

**PRIEST CAPTURES ENTIRE COMPANY**

**ermans in "Dragon's Cave" Lay Down Their Arms When Surprised by French Stretcher-Bearer.**

(Correspondence of The Associated Press.)

French Front, Aug. 1.—The story of the capture of nearly a company of German troops who were trapped in the Dragon's Cave near the famous Chemin Des Dames, when the French troops stormed and carried the German position along that historic road was told to The Associated Press correspondent by Father Py, a Franciscan priest, who, with a doctor, brought the prisoners into the French near lines. Father Py was acting as stretcher-bearer to one of the most celebrated regiments of the French army, the 152d infantry.

The Dragon's Cave is near the farm of Hurtebise, or what was a farm, for it has now become nothing but a heap of bricks, mud and splintered timbers.

He is a small man, is Father Py, who when the war broke out was engaged in missionary work in Brazil. The call of his country brought him back to France, and, although he is a native of the south of France, he volunteered for service in the ambulance section of the 152d, a regiment from the Vosges. He explained to the correspondent how on the day of the battle he had been detailed to go out and tend to the wounded, but not to advance beyond a certain trench, which was very near the most advanced French line. When he got there he found no one. The French soldiers had gone forward with one bound right in the track of the curtain fire put up by the artillery and had reached German trenches on the other side of the crest on of sight with miraculously slight losses. The priest and a companion looked about in search of wounded but could find none. Then, thinking under the circumstances they were justified in disobeying orders they climbed over the top of the trench and went further forward.

**Clothing On Fire.**

A little farther on they saw a German running about with his clothes aflame and uttering cries for help, at the same time pointing behind him to a hole in the ground where two other men were gesticulating. The priest went on thinking to find some more wounded men—perhaps men of his own regiment, but soon he saw they were Germans. At once he raised his crucifix in the air in the belief it would protect him, and he continued to advance. The Germans did not threaten him as he approached and soon he saw they were wounded.

On arriving at the entrance to what he had believed was a dugout, he found the hole went far into the side of the crest. He entered the Dragon's Cave still holding his crucifix before

**Omaha Boy at Funston Wins Honors as Machine Gun Expert**

Sergeant Harold T. Thom, 2315 Ogden avenue, has won honors at Camp Funston as a machine gun operator. He has demonstrated such efficiency in this branch of the service that he will teach other officers, and an Omaha man who returned on Friday from Funston stated that Thom will receive a commission.

This Omaha soldier went to the training camp on September 6, 1917. He was a railway clerk, was graduated from Omaha High school in 1916 and received his elementary education at Saratoga school. He is a son of Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Thom. He lived here since he was 3 years old.

In a series of tests Sergeant Thom won the distinction of being the best machine gun man at Funston and one of the best in any of the cantonment camps.

him and shouting "Catholic!" Inside he found the hole spread out in all directions and that it was full of armed German soldiers. Four or five of them were officers and, under the impression some of them at least would understand French, he called out in that language that he was a Catholic priest and that if there were any German wounded there he was prepared to administer the rites of the church.

One of the officers spoke to him, asking what he was doing there and what was going on outside. He informed him that French had made a long advance over their heads and had crossed the crest and that they had better lay down their arms, for they would either be killed or taken prisoners in any event.

**Officers Hold Conference.**  
The officers then held a discussion among themselves, at the end of which one of them with tears streaming down his face said he supposed they must resign themselves to their fate, but they could only surrender to an officer.

Father Py scribbled on a piece of paper a note to one of the French captains, which was handed to his companion who had remained outside the cave.

While the note was being carried to the French officer a German doctor in the cave showed the priest the resting place of several German wounded. Among them was a Jesuit priest who was serving in the German army as a soldier, with whom the French priest spoke in Latin. To the other wounded Germans Father Py gave the consolations of the church.

Afterwards and while awaiting the return of his messenger with the French officer, Father Py advised the German officers to disarm their men in order to avoid any possibility of misunderstanding. He himself superintended the operation, telling each soldier to discard every weapon he possessed, but that they might retain small pocket knives.

A little later, just when the process of disarmament was being completed,



a French officer—or rather a doctor—appeared at the mouth of the cave and the German officers surrendered their swords and revolvers to him.

Then began the exit of the prisoners through the narrow entrance and they were all marched through a communication trench back to French regimental headquarters, with an escort composed only of the priest, his stretcher-bearing comrade and the French doctor. They were almost a company and their arrival caused considerable surprise at headquarters.

The little priest, who always was a favorite in the regiment, with which he participates in all the hardships of fighting and in constant exposure to wounds and death, is now quite a hero. He never leaves the men to go on leave and did not even go to Paris when a detachment of the regiment went there to receive the decoration of the knotted cord in the colors of the military medal which has been conferred on it for having been five times mentioned in general army orders for bravery. The 152d is the only regiment in the French army besides the Foreign Legion which has won this honor.

As a result of its good work at Hurtebise and on the Californie plateau, further east, the Chemin des

Dames is now almost entirely in French hands. The women for whom it was constructed would scarcely recognize it in its present condition, for there is not a foot of its length which is without a shell hole and the whole of the sheltering trees which formerly lined its sides have all been torn away.

To discover why Hurtebise has attained such prominence one has to learn of its high importance as a military position. It forms the highest point on the crest along which runs the Chemin des Dames—the Ladies' Way.

The correspondent was able to note the peculiar value of this part of the crest when he went out to observe one of the many fights for its possession which have been waged.

Looking for work? Turn to the Help Wanted Columns now. You will find hundreds of positions listed there.

**Brief City News**

**Have Root Print It—New Beacon Press.**

**Lighting Fixtures, Burgess-Granden.**

**Tom Nolan Returns—T. J. Nolan, Omaha attorney, has returned from an eastern trip.**

**Robt. C. Druesedow & Co., stocks and bonds and local securities, 350 Omaha Nat. Bank Bldg.**

**Students Give Recital—The students of James A. Carnal gave their semi-monthly vocal recital at the studio Thursday evening.**

**State Bank of Omaha, corner Sixteenth and Harney streets, pays 4 per cent on time deposits; 3 per cent on savings accounts. All deposits in this bank are protected by the depositors' guarantee fund of the state of Nebraska.—Adv.**

**Enlists in Engineers—Karl B. Kraus, head of the Karl B. Kraus company, designing engineers, of**

Omaha, has been accepted for service in the 43d engineers. He goes to Jefferson Barracks, Mo. From there he will proceed to Camp American University, Washington, D. C.

**Teachers Aid Uncle Sam—Miss Mabel Gormley of Florence school and Miss Ida Melchor of Saratoga school have gone to Washington, D. C., to enter government service.**

**Special Program Sunday—James E. Carnal, director of music, has arranged a special musical program to be given at the First Methodist church Sunday. Miss Nora Neal will play the organ.**

**Another Candidate—Michael Sullivan, Jr., timekeeper for street car company, Saturday announced his candidacy for city commissioner. Sullivan is a son of Detective Mike Sullivan. He was born and reared in Omaha.**

**Sentence S. pending—Fred Grieb, who, with two companions, was injured in a collision with a street car Thursday night at Twenty-first and Dodge streets, Saturday morning was**

sentenced to 10 days in jail for reckless driving. The sentence was suspended and he was paroled to E. Grange of Thompson-Beld company, by whom he is employed.

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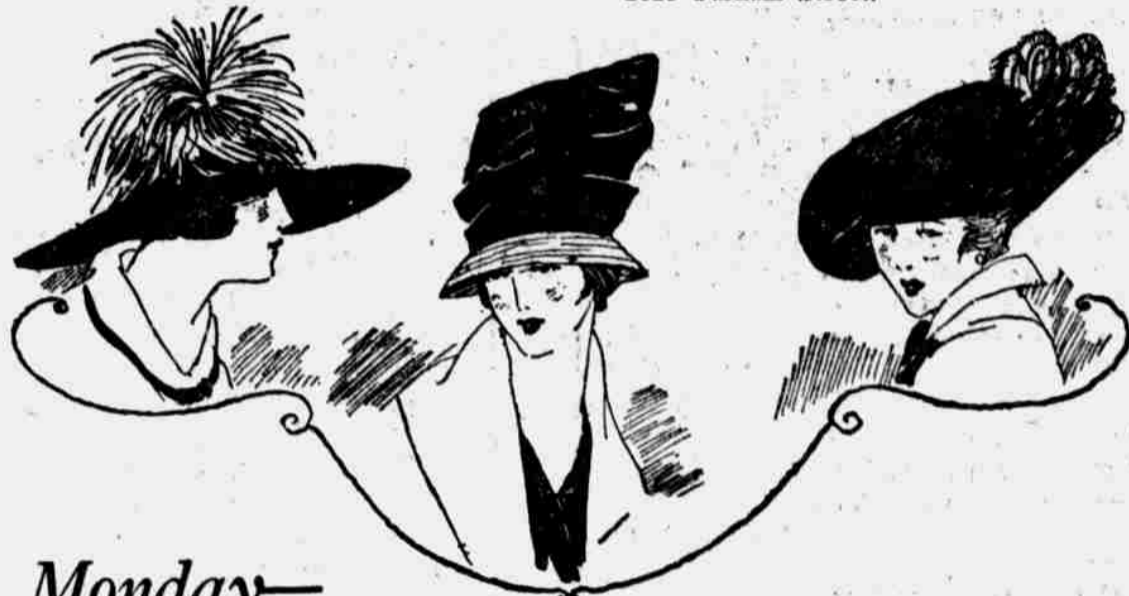
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