

SERGEANT YORK'S OWN STORY

Edited by
TOM SKEYHILL

CHAPTER 2. WAR.

LIFE'S too queer, You think you've got a grip on it, then you open your hands and you find there's nothing in them. It doesn't go in straight lines like bees to their hives or quail from the covey. It sorter circles like foxes and goes back again to where it begun. After I was given up liquoring and gambling and fighting and the wild life, I kinder thought I could settle down in peace and make amends for my sins by working hard and doing all the good I could. I got me a job farming with Rosy Fyle. I worked from sunup to sundown. I kept up my singing lessons and I spent any spare time I had reading the Bible and doing church work.

Of course, often the old longing to go out and do best around would come over me, but I jes prayed and resisted the temptation. Sometimes Everett or Marion or some of the other boys would drop around and tell me they were piling on another gay party and invite me to join them. Then it was that I was most sorely tempted. I prayed most awful hard and got a good hold on myself and didn't go. Each time I refused it was so much easier next time, and every day it became easier. In a few months I was solid on myself and didn't go. Each time I was thinking of better things, more worthwhile things. I was beginning to find peace in my soul.

And, of course, there was a girl. Little slip of a girl. I knowed her since she was a baby. We sorter grew up together. She was younger than me, and it may have been on account of that or because I was careless and didn't notice things when I was drinking and sinning around—anyway, I hadn't noticed how she had grown up from girlhood to womanhood. But when I was saved and working hard and going in for the decent things again, I begun to watch her coming and going pretty close. I didn't see much of her at first. I guess she had heard of my wild life and sorter wasn't interested and kept out of my way. But when I got religion, the church work brought us together. We did not speak to each other at first. She was kinder shy; she hadn't never been out of the mountains and hadn't been used to strangers. But she had a nice way about her, always kind to folks and always doing things for the church. There hadn't been nothing flighty about her, nohow. And I'm a-tellin' you she was pretty, always as fresh as a flower in the mornin' with the dew on it. I kinder noticed her hair. You jes couldn't get no telling at it, jes couldn't see no sort of soft and silky and there was so much of it, and she done it up nice in two big braids wound up in the back with a blue ribbon woven in. And I seed her eyes was blue and big and kinder shined with goodness, and though I never thought of it before, I jes knowed blue was my favorite color. I am a-tellin' you there was somethin' grand about her, the way she talked in that quiet voice of hers that sometimes got shaky, she was that way, and the way she looked at you with those big blue eyes as though she was jes trying to see inside of you and help you be good. I jes wanted to be near her and talk to her, and there was many a time when I was out tramping in these here mountains with them bound dogs of mine and scouting for coon when I would jes sit down on some log and look over the valley on that there mountain where she lived and wish I could be there and tell her how I was. I was so glad I wouldn't do for her if she'd only let me. That's how much I cared for her.

Courting.

Her parents were agin me. I couldn't blame them, nohow. But I wasn't in love with them at that time. I was in love with Gracie, and we managed to steal meetings, and nobody but us knowed much about them, nohow. There was a big, winding lane between our homes. It was lit with big shady trees. And there was wild honeysuckle there. And, best of all, it sorter dipped out of sight between the two hills. It was sorter made for us to meet in. So of an evening Gracie would come along this way to get the news for making and I most awful sudden found out there were a heap of squirrels along that old lane. So I would tote the old muzzle-loader and go hunting down the lane. I was so glad to get my hands on them. But I kinder used to always go back there every evening.

I was happy. I was happier than I had ever been before. You see, I found love, too. When you have found that and peace of soul you are beginning to find out what life is all about. I guess there were two things, love and peace, are what folks call the fundamental things. The World War done broke out, but as you don't pay much attention in the sky, so I didn't pay none to the war. I scarcely heard or seed it. It didn't touch me. I knowed it was in Europe, but that meant nothing to me. I knowed big nations were fighting, but I didn't know for sure how many and which ones. I didn't know what they were fighting for. I didn't know what it was all about. It was a long way from our peaceful little valley to them-there battlefields way across the sea. I read a little about it in the papers, and I heard them talking about it around the store. Not much, though. Jes a little and now and then. So I went on with my farming and my church work and trying to court Gracie, when people were not around and I was lucky enough to get there in the lane. And I am a-tellin' you that kept me a-going. I had no time, nohow, to bother much about a lot of foreigners quarreling and killing each other over there in Europe. I had had fighting and quarreling myself. I had found it bad. I had learned that it didn't profit a nuthin' and I had given it up for ever. I hoped I didn't want to go in for it, nohow. I jes wanted to be left alone to live in peace and love. I wasn't a soldier, and I didn't want to be. I didn't see that I had anything to do with them-there things away over in Europe. I kinder figured out that if some place were quarreling and fighting in the valley next to ours it wasn't none of my business to go over there and interfere, and Europe was a much farther than that, and I was in a peaceful valley. That's what the war meant to me.

I didn't think our country would get into it, nohow. I didn't think it had anything to do with it. I never even dreamed that we would go over there and fight. Even when we got into it in 1917, it seemed to me like we was off and I didn't figure on being called. But the little cloud was growing bigger and bigger, and even in our little valley there was a heap of folks talking of going away and fighting, and there was a to-be-able to talk of the draft and of how we would have to go. I couldn't see it that way. I couldn't sorter get interested, and I jes didn't want to fight, nohow.

I wasn't unpatriotic or disloyal or anything like that. I knowed my people for generations back had always fought for their country. I knowed we were all good patriots in the mountains, but that there World War seemed such a long way off. So I didn't pay much attention to it. I didn't let it bother me. I kept on going as I had been ever since I had been saved.

Gracie's Promise.

One summer afternoon I got my old squirrel gun and went down the lane as usual and met Gracie. I disremember what we talked about or what it happened, but I know we came to an understanding. I walked back home the happiest man that ever could be. I was kinder drunk with happiness. I had Gracie promise that she would marry me. Her folks were agin me but she was for me. I sorter lived in a dream for the next few days. And when I wrote to the board that I didn't want to go, so it seemed to me, I jes sorter took me by the back of the neck and tried to lift me out of my little valley and throw me to the war over there in France. I received from the postoffice a little red card telling me to register for the draft.

I can't tell you how I felt. I just can't describe it. I was all mused up. Everything was going from under me. Fight! Kill! And I'd been contented to the Gospel of peace and love, and of the good for evil.

That's how the war came to me. In the midst of all my peace and happiness and dreams, which I got all along were too good to be true and just couldn't last. In my records in the War Department in Washington, D. C., there is a little narrow pink slip, marked:

Conscientious Objector.

YORK, ALVIN C.

Desires release as he is conscientious objector.

A. G. 383-2 Exempt. Religious sects.

4-19-1

1918

So long as the records remain I will be officially known as a conscientious objector. I was, I couldn't have been anything else nohow.

"At first I jes couldn't imagine I would be a soldier. The war seemed too far away to be missing out on it. And I didn't want to be in it nohow. I never had killed nobody, not even in my

bad days, and I didn't want to begin now. I turned my back on all of those rowdy things and found a heap of comfort and happiness in religion. I joined the church. It was the Church of Christ in Christian Union. I had taken its creed and I had taken it without what you might call reservation. I was a Sunday Christian. I believed in the Bible. And I tried my own way to live up to it. It was the only creed of my church. To be a member I had to accept the Bible as the inspired word of God. I did. And the Bible said, "Thou shalt not kill." That was so definite a child could understand it. There was no way around or out of it. So you see there were two reasons why I didn't want to go to war. My own experience told me that it weren't right. And the Bible was agin it, too.

But Uncle Sam said he wanted me and he wanted me most awful bad. And I had also been brought up to believe in my country. I knowed that even in the Civil War when Tennessee was a doubtful State, my two grandfathers had both fought straight out for the Union. I knowed that my great-grandfather, old Conrod Pile, had been one of the pioneers who come here to build up this here country, and he hadn't never hesitated to use a gun, and I kinder felt that my ancestors would want me to do whatever my country demanded of me.

Conscientious Objections.

So you see my religion and my own experience sorter told me not to go to war, and the memory of my ancestors jes as plainly sorter told me to get my gun and go and fight. I didn't know what to do. I am a-tellin' you there was a war going on inside of me and I didn't know which side to lean on. I was a heap bothered. It is a most awful thing when the wishes of your God and your country sorter get mixed up and go against each other. One moment I would want to go to war to follow God, and the next I would hesitate and almost make up my mind to follow Uncle Sam. Then I wouldn't know which to follow or what to do.

I wanted to follow both. But I couldn't. They were opposite. And I couldn't reconcile them nohow in my mind. I was so confused. I was so confused. I wanted to be a good Christian and a good American too. I had always figured that the two were sort of connected. And now I was beginning to find out that they were kinder opposed to each other. If I went away to war and fought and killed, according to my reading of the Bible, I weren't a good Christian. And if I didn't go to war and do these things, according to Uncle Sam, I weren't a good American.

So I was the next bothered boy in all of these mountains. I didn't know what to do or where to turn. I walked the mountains night after night, trying to figure it out. I read the Bible over and over. I prayed and prayed often late into the night. I got away off in the woods and I got out that little Government card telling me to register for the draft. I turned it over. I read and studied it. I jes couldn't make up my mind that the Bible were wrong. And I couldn't make up my mind Uncle Sam were right. I was a soul in doubt. I'm a-tellin' you, I was most unhappy.

Pastor Pile was the registrar. He had a store and the postoffice at Pall Mall, Tenn., and the Government done had him to take the registration for the draft. I went to him and we talked it over, and we read the Bible and prayed together. No matter how we looked at it, we always come up against "Thou shalt not kill." That was the word of God and that was how it was revealed in His Holy Book. There was no getting past that nohow.

So when I registered I claimed exemption from the draft. I wrote on the paper: "I don't want to fight." And that there paper with that statement on it is now in the War Department in Washington, D. C.

A few weeks later I filed this application:

To Local Board,
County of Pentress,
Alvin Cullum York, Serial No. 378, hereby certify that I am 29 years old and reside at Pall Mall, Tenn.

I hereby respectfully claim discharge from selective draft on the following ground, that I am—

(1) A person who was a member of a well-recognized sect or organization, organized and existing May 18, 1917, whose then existing creed or principles forbade its members to participate in war in any form.

I do further solemnly swear that my religious convictions are against war or participation therein in accordance with the creed or principles of said religious organization.

I do hereby bind myself to report in person and to notify said Local Board, at once, whenever the conditions entitling me to discharge cease to exist.

A. C. YORK,
Pall Mall, Tenn.

Subscribed and affirmed to before me this 1st day of Sept. 1917.

BLAINE WILLIAMS,
Notary Public,
State of Tennessee, County of Pentress.

Mother York and her daughter-in-law, Gracie, the beautiful young wife of Sergt. Alvin York.

creed or principles forbade its members to participate in war in any form and whose participation therein in accordance with the creed or principles of said well-recognized religious sect or organization.

But the local board refused to exempt me. LOCAL BOARD FOR THE COUNTY OF PENTRESS, STATE OF TENNESSEE, JAMESTOWN, TENN.

Serial No. 378. Order No. 218. Alvin Cullum York.

Denied because we do not think "The Church of Christ in Christian Union" is a well-recognized religious sect, etc. Also, we understand it has no special creed except the Bible, which its members more or less interpret for themselves, and some do not disbelieve in war, and therefore there is nothing forbidding them to participate.

Followed God.

Then I was bothered more than ever. I done what I thought was right. I followed God, so I thought, even against the judgment of my country. I done wrote to the board that I didn't want to kill; and because I belonged to a church which was opposed to war. And they done refuse my appeal. But that didn't convince me, nohow. I couldn't accept the written word of man against the written command of God. So I appealed against their decision. I wrote them:

LOCAL BOARD FOR THE COUNTY OF PENTRESS, STATE OF TENNESSEE, JAMESTOWN, TENN.

To Local Board,
Alvin Cullum York, Pall Mall, Tenn., now hereby claim an appeal to the district board for Middle District of Tennessee, Nashville, Tenn., because you denied my claim for discharge, which was based upon the ground that I am a member of a well-recognized religious sect or organization existing May 18, 1917, whose then existing creed or principles forbade its members to participate in war, etc.

Pall Mall, Tenn.

And I also forwarded two affidavits, one from Pastor Pile and one from myself:

1. Affidavit of Person Whose Discharge Is Sought.

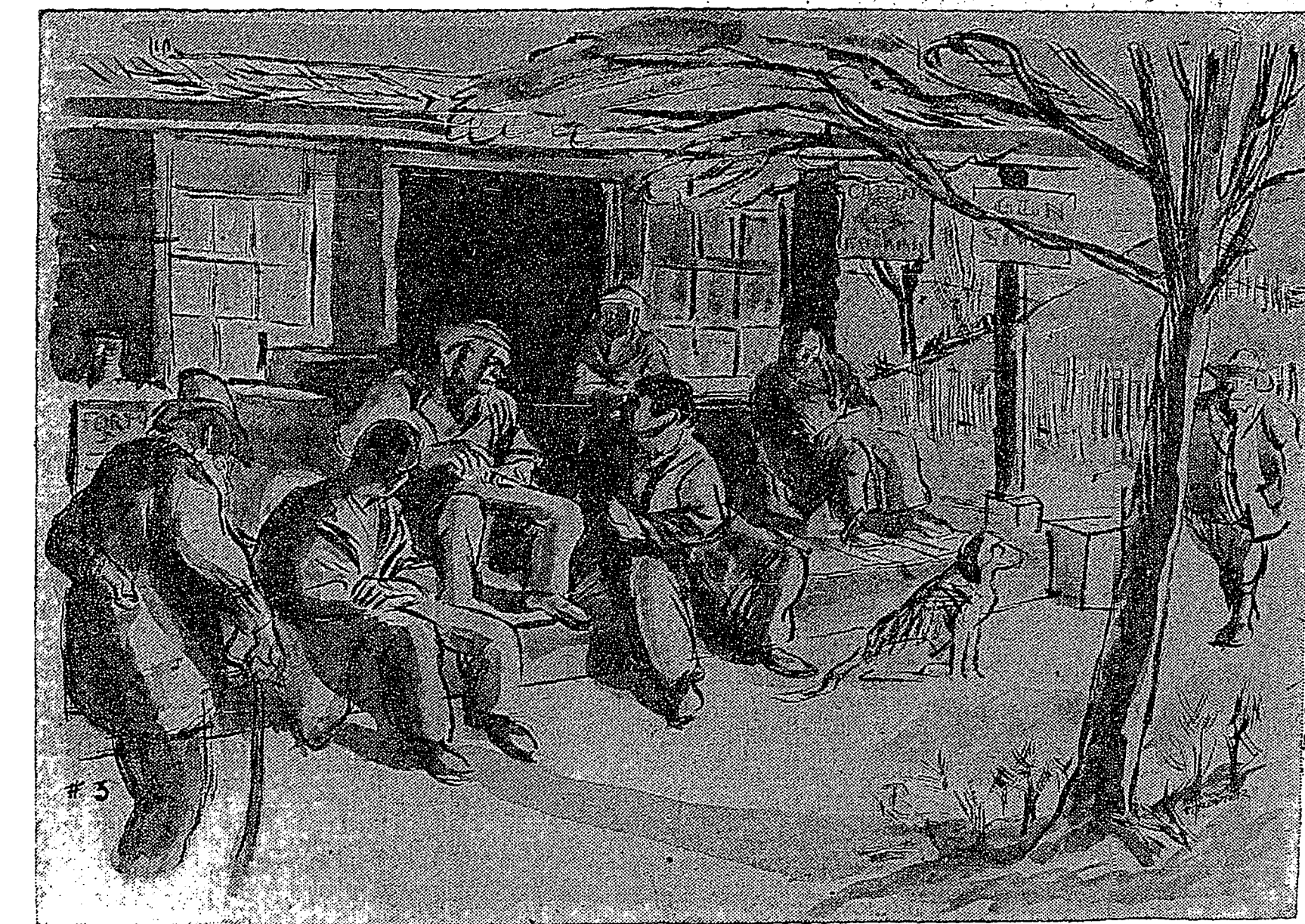
State of Tennessee,
County of Pentress, to-wit:

I, Alvin Cullum York, do solemnly affirm that I am 29 years old and reside at Pall Mall, Tenn., and that Serial Number 378 was given me by the Local Board for County Pentress, and that I am for my discharge was filed with said Local Board on the 28th day of August,

1917, on the ground that I was a person who was a member of any well-known religious organization, organized and existing May 18, 1917, whose then existing creed or principles forbade its members to participate in war in any form.

I do further solemnly swear that my religious convictions are against war or participation therein in accordance with the creed or principles of said religious organization.

I do hereby bind myself to report in person and to notify said Local Board, at once, whenever the conditions entitling me to discharge cease to exist.



I heard them talking about war around the store.

1917, on the ground that I was a person who was a member of any well-known religious organization, organized and existing May 18, 1917, whose then existing creed or principles forbade its members to participate in war in any form and whose religious principles are against war or participation therein, in accordance with the creed or principle of said religious organization.

I do further solemnly swear that I am a member in good faith and good standing, of the Church of Christ in Christian Union, which, on the 18th day of May, 1917, was organized and existing as a well-recognized sect or organization whose existing creed or principles forbade its members to participate in war in any form.

I do further solemnly swear that my religious convictions are against war or participation therein in accordance with the creed or principles of said religious organization.

I do hereby bind myself to report in person and to notify said Local Board, at once, whenever the conditions entitling me to discharge cease to exist.

A. C. YORK,
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against fighting. I mean I was fighting hard so I would not have to go to war and kill. It was sorter like a forest fire, when you fight fire with fire. I didn't understand it all. I only knowed I was troubled more'n I ever'd been before. I was up against the biggest thing I ever'd been up against. I'd used God's holy command in order to get an exemption from war. And now men who claimed they were jes as good Christians as I was and were good churchmen, too, although they didn't belong to my church, disallowed the words of God, as I had heard them, and told me that I would have to go to camp and learn to fight and kill for my country. So I appealed again:

Jamestown, Tenn., a claim of appeal to your Honorable Board from the decision of the said Local Board, wherein said Local Board denied my claim for discharge, which claim was based upon the ground that I am a member of a well-organized Religious Sect or organization, existing May 18, 1917, whose then existing creed or principles forbade its members to participate in war in any form and whose convictions are against war or participation therein in accordance with the creed or principles of said well-recognized religious sect or organization.

A. C. YORK, Pall Mall, Tenn.

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TOM SKEYHILL

CHAPTER 5. TO THE FRONT.

THE sergeant in charge of our platoon was Harry Parsons, of Brooklyn, N. Y. He'd been an actor and he was jes a natcherborn entertainer. He used to lead us in singing. He used to entertain us at night, and when we were out on a long rout march and were tired out he would get us around and go to it and then we'd all get to laughing and singing. That's one of the ways he handled us. He was a big husky sort of fellow. He knew how to handle that platoon. He didn't fight unless he had to, and then he'd hit 'em with both hands together. He'd put his chin out and let his fly with both hands at the same time. And when he did that somebody went down, and it was never him. But he never handled our fellows unless he had to. But when he had to he made a right smart job of it. Something must have happened to him over there in the Argonne, because when he come home he was changed. He went back on the stage but he done lost his power to entertain.

Then we had two of the widest fighting corporals that ever knocked them down and dragged them out. One of them was Bernard Early. He used to be a bartender in Connecticut. The amount of liquor he could put away was most amazing. He didn't know how to fight, but he couldn't be beat. Early come from Ireland where they jes natcherly breed fighting men. In and around the camp, in the saloon or over in the front line in France, it was all the same to Bernie. If there was a fight he was happy. If there wasn't he was kinder always looking for one. But he was a friendly chap, and he had a sorter way with him. He was a right smart soldier, too, most awful brave. I guess he hadn't never known what fear was.

This particular buddy was another corporal, William S. Coker. He was a Pole from around Boston and New York, where he used to be an ice man. He was always rarin' to go. You ought to've heard him talk. He was funny-ov'er he said what he wanted to say. He went into the front line trenches if the Germans ever threw bombs at him he would jes eat them-there bombs for breakfast. These-here two corporals jes lead the hard-boiled soldiers I ever knowed. It took me a long time to understand them, and I'm a thinkin' I ain't never really done it. But jes the same, once they got going I jes knowed jes what they was doin'. Jes a heap more better than a whole swarm of hornets or bumblebees ever could have.

Among the privates was that-there Sok. For a little time I didn't know who he was, but his name, I thought it was a nickname. When he went berserk over there at the front it looked as if he never would stop nowh until he got right through.

Then there was Michael Saccina, a little Italian. I think he come from New York. After the fight in the Argonne he likened the German major's whistle to the little whistle on a peanut stand at home in New York. That sorter speaks for itself. And there was Joe Konoski and Walter Swank and Muzzi and Beardsley and Johnson and a heap of others, all of them most awful hard fightin' men and most awful tough soldiers. Most of them were always causing a lot of trouble; but they bothered the Germans a heap more with their knockers any other else. I recollect, too, we had a couple of farm boys from the South with us. Hol hol!

When we were in New York, before sailing, they got their safety razors. They didn't understand them nowh. One of them fixed up his razor and tried to shave with it, but it weren't no good. He looked at it and said, "This is a sorter razor, it gives you for nothing ain't never no good," and with a sort of disgusted look on his face he throwed it away. The other one tried several times without never cutting a hair. Then he throwed his razor away, and said he "never had no use for the Democrats nowh," and now they were in power they had to go and buy razors that wouldn't shave. Hol hol! They were trying to shave with the wax paper on the blades!

So these were the sort of soldier boys that I was with in the Eighty-second division. Jes a bunch of hard-fighting doughboys, always spilling for a scrap. But when you got to know them, they were jes about as fine a bunch of boys as ever lived together and did square right and square left, and when they got into it over there they jes kept on goin'.

Of course, it taken me a long time to get to know them. In camp I never did think I would learn to understand them, and I guess they couldn't figure me out nowh. They knowed that I was a conscientious objector, and they hadn't much use for that. They jes didn't understand. Sometimes they got to teasing me most awful bad, but I never done any arguing with them. I hadn't anything to say or any fault to find, and I wasn't going to quarrel or fight with them no matter what they done. I didn't want to fight nobody and least of all American doughboys.

So we went on training together through the early months of 1918.

MARCH, 1918. Camp Gordon, Ga. Well, they give me a gun and oh my that old gun was jes full of grease and I had to clean that old gun for inspection. The sergeant had jes had to get that old gun clean. So when I got this gun I begin to drill with the gun, and we had to hike once a week. So I have seen many boy fall out of the hikes. We had to haft to take long hikes with all our stuff on our back and carry that gun. Hol hol! And we would haft to go out before daylight and have sham battles. So I begin to wan a pass to go home.

That first Army rifle that was issued me was all full of grease, gun grease of some kind. Of course, I didn't like that. The rifles we used in the mountains was always kept clean. They were most all muzzle loaders. And I'm tellin' you up to 100 yards they could out-shoot them-there Army rifles any time. But, of course, a muzzle

loader wouldn't be no good nowh in a modern war. It takes too long to reload. It don't carry far enough, and it's too heavy. So I had to get used to the Army rifle. And I did. I cleaned it up. I took care of it. I put it together again. I nursed it and doctored it. I learned all about it.

Then we went out on the rifle ranges to practise shooting. Them-there Greeks and Poles and New York Jews and some of the boys from the big cities hadn't been used to handling guns. Some of them didn't even know how to load them, and when they fired they not only missed the targets, they raised the back-grounds on which the targets were fixed. They missed everything but the sky. It shore was dangerous scoring for them boys. Jes, of course, it weren't no trouble nowh for me to hit them great big Army targets. They were so much bigger than turkeys' heads. And an Army bull's-eye is about a million times bigger than a crane's cut with a sharp knife on a piece of board or a tree; and that's the target we most often used in our shooting matches at home. We had to cut the center right out to win anything. That's the sort of shooting I was used to. So I made a toiable score on the shooting ranges in camp.

I got my pass to go home in late March. I taken the train as far as I could and then I hiked the last 12 miles over the mountains, alone. I had to carry my suit case, too. Hol hol! It hurt to say good-bye to Mother. And I jes knowed I would never forget that-there last meeting in the lane with Gracie. But I ain't a-writin' about those things. There are some things in your life that you can't do nothing else with but jes sorter feel deep inside of you. And that's the way it was with me.

MARCH 29. Fall Mail, Tenn. So I had to start back to my company, and that was a heart-breaking time for me, as I knowed I had to go to France. But I went back to my company, trusting in my God and asking him to keep me safe although I was a coward and much hardship and temptation. But yet I could look and up say: O God, in hope that sends the shining ray, Far down the future's bendin' way; In peace that only Thou canst give; With Thee, O Master, let me live. Then it was that the Lord would bless me, and I almost felt sure of coming home, for the Lord was with me.

APRIL 19. Camp Gordon, Ga. So we left Camp Gordon in the afternoon.

Camp Upton, N. Y. We got to Camp Upton, N. Y., so we stayed there a few days and drilled.

APRIL 30. Boston, Mass. We went to Boston, Mass.

MAY 1. Boston, Mass. About 4 o'clock am we got on for France. I had a hard time of it.

We left Boston and sailed down around to New York Harbor and we stopped there until we got our convoy, and then we lit out. And that was the first time that I had ever seed the open sea. It was too much for me. I was sick and I was scared. My parents come from Jimtown, was born inland. And he never seed the open ocean until he growed up. And when he stood on the beach and seed it for the first time, his friends asked him what he thought of it, and he said, "It was a success." But when Mark said that he wasn't on the ocean. He was on the shore. And when our old boat got away out and begun to pitch and toss I jes knowed Mark was wrong.

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I did a heap of thinking and praying.

The Greeks, Italians and Poles, and New York Jews stood the trip right smart. That kinder impressed me. It sorter made up for their bad shooting. I sorter got to like them more.

Over There.

MAY 16. Liverpool, England. We got off the boat in the evening.

MAY 17. Camp Knottish, England. We stayed at a little camp called Knottish on the 17.

MAY 18. Southampton, England. We went to Southampton.

MAY 19. Southampton, England. Stayed there the 19.

MAY 20. Southampton, England. We started from England to France.

So you see I didn't see much of England. I'd traveled over 3,000 miles from my home to get there, and when I did get there all I did was hike and catch trains and keep moving. I migat jes as well have been in Georgia, only the English country was more beautiful. I was sort of roung-e and the parks and fields were so neat and tidy that it most looked as though they had special gardeners to look after every few acres of them.

Of course, we were all anxious to get to France. We wanted to get into it and get it over. We had a sorter idea that they would rush us right to those old front-line trenches and let us get at the Germans without losing any time.

MAY 21. Laharve, France. So we got to France at Laharve, there we turned in our guns and got British guns.

We crossed the English Channel on the H. M. S. Viper. It was more like a bucking mule than a boat. We were only on it for a few hours, but that was a plenty. Long before we landed, I didn't care whether we stayed up or went down, whether we got there or didn't get there. I didn't care about anything. I was kinder miserable. I missed the mountains of Tennessee more'n ever.

We spent our first night in France in a little camp outside of Laharve. We had to turn in our guns and get British guns. I had takened a liking to mine by this time. I had takened it apart and cleaned it up so often that I had learned every piece, and could almost put it back together with my eyes shut. The Greeks and Italians and Jews and Poles were improving. They had stayed continuously on the rifle range for a month or two, and got so they could do shootin'. They were fairly good pals, too. But I missed the mountain boys. I was the only mountaineer in the regiment. I was the largest in our platoon.

We got our first gas masks in Laharve. That brought the war a whole heap closer. I never did like those pesky gas masks.

We traveled in box cars. They were marked, "Forty men or eight horses." One of our boys who was detailed to load the cars, went to the captain and said, "Captain, I loaded the 40 men all right, but if you put the eight horses in too they will shore trample the boys to death. Hol hol!"

MAY 22. Eu, France. Taken the train at Laharve and come to a little place called Eu.

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MAY 24. Floraville, France. We ate our breakfast at Eu and then hiked to Floraville, and jes stayed at Floraville a few days.

Field Marshal Haig and his staff inspected one of our battalions here. The British commander made a right smart impression on the boys. While he was with them he went and inspected one of the kitchens. One of the cooks was a great fellow from Tennessee, and the field marshal asked him if everything was all right, and he said, "No, everything is all wrong, most awfully, all wrong—there was no salt." The field marshal turned and asked him what he was doing with him, and asked for an explanation. The quartermaster said the two last salt ships were torpedoed and there was a shortage. The field marshal then instructed him to immediately send some salt to the American kitchen. That kinder tickled our boys.

Our own Gen. Pershing also inspected us. We were anxious to make a right smart impression on him, because we knowed if we did we would get up to the front-line trenches so much quicker, and our boys were jes rarin' to go. Gen. Pershing made even a better impression than Field Marshal Haig, and he seemed sorter satisfied with us. So you see here we were in France. And we were inspected by two commanders in chief and we got by all right. We shore were a different outfit to the ramin' boys that were with them that first got together in Camp Gordon, in Georgia.

Anyone who thinks that soldiering is jes goin' back in the hills and fightin' is jes plumb foolin' himself. Weeks passed and we never seen a trench except the training ones. We never once heard the sound of guns. All we did was hike, and hike, and hike—then hike again. They shore kept us a-going-hike. It seemed as though they had sent us to France to kinder test out the strength of them-there American military shoes.

JUNE 4. Mons Babert, France. Hiked here and we stayed a few days.

And the boys were beginning to think by this time that we weren't a fightin' outfit at all. We were jes sorter touring France—on the hoof. Hol hol! I didn't mind it much because I was used to hunting and I never seen a trench except the training ones. We never once heard the sound of guns. All we did was hike, and hike, and hike—then hike again. They shore kept us a-going-hike. It seemed as though they had sent us to France to kinder test out the strength of them-there American military shoes.

JUNE 10. Lucy, France. Hiked to Lucy.

Of course, of a night time if we was near a town some of the boys got leave. Some of them got all tattered and ragged, and some of them got in rouge and cognac, and, being soldiers, they were right smart when it came to drinkin' there pretty French girls. Some of them knowed jes about hunting and findin' them, and I did about trailing coon and fox back there on the mountains at home. They were fuller of fight than ever. It was in them and it had to come out. They come to meet at the Germans yet, so they sorter practiced out on themselves. There was a heap of Irish and Poles in our platoon, and one night in one of the cafes one of the Irish boys said he didn't believe the Poles could fight nowh. Hol hol! That shore started 'em. They went at it with fists and belts. They turned that cafe into a no man's land, only worse, and we had to turn out the guard to stop it. I'm tellin' you, there was nothin' to mean or about the boys. They was jes sorter full of life.

I didn't go into the towns much. I had put all of the drinkin' and fightin' in my head, and I left it back home in the Kentucky line. I didn't have a drink all the time I was in France. I didn't have a fist fight or an argument. I didn't shed no tears either. I wasn't any better'n any of the other boys. It was jes my way of livin'.

JUNE 20. Lucy, France. Hiked to Lucy.

Of course, of a night time if we was near a town some of the boys got leave. Some of them got all tattered and ragged, and some of them got in rouge and cognac, and, being soldiers, they were right smart when it came to drinkin' there pretty French girls. Some of them knowed jes about hunting and findin' them, and I did about trailing coon and fox back there on the mountains at home. They were fuller of fight than ever. It was in them and it had to come out. They come to meet at the Germans yet, so they sorter practiced out on themselves. There was a heap of Irish and Poles in our platoon, and one night in one of the cafes one of the Irish boys said he didn't believe the Poles could fight nowh. Hol hol! That shore started 'em. They went at it with fists and belts. They turned that cafe into a no man's land, only worse, and we had to turn out the guard to stop it. I'm tellin' you, there was nothin' to mean or about the boys. They was jes sorter full of life.

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I didn't go into the towns much. I had put all of the drinkin' and fightin' in my head, and I left it back home in the Kentucky line. I didn't have a drink all the time I was in France. I didn't have a fist fight or an argument. I didn't shed no tears either. I wasn't any better'n any of the other boys. It was jes my way of livin'.

JUNE 20. Lucy, France. Hiked to Lucy.

Of course, of a night time if we was near a town some of the boys got leave. Some of them got all tattered and ragged, and some of them got in rouge and cognac, and, being soldiers, they were right smart when it came to drinkin' there pretty French girls. Some of them knowed jes about hunting and findin' them, and I did about trailing coon and fox back there on the mountains at home. They were fuller of fight than ever. It was in them and it had to come out. They come to meet at the Germans yet, so they sorter practiced out on themselves. There was a heap of Irish and Poles in our platoon, and one night in one of the cafes one of the Irish boys said he didn't believe the Poles could fight nowh. Hol hol! That shore started 'em. They went at it with fists and belts. They turned that cafe into a no man's land, only worse, and we had to turn out the guard to stop it. I

Sergeant York's Own Story *Edited by TOM SKEYHILL*

CHAPTER IX. THE ARMISTICE.

THE fightin' hadn't done stopped yet. There was some more big battles ahead—terrible battles. And I was only wishing and praying that a good God would bring all this man-killing desolation to an end.

OCTOBER 9TH.

Argonne Forest. Well now as we went on our way through the thick woods of the Argonne we could hear the cries of our boys who were being shot, and, oh, my, we had to sleep by the dead and with the dead. But when we were seeing so many of our boys being shot, all we could say is just to say as we seen our fallen comrades. Goodby, pal; I don't know where you is camping now:

Whether you've pitched your tent 'neath azure skies.

Or whether o'er your head the bleak storm winds blow.

I only know that when your final call come for you

It almost broke my heart to see you go.

But, I trust, pal, that you are ready to meet that last call. Yes, and now you be careful that the last final call don't find you not ready to meet your God in peace.

OCTOBER 10TH.

Pleceville, the Argonne Forest. We got to Pleceville.

OCTOBER 12TH.

Somerance, the Argonne Forest. We had got to Somerance, and during this time we had lost heavy on our men and was still losing them, as you know that you can't fight in war without losing men. and the Germans was shelling us awful with big shells, also gas, and the boys laying there that they couldn't hurry. Oh, my, I can't tell you how I felt, and when those big shells would come over and burst, then I heard my comrades crying and mourning. All we could do was to trust God to protect us and look up and say:

Good-by, o'd pal, your body sleeps heer 'neath the sod.
Your soul, I pray, has gone home to God.

But yet I can't know the greenwood tree that leads into the vale beyond. Not yet. So close by this, pal, my solitary bunk I had to make to stay over night, and, oh, how lonely, how sad, no tongue can tell. But yet God was with me. Is God with you? If not, please don't do as many others have done—put it off to long.

So we stayed in the front at Somerance until we got relieved by the 80th Div. boys.

We stayed in actual fighting in the Argonne from the time we went in, which was the morning of October 8 to November 1. Over three weeks. Fighting in the front line all the time and through those terrible woods. And we were both mused up right smart. The woods and us. Those old woods were all ruined. And we were all shot to pieces. There were not many of them there Greeks and Italians left. But what was left were still fighting like a pack of wildcats. I shore did like those boys now. They were my buddies. Yes; they were still burning up a most awful amount of ammunition. But they always kept on going. Always. The nearest I come to getting killed in France was in an apple orchard in Somerance in the Argonne. It was several days after the fight with the machine guns. We had a very heavy barrage from the Germans suddenly drop down on us, and we were ordered to dig in and to lose no time about it. Some of us were digging in under an apple tree. The shells were bursting purty close. But we didn't take much notice of them. Jes kept right on a-digging. It's funny, after you've been at the front a right smart while you can almost tell where the shells are going to burst and what size they are. It is a sort of soldier's instinct. And this morning they were close, but not close enough to scare us. And then they got closer. And we dug faster. I have dug on farms and in gardens and in road work and on railroad, but it takes big shells dropping close to make you really dig. And I'm a-telling you, the dirt was flying. And then bang!—one of the big shells struck the ground right in front of us, and we all went up in the air. But we all come down again. Nobody was hurt. But it sure was close.

NOVEMBER 1.

Argonne Forest. So we came out of the lines to a German's rest camp, and there we got something to eat—

I was made a sergeant just as quick as I got back out of the lines. But, oh, my! so many of my old buddies were missing, and we scarcely seemed the same outfit.

NOVEMBER 2.

Argonne Forest. And then we star'd out and hiked to a French camp.

NOVEMBER 4.

(No place given). We loaded on French buses to go to French camp.

NOVEMBER 5.

(No place given). We got to a French camp.

NOVEMBER 7.

Aix-Les-Bains. I taken train for Aix-Les-Bains. I had a fur-lough for ten days.

NOVEMBER 8.

Aix-Les-Bains. So I got to Aix-Les-Bain and went to the Hotel De Albion, and I stayed at this hotel from the 8th to the 16th, and I went around and seen some fine scenery. I got on a motor boat and went over to Italia, and there I seen some good scenery.

There was a bunch of us had been given a ten-day leave to Aix-Les-Bains.



The fightin' hadn't done stopped yet.

We went down there for a rest. We had been in the Argonne for several weeks without any relief and were tired and worn out and went down there to rest during the ten-day leave. We were staying in private places. We jes went around seeing the historical places, the old Roman baths and up on the mountain.

NOVEMBER 10.

Aix-Les-Bains. I went to church. I think the man gave us a very good talk. His subject was the angel helping the wounded to the aid station. And there I also seen the old Roman baths that they said was built 122 years before Christ.

And then it all come to an end. All of this killing and destroying.

NOVEMBER 11.

Aix-Les-Bains. And the armistice was signed. And they sure was a time in that city that day and night. Yes. Say, did you think that the armistice was sign on the eleventh month on the eleventh day and the eleventh hour of 1918? And another thing, did you ever know that the war just lasted 585 days from the time that the President declared war against Germany until the armistice was signed, and did you ever know that in this little short time of 585 days that the Americans was over here in France a holding a 77-miles front in the Argonne forest?

I don't know that I can jes exactly tell my feelings at that time. It was awful-noisy, all the French were drunk, whooping and hollering. The Americans were drinking with them, all of them. I never done anything much. Jes went to church and wrote home and read a little. I did not go out that night. I had jes gotten back there and were all tired. I was glad the armistice was signed, glad it were all over. There had been enough fighting and killing. And my feelings were like most all of the American boys. It was all over. And we were ready to go home. I felt that they had done the thing they should have done, signing the armistice.

PARIS.

The rejoicings which followed the armistice lasted for several days. I didn't take no part in them. I don't know why. I kinder think I felt it all so much that I daresn't let myself go.

NOVEMBER 17.

Champlette, France. Well, I'll go on—so I stopped at Champlette and the French had a dance that night and they had to go by my bed to where they were dancing and the girls would pull my feet until I couldn't sleep for them.

NOVEMBER 25.

Long, France. I went to see President Wilson and wife at Long, where they had a review. So there was a large crowd there. I enjoyed myself very well but I didn't get any dinner. So I was not enjoying a Xmas dinner, you see, ho, ho. So I went back to my company that night and it was after dark. So Mrs. Wilson was dressed very nice and she had a smile on her face all the time. She was wearing a Smart Seal Skin Coat with a Big Fox Collar and a close fitting Seal Skin Togue with a bright red rose trimming on one side and a little bunch of holly at her throat. So she looked very pleasing and Mr. Wilson was wearing a large black silk hat with a light gray fur coat. He also had a smile on his face. So that cheered the boys to see Mr. and Mrs. Wilson and hear them talk, ho, ho.

In January I began to travel over France and talk to the boys. I was traveling in and out of my division headquarters something like six weeks. I traveled by motorcycle and automo-

bile. I would just go to a place and the boys would come around and I would hold a meeting and talk to them. I spoke in the Y huts and out in the open to the battalions and to the assembled troops on the ground. I got good representation everywhere. Our division chaplain, the Rev. C. Tylor, of Milwaukee, often traveled with me. He was a nice man and a powerful preacher. I first talked to the boys in our Eighty-second Division and then I went to other outfits.

On one of these trips they done drove me about 80 miles an hour on a motorcycle over those old French roads. It was asking too much of God, traveling like that. In front of the machine guns in the Argonne I couldn't protect myself. So I expected Him to look after me. And He done it and I came out unharmed. But there was no sense rushing like mad over those old roads on a motorcycle. So I wouldn't do it.

The boys were longing to get home. They felt they had done their jobs. The war was over. They were kinder restless. I was that way, too. Now that there was nothing much to do, I began to get homesick again. I began to think more and more of the log cabin in the Valley of the Three Forks of the Wolf at home in Tennessee, and of my little old mother, and of Grace.

Oh, my! How slow those cold, wet days in camp went by. There was nothing to do and so much time to do it in. I don't like fooling around like that nohow. I kinder think the waiting, waiting, waiting pestered me a heap more than the war itself did. It jes seemed as though that old ship to take us home would never come.

FEBRUARY 12TH.

Prouthoy, France. I sit a round all day didn't do anything.

FEBRUARY 13TH.

Prouthoy. It was so cold and snowy that I never did anything but sit by the fire.

FEBRUARY 14TH.

Prouthoy. Cold and snowy and sit by the fire all day.

FEBRUARY 15TH.

Prouthoy. Cold and snowy and never did anything.

FEBRUARY 16TH.

Prouthoy. I went to church. It was Sunday and a rainy day, and we had a nice talk.

FEBRUARY 17TH.

Prouthoy. I never done anything much for I was not feeling good.

FEBRUARY 18TH.

Prouthoy. I didn't do much.

FEBRUARY 26TH.

Prouthoy. On the night of the 26th of February I taken the vant and started for Bordeaux.

At last we moved on to Bordeaux. En Route to Boudaux. I was on the train and it came an awful cold snowstorm about 3 p. m. So we was in box cars and it was cold and snowing and we had no fire. So it was pretty tough. But that was better than sleeping in those old French barns where the cows sleep in the parlor and the chickens in the dining room, ho, ho!

It was even worse in Bordeaux. Jes cold, stormy days with nothing to do but sit around and think of home. Of course, we did some drilling and marching. And there were guards and reviews which somehow now that the war was over didn't seem the same nohow. There was neither strength nor seasoning in them.

Once in a while though things did get a bit exciting. One night the officers had a dance in the Y hut. The privates were not allowed to go, but they done got tanked up on some of that French cognac. Then they sort of pushed in on the dance. They picked out most of the pretty girls, and the girls were kinder willing, too, ho, ho. And they sort of crowded the officers. I'm a-telling you that made them

there captains and lieutenants mad. They ordered me to call out the guard and get the boys off the floor. But that was a harder job than busting the Hindenburg line. The boys hung on to the girls and didn't want to give them up or stop dancing nohow. The officers were just as determined to keep the dance private, that is, for themselves and their girls. So I sorter arranged an armistice between them. I roped off that old dance floor and stationed the guards along the rope. So the officers were able to dance at one end. And the boys kept some of the girls and danced at the other end.

Later on in March I got me a leave pass and went to Paris. The first time I didn't do much but hike around and see the sights. I done heard a lot about that there opera. I had never heard of the word before. All I knowed about it from what the boys told me was that it was music, a lot of them stringed instruments playing together, so I hiked me to the place and bought a ticket and they done charged four dollars for a seat! I sat through it all right. I liked the orchestra, but I don't think I'd ever again spend four dollars to see another opera like it. I went out to Versailles and wandered through the palaces there. I went to the tomb of Napoleon. I went to where they buried the unknown soldier, but I didn't stay long because it sorter made me sad; and I didn't want to be sad in Paris; but I was sad jes the same. Of course, I could have gone out like a whole heap of boys and fooled around with the mademoiselles and the vin rouge, and sorter tried to forget the war and them there Germans I done killed in the Argonne. But I didn't drink and I had a girl of my own back home in the mountains. So I hiked around all day and at night time I jes got out in the streets and mixed in the crowd and then went home to bed.

MARCH 28.

Paris. I rode on the Paris wheel and took a train ride down to St. Louis 14 Plat at night.

I kinder think that bestest of all I enjoyed my ride on the Paris wheel. I'm a-telling you that when it started to go round and round with me on it and the sky and the ground all got mixed up, I not only forgot the war, I done forgot everything, ho, ho.

I went back to Paris again in April. I was ordered to represent my division as a non-commissioned officer at the first meeting of the American Legion. That was when it was formed.

APRIL 7.

Paris. I arrived in Paris at 8:30 a. m. and 10:30 a. m. was our meeting. I was there on time at the Hotel De Gabriel. So we had the meeting all day until 5:30 p. m. the meeting adjointing.

So you see I'm a charter member of the American Legion. It began right there in Paris at the Hotel De Gabriel. The meeting lasted all day until about 5:30 in the afternoon. I attended all the sessions. I jes knowed hit was going to grow into a big organization. It sorter seemed right that the buddies who fought together in France should have some sort of organization that would keep them together in peace.

Once I got lost tramping round the streets. That is the only time that I ever got bewildered as to direction. Right in the middle of that-thar old city the streets are all sorter mixed up. They seem to have no beginnings and no ends. And when they do have ends they sorter go plumb up against a blank wall. They call it a col-de-sac. So I got lost. I tried to get my direction of the sun, but I could not see it. Ho, ho! I tried to remember some of the buildings. I couldn't. And I'm telling you I couldn't make heads nor tails out of the names of the streets. I didn't know where I was. All I knowed was I was in Paris. So I went up to a mademoiselle and I told her as well as I could that I was lost and would she be so kind as to tell me where my hotel was. She was a right smart girl. She smiled and then taken me to a street car and put me on it and told the mademoiselle-conductor where I wanted to go and to let me off when I got there. She sure did, too. So, you see, I never taken any girls home in France, but one of them had to take me home, ho, ho!

One day some of us boys heard that the Queen of Roumania was coming in on the train. So we hiked down to the station. And, sure enough, she come and when she seed us she smiled and waved her hand. I was fairly close to her. She looked very pretty and she sorter walked like a queen. She had on a black dress and a kind of black veil.

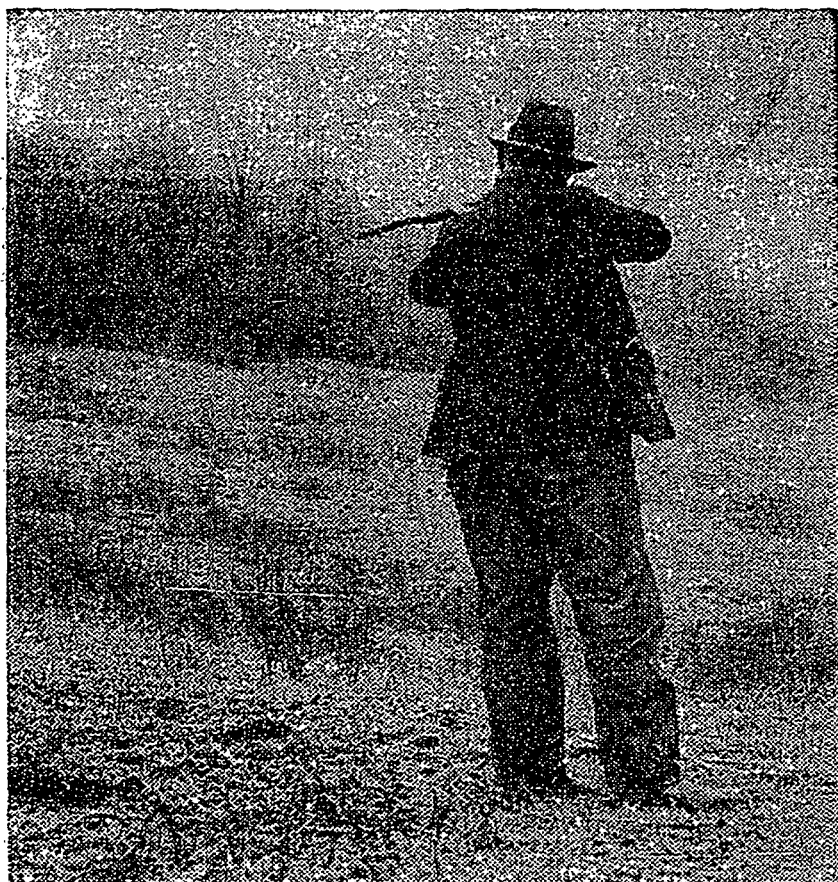
APRIL 8.

Paris. I seed the Queen of Roumania. She is a very good-looking lady, so I stayed in Paris until 8:26 on the night of the 9th.

I liked Paris all right. It was a right-smart city. Jes the same it sorter convinced me more than ever that cities don't mean much to me nohow. I knowed in my own heart that I wouldn't give up my mountains and the hunting and the shooting for all of the cities in the world. So soon as my leave was up I went back to the camp near Bordeaux. And I jes sat around there in the rain and the mud doing nothing and waiting for that-thar old ship to come and take us home. Oh, my! The days went by slower and slower. It jes seemed as if we would never get away from France. I'm a-telling you there were the homesickiest days I ever had in my life.

At last we got ready to sail. The boat done came. I'm a-telling you I was tickled. So were the boys. But when we got down to the wharf and began to load there were so many of us the boat wouldn't hold us all. And, oh, my! I had to stay behind with 66 others and do some more waiting. That was pretty tough. I'm a-telling you. But the next day another old boat came along and we done sailed jes the same.

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Sergt. York's thoughts turned to the Tennessee mountains, where wild turkey hunting was the only excuse for using a gun.

Sergeant York's Own Story *Edited by TOM SKEYHILL*

CHAPTER X. HOME.

MAY 10.

ON board U. S. S. Ohio. In the morning we went down to the docks and eat us a little and then we got on the U. S. A. Ohio boat at 2:26 p. m. We broke loose from the shores of France and by dark we was out of sight of land.

MAY 15.

At sea. Awful rough.

We had about three or four days of storms and most awful rough seas. I was right smart sick for several days. Had to stay down part of the time in my berth and part of the time on top of deck. I sure would have liked to see some trees or those old mountains. Oh my, that sea! I didn't feel like talking or doing anything but lying down and being left to myself alone. And then I knowed, too, that they were going to give me a big reception when I arrived in New York. They done wred out at sea. And that hed me worried. I would hev got out and walked if I could hev.

MAY 22.

Hoboken, N. J. At 2 p. m. I landed and the Tennessee Society had a five-day furlough for me to see New York City. So I stopped at Waldorf Hotel.

"Oh, my, I can't tell you how I felt when our ship steamed up New York Harbor and I seed the sky-scrapers sorter standing up against the sky. In the distance they looked jes a little like the mountains at home when you see them from a long way off.

Oh, my, I was so homesick!

I jes knowed I would never leave my country again. I didn't want to nohow. I stood there in front of the ship as we steamed up the harbor and when we passed the Statue of Liberty I sorter looked her in the eyes and I kinder understood what the doughboy meant when he said: "Take a good look at me, Old Girl. Take a good look at me, because, whenever you want to see me again you will have to turn around."

I knowed, of course, that a committee from the Tennessee Society was going to meet my boat. And they did. They tried to make a most awful fuss over me. They seemed to think I done done something wonderful. I couldn't see it that way nohow. I done done my duty like most any other soldier would have done when he was up against the same thing.

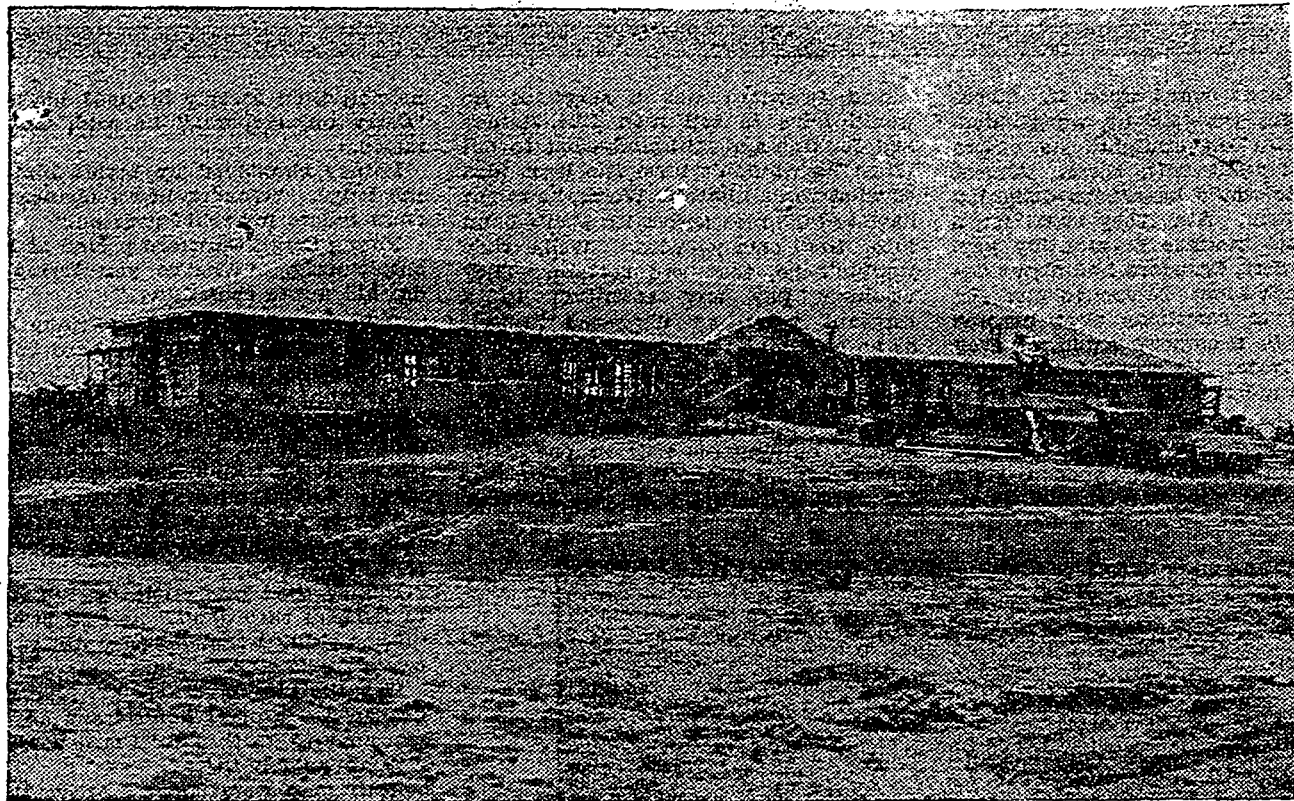
The Tennessee Society met me at the boat with a car. There was a right smart heap of newspaper men there, too, and they made me stand around and have my picture taken. There were a whole heap of cameras. So you see I was under fire again. And they done questioned me. And by the time they had finished writing about me in their papers I had whipped the whole German Army single-handed. Ho, ho! Those newspaper men! But they were very nice.

They gave me a right smart reception in New York City. They drove me through the streets in an open car, and the streets were so crowded we could only go slow. It seemed as most everybody knowed me. They throwed a most awful lot of paper and ticker tape and confetti out of the windows of those big sky-scrapers. I wondered what it was at first. It looked like a blizzard. I didn't understand that it was for me until they told me. I thought it was a New York habit. And a very nice habit, too.

They takened me to the Waldorf Astoria, where they had a whole suite of rooms for me. There were two beds in my room. Twin beds. That kinder tickled me. I didn't know which one to sleep in. So I tried them both.

The Tennessee Society done give me a banquet, and there were a whole heap of people sitting down to the big dinner. There were generals and statesmen all over the place. They asked me that many questions that I kinder got tired inside of my head and wanted to get up and light out and do some hiking. There were a heap of speeches. They seemed to be having a sorter competition saying nice things about me. They told me I was famous. And I thought to myself, if this is fame, having to stay at a big hotel with several rooms all to yourself and two beds to sleep in and a big banquet where there are so many people you couldn't remember them nohow, then fame ain't the sorter thing I used to think it was.

Of course, everybody was nice. But I'm a-telling you it was a tough corner for a mountain boy to be in. Between answering questions and kinder watching the people around me eat so I



Sergt. York is responsible for the building of several such schoolhouses as this in the Tennessee mountains.

would know how to handle that old silverware without making too many bad breaks. I'm a-telling you I was busied a plenty. But I got through it all right. I didn't know what all the plates and knives and forks and spoons were for. So I kinder slowed up and jes kept a couple of moves behind the others. So I knowed what to do. In the middle of that there old banquet I got to kinder dreaming about home and the little log cabin and my mother and Gracie and them there hound dogs of mine. I knowed I was to be with them soon, and I sorter couldn't think of anything else.

Jes the same, everybody was nice and meant well and they all done their best to give me a right smart time.

Next day I hiked a-plenty all over that old city. So you see I was still hiking. I done more of that when I was in the Army than anything else.

I tried to get my mother over the long-distance telephone, but we couldn't get through. That made me homesicker than ever.

They told me I could have anything I wanted in New York City. I got to figuring it out—and I couldn't figure that I wanted anything special. Hit's kinder funny that when you can have anything you want, you don't seem to want anything. That's life. So hit seems to me hit ain't having things that matters so much. Hits the wanting to have them that counts. They kept insisting. So I thought I would like to have a ride in the subway. You see I thought it was right smart to have them tunnels under the ground and be able to go all over New York City that way, so they done got a special train and rode me all over New York City in the subway. I liked that, ho, ho.

MAY 23.

New York City. I was looking at New York City. On the night of the 23d I took the train for Washington, D. C. honorable Hull had had come to get me.

Washington, D. C. So I got to Washington this morning about 6 a. m. So we drove a car all over Washington almost looking at the city and I had the honor to meet Secretary Baker of War and shake hands with him.

Congressman Cordell Hull takened me in charge and showed me all over Washington, D. C. He takened me to the White House to meet the President, but the President was done gone. So I met Secretary of War Baker. And we talked about the war. And he was most kind and considerate. I went to Congress. They takened me there on the floor of the House, and the members all come around me. And there was more questioning and a whole heap of cheers and applause. By this time I was sorter feeling like a red fox circling when the hounds are after it. I was beginning to wonder if I ever would get back to my own home again.

The next day I went back to New York City again; and they takened me to the stock exchange in Wall Street. That didn't mean nothing to me nohow. A country boy like me jes couldn't understand what it was all about. Rifle guns, hounds, foxes, coons, mountains, shootin' matches—I understand these things. I belong to them and I'm a-thinkin' they belong to me. But

money and big business were things I jes didn't understand nohow. The streets in that part of New York City are most awful narrow and plumb full of people. I figured it was sorter funny that people would be willing to crowd together and work and live in such cramped-up spaces when there's such a heap of open country and grass and sky in other parts of America. But then you see I was a country boy and didn't understand the city life.

About this time they begun to pester me with a whole heap of offers to go on the stage and into the movies. They offered so much money that it almost takened my breath away. I thought to myself, wouldn't I look funny in tights, ho, ho. Besides, I sorter felt that to take money like that would be commercializing my uniform and my soldiering. I knowed if I hadn't been to war and hadn't been a doughboy they never would have offered me nothing nohow. I also knowed I didn't go to war to make a heap of money, or to go on the stage or in the movies. I went over there to help make peace. And there was peace now. So I didn't take their thirty pieces of silver and betray that there old uniform of mine. I would have been interested in helping to make

the pictures if I didn't have to be in it myself and if they would do it, not to make a heap of money for themselves or for me but jes to show what the boys done done over there, and also to show what faith will do for you if you believe in it right. But I knowed they weren't interested in that. They jes wanted me to show how I done killed the Germans in the Argonne. So I wouldn't have nothing to do with them nohow. They also offered me a heap of money to write newspaper stories and sign advertisements. But I didn't want to do that either.

I jes wanted to be left alone to go back to my beginnings. The war was over. I had done done my job and I had done it the bestest I could. So I figured I ought to be left alone and allowed to go home to the mountains where I belonged. I sorter felt, too, that if they wanted to do something right smart for me they might help me to get a soon-go for home. The Army officers understood me and I understood them and they sent me South to be demobilized as soon as they could get the papers fixed up.

I'm a-saying right here that they treated me right smart all the time that I was in the Army. They done

played the game with me and they played square. So far as I am concerned, the officers and everybody connected with the Army done done the right thing by me. They were right smart folk.

In late May I got my transportation papers to Fort Oglethorpe, Ga., and there I got my discharge papers and transportation home. But I can't tell you what I felt like when I got home in May, 1919. The mountains sure looked good to me. The mountain people, thousands of them, come from all over jes to say howdy. All of my big brothers were there and my sisters and my mother.

As soon as I got back to the little old log cabin in the Valley of the Three Forks of the Wolf I went a-hunting—not for coon, or possum or fox or squirrels—went a-hunting for Gracie I done found her, too. And what I said to her and what she said to me and what we said to each other ain't nobody's business nohow.

Then I went out on the mountain-side where I used to pray, and when it was all quiet and there was nobody around nohow I returned thanks to God. He had given me my assurance that even if I didn't think it right I should go jes the same; and would be protected from harm; and would come back without a hair of my head injured. I don't know what I said to Him. I disremember. I jes felt.

And, oh, my, what a joyful time I had with them there hound dogs of mine. I done set down and looked at them and patted them and they wagged their tails and licked my hands, and then, ho, ho, they bayed and sorter circled round, and sorter lit out for the woods; jes to sorter remind me that they hadn't been foolin' round nohow while I was away; and they still knowed where the coons and possums and the foxes were.

In a few days I had the old uniform off and the overalls on. I done cleaned up the old muzzle-loader. It was all over. I was home.

A Heap o' Larnin'.

Nothing seemed to have changed much. The little old log cabin was still there at the head of the spring and the water in it was a-running and a-singing the same as ever. The razor-backs were rooting for acorns and hickory nuts jes as before. Their bells, and the cowbells, too, sounded much the same. The dogwood blossomed white and the redbud pinkish-like, jes as they used to. Though I seemed to notice them more now. The hills were as they always were, blue and kinder dreamy. And the people hadn't changed nohow. They were putting in their crops, working from sunup to sundown.

The same crowd of mountain boys and girls were to be seen at the store. The little church on the hill was doing to'able well. Rosy Pile held his Sunday school the same and the kiddies larned their lessons and some of them fell off to sleep jes about the same.

The war had come and gone. Millions of boys had been killed and wounded. Millions of dollars had been poured out jes like water. Homes all over the world had been desolated. Some of the old countries had been all mused up and new ones had come up and sort of takened their places. The whole outside world seemed to have changed. But not our valley. Everything there was kinder the same.

But I knowed, though, that I had done changed. I knowed I wasn't like I used to be. The big outside world I had been in and the things I had fought through had teched me up inside a most powerful lot. The old life I had lived seemed a long, long way behind me. It seemed to be a sort of other life in another world. I knowed I had changed. I was sort of restless and full of dreams and wanting to be doing something; and I didn't understand. So I sat out on the hillside trying to puzzle it out.

Before the war I had never been out of the mountains. I had never wanted to be. I had sorter figured that them there mountains were our shield against the iniquities of the outside world. They sorter isolated us and kept us together so that we might grow up pure-blooded and resourceful and God-loving and God-fearing people. They done done that, too, but they done more'n that. They done kept out many of the good and worth-while things like good roads, schools, libraries up-to-date homes, and modern farming methods. But I never thought of these things before going to war. Only when I got back home again and got



Sergt. Alvin C. York upon his arrival in New York.

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Little Stories of Great Events

WATT SOLVES STEAM MYSTERY

By RAMON COFFMAN, Author of "Uncle Ray's Corner."

Pump, Not Legendary Teakettle, Leads to First Steam Engine

Was Watt the inventor of the steam engine or simply its improver? Did his wife help or hinder his work? These are two of the questions treated by Ramon Coffman in this article, which likewise indicates that Watt's experiments were brought about by the sight of a model of Newcomen's steam pump, rather than by the traditional teakettle.

THERE was a dreamer in Scotland 166 years ago, a young fellow in his middle twenties. By trade he was an instrument-maker, with his workshop in a small room provided by the University of Glasgow. By inclination he was an inventor, one of those curious folk, who seem never satisfied with the present, but who desire to improve whatever they touch. By name he was James Watt.

Watt had turned his hand to many a field—besides preparing models for the students of mechanics at the university, he had made spectacles, flutes, violins and guitars. At one time he was asked to build an organ, and he undertook the enterprise with such vigor and skill that his production elicited the surprise and admiration of the musicians.

Steam was in those days a power known but little used. An ancient Greek had made a wheel which was turned by escaping steam, and others had toyed with the idea in later times. Denis Papin, that pathetic figure given to the world by France, had done far more than toy with steam; he had devised engines which would run by the pressure of hot vapor, he had striven to drive a boat by the power of steam and had succeeded in a crude, faltering way, but he had fought with an unyielding world, had flung his titanic genius into currents and eddies which would have none of him.

It was the work of Simon Newcomen which came down in the line of direct succession to James Watt. A century before, Newcomen had produced a steam pump, which was fairly effective in getting water out of mines—effective, yes, but hardly more than a good

milestone in the conquest of steam power. Left to itself, Newcomen's engine would not have meant a great deal in the directing of man's activity.

Mankind needed something more than the freeing of mines from water, more than the mechanical power supplied by clumsy water-wheels or problematical windmills. Fate was ready, if the string were pulled, to reveal a stream of changes unprecedented for their swiftness and import in all the long march of the human drama.

Who should pull the string? Was it to be this young Scotchman addicted, as he was, to nervous headaches, scarcely schooled, save by his own undirected efforts to acquire learning? Perhaps, and then again, perhaps not!

A turning point in Watt's life and conceivably in the life of mankind, came when a model of Newcomen's pump was brought to Watt's workshop in the University of Glasgow.

"Can you repair this steam pump so that I may show my students how it works?" asked the professor.

"I'll see what I can do," replied Watt.

When the professor had left, Watt examined the model. He studied the method by which the power of fire passing through water was supposed to bring about mechanical movement. At length he managed to effect repairs so that the little machine worked indifferently well. The piston moved when pressed by the steam, but it moved for only a short period—and then there must needs be delay for the production of more steam.

Many a man would have let it go at that, would have busied himself with the next job of the day. Watt did busy himself with other things, as he was compelled to do in order to earn his living, but the thought of Newcomen's model kept recurring to him. Why should there not be a pump which would better harness the power of steam? Were there not possibilities unnumbered for an engine which could be steadily driven by steam?

Giving further study to the model from time to time, Watt saw some of its defects. The heat of the steam was wasted in large part by going to warm the cool cylinder. How could that be avoided?

"I had gone," Watt tells us, "to take a walk on a fine Sabbath afternoon, early in 1765. I had entered the green

by the gate at the foot of Charlotte street and had passed the old washing house.

"I was thinking upon the engine when the idea came into my mind that as steam was an elastic body it would rush into a vacuum, and if a communication were made between the cylinder and an exhaust vessel it would rush into it and might be there condensed without cooling the cylinder."

This was the flash which was to bring about the separate condenser, provided that Watt could apply his thoughts to action. He had difficulty there, grave difficulty. Clever though he was putting his hands to the making of mechanical odds and ends, he was prone to allow his larger ideas to become la-

or not Watt would let the fever of his brain turn into the action of his hands.

The works of men, the bigger things, the things which count, have sometimes been impeded or destroyed by marriage; but the marriage of James Watt proved to be a case exactly the reverse. Into his life came Margaret

pounds and pence for household promotion, she threw her weight, her energy, her courage, to the other side of the scales.

"James," she would say, "let some of these other things go—you are on the track of achievement; put the ideas you have sketched into action—make your machine!"

Vision though she had, this woman could scarcely have surmised the magnitude of the stakes for which Fate was playing when she urged her husband toward the bigger goal. It would have required a seer to foretell the myriad engines which were to turn the wheels of factories, the locomotives hurtling across continents, the majestic steamers traversing every ocean; but she saw enough. The trend of Watt's life was brought more toward expression; the seeds were placed in contact with the soil.

The years which followed were rich in effort, rich in disappointment, rich in accomplishment. Step by step, Watt switched his trials from the improving of a steam pump to the production of a steam engine for general purposes. Falling into debt through his experiments, he took in partners; and at last succeeded in perfecting a practical steam engine, an engine which in 50 years was to revolutionize the industrial processes of Europe and America. The engine which propelled Robert Fulton's steamboat up the Hudson was built in England in Watt's factory.

The gentle wife who did so much behind the scenes to make the dream come true lived long enough to see only the beginning of the justification of her faith; but history owes to her a place among the immortals.

In the midst of all the honor and plaudits which came to him, Watt had the courage and honesty to say: "I am not the inventor of the steam engine—I am simply its improver." Those words might well be engraved upon his tombstone, for they betoken a nature which would not seize false credit, which preferred to let his work rest purely for what it was. Every inventor is in truth an improver, when careful analysis is made; but we may say without undue laudation that James Watt deserves to be ranked as the chief improver, the chief inventor, of the modern steam engine.

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"Can you repair this steam pump, so I may show my students how it works?" asked the professor.

tent, to express them in terms of dreaming rather than in fashioning patterns in the material world.

Without seeds, there could be no crops; but if the seeds are kept from the soil there still can be no crops. Without dreams there could be no invention; but the question was whether

Miller, a woman gentle of heart, cheerful, courageous, filled with faith in the man with whom she joined her lot.

To her husband Margaret gave a home—a blessing without which he for long years had struggled—and she gave much more. Instead of a petty insistence on the immediate demands of

Sergeant York's Own Story

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10.

to kinder thinking and dreaming. I never realized hit.

Then I knewed we had to have them. We jes had to. And the more I thought the more I kinder figured that all of my trials and tribulations in the war had been to prepare me for doing just this work in the mountains. All of my suffering in having to go and kill were to teach me to value human lives. All the temptations I done went through were to strengthen my character. All the associations with my buddies were to help me understand and love my brother man. All of the pains I done seed and went through were to help and prepare me. And the fame and fortunes they done offered me in the cities were to try me out and see if I was fitted for the work He wanted me to do.

Again the devil taketh him into an exceedingly high mountain and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and he said unto all these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him get thee hence, Satan, for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve.

So He was tempted. So everybody since, who is called on to do good, is tempted. So I, an unlearned mountain boy, was tempted too.

But I done come through it all all right. My prayers and the prayers of my mother and Pastor Pile and a whole heap of other friends were answered.

So I talked to Gracie about these dreams of mine. She understood. She done always understood. So we done get married. Gov. Roberts, the Governor of Tennessee, done come down to our valley and performed the ceremony. Thousands of people come from all over Tennessee to see the goings-on. And the mountain people provided the vittles. They brought in goats and hogs

and turkeys and slaughtered and dressed them right there on the hillside. They set up a table, the largest I ever seed, and they done piled hit up with all the meats and eggs there was and with sweet potatoes and cornbread and milk and jams and cakes and a whole mass of other things. We were married on the mountainside above the spring and under the shady trees and with the blue mountains and green grass and the flowers all around.

Then I begun what I felt was my life work. I went to the State Highway Department and asked them to build a road through the mountains. And they done done it. They built what we now call the York Highway, right across our county. Then the other counties done noticed it and built roads on either end. And today we have a right-smart road running through this here mountain country. And there were only mountain trails and old dirt roads that were no good nohow and creek beds here before. That was the beginning.

Then I begun to work for a school, an up-to-date school in our county. We done needed it most awful bad. We only had a few schools here. They were all frame buildings, and some of them were well-nigh uninhabitable. There was only one high school. Very few of the teachers were even college graduates. So, you see, we needed new buildings and up-to-date teachers and equipment; most awful bad. So I raised about \$15,000 myself and the State and the county each put up \$50,000. That gave me \$115,000.00 to build new schools. I wanted a modern, up-to-date vocational school, which later on could be sorter developed into a mountain college. The board they give me couldn't see things the way I did. So I have had a most awful hard fight, a much worse one than the one I had with the machine guns in the Argonne. The politicians and the real estate people tried to use me. The small-town bankers tried to get in on it. Jealous factions wanted to get a hold of it and handle it their way. So it done got held up. And oh, my, I had a terrible time. But I knowed I was

in the right. So I kept on fighting jes the same. I done got the old board put out. I done got the State Board of Education to handle the promotion. The school is a quasi-State institution today. And hits a-coming. At this moment we have two fine new school buildings with right-smart teachers and up-to-date equipment in Jimtown. And that's only the beginnings.

As soon as I can get the money to make them self-supporting, and have proven that I can successfully look

after them, I'm a-thinking they're a-going to be handed over to me. And then I'm a planning to sorter turn them into a mountain college for vocational education. I'm a-going to teach the mountain boys and girls the trades; dairying, woodworking, carpentering, fruit growing, the breeding of pure-bred live stock, dressmaking, and so on. I'm going to have them instructed in health and hygiene. I'm going to train them to be self-supporting.

If they're too poor to pay their way, I'm going to give them a chance to work their way through. If they live back in the mountains where the roads are too bad to get out, I'm a-going to build good roads to them. I don't know of no part of America nohow that needs all of this worse than we do. In our county alone there are over 1,000 boys and girls between the ages of 6 and 18 that can't even read and write. And I'm a-telling you—it's not their fault.

Of course, in such things as electric lighting, sewerage, water supply and up-to-date homes our mountain towns and villages are sorter away behind the times. But I'm a-thinking if I can bring larnin' to the children they will grow up and change all these things. I can't influence the older people much nohow. They're sorter set in their ways. But if I can get the children to school and to college, the rest will come.

I'm a-going some day to have roads all through these here mountains; to have modern homes and all sorts of other improvements and sanitary arrangements in our towns and villages; and, most of all, to have a heap of schools and a right-smart mountain college.

I ain't going to show no favoritism nohow. I fought with Catholics and Protestants, with Jews, Greeks, Italians, Poles and Irish, as well as American-born boys in the World War. They were buddies of mine and I larned to love them. If there is any of them in these here mountains we'll make a place for them in these schools. I'm a-going to give all the children in the mountains the chance that's a-coming to them. I'm a-going to bring them a heap o' larnin'.

THE END.

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Pawnshop Rate Cut.

Peeping (U.P.).—Pawnshops in Peeping hereafter must charge their clients only 20 per cent a month, the municipal government has decided. Previously, it was legal to charge 30 per cent a month.



I wonder if the poppy shows
The slightest envy of the rose?

Or if the pansy wastes its time
Regretting that it cannot climb?

Do blossoms of a yellow hue
Complain because they are not blue?

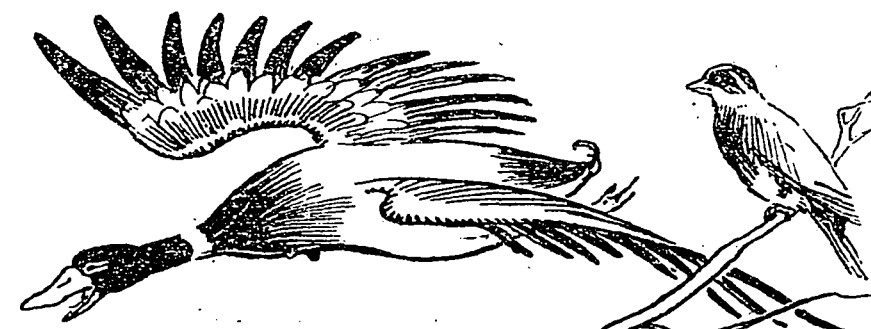
Do birds which God designed
To sing
Envy the wild ducks' fleet wing?

And does the sparrow sadly
mourn

Because he was not goldfinch
born?

I cannot say, but fancy not.
Each seems contented with his lot.

'Tis only man who thinks that
he
Some other man would rather
be.



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