

PRISONERS TOTING THEIR OWN WOUNDED



MOTHER'S BREAD AT ARMY'S BAKERY

Punk for Fighters Waits 48 Hours Before Going on Train

KNEADING DONE BY HAND

But Kneaders Wash Their Mitts in Special Chemical Preparations First

There's a homey, kitcheny aroma arising from the six long, low, squat buildings over there by the railroad tracks, with the freight cars partially hiding them. Mess shacks? No; who would be cooking mess at this hour of the day? Fire? No; there's the M.P. on duty right up there, within good nose range, not a bit concerned.

To be sure, there's a fire in the six buildings. It's a fire that doesn't go out any hour of the 24. For in them is kneaded, brewed and baked the daily bread of a group of six American fighting divisions.

Day in, day out, those fires are kept going, with coal, wood, anything kindle-able. Day in, day out, the bakers and kneaders and toters of the finished product work in 12-hour shifts, under the omnipresent blanket of heat. And in spite of the long shifts—which, as soon as more help comes from the States, are going to be cut down—in spite of the heat and all, those men are turning out in the neighborhood of 270,000 standard 12-pound Army loaves a week.

Six Companies on Job

There are six bakery companies on the job in this particular place, only a fraction, of course, of the number of bakery companies now in France, busily engaged in producing the punk for an Army that is growing like a growing boy and eating like two growing boys. In every company there are 101 men and two officers, the officers having been for the most part either master bakers in civil life or Army bakers in the old Regular establishment.

Unlike many of the projects now being engineered by the Quartermaster Corps in the S.O.S., the bakery outfits are manned solely by Americans, no French or neutral labor being employed. Similarly, with the exception of the yeast, and the water, they use only American products in the bread. It is good American whole wheat flour, plus good American salt—then yeast and water, and much good American elbow-grease in the kneading, for in the working of the bread is done by hand.

Waiting for the Train

But the kneading and actual baking of the bread, in firm, reliable brick ovens built into the sides of the baking shacks, 15 to each shack, isn't the whole process, by any means. Once baked, the loaves are stacked on big wooden drying racks, and there wait for 48 hours before being put into the bread cars which swing in on the tracks right outside the bakery plant, and which swing out again to be hooked on trains and sped up to the ultimate railheads from which the Army in the field is fed.

The loaves are kept 48 hours for the simple reason that fresh bread would get mouldy in transit; and once every 24 hours, as they repose in the drying racks, they are turned to air and dry them the more completely.

The bakery plant, furthermore, is amply provided against emergencies. In case a shell should make bread crumbs out of one of its precious shipments and the word should come back for more to duplicate the order, the plant would be ready. It keeps from 600,000 to 700,000 pounds of bread in reserve, and there is always on hand 1,000,000 pounds of flour, 20,000 pounds of salt and 10,000 pounds of yeast.

Special Stuff to Wash In

"Spotless town" has nothing on the bakery outfit. There's a special chemical preparation in which the kneaders and bakers must wash their hands before starting on their jobs, and their clothes must be absolutely clean, as must the woodwork on which the bread may be rested; the pans, and the five-loaf sacks in which the bread finally reaches the consumer.

FROM THE OURCQ TO THE VESLE

Planted by the French, cultivated by the Germans, eaten by the Yankees—that is the history of many a bean, tomato, potato, carrot, cauliflower, the most common of the Ourcq and the Vesle. Sweeping over the fertile Tardenois in late May, the Boches found the gardens all hopefully planted, and their soldiers were detailed to tend the rows of vegetables which they fondly expected to eat at harvest time. Amid the great welter of things it pained them to leave behind was this juicy crop of garden truck, and that is why fresh celery and new green peas have graced many a Yankee mess on the Vesle front.

It would do Mr. Hoover's heart good if he could see—and probably he did—the harvest being brought in from the reconquered farms between the Marne and the Vesle. Marshal Foch's dashing counter offensive must be measured not only in territory regained, prisoners captured, guns netted, but in rich crops seized at the critical time.

The Germans, who are harder up for food than any other country, lost not only the harvest they held but the harvests they hoped to capture. Now, close behind the troops, the reapers and binders are at work.

The other day, a battalion commander at the front, spotting a strange machine that looked like some fantastic tank wobbling along a crest across the valley, caught it in the focus of his field glasses and laughed outright. It was that eminently pacific engine, the land plow.

Here and there a threshing machine plays chorus to the song of the airplanes overhead. Old soldiers in faded blue, old women, buxom young wives, little children, all have been tugging away at the great stacks of wheat, and if you cross a newly harvested field at sundown, you are sure to see the women rolling out from under the heiges, shaking the dew from their hair, and going to work at the gleaming.

The Yanks in hospital, who got their wounds in the fields near Vaux and Boursches and Belleau Woods, will be glad to hear that from those fields a golden treasure has already been gathered, and the crickets in the stubble sing a song of peace.

As a sign post which says "Nach Seringes" is just as good a guide as one that says "Vers Seringes", the M.P.'s don't bother to take down the signs they found decorating the walls and houses above the Marne. Most of these are quite intelligible, even if you couldn't read "Die Lorelei" to save your life. "Arresthaus", for instance, wouldn't fool anybody, though it might take some of us a good while to recognize "Flieger Keller, 30 Mann" as the notice of an abri where 30 dirty Germans could hide in hours of stress.

Pvt. Herbert Ploughman, battalion runner in the thick of the fighting below the Vesle, carried his message forward to the platoon and dropped flat a few feet from the commanding lieutenant, who was helping bandage a wounded man's leg.

"What's the matter, are you wounded here?" the lieutenant asked. No, Ploughman was only playing safe. The message was important. Should he come out in the open and deliver it? The lieutenant nodded and Ploughman stepped to his side. He was just in the act of handing the message over when a shell crashed between them, tearing away the lieutenant's leg with a wound so grievous that he died before the day was spent. Somehow, Ploughman got back to his battalion commander.

"The message was delivered, sir," he said, and, from force of habit, saluted. It was when the hand was thus raised that the major noticed two fingers had just been shot from it.

A number of our soldiers recently joined some French in a raiding party. After it was over, Sgt. Edward Horrikan, a wiry little chap from Big Rapids, Michigan, was seen sporting a Croix de Guerre. His own company and particularly some of those who had shared in the raid were not so much curious as a little curious. Horrikan grinned and explained that the French just sort of issued the darn things and it was a question of luck who got them. It was not till the citations were published in orders that the others in Company M got the missing details. Horrikan had forgotten to mention that straying when the band was thus raised, he had brought in a German prisoner and, by going back and carrying him in through the barrage, had saved the life of a wounded polli.

indignantly, by his own crowd. He had been a prisoner in France all his repatriation, not long ago, and had been escaping from Germany after four days at the front. He expressed the greatest distaste for all Germans and emphasized his point of view by taking a gun and bringing down two German snipers.

Then he lent his expert hands to the bandaging of about 40 American wounded, and feeling much relieved, retired gracefully to the rear. The Yanks didn't think much of him. But they let him live.

The pursuit of the Germans from the Ourcq to the Vesle was a terrific strain on the American Army because the villages recaptured were so hard to pronounce.

Seringes suffers either as Syringa or Syringe. Sergy is served up with either a hard or soft G. Clerger is pronounced as it were the same village as Sergey, a slip of the tongue very confusing to the traffic regulations, as they are several kilometers apart. Saint Gilles is called either Saint Giles, Saint Gillus or Saint Gilbooley. Fismes, which the French have an odd, unreasonable habit of calling Feem, emerges from Yankee lips as Fis-mus or Fizzmus.

Yankee tongues suffer terrible casualties going over the top of Fismettes. Fismettes is the part of Fismes that overlaps the Vesle. It is the Caudein, the Jersey City, the Kansas City, Kansas, of Fismes.

One battalion commander who fought his way into the possession of Fismettes made several assaults on its pronunciation and retired in discomfiture. "I'm damned if I can say it," he growled, "but I can take the darn thing."

All the Yankees fighting or toiling in or near the Vesle River battle line have wondered why such a high proportion of the German shells falling in their neighborhood within recent weeks have been dud. No sound on earth is half so pleasing as the sweet silence of a German dud. One man, lying on his back under the stars, not long ago, counted the whining passage of 75 enemy projectiles. Only four of them exploded. Of course, the average proportion is nothing like that, but the run of duds has been so strong that no end of speculation has arisen therefrom. It has been guessed that in the hasty and difficult retreat Fritz made from his treasure-laden Chateau-Thierry salient—a retreat made for the most part through days and nights of spasmodic rain—it was found impossible to carry out the routine precautions for keeping the ammunition dry.

A platoon of American doughboys emerged from a wood about a mile south of the Vesle singing "They Go Wild, Simply Wild Over Me"; "they" meaning a company of Germans who were running toward Germany across the open field in front of the wood.

The Americans pursued, still singing their song. A back private, who sang in the chorus, said it was the best interpretation of the song he has ever known.

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HERBERT L. SMITH; WHICH ONE, PLEASE?

Only Five of Them—So Far—Are Getting Their Mail Mixed

A gay little war, trifling in size but furious in reprisals, is being waged among the Herbert L. Smiths in the American E.P.

The other day 2nd Lieut. Herbert L. Smith, Q.M.C., was viciously passing out cigars and cigarettes that had just arrived in the latest American mail. "They may be mine, but I don't think so," he said, with an insane light in his eyes. "I only hope they belong to the Herbert L. Smith who snagged the box of cookies and winter comforts that were sent to me."

This H.L.S. No. 1 has an Uncle George, and so has No. 2. He also has an Aunt Mary, and so has H.L.S. No. 3. But when a letter comes telling of the knitting record of Aunt Mary and Aunt Elizabeth, he knows he is reading No. 2's mail, because he hasn't an Aunt Elizabeth.

No. 4 wrote sarcastically once, upon receipt of a bitter note from No. 1. "If you'll tell me what Herbert L. Smith you are, I'll tell you the one I am." To the information, "I am the H.L.S. of the Gas Service," came the response, "I am the H.L.S. who used to be in the Q.M.C. at Providence, R. I."

No. 5 has a wife whose handwriting is exactly like that of the spouse of No. 1. She calls the roll of a platoon of No. 1.

So they read each others mail, making notations on the original envelopes such as "Not H.L.S., A.P.O. 713, but glad to see that your Aunt Mary is feeling O.K." Each has the interests of five families to keep track of, and probably 10 of them share equally in the spoils sent across by the solicitous relatives.

TO A DUGOUT RAT

Hurry! Scurry!
Run across the floor,
Stop! Drop!
Out the dugout door,
Can't you see that Yankee,
With a shoe held in his hand?
He is waiting just to send you
To the Promised Land.

AND NO GATE RECEIPTS

"Who's going to win the world series?" a doughboy asked a recent arrival from the States.

Another doughboy had the correct answer in a flash. "The Allies are going to win the only one that counts."

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"TELL THE WIFE--" BUT NOT JUST YET

Corporal Gets Away With Wild West Stuff Along the Vesle

A platoon of Americans were advancing on a machine gun nest near the banks of the Vesle.

The advance was being made in an open field where the Germans had planted their machine gun on a high bit of ground which enabled them to deliver a sweeping fire on the Americans.

Try as they might, the Yanks could not flank the German position. They covered themselves the best they could and waited in hopes that they would get a pot shot at Fritz and then they would continue their advance.

But Fritz was not inclined to expose himself to pot shots and kept his gun working.

"Say, sergeant, gimme that gat of yours," said Corporal Browne. The sergeant handed it over. Corporal Browne drew his own pistol and, with an automatic in each hand, he got up on his hands and knees and took a peep at Fritz.

"Say, boys, tell the wife for me that I was one game guy! So long to all of you guys!"

After saying all that Corporal Browne went out after the Boches. He got them, too—four of them and a perfectly good machine gun. When his comrades came up Corporal Browne had loaded the machine gun on to his back and was ready to go on. All four Boches were dead in the pit.

"How'd you do it?" some one asked him after it was all over.

"Barned if I know," he answered. "It was awfully easy. Kind of surprised myself, in fact."

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