant glance around the circle, relapsed into silence.

Curly Wallace exclaimed:

"'To 'ell with your admiral; do you want to hear this story? If you do, shut up and let me tell it.'

"'Go on, Curly, never mind; he's harmless,' ejaculated Happy Houghton.

"'Curly carried on, with:

"'Getting our packs and drawing three days' rations, we started hiking



Hooked to the Plow, and Carried on His Work.

it for the village of B—. We arrived there about four in the afternoon, and after putting our packs and rations in an old barn which we intended to use as our billet during our stay in the village, we left on a general tour of inspection.

"There were about three hundred civilians in the place, who preferred to brave the dangers of shell fire, as there

was a rich harvest to be reaped from the sale of farm produce, beer and wines to the troops billeted all around. Two estaminets (French saloons) were still open and did a thriving business.

"Occasionally a shell would burst in the village, but the civilians did not seem to mind it; just carried on with their farming and business as usual.

"We decided to make a thorough search of all houses, barns and buildings for concealed wires, and did so, but with barren results. Nothing suspicious was found. This search wasted five days, and we were in desperation. Watch and question as we would, not a single clue came to light.

"During this time two large bodies of troops had passed through and each time they were heavily shelled, with dire results.

"On the sixth night of our assignment, utterly disgusted, I, being in charge, had decided to chuck up the whole business and report back to Old Pepper that we had made a mess out of the investigation. My partner pleaded with me to stick it out a couple of days more, and after he gave me a vivid description of what Old Pepper would hand out to us I decided to stick it out for six months, if necessary. To celebrate this decision my side-kicker offered to blow to several rounds of drinks. Now, this fellow had never, during my acquaintance with him, offered to spend a ha'penny, so I quickly accepted his offer and we went to the nearest estaminet.

"Sitting around a long table, drinking French beer and smoking cigarettes, was a crowd of soldiers, laughing, joking, arguing and telling stories.

"We sat down at the end of the table, and in a low tone tried to work impossible theories as to how the spy, if there was one—by this time we were doubtful—could get the information back to the German batteries.

"Right across from us were two soldiers arguing about farming. Suddenly my side-kicker pinched me on the knee and whispered:

"'Listen to what those two fellows across the table from us are saying. It sounds good.'

"I listened for about a minute and then paid no further attention. At that time farming in no way interested me. I wanted to catch that spy, and started devising impossible theories as to the ways and means of doing so. At last I gave up in disgust. My partner was still attentively listening to the two across the table from us. Another poke in the knee from my partner and I was all attention. One of the fellows across the way was talking:

"'Well, I don't see why this French blighter should change horses in his plow every afternoon. I've watched him for several days. Now, in the morning he uses two grays, and then about two in the afternoon he either hooks up two blacks or a gray and a black. French ways may be different, but this frog-eater is very partial to the colors of his team. He works the grays all morning and then changes them in the afternoon. Now, figure it out for yourself. He starts work with the two grays about six o'clock in the morning; works the two buggers up till noon. That's six hours straight. Then he sticks them in the stable, lays off for two hours, and in the afternoon about two o'clock the new relay of animals comes on and works up till four. Now, anybody with any brains in their nappers knows that is no way to keep horses in condition, working one team over six hours and the other team only two hours. I know, because we have been farmers in our family back in Blighty for generations.'

"I was all excitement, and a great hope surged through me that at last we had fallen on the clue that we were looking for. Restraining my eagerness as much as possible I addressed the fellow who had just spoken:

"'Well, mate, I don't like to intrude into your conversation, but I've also been a farmer all my life and I don't see anything queer in the actions of this French farmer.'

"He answered: 'Well, blime me, there might be a reason for this blighter doing this, but I can't figure it out at all. If you can explain it, go ahead.'

"I answered: 'Well, perhaps if you can give a little more details about it, it would be easy enough to explain. Who is the farmer, and where is his farm located?'

"He swallowed the bait, all right, and informed me that the farmer was plowing a field on a hill about five hundred yards west of the church at a point where our troops were being shelled.

"Buying a round of drinks, I nudged my partner and he came in on the conversation. The two of us, by adroit questioning, got the exact location of the field and a description of the farmer.

"I pretended to be sleepy, and yawning, got up from the table, saying that I was going to turn in, and left. My partner soon followed me. Upon reaching our billet, we outlined our plan. We decided that next morning we would get up at daybreak and scout around the field to see if there was a hiding place.

"Sure enough, along one edge of the field ran a thick hedge. We secreted ourselves in this and waited for developments.

"At about six in the morning, the farmer appeared, driving two grays, which he hooked to the plow, and carried on his work. To us there appeared nothing suspicious in his actions. We watched him all morning. At noon he unhooked the horses and went home. We remained in hiding, afraid to leave, because we wanted to take no chances of being seen by the farmer. We had forgotten to bring rations with us, so it was a miserable

wait until two o'clock, at which time the farmer reappeared, driving two blacks, which he hitched to the plow, and carried on until four o'clock, and then knocked off for the day. That night troops came through and, as usual, were shelled.

"Next morning, at daybreak, we again took our stations in the hedge, this time bringing rations with us. The farmer used the same grays in the morning, but in the afternoon he appeared with a black and a gray, and again knocked off around four o'clock. No troops came through that night, and there was no shelling.

"Next day the farmer repeated the previous day's actions—two grays in the morning and a black and a gray in the afternoon. No troops, no shelling.

"We were pretty sure that we had him, but this arresting a spy on slim evidence is a ticklish matter. We didn't want to make a mess of the affair, or perhaps send an innocent man to his death, so the following day we again took up our stations. Sure enough, it was two grays in the morning, but in the afternoon he used two blacks. That night troops came through and were shelled. We had solved the problem. Two grays in the morning mean nothing. The actual signal to the enemy was the change of horses in the afternoon; two blacks meaning 'troops coming through tonight, shell the road'; a gray and a black, 'No troops expected, do not shell.'

"When it got dark and it was safe to leave the hedge, we immediately reported the whole affair to the town major (an English officer detailed in charge of a French village or town occupied by English troops) who, accompanied by us and a detail of six men with fixed bayonets, went to the farmer's house that night and arrested him. He protested his innocence but we took him to military police headquarters where, after a grueling questioning, he at last confessed.

"It was a mystery to us how this farmer knew that troops were coming through, because he never made a mistake in his schedule. After further questioning he explained to us

that if we searched in his cellar and raised up an old flagstone with a ring in it, we would find a telephone set. The other end of this set was established in an estaminet in a little French village eleven kilos distant. His confederate was so situated on the road that troops coming into the village had to pass the door. As troops march only at night while in the fire sector, his confederate could safely figure out that the passing troops would be quartered in his village until the next night, when, under cover of darkness, they would start for the next village, and would have to pass the point in the road by the old church. He would immediately telephone this information to the farmer, who would change his horses accordingly. The hill on which he did his plowing could be easily observed from an observation balloon in the German lines, and thus the signal was given to the German artillery.

"We still carried on with our third degree, and got further valuable information from him.

"If, in the plowing, two gray horses were used on two consecutive afternoons, it meant that the use of the road had been indefinitely discontinued for troops and supplies.

"Under a strong guard, which concealed itself in the hedge, the farmer was made to use two grays for two afternoons. The scheme worked. For weeks afterward that road was only occasionally shelled, and our troops and supply trains used it at will. The spy at the other end was rounded up and both were taken to the base and shot.

"We reported back to Old Pepper, expecting to be highly commended for our work, and we were—I don't think. All the blooming blighter said was:

"'Well, you certainly took long enough to do it. I have a damn good mind to send you back to your units for incompetency and inefficiency.'

"We saluted and left.

"You see, we didn't deserve any great credit, because it was only through a lucky chance that we stumbled over the clue, so I guess 'Old Pepper' was right after all."

After finishing his story, Curly turned to us and asked:

"Don't you think it was pretty nifty work?"

We agreed that it was.

After a few minutes more the party broke up and turned in.

Confirmation.

No woman is really satisfied with the compliments her mirror pays her unless they are reiterated by some man.—Boston Transcript.



ERADICATE LICE AND MITES

Sodium Fluorid Makes an Effective Powder and Should Be Used Freely—Use Kerosene.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

The free use of an effective lice powder is always in order. Sodium fluorid makes an effective lice powder. In applying the powder hold the fowl by the feet, head down, and work the



Dusting Chicken With Sodium Fluorid a Most Effective Remedy for Lice and Mites.

powder well down into the feathers. A dust bath is essential in ridding the fowls of lice.

The free use of kerosene or crude petroleum on the roosts and in the tracks will exterminate mites. Whitewashing the interior of the house thoroughly once or twice a year helps to keep it sweet and clean.

FOWLS FOR BREEDING STOCK

Health and Vigor Must Be First Points to Keep in Mind When Making Selection.

Eggs may be perfectly fertile and yet hatch unsatisfactorily, and the first consideration must be the production of hatching eggs with strong, virile, well-nourished germs. This can be done only by a careful selection, mating and management of the breeding stock and affording the eggs the proper care after they are laid. Health and vigor must be the first points to keep in mind when selecting the breeders.

The rule that good seed must be used if one expects a successful crop includes the chicken crop as well as those of grass and grain. The breeding flock should include only sound, healthy, well-fed stock, and all fowls that have at any time suffered from any serious illness or show any faults or defects, such as crooked back or breast, hawk-bill or snake-head, pale face, rattling in throat, foreign growths upon any part of the body, leg weakness or string halt should be promptly discarded.

CHILLING OF MUCH BENEFIT

Wet-Packed Poultry Arrives at Destination in Poor Condition—Slow Railroads Blamed.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

The chill room developed by the United States department of agriculture for the preservation of poultry and eggs and to prepare them for transportation to market has proved of great advantage to small poultry packers. Packers who have had to ship in less than carload quantities have found that wet-packed poultry has spoiled in enormous quantities because of slow transportation resulting from congestion on the railroads. Packers equipped with the small chill room recommended by the department have found that poultry dry-chilled and properly packed arrived at its destination in good condition, while wet-packed fowls in the same car were in bad order. It has been found also that the method recommended by the government requires less ice than the ice-packing process.

LEAVES MAKE GOOD LITTER

Not Advisable to Leave Them on Floor Too Long—Throw Sweepings on Garden Patch.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

There is no litter better than leaves, outside of clover or any of the dried grasses, that fowls find nourishment in. But do not allow the leaves to lie too long on the floors, as the fowls pick at them until they reduce many to almost dust. Pack away plenty in barrels, as you must be sparing of higher-priced scratching material, and throw the leaf sweepings on the garden patch.

GIRLS! LOTS OF BEAUTIFUL HAIR

A small bottle of "Danderine" makes hair thick, glossy and wavy.

Removes all dandruff, stops itching scalp and falling hair.



To be possessed of a head of heavy, beautiful hair; soft, lustrous, fluffy, wavy and free from dandruff is merely a matter of using a little Danderine.

It is easy and inexpensive to have nice, soft hair and lots of it. Just get a small bottle of Knowlton's Danderine now—it costs but a few cents—all drug stores recommend it—apply a little as directed and within ten minutes there will be an appearance of abundance, freshness, fullness and an incomparable gloss and lustre, and try as you will you cannot find a trace of dandruff or falling hair; but your real surprise will be after about two weeks' use, when you will see new hair—fine and downy at first—yes—but really new hair—sprouting out all over your scalp—Danderine is, we believe, the only sure hair grower, destroyer of dandruff and cure for itchy scalp, and it never fails to stop falling hair at once.

If you want to prove how pretty and soft your hair really is, moisten a cloth with a little Danderine and carefully draw it through your hair—taking one small strand at a time. Your hair will be soft, glossy and beautiful in just a few moments—a delightful surprise awaits everyone who tries this. Adv.

Deep Grief.

"And was the widow so inconsolable?" "Oh, yes. Why, they had to hide her powder puff to keep her from weeping."

Weekly Health Talks

What Doctors Pierce Has Done for Humanity

BY DOCTOR CRIPPS.

It has always seemed to me that Dr. Pierce, of Buffalo, N. Y., should be placed near the top when a list of America's great benefactors is written. He studied and conquered human diseases to a degree that few realize. Whenever he found a remedy that overcame disease, he at once announced it in the newspapers and told where it could be bought at a small price. He did not follow the usual custom of keeping the ingredients secret, so that the rich only could afford to buy the medicine, but openly printed the name of each root and herb he used. And so today the names of Dr. Pierce and his medicines are widely known, and they stand for better health and better citizenship.

One of this great physician's most successful remedies is known as Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets. These are little, sugar-coated pills, composed of Mayapple, leaves of aloë, root of jalap—things that Nature grows in the ground. These Pellets are safe because they move the bowels gently, leaving no bad after-effects, as so many pills do. Very often they make a person who takes them feel like a new man or woman, for they cleanse the intestines of hard, decayed and poisonous matter that accumulates when one is constive. If you are constipated, by all means go to your druggist and get some of Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets. They may prove to be the very thing your system requires to make you well and happy.

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