

FIRST AMERICAN MILITARY FORCE ARRIVES IN ITALY

Troops Direct From This Country to Supplement Others Sent From France by General Pershing.

By Associated Press.
 Washington, June 29.—Sate arrival in Italy of the first contingent of military force which will represent the United States was announced today by General March, chief of staff. Sent direct from this country, the troops landed yesterday, to supplement others ordered from France by General Pershing.

Sanitary units compose the greater part of the first arrivals, but "other special units" also were included. General March reiterated the statement that the bulk of the combatant American troops going to Italy will be sent from the western front, their places being immediately taken by new regiments from the United States.

"No definite plan for the increase of this force from the United States has been reached," Secretary Baker said later, in commenting upon the announcement. "It should have been emphasized that the shipment of further increments depends largely upon future developments."

Force Materially Increased.
 Material increase during the last week in the force under General Pershing was indicated by the announcement that five American divisions, which had been brigaded with the British for training, have been returned to the American army. While the actions along the American sectors during the last week have been entirely local in character, the chief of staff said the results have shown that American troops are more than holding their own, and fine examples of individual valor have been reported.

Viewing the military situation as a whole, General March was of the opinion that it is extremely favorable to the allies. He said the Austrian defeat was extremely valuable, both from a military and psychological sense. General March had not received official report of the British and French successes on Friday, and, therefore, withheld any comment.

Red Oak G. O. P. Convention Decides Against Wilkerson
 Red Oak, Ia., June 29.—(Special Telegram.)—At the republican county convention, held here this morning, the report of the board acting on the candidacy of J. N. Wilkerson, who received the highest number of votes for the office of county attorney in the June primary election was made, declaring no nomination for the office, since Wilkerson has not been admitted to the Iowa bar. In the vote of the convention which followed Oscar Wenstrand, the present county attorney, received 95 votes and J. N. Wilkerson 26. Wenstrand was declared the republican nominee.



Harry Lauder in the War Zone

"A Minstrel in France" Tells His Personal Experiences on the Western Fighting Front

CHAPTER XXVIII. How War Begets Faith.

I have stopped for a wee digression about my fund. I saw many interesting things in France, and dreadful things. And it was impressed upon me more and more that the Hun knows no mercy. The wicked, wanton things he did in France, and that I saw!

There was Mont St. Quentin, one of the very strongest of the positions out of which the British turned him. There was a chateau there, a bonnie place. And hard by was a wee cemetery. The Hun has smashed its pretty monuments, and he had reached into that sacred soil with his filthy claws and dragged out the dead from their resting place, and scattered their helpless bones about.

He ruined Peronne in wanton fury because it was passing from his grip. He wrecked its old cathedral, once one of the loveliest sights in France. He took away the old fleurs-de-lis from the great gates of Peronne. He tele and carried away the statue of St. Peter, still standing in the churchyard, but its thumb was broken off. I found it, as I rummaged about idly in the debris at the statue's foot.

It was no casual looting that the Huns did. They did their work methodically, systematically. It was a sight to make the angels weep.

As I left the ruined cathedral I met a couple of French poilus and tried to talk with them. But they spoke "very little" English, and I fired all my French words at them in one sentence.

"Oui, oui, madame," I said. "Encore pomme du terre. Fini!"

They laughed, but we did not get far with our talk! Not in French. "You can't love the Hun much, after this," I said.

"Ze Hun Ze bloody boche?" cried one of them. "I keel heem all my life!"

I was glad to quit Peronne. The rape of that lovely church saddened me more than almost any sight I saw in France. I did not care to look at it. So I was glad when I returned to the headquarters of the Fourth army, where I had the honor of meeting one of Britain's greatest soldiers, General Sir Henry Wilson, who greeted us most cordially, and invited us to dinner.

After dinner we drove on to Amiens. We were swinging back now, toward Boulogne, and were scheduled to sleep that night at Amiens—which the Germans held for a few days, during their first rush toward Paris, before the Marne but did not have time to destroy.

Adam knew Amiens, and was made welcome, with the rest of us, at excellent hotel. Von Kluck had made it his headquarters when he swung that way from Brussels, and it was there he planned the dinner he meant to eat in Paris with the kaiser. Von Kluck demanded an indemnity of

\$1,000,000 from Amiens to spare its famous old cathedral.

It was late when we arrived, but before I slept I called for the boots and ordered a bottle of ginger ale. I tried to get him to tell me about old Von Kluck and his stay, but he couldn't talk English, and was busy, anyway, trying to open the bottle without cutting the wire. Adam and Hogge are fond, to this day, of telling how I shouted at him, finally:

"Well, how do you expect to open that bottle when you can't even talk the English language?"

Next day was Sunday, and we went to church in the cathedral, which Von Kluck didn't destroy, after all. There were signs of war; the windows and the fine carved doors were banked with sand bags as a measure of protection from bombing airplanes.

I gave my last roadside concert on the road from Amiens to Boulogne. It was at a little place called Ouet and we had some trouble in finding it, and more in pronouncing its name. Some of us called it Off, some Owl! I had heard the name somewhere, and I now was racking my brains to think as Johnson set up our wee piano and I began to sing. Just as I finished my first song a rooster set up a violent crowing, in competition with me, and I remembered!

"I know where I am!" I cried. "I'm at Egg!"

And that is what Ouet means, in English!

The soldiers were vastly amused. They were Gordon Highlanders, and I found a lot of chaps among them far awa' Aberdeen. Not many of them are alive today! But that day they were a gay lot and a bonnie lo'. There was a big Highlander who said to me, very gravely:

"Harry, the only good thing I ever saw in a German was a British bayonet! If you ever hear anyone at home talking peace—cut off their heads! Or send them out to us, and we'll show them. There's a job to do here, and we'll do it."

"Look!" he said, sweeping his arm as if to include all France. "Look at von ruins! How would you like old England or auld Scotland to be looking like that? We're not only going to break and scatter the Hun rule, Harry. If we do no more than that, it will surely be reassembled again. We're going to destroy it!"

On the way from Ouet to Boulogne we visited a small, out of the way hospital, and I sang for the lads there. And I was going around, afterward talking to the boys on their cots, and came to a chap whose head and face were swathed in bandages.

"How came you to be hurt, lad?" I asked.

"Well, sir," he said, "we were attacking one morning. I went over the parapet with the rest, and got to the German trench all right. I wasn't hurt. And I went down, 30 feet deep into one of their dugouts. You wouldn't think men could live so—but, of course, they're not men—

they're animals! There was a lighted candle on a shelf, and beside it a fountain pen. It was just an ordinary looking pen and it was fair loot—I thought some chap meant to write a letter, and forgotten his pen when our attack came. So I slipped it in my pocket.

"Two days later I was going to write a few lines to my mother and tell her I was all right, so I thought I'd try my new pen. And when I unscrewed the cap it exploded—and well, you see me, Harry! It blew half of my face away!"

The Hun knows no mercy.

I was glad to see Boulogne again—the white buildings on the white hills, and the harbor beyond. Here the ministry of the Rev. Harry Lauder, M. P., Tour, came to its formal end. But, since there were many new arrivals in the hospitals—the population of a base shifts quickly—we were asked to give a couple more concerts in the hospitals where we had first appeared on French soil.

A good many thousand Canadians had just come in, so I sang at Base Hospital No. 1, and then gave another and farewell concert at the great convalescent camp on the hill. And then we said goodbye to Captain Godfrey and the chauffeurs, and to Johnson, my accompanist, ready to go back to his regiment now. I told them all I hoped that when I came to France again to sing we could reassemble all the original cast, and I pray that we may!

On Monday we took boat again for Folkestone. The boat was crowded with men going home on leave, and I wandered among them. I heard many a tale of heroism and courage, of splendid sacrifice and suffering nobly borne. Destroyers, as before, circled about us, and there was no hint of trouble from a Hun submarine.

On our boat was Lord Dalmeny, a king's messenger, carrying dispatches from the front. He asked me how I liked the "show." It is so that nearly all British soldiers refer to the war.

They had earned their rest, those laddies who were going home to Britain. But some of them were half sorry to be going! I talked to one of them.

"I don't know, Harry," he said. "I was looking forward to this leave for a lone time. I've been out two years. My heart jumped with joy at first at the thought of seeing my mother and the auld home. But now that I'm started, and in a fair way to go there I'm no so happy. You see—every young fellow frae my toon is awa' I'm the only one going back. Many are dead. It won't be the same. I've a mind just to stay on London till my leave is up, and then go back. If I went home my mother would burst out greetin', an' I think I could no stand that."

But, as for me, I was glad, though I was sorry, too, to be going home. I wanted to go back again. But I wanted to hurry to my wife and tell her what I had seen at our boy's

grave. And so I did, so soon as I landed on British ground once more. I felt that I was bearing a message to her. A message from our boy. I felt—and I still feel—that I could tell her that all was well with him, and with all the other soldiers of Britain, who sleep, like him, in the land of the bleeding lily. They died for humanity, and God will not forget.

And I think there is something for me to say to all those who are to know a grief such as I knew. Every mother and father who loves a son in this war must have a strong, unbreakable faith in the future life, in the world beyond, where you will see your son again. Do not give way to grief. Instead, keep your gaze and your faith firmly fixed on the world beyond, and regard your boy's absence as though he were but on a journey. By keeping your faith you will help to win this war. For if you lose it, the war and your personal self are lost.

My whole perspective was changed by my visit to the front. Never again shall I know those moments of black despair that used to come to me. In my thoughts I shall never be far away from the little cemetery hard by the Bapaume road. And life would not be worth the living for me did I not believe that each day brings me nearer to seeing him again.

I found a belief among the soldiers in France that was almost universal. I found it among all classes of men at the front; among men who had before the war, been regularly religious, along well ordered lines, and among men who had lived just according to their own lights. Before the war, before the Hun went mad, the young men of Britain thought little of death or what might come after death. They were gay and careless, living for today. Then war came, and with it death, astride of every minute, every hour. And the young men began to think of spiritual things and of God.

Their faces, their deportments, may not have shown the change. But it was in their hearts. They would not show it. Not they! But I have talked with hundreds of men along the front. And it is my conviction that they believe on and all, that if they fall in battle they only pass on to another. And what a comforting belief that is!

It is that belief that makes us indifferent to danger and to death," a soldier said to me. "We fight in a righteous cause and a holy war. God is not going to let everything end for us just because the mortal life quits the shell we call the body. You may be sure of that."

And I am sure of it, indeed! (The End.)

Finn's Band Will Give Two Concerts at Manaaw Today
 Finn's band concerts this afternoon and evening at Lake Manaaw include an arrangement of popular songs composed by Mr. Finn and also a patriotic march, "Freedom For All Forever," written by Cogely-Bock, Omaha men. Although the war songs predominate in the program, several dance songs and classical airs are included.

Killed in Aerial Combat.
 Paris, June 29.—Capt. Marcel Doumer, commandant of a French escadrille, was killed during an aerial combat at Villers-Cotterets yesterday. He is the third son of Senator Paul Doumer to fall in action.

Bill of Lading With First Load of Freight, New Order
 Owing to delays resulting from violations of this rule, Omaha railroads after July 1 will refuse to accept shipments of outbound freight from Omaha merchants unless the first load delivered at the platform is accompanied by a bill of lading.

Fancy Stationary Taboo In United States Mails
 Fancy stationary and odd-shaped envelopes will not be tolerated in

war times and United States postal officials have asked that only standard sized white envelopes be used for mailing purposes.

Addresses on colored envelopes especially dark tints, are hard to read and because of heavy mails and the war shortage of labor it is a patriotic duty to do everything possible to facilitate the work of the Postoffice department.

Extremely small or odd-shaped envelopes hinder the work of stamping and stacking the mail. Patriots are asked to curtail their whims in regard to individual style of writing paper until the war is won.



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