GUNNER DEPEW

By Albert N. Depew

EX-GUNNER AND CHIEF PETTY OFFICER, U. S. NAVY
MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN LEGION OF FRANCE
CAPTAIN GUN TURRET, FRENCH BATTLESHIP CASSARD
WINNER OF THE CROIX DE GUERRE

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DEPEW IS CAUGHT IN ZEPPELIN RAID AND HAS EXCITING EXPERIENCE

Synopsis.—Albert N. Depew, author of the story, tells of his service in the United States navy, during which he attained the rank of chief petty officer, first-class gunner. The world war starts soon after, he receives his honorable discharge from the navy, and he leaves for France with a determination to enlist. He joins the Foreign Legion and is assigned to the dreadnaught Cassard, where his marksmanship wins him high honors. Later he is transferred to the land forces and sent to the Flanders front. He gets his first experience in a front line trench at Dixmude. He goes "over the top" and gets his first German in a bayonet fight.

CHAPTER VII—Continued.

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I surely wished I was the gunner officer. I would have enjoyed it more if I could have got back at Fritz somehow. But I was not the gunner officer and I told him so. I had to shout at him quite a while before he would believe me. Then he wanted me to find the gunner officer, but I did not know where to find him. If I could have got to our guns I guess I would have had another medal for working overtime, but I missed the chance there.

About this time another bomb came over and clouted out the best friend I had in my company. Before the war he had been one of the finest singers in the Paris opera houses. When he was with us he used to say that the only difference between him and Caruso was $2,500 a night.

A pollu and I dragged him into a dugout, but it was too late. One side of his face was blown off; the whole right side of him was stripped off and four fingers of the right hand were gone.

I stuck my head out of the dugout and there was the captain discussing the matter with himself, cursing the Germans from here to Helgoland and putting in a word for the bombs every once in a while. All up and down the trenches you could hear our men cursing the Germans in all kinds of languages. Believe me, I did my bit and I could hear somebody else using good old United States cuss words, too. It certainly did not make me feel any better, but it gave me something to do. I think that was why all of us cursed so much then, though we were pretty handy with language at any time. But when you are under heavy fire like that and cannot give it back as good as you get, you go crazy unless you have something to do. Cussing is the best thing we could think of.

Up the trench the third bay was simply smashed in and the Germans were placing bomb after bomb right in it and in ours. The captain yelled out that he was going up to the next bay to examine it, but no more had he got there than he had his head taken clean off his shoulders.

At daybreak our trenches were all pounded in and most of our dugouts were filled up. Then Fritz opened up with his artillery fire right on us. We thought they were going to charge and we figured their barrage would lift and we could see them come over.

We received orders to stand to with fixed bayonets. Then the man at the periscope shouted, "They come!"

A battery directly behind us went into action first and then they all joined in and inside of five minutes about eight hundred guns were raising Cain with Fritz. The Boches were caught square in No Man's Land and our rifles and machine guns simply mowed them down. Many of them came half way across, then dropped their guns and ran for our trenches to give themselves up. They could not have got back to their own trenches.

It was a shame to waste a shell on these poor fish. If they had been civvies the law would prevent you from hitting them—you know the kind. They could hardly drag themselves along.

That is the way they look when you have got them. But when they have got you—kicks, cuffs, bayonet jabs—there is nothing they will not do to add to your misery. They seem to think that it boosts their own courage.

An artillery fire like ours was great fun for the gunners, but it was not much fun for Fritz or for us in the trenches. We got under cover almost as much as Fritz and held thumbs for the gunners to get through in a hurry.

Then the fire died down and it was so quiet it made you jump.

We thought our parapet was busted up a good deal, but when we looked through the periscope we saw what had happened to Fritz' trenches and, believe me, they were practically ruined.

Out in No Man's Land it looked like Woolworth's five-and-ten; everywhere were gray uniforms, with pieces and accouterments that belonged to the Germans before our artillery and machine guns got to them.

Our stretcher bearers were busy, carrying the wounded back to first-aid dressing station, for, of course we had suffered too. From there the blesses were shipped to the clearing station.

The dead lay in the trenches all day and at night they were carried out by working parties to "Stiff park," as I called it.

A man with anything on his mind ought not to go to the front-line trenches. He will be crazy inside of a month. The best way is not to care whether it rains or snows; there are plenty of important things to worry about.

CHAPTER VIII.

On Runner Service.

One night a man named Bartel and I were detailed for runner service and were instructed to go to Dixmude and deliver certain dispatches to a man whom I will call the burgomaster and report to the branch staff headquarters that had been secretly located in another part of town. We were to travel in an automobile and keep a sharp watch as we went, for Dixmude was being contested hotly at that time and German patrols were in the neighborhood. No one knew exactly where they would break out next.

So we started out from the third-line trenches, but very shortly one of our outposts stopped us. Bartel carried the dispatches and drove the car too, so it was up to me to explain things to the sentries. They were convinced after a bit of arguing. Just as we were leaving a message came over the phone from our commander, telling them to hold us when we came. It was lucky they stopped us, for otherwise we would have been out of reach by the time his message came. The commander told me, over the telephone, that if a French flag flew over the town, the coast would be clear; if a Belgian, that our forces were either in control or were about to take over the place, but that German patrols were near. After this we started again.

When we had passed the last post we kept a sharp lookout for the flag on the pole of the old fish market, for by this we would get our bearings—and perhaps, if it should be a German flag, a timely warning. But after we were down the road a bit and had got clear we saw a Belgian flag whipping around in a good, strong breeze. But while that showed that our troops or the British were about to take over the place it also indicated that the Germans were somewhere near by. Which was not so cheerful.

As we went through the suburbs along the canal which runs on the edge of the town we found that all our rifles and machine guns simply mowed them down. Many of them came half way across, then dropped their guns and ran for our trenches to give themselves up. They could not have got back to their own trenches.

As we were about to start when the burgomaster himself came running out. He ordered us to leave the car there and said he would direct us where to go. He insisted that we go on foot, but I could not understand when he tried to explain why.

We soon saw the probable reason for the burgomaster's refusal to ride in the car. All around for about a mile the roads were heavily mined and small red flags on iron staves were stuck between the cobblestones, as warnings not to put in much time around those places. Also, there were notices stuck up all around warning people of the mines and forbidding heavy carts to pass. When we got off the road I breathed again!

After a great deal of questioning we finally reached our destination and made our report to the local commandant. We told him all we could and in turn received various information from him. We were then taken over to the hotel. Here we read a few Paris newspapers, that were several weeks old, until about eight, when we had dinner, and a fine dinner it was, too.

After we had eaten all we could, and wished for more room in the hold, we went out into the garden and yarned a while with some gendarmes, and then went to bed. We had a big room on the third floor front. We had just turned in and were all set for a good night's rest, when there was an explosion of a different kind from any I had heard before, and we and the bed rocked about, like a canoe in the wake of a stern-wheeler.

There were seven more explosions, and then they stopped, though we could hear the rattle of a machine gun at some distance away. Bartel said it must be the forts, and after some argument I agreed with him. He said that the Germans must have tried an advance under cover of a bombardment, and that as soon as the forts got into action the Germans breezed. We were not worried much, so we did not get out of bed.

A few minutes later we heard footsteps on the roof, and then a woman in a window across the street asking a gendarme whether it was safe to go back to bed. Then I got up and took a look into the street. There were a lot of people standing around talking, but it was not interesting enough to keep a tired man up, so back into the hay.

It seemed about the middle of the night when Bartel called me, but he said it was time to get out and get to work. We found he had made a poor guess, for when we were half dressed he looked at his watch and it was only a quarter past seven, but we decided to stay up, since we were that far along, and then go down and cruise for a breakfast.

We Were Constantly Finding the Mutilated Bodies of Our Troops.

When we got downstairs and found some of the hotel people it took them a long time to get it through our heads that there had been some real excitement during the night. The explosions were those of bombs dropped by a Zeppelin, which had sailed over the city.

The first bomb had fallen less than two hundred yards from where we slept. No wonder the bed rocked! It had struck a narrow three-story house around the corner from the hotel, and had blown it to bits. Ten people had been killed outright, and a number died later. The bomb tore a fine hole and hurled pieces of itself several hundred yards. The street itself was filled with rocks, and a number of houses were down, and others wrecked. When we got out into the street we had talked with some army men we found that even they were surprised by the force of the explosion.

We learned that the Zepp had sailed not more than five hundred feet above the town. Its motor had been stopped just before the first bomb was let go, and it had slid along perfectly silent and with all lights out. The pure that we had thought was machine guns, after the eighth explosion, was the starting of the motor, as the Zepp got out of range of the guns that were being set for the attack.

The last bomb had struck in a large square. It tore a hole in the cobblestone pavement about thirty feet square and five feet deep. Every window on the square was smashed. The fronts of the houses were riddled with various sized holes. All the crockery and china and mirrors in the house were in fragments.

Not much more than an hour before the Zepp came, we had been sitting in a room at the house of the local military commandant, right under a big glass-dome skylight. This house was now a very pretty ruin, and it was just as well that we left when we did. You could not even find a splinter of the big round table. The next time I sit under a glass skylight in Dixmude, I want a lad with a live eye for Zeppelins on guard outside.

Something about the branch headquarters ruins made us think of breakfast, which we had forgotten, so back to the hotel. Then we started back to our lines. We were ordered to keep to the main road all the way back, or we would be shot on sight, and to report to headquarters immediately on our return. I thought if the sight of me was so distasteful to anybody, I would not take the chance of offending, being anxious to be polite in such cases. So we stuck to the main road.

Fritz did not give us any trouble and we were back by five, with all hands out to greet us when we hove in sight, and a regular prodigal son welcome on tap, for we were later than they had expected us, and they had made up their minds that some accident had happened.

While I was around Dixmude, I saw many living men and women and children who had been mutilated by the Germans, but most of them were women and children. Almost every one of the mutilated men was too old for military service. The others had been killed, I guess.

But the Belgians were not the only ones who had suffered from German kultur. Many French wounded were tortured by the Huns, and we were constantly finding the mutilated bodies of our troops. It was thought that the Germans often mutilated a dead body as an example to the living.

The Germans had absolutely no respect whatever for the Red Cross. For instance, they captured a wagon loaded with forty French wounded, and shot every one of them. I saw the dead bodies.

When the Germans came to Dixmude they got all the men and women and children and made them march before them with their hands in the air. Those who did not were knocked down. After a while some of them saw what they were going to get, and being as game sports as I ever heard of, tried to fight. They were finished off at once, of course.

The former burgomaster had been shot and finished off with an ax, though he had not resisted, because he wanted to save the lives of his citizens. They told me of one case, in Dixmude, where a man came out of his house, trying to carry his father, a man of eighty, to the square, where they were ordered to report. The old man could not raise his hands, so they dragged his son away from him, knocked the old man in the head with an ax, and left him there to die. Those who were spared were made to dig the graves for the others.

There was a doctor there in Dixmude, who certainly deserves a military cross if any man ever did. He was called from his house by the Germans at 5:30 one morning. He left his wife, who had had a baby two days before, in the house. He was taken to the square, lined up against a wall with three other big men of the town.

Then he saw his wife and baby being carried to the square on a mattress by four Germans. He begged to be allowed to kiss his wife good-by, and they granted him permission. As he stepped away, there was a rattle and the other men went West. They shot him, too, but though he was riddled with bullets he lived, somehow, and begged the German officer to let him accompany his wife to the prison where they were taking her. This was granted too, but on the way, they heard the sound of firing. The soldiers yelled, "Die Franzosen!" and dropped the matter and ran. But it was only one of their own butchers at work.

Doctor Laurent carried his wife and baby to an old aqueduct that was being rebuilt by the creek. There they lived for three days and three nights, on the few herbs and the water that Doctor Laurent sneaked out and got at night. Doctor Laurent says that when the Germans killed and crucified the civilians at Dixmude, they took from them of their watches, pocketbooks, rings and other things. There was a Madame Tilmans there, who had had three thousand francs stolen from her and was misused besides.

These were just a very few of the things that happened at just one place where the Germans got to work with their "kultur." So you can picture the Belgians agreeing on a German peace, while there is a Belgian alive to argue about it. They will remember the Germans a long time, I think. But they need not worry; there are a lot of us who will not forget, either.

Depew is wounded in a brush with Germans. See next installment.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Saws for Cutting Metal.

Not so very long ago the discovery was made in Germany that metals could be sawed easier and quicker with rapidly revolving smooth disks of steel, than with toothed circular saws. It was found that the cutting was done by the heat generated by the friction of the edge of the disk against the metal. The metal is melted at the point of contact, while the steel of the disk, being cooled by the air, does not reach the melting point. The disks need no sharpening and do not wear out so quickly as the toothed saws heretofore used for cutting metal. The faster the disk revolves, the greater the amount of heat generated, and the quicker the job.—Popular Science Monthly.

School Children Claim Attention

It is the children of school age, and the young folks going away to school that claim attention in August. Early in September they begin another year's work and must be outfitted with clothes for the first quarter of the school year, at least, and often for half of it.

The early display of clothing is a great help to those mothers who undertake to have their children's clothes made at home. It is probably quite as economical to buy little cotton dresses ready-made as to make them at home; but in home-made garments individual taste can be brought into play and more handwork and "stitchery" used than can be had in moderately priced frocks bought ready made.

Besides, remodeling is an item in wartime economy that every mother should consider. All woolen frocks that are either remodeled for the children or handed on to some one who can wear them save the consumption of energy, and this is a patriotic service that is worth while.

Blue serge—the never failing—is featured in the new displays. Sometimes it is combined with heavy linen as in a model showing a plaited, long-waisted blouse of amethyst-colored linen to which a plaited blue serge skirt is buttoned. A broad belt of patent leather slips through crocheted loops of amethyst silk floss that hang from the blouse. They are fastened to it with a few fancy stitches, an inch or so above the buttons so that the belt covers the joining of skirt and blouse.

Heavy linen in natural color makes collars and cuffs and sometimes vestees on serge one-piece frocks. Needle work in yarn or silk floss is more used for decoration than anything else. Usually one or two colors in contrast to the frock are used and the designs must be simple. The little frock pictured for the girl of six years is a good model for any sort of material—wool, linen, heavy cotton or plain wash silk. Wool and linen are most worth while, for the stitchery that must be put in by hand.

Collars and cuffs or vestees in heavy natural linen are beautiful in combination with blue, brown or green woolens. They are made so that they can be taken out and washed; hence two sets are necessary to each dress.

For Fall Motoring

To shade the eyes or not to shade the eyes, that is the question to be decided when the quest is for auto bonnets for fall motoring. There are several requisites that the successful bonnet or hat or cap must fill. First of all it must stay on; no matter what winds may blow or how much the driver manages to exceed the speed limit. To wobble about or come off is the unforgivable sin in a piece of motor headwear. Besides this indispensable feature—and equally important—the bonnet must measure up to its wearer's ideas of becomingness.

Comfort in all our apparel is an attribute that (it almost goes without saying) is required of it today. Nearly all the hats and bonnets for motoring have small brims, or visors at the front for shielding the eyes, but there are some turbans and caps that are brimless. These are in the minority; so it is evident that if the question of shading the eyes or not were put to the popular vote—the eyes would have it. Nevertheless, the "Blue Devil" tam is so dear to the heart of young Americans that it enters the ranks of fall hats for motor wear. It sticks to the head as securely as a French soldier to a Sammy, and withstands shocks of wind and weather without betraying their punishment. It is for yourthful wearers and shading the eyes is not a matter of concern with it. There are veils and goggles for that—if shading is needed. This tam, made of silk, appears at the left of the two pictures.

At the right there is a corduroy bonnet—clearly of Dutch bonnet inspiration. It has a beeching drooping brim all about the face, but a brief brimless space across the back. Here is a bit of strategy which is successful in keeping the bonnet on the head. A short, strong elastic band is set into the base of the crown at this point and its tension makes the bonnet hug the head. The crown is flexible and the bonnet has a soft lining of silk. Everyone knows the enduring quality of corduroy and this model will surely commend itself to motorists. A small chiffon veil, gathered over an elastic cord with snap fasteners at the end, is easy to adjust on it—and easy to take off.

Julia Bottomley

Organdie for Bridesmaids.

Never were bridesmaids more charmingly frocked than in the exquisite organdie dresses introduced this season.