

The Lone Tree Sentinel; or, Ghosts on the Firing Line

By **Sergeant Arthur Guy Empey**
Author of "Over the Top," "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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One sunny afternoon our gun's crew was sitting on the fire step of a front-line trench, just in front of Gomme-court wood.

Happy Houghton was busily engaged in rigging up a flash screen to hide the flare of our gun, which we were to mount on the parapet that night.

Sailor Bill was sewing a piece of khaki cloth over his tin hat, because the night previous, while on sentry go, standing in the moonlight, with his head over the top the rays from the moon had reflected from his steel helmet and a couple of German bullets had knocked up the dirt within a few feet of his head.

As was usual with him, Hungry Foxcraft was wrestling with a tin of bully beef, while "Curly" Wallace was hunting for cooties.

Ikey Honney, with our mascot, Jim, was sitting on the fire-step, his back leaning against the traverse of the fire-bay, picking mud out of his harmonica with a sliver of wood. Jim seemed happy and contented, not knowing the fate in store for him. Two days later poor Jim was killed by a German bullet and we buried him behind the lines, placing a little wooden cross at the head of his grave.

After working a few minutes at the harmonica, Ikey would pause, put it to his lips and blow into it; a squeaky, rattly noise resulting. Then, with a deep sigh, he would resume the picking process.

I had just finished a letter home and was sighing for the time to come when once again I would be able to say "hello" to the old girl with the lamp in her right hand guarding New York harbor.

Although it was warm and sunny, the floor of the trench was about three inches deep in soft, sticky mud.

On my right I heard a low muttering and a splashing in the mud, and around the traverse, into our fire-bay, carrying a box of ammunition on his shoulder, came the most weird-looking soldier I had ever seen. As he passed in front of me he turned his gaze in my direction and a cold shiver seemed to run up and down my spine as I looked into his eyes. They were unnerving; a sort of vacant stare, as if the owner of them was looking into the Great Beyond. As this soldier staggered through the fire-bay, almost bending double under the weight of the ammunition and passed from view around the traverse, it seemed to me as if the Grim Reaper had stalked through.

Shuddering a little, I instinctively turned my eyes in the direction of the rest of the crew. They were also staring at the traverse around which the gloomy-looking soldier had disappeared.

My heart sank to zero and I had a sinking sensation in the region of my stomach, and on the parapet in front of me, like a moving picture on a screen, flashed a cemetery, dotted all over with little wooden crosses. I felt queer and uneasy.

Curly Wallace, in a low, half-frightened voice, exclaimed:

"Blime me, that was 'Aunted Jerry's brother, the one who clicked it by the old lone tree. If you blokes want to get the creeps you ought to 'ear 'im talk. Some o' the fellows claim that it's unlucky to get 'im started. They say that one o' 'is 'easers is sure to click in within a few days' time, but if you fellows want to tyke the chance, I'll go over to 'is section, which is occupying the second fire-bay on our left, and see if I can get 'im to tell as about 'is brother. But, now mind, this fellow is a little balmy in 'is napper, so don't myke fun of 'im."

I confess that I was glad to be rid of him, but my curiosity overcame my fears, so I asked Curly to go ahead. The rest of the crew weakly assented, and Curly went after Jerry's brother, in about twenty minutes he returned with him. Jerry's brother came over and sat on the fire-step next to me. He sat silent for a few minutes, and then, as a thick piping, high-pitched voice spoke:

"So you want to 'ear about Jerry, do you? They called him 'Aunted Jerry', but he weren't 'aunted; he could just see—'e could see into the future; could sort o' tell what was agoin' to 'appen. 'E could talk to the dead, and they told 'im. 'E always 'ad spirits around 'im—ghosts, you call 'em, but there ain't no such thing as ghosts—they're souls awanderin' around; they're about us now—I slowly eased down the fire-step away from him.

"Jerry used to talk to the dead; 'e would sit in a cemetery at night while a rest blizted, and receive messages from them what can't speak no more.

"Sometimes, tyte at night, I can 'ear 'is 'owly, voices callin' to me, but as

yet cawn't understand 'em, but I will—I will."

My blood began to curdle.

Curly Wallace, placing his hand on the speaker's knee, softly said:

"Righto, mate, we know you can see far beyond us, but tell us of 'Aunted Jerry and the pome 'e wrote the day before 'e clicked it at the lone tree."

Jerry's brother nodded in a comprehending way, and reaching into the pocket of his tunic drew out a creased and muddy piece of paper, which he opened out upon his knee, and then, in an unnatural, singsong voice, which sent shivers through us, recited the following poem:

Between the lines, in No Man's Land,
With foliage gone, and trunk that's torn,
A lonely sentry takes his stand,
Silently watching from morn to morn.

On starlit nights, when moon is bright,
And spreads its rays of ghostlike beams;
Against the sky, that tree of blight
A ghastly hangman's gibbet seems.

When night is black, and wind's faint sigh
Through its shell-torn branches moans,
A call to men, "To die, to die!"
They answer it with groans and groans.

But obey the call, for "more and more,"
And Death sits by and grin and grin,
And watches the fast-growing score,
The harvest of his sentry's whine.

There they lie huddled, friend and foe,
Ghastly heaps, English, Hun and French—
And still those piles forever grow,
They are fed by the "Men of the French."

No wooden cross to mark their fall,
No tombstone there, no carved cross,
Just the Lone Tree with its grim call,
Which forever mocks and mocks.

When Jerry's brother had finished, a dead silence ensued. I nervously lighted a fag, and out of the corner of my eye noticed that Sailor Bill was uneasily squirming on the fire-step.

Letting out a sigh, which seemed to whistle between his teeth, our "guest" carried on:

"Jerry weren't much at cheerful writing, because 'e 'ad a calling. Even back 'ome in Blighty, 'e weren't much for lights nor fun. 'E took after our mother. The neighbors called 'er 'Aunted, too, but she weren't. She could see things, like Jerry.

"This 'ere lone tree sentinel Jerry writes about was an old tree in No Man's land, about a 'undred yards from our front-line trench. It was pretty well knocked about by bullets and shell fragments. It made a pretty good guide post, stickin' 'is sort o' lonely like up against the skyline at night. Reconnoitering patrols and bombing parties used it to show 'em the w'y'e back to their trenches, because, y' know, out there in the blackness 'is 'e easy to lose your w'y'e, unless you 'ave spirits a-guidin' you.

"Lots of times English and German patrols would meet near the lone tree, and many a 'and-to-'and fight would tyke place around its roots.

"At that part o' the line it were pretty 'ot, what with the rifle and machine-gun firing. The only time there would be a lull in the firing was when a reconnoitering patrol was out in front, and then, as you know, you couldn't fire for fear of a 'ittin' your own blokes. All around the lone tree were scattered many bodies, mostly English and German. Some of 'em 'ad been a-lyin' there for weeks, and when the wind were a-blowin' from the German lines towards us it were sort of unpleasant in our front line.

"Every time the captain would call for soldiers for a reconnoitering patrol, 'Aunted Jerry, as you call 'im, always put 'is bloomin' nyme on the list. It got so that after a while 'e never asked if 'e wanted to go; the captain would just naturally put 'is nyme down as agoin'.

"In our dugout, Jerry would tell me 'ow many dead were around the tree. 'Ow 'e could count 'em in the dark, I don't know, but 'e could see—'e could see.

"Sometimes in the daytime 'e would rig up a periscope on 'is own, and sit on the fire-step for hours alookin' out

in No Man's land at the lone tree, and the bodies around it. This sort o' got on our captain's nerves, and 'e gave Jerry orders not to use a periscope. After this order Jerry used to sit off by 'imself on the fire-step a musin' and a musin'. The other blokes laughed at 'im, but I knew what he were doin'—'e were atalkin' to the spirit of the lone tree.

"Then 'e got sort o' reckless, and because it were against orders for 'im to use a periscope, 'e used to, in the bloomin' daytime, stick 'is 'ead over the top and gaze in the direction of the

lone tree. Bullets from German snipers would kick up the dirt and tear the sandbags all around 'im, but none of 'em ever 'it 'im. No bullet ever myde could kill 'Aunted Jerry, as you call 'im.

"The rest o' the blokes in the trench would pull 'im down off the fire-step. They thought they were a-savin' his life, but Jerry weren't afraid from bullets. 'E knew, and so did I, that they couldn't 'arm 'im. Then our captain—'e 'ad brains, 'e 'ad—said that Jerry was balmy, and gave orders to the sergeant major to tyke 'im back to the doctors, to send 'im to Blighty. Jerry was told about this the night before 'e was to leave. 'E was greatly upset, and did nothin' but talk to the spirits—the air was full of 'em—I could 'ear their voices, too.

"That night about ten o'clock Jerry was missed. The next morning 'e was still a-missin'. For two days nothin' was 'eard of Jerry. Then the Royal Irish Rifles took over a sector of trench on our right. A lot of our blokes told 'em about Jerry betn' missin'. A few of 'em got around me, and I described Jerry to 'em, but I weren't afraid for Jerry—I knew where 'e was—'e were with 'is spirits.

"That night an Irish patrol went out and when they returned they brought a body with them; said they'd found it at the foot of the lone tree. It were Jerry, all right, but 'e weren't 'it nowhere. Two bloomin' doctors examined 'im, lookin' for wounds. 'E was dead, all right, and that bloomin' cap-

tain—'e 'ad brains, 'e 'ad—was responsible for 'is death. 'E 'ad tried to tyke Jerry aw'y from 'is spirits, so Jerry crawled out to the lone tree to answer 'is call. 'E answered it, and now 'e's with the spirits 'e loved, and some time I'll be able to talk to 'im 'is w'y'e with 'em, all right, I know—I know."

Just then Jim started to whimper. I guess if the truth were known, we all felt like whimpering.

Without another word, Jerry's brother got up, and, muttering to himself passed out of sight around the traverse. As he disappeared from view, Sailor Bill exclaimed:

"Blawst my deadlights, but if a bloke like that ever slipped in the navy, in a fortnight's time 'e would be a bloomin' admiral, because 'e would be the only one left in the blinkin' navy. Gives me the proper creeps. 'Ow in 'ell 'is company stands for 'im I don't know. 'Ow about it, Curly—why 'asn't 'e been sent to Blighty as balmy?"

"I'll tell you, Bill," answered Curly. "This bloke only gets these fits occasionally 'E's a d—d good soldier—always on the job, and next to Corporal French and his brother 'Aunted Jerry, 'E's the best scout for work in No Man's land that's ever put a foot in these blinkin' ditches. It's only lately that 'e's been 'avin' these spells so often, and yesterday the sergeant major told me that 'e was under observation and that it would only be a short time before 'e was shipped back."

"Is it a fact, Curly," asked Happy. "that this 'Aunted Jerry crawled out there the way his brother says, and that he was found dead without a wound on him? If it's so, he must have had a bloody poor heart and died that way."

Curly answered: "It sure is so, because I got it from a lieutenant in 'Aunted Jerry's section."

Jim was still whimpering. This got on Ikey's nerves; he gave him a sharp cuff on the side of the head. This was the first time a hand had been raised against Jim since he had joined us months back. He gave Ikey a piteous look, and sticking his stump of a tail between his legs disappeared from the fire bay. Two days later Ikey made up for that slap, because at the risk of his life, during an attack, he raced into No Man's land under heavy fire and brought in the bleeding body of Jim.

All afternoon we tried to be as cheerful as possible, but our merriment was very artificial. Every laugh seemed forced and strained. 'Aunted Jerry had sure put the "kibosh" on us.

"That night Curly, Happy and I were on watch from ten to twelve, and, believe me, we never spent a worse two hours in our lives. There was not a word spoken among us. I was thinking of 'Aunted Jerry, and no doubt the other two were doing likewise.

A few days later Jerry's brother was sent back to Blighty, and no doubt right now is in some insane asylum in Blighty communicating with 'Aunted Jerry and his spirits.

THE KITCHEN CABINET

I see from my house by the side of the road.
By the side of the highway of life,
The men who pass with the ardor of hope.
The men who are faint with the strife.
But I turn not away from their smiles nor their tears—
Both parts of an infinite plan—
Let me live in my house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.

FOR THE TEMPTING MEAL.
Honey is such a wholesome sweet and one that should be more common, as bee-keeping is quite a woman's employment. The shortage of sugar has encouraged many to undertake the interesting work, and a hive or two in anybody's back yard would be a source of entertainment as well as an income.

Oranges in Jelly.—Soften one-fourth of a package of granulated gelatin in one-fourth of a cupful of cold water and dissolve in one-half cupful of boiling water; add one-third of a cupful of strained honey, one cupful of orange juice and the juice of half of a lemon. Set a mold in ice and water; pour in half an inch of the liquid; when nearly firm arrange on it a layer of orange sections freed from all membrane and seeds, cover with the liquid mixture and repeat in layers until all the liquid has been used. Serve unmolded with sugar and cream.

Beef and Oatmeal Scrapple.—Take two pounds from the upper part of the shank. The marrow may be removed to chop with the cooked meat. Cover the meat with boiling water and let cook until tender. The next day chop the meat, and to three cupfuls of the broth add a teaspoonful of salt, and when boiling stir in oatmeal to make the usual mush. It should be rather thick. When the oatmeal is thoroughly cooked, stir in the chopped meat. Add any desired seasoning, celery salt, onion juice, paprika or poultry dressing. Turn into bread pans well greased, and when cold and firm slice, dip in flour and oatmeal and fry in hot fat until well browned on one side; then turn.

Maple Sirup Cake.—Beat half a cupful of shortening to a cream, add half a cupful of corn sirup and one cupful of maple sirup; add two eggs well beaten, and alternately half a cupful of boiling water, two cupfuls of wheat flour and half a cupful of rye, three-fourths of a teaspoonful of soda, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder and half a teaspoonful of ginger. Bake half an hour. Spread the inverted cake with maple frosting and pecans.

There are hermit souls that live withdrawn
In the place of their self-content.
There are souls, like stars, that dwell apart
In a far-off firmament;
There are pioneer souls that blaze their paths
Where highways never ran—
But let me live in a house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.

ECONOMICAL DISHES.
Junket is such a quickly prepared and well-liked dessert that we are always glad to find some new way of serving it.

Junket With Raisins.—Dissolve a junket tablet in a tablespoonful of cold water; heat one quart of milk just lukewarm; add three tablespoonfuls of sugar, one-half teaspoonful of almond extract. Mix all the ingredients, stirring well, then pour into sherbet cups to become firm. A pinch of salt should be added to the milk. When the junket is firm sprinkle the top with chopped raisins or dates—a teaspoonful to each glass and top with a spoonful of whipped cream. The fruit may be placed in the bottom of the glass and the junket poured over it as the weight of the fruit will often cause the junket to separate.

Ginger Pudding.—To one pint of sifted bread crumbs (brown) add one and one-half cupfuls of cornmeal, one tablespoonful of fat, one beaten egg, two cupfuls of sweet milk, one cupful of brown sugar and one-third of a teaspoonful of ginger; and one-half teaspoonful of baking powder. Mix well and add one cupful of chopped raisins. Bake slowly three-quarters of an hour. Serve with a sauce.

Baked Calves' Liver.—Lard the liver with small strips of salt pork, using one and one-half pounds of liver. Dust with salt and pepper and brown in pork fat. Add a cupful of hot water and bake in a hot oven twenty minutes, basting twice; the last time add two tablespoonfuls of sour cream and a tablespoonful of flour well mixed. Serve after ten minutes further cooking.

Spiced Sauce.—Mix together two tablespoonfuls of cornstarch with one cupful of sugar; add one pint of boiling water and cook ten minutes; then add two tablespoonfuls of butter, the juice and a rind of a lemon. A table spoonful of vinegar and a teaspoonful of mixed ground spices.

Caramel Pudding.—Cream together one cupful of brown sugar and one-half cupful of shortening. Add one cupful

of sweet milk, one cupful of bread crumbs, one cupful of blanched chopped almonds, one cupful of sifted flour and one teaspoonful of baking powder. When well mixed, add a cupful of raisins. Bake slowly forty-five minutes. Serve with a sauce made of ginger sirup, a bit of butter creamed with powdered sugar.

She kindly talked, at least three hours:
I described our pre-existing station
Before this vile terrere creation!
And lest I should grow wearied,
madam,
To cut things short, come down to
Adam.
—Prior's Alma.

GOOD EATING.
As variety is the spice of life, we are all looking for variety in our menu making.

A Green Soup.—Wash two quarts of spinach in several waters. Wash, peel and chop fine three small turnips, two onions, a head of celery and a bunch of parsley. Fry the vegetables gently in four tablespoonfuls of shortening. Add one pint of water and simmer until they are tender. Mix two tablespoonfuls of flour with a little milk, add it to three cupfuls of milk, let boil five minutes. Put all the vegetables through a sieve; then add the hot milk and serve with croutons (fried bread).

Fig Dessert.—Soak one pound of figs over night, then stew gently until soft. Add sugar to make a rich sirup and flavor with vanilla. Chill and turn into a glass dish. Serve with sweetened and flavored whipped cream.

Vanilla Souffle.—Put a cupful of milk over the fire in a double boiler to heat. Moisten three tablespoonfuls of flour with cream, add to the hot milk and cook until well done. Separate four egg yolks and whites, add a little hot milk, the beaten yolks and stir into the milk; then add the stiffly beaten whites. Turn into greased custard cups and bake 20 minutes. Serve with a sauce made of a tablespoonful of butter mixed with a cup of powdered sugar and a little whipped cream to make it foamy.

Junket.—Dissolve one junket tablet in a tablespoonful of cold water; add it to one quart of lukewarm milk; stir and mix well; add four tablespoonfuls of sugar and any desired flavoring. Pour into sherbet cups and let stand in a warm room to set. When firm remove to the ice chest to chill. Serve with a tablespoonful of strawberry jam or raspberry jam, topped with whipped cream. If the jam makes the dessert too sweet, leave out some of the sugar in the junket.

If you've found a task worth doing,
It matters little where I was born, or
If my parents were rich or poor; but
whether I live an honest man and hold
my integrity firm in my clutch I tell
you my brother, as plain as I can—it
matters much.—Emerson.

LET US MAKE OUR OWN SWEETS.
Candy made at home is so much more wholesome as well as economical.

Pralines.—Take one pound of brown sugar and a cupful of boiling water with one pound of Brazil nuts. Dissolve sugar in the water and let boil three or four minutes; put in the nuts and boil to 238 degrees F., or until a thick sirup is formed. Remove from the fire and stir until the nuts are well sugared. Return to the fire and stir until the sugar melts, then remove and stir again and turn on an oiled paper.

Strawberry Turkish Paste.—Take preserved strawberries, drain from the sirup and pour one and one-quarter cupfuls of the sirup over three tablespoonfuls of gelatin. When the gelatin is softened boil 20 minutes. At the end of ten minutes add one cupful of the drained berries and the juice of one lemon; finish boiling. Pour into a breadpan and let stand over night. Loosen from one end and pull from the pan. With a round cutter dipped in hot water stamp out in small rounds. Let stand in the air to dry.

Coconut Balls.—Take one cupful of shredded coconut, two teaspoonfuls of vanilla, four teaspoonfuls of peanut butter. Mix and shape into small balls, place on paraffin paper and in a cold place to harden.

Velvet Molasses Candy.—Take one cupful of molasses, three cupfuls of sugar, one cupful of boiling water, three tablespoonfuls of vinegar, one-half teaspoonful of cream of tartar, half a cupful of melted butter and one-quarter of a teaspoonful of soda. Put the molasses, sugar, water and vinegar on to boil. As soon as the boiling point is reached add the cream of tartar. Boil until the mixture is brittle when tried in cold water. Stir constantly when nearly cooked. When nearly done add the butter and soda. Pour out, cool and pull. When pulling add such flavors as vanilla, lemon extract or peppermint. By dividing the candy one may have all these flavors, and more if liked.

RECIPES FOR GRAY HAIR.
To half pint of water add 1 oz. Bay Rum, a small box of Barbo Compound, and ¼ oz. of glycerine. Any druggist can put this up or you can mix it at home at very little cost. Full directions for making and use come in each box of Barbo Compound. It will gradually darken streaked, faded gray hair, and make it soft and glossy. It will not color the scalp, is not sticky or greasy, and does not rub off. Adv.

A little disappointment now and then is a wholesome tonic.

Coated tongue, vertigo and constipation are relieved by Garfield Tea.—Adv.

There are two sides to every story and a lot of them should be turned.

Your Granulated Eyelids, Eyes inflamed by exposure to Sun, Dust and Wind quickly relieved by Murine Eye Remedy. No Smarting, Just Eye Comfort. At Your Druggists or by mail 60c per Bottle. For Book of the Eye free write Murine Eye Remedy Co., Chicago.

Needie Maxwell

WOMEN OF MIDDLE AGE

Need Help to Pass the Crisis Safely—Proof that Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound Can be Relied Upon.

Urbana, Ill.—"During Change of Life, in addition to its annoying symptoms, I had an attack of grippe which lasted all winter and left me in a weakened condition. I felt at times that I would never be well again. I read of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and what it did for women passing through the Change of Life, so I told my doctor I would try it. I soon began to gain in strength and the annoying symptoms disappeared and your Vegetable Compound has made me a well, strong woman so I do all my own housework. I cannot recommend Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound too highly to women passing through the Change of Life."—Mrs. FRANK HENSON, 1318 S. Orchard St., Urbana, Ill.

Women who suffer from nervousness, "heat flashes," backache, headaches and "the blues" should try this famous root and herb remedy, Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

Use Cuticura Soap To Clear Your Skin

All druggists, Soap & Ointment Dept. E. B. Taylor & Co. Sample each free of "Cuticura," Dept. E, Box 7.

A man's good deeds are limited; but there is no limit to the mischief he can accomplish.

BOSCHEE'S SYRUP

Why use ordinary cough remedies when Boschee's Syrup has been used so successfully for fifty-one years in all parts of the United States for coughs, bronchitis, colds settled in the throat, especially lung troubles? It gives the patient a good night's rest, free from coughing, with easy expectoration in the morning, gives nature a chance to soothe the inflamed parts, throw off the disease, helping the patient to regain his health. Made in America and sold for more than half a century.—Adv.

One really never knows a man till he gets into politics.

For a disordered liver, take Garfield Tea, the Herb Laxative. All druggists.—Adv.

A little good advice goes a long way before anybody takes it.

Confined to Her Bed Days at a Time

But Doan's Brought a Quick and Lasting Cure.

Mrs. Herman Ruschke, 177 Fourth St., Long Island City, N. Y., says: "The pains in my back were almost unbearable. I always felt tired and listless and found it almost impossible to attend to my housework. Gradually the pains increased—day by day my suffering became worse. Often flashes of light and black specks would appear before my eyes and dizzy spells would come over me. My hands and feet were swollen and my head pained me so at times I thought it would split. My kidneys annoyed me, too, and became despondent. Some times I would have to take to my bed for three or four days at a time. I had the good fortune to hear of Doan's Kidney Pills, so I began using them and was soon back in perfect health again. My cure has stood the test of time, so I am only too glad to recommend Doan's to other kidney sufferers."

Mrs. Ruschke gave the above statement in April, 1916, and on April 4, 1917, she added: "I am glad to say I have said about Doan's Kidney Pills, for they have cured me of kidney complaint."

Get Doan's at Any Store, 60c a Box

DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS

FOSTER-MILBURN CO., BUFFALO, N. Y.

Do what you can when you are unable to do what you would.

Doan's Kidney Pills

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