

TALES FROM A DUGOUT

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Tales from a dugout by Arthur Guy Empey

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ARTHUR GUY EMPEY

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Katharine Fay

BY
ARTHUR GUY EMPEY

Author of "OVER THE TOP," etc.



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I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

TO THE

"ARMY OF THE PEOPLE WHO STAY AT HOME":

*the overaged, the women, the physically unfit
and the children. These are the ones to be
pitied, the ones who suffer most, because
their hearts are on the battlefields
of France, although their bodies
must stay at home.*

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FOREWORD

Picture a dugout in one of the front line trenches of France, damp and evil smelling, hardly deep enough to protect the inmates from a three-inch shell-burst. This hole in the ground will comfortably house four soldiers. Put seven of them with full equipment and a machine gun in it, and what results? I dare say in civilian life there would be only one outcome—TROUBLE. Well, in the army on the Western Front, this situation spells GOOD FELLOWSHIP.

If it were only possible for a giant dictograph to be invented, the transmitter being placed in any dugout of the American Army in France, while at the receiver, across the Atlantic, the American Public "listened in," many a heartache would disappear, worry for the "boys at the front" would more or less vanish

in mist. If the mothers, fathers, wives, sweet-hearts, sisters and friends, could only hear these conversations, their hearts would be filled with joy and pride for the fighting men of America. Of course, at times, few and far between, they would be slightly shocked, as most eavesdroppers are, but on the whole, they would listen to wonderful sentiment, clean and wholesome Americanism.

It has been my misfortune not to have occupied an American dugout as yet, but I have crowded into one with the Britisher, with good old Tommy Atkins. We are of the same family, the same blood runs through our veins, so Tommy's ideas and conversations are identical with those of our brave American boys. Therefore, I hope that in a way these Tales from a Dugout will help fill the void of the absent dictograph.

It is only a matter of time before our boys and our Allies, God bless them all, will victoriously return to "Blighty," and be received in the arms of their waiting dear ones.

PREAMBLE

There were seven of them composing the crew of Gun No. 2, of the —th Brigade Machine Gun Company. Their gun was the Vickers, light, .303, watercooled.

They were nicknamed as follows:

Curly, a Scotchman. Dubbed Curly on account of a cute little Della Fox curl. He gave more attention to this curl than to his rifle. Many girls wrote to him, and he wrote to many girls.

Happy, a Londoner. He earned his title from his happy disposition. He helped Curly with his correspondence.

Hungry. His nickname needs no explanation. He was. Once Mr. Hoover dined with him, hence his food conservation idea. Hungry hailed from London.

Ikey. He was. Came from the East Side,