

A. E. F. UNIVERSITY GIVES GRADS DEGREE OF B. A. F.

2000 Bachelors of Art of Fighting Have Been Turned Out of Army's Schools in France

FIVE WEEKS' COURSE IS STIFF ONE TO BUCK

"What We're Here For," Say Students as They Buckle Down to Big Job

By W. S. BALL
Correspondent of the Providence Journal With the American Army in France

America's educational system is expanding, as perhaps you realize. Perhaps, also, you know that it is bulging heavily in this direction. But it is developing more than you might believe. I suspect, along formal and elaborate lines.

I have just returned from a visit to one of our newest and busiest American universities. There are, of course, special training schools of many sorts in all the armies. But this one is a real university, a group of post-graduate schools; so far as I know it was the first of its kind.

And scribbling here by dubious candle light in the office of the village tavern, where French and American uniforms and accents are mingling curiously around the room, I want, while the picture of what I have seen is fresh in mind, to emphasize the fact that it is a splendidly American addition to our chain of educational institutions.

The universities back home have, for the duration of the war, a lively rival here. And yet not merely a rival. It supplements their work as well. Within the day I have talked with Brown graduates and those of other colleges, now studying side by side with men to have seen no schooling since eighth grade days.

This university, whose name is a number and whose address is the familiar alphabetical trilogy "A. E. F.," has for its campus a few thousand acres of mud.

Its lecture halls are squatly shacks about as impressive as those in a typical street-widening scene in downtown Providence. Its dormitories can be distinguished from the lecture halls by the numbers over the doors, and nohow else. Its laboratories are nohow make the sternest showing of the engineering department of any university back home look like a Behoboth sewing circle.

College Yell Is Untamed

Its college yell exists only in the form of a general shout of glee at grub time. Its favorite song is "Rosie O'Rourke," or something equally antique. Whatever old ditty happens to be running in any man's mind at the moment will serve.

Its official bell is a bugle. Its campus gate is a two-by-three sentry box. Every physical phase of it is new and primitive.

It is equipped to graduate 8,000 aviator-fighters a year. More than 2,000 of them already cherish its diplomas.

And every man it sends out from any one of its departments is not merely a super-fighter, but the teacher of a company of fighters. For it is a normal school as well.

It was said that Mark Hopkins on one end of a log and a student on the other made a college. Here, too, it is the instructors and the students, rather than the physical equipment, that make the university. The spirit of the men creates the place.

I mentioned that 2,000 already cherish its diplomas. "Cherish" is right. For a diploma from this school is a tribute to hard-won knowledge—knowledge of how to "get" the Kaiser's cohorts.

The man who passes his exams here has learned much, and as well as the goods—the strange goods that this war demands. He can teach others to deliver them. He can help America put on its "show." (I like that phrase from the British front. It says so much so casually.)

They are of all sorts and all degrees of previous education, products of college and high school and store and bank and factory. But they are all men in khaki, which means that they are all men of one sort. They are here for business.

Exams Are Good Stiff Ones

For they are men who have been in France long enough to realize—to feel in their muscle and marrow as well as in their minds—that we are facing a job to test the mettle of the biggest of Republics. This school is here to teach them to do their share. And they are not dawdling.

"We had our first written exam a couple of days ago," one of the students told me. A man, by the way, whose name used to figure in the headlines after certain interregate news items not many years since. "And believe me, I never ran up against a tougher test in all my four years at —." He named a famous university.

"Did you pass it?"

"You bet your life I passed it. That's what I'm here for."

That's the spirit of the place. It is the spirit not alone of this particular school, but of khaki-America in France. Give the men here a reasonable chance with supplies and all, and "you can bet your life" on them. Which, as a matter of fact, is the gamble you can't dodge in this affair.

The geography of the university in question is difficult to describe without wispy precision. The easiest way to get to it is to don Uncle Sam's uniform and make good in your company until Friend Captain asks you to make better by sending you here. If Friend Colonel and Friend General endorse the Captain's guess about you, then welcome to our village.

"To Make Better Than Good"

"To make better than good" is the real motto of the institution. It takes, by a careful system of selection and assignment, men from different different commands in many branches of the service. These are given a vigorous course in the intricacies of the newest arts of modern war, and then return to their commands to pass along what they have learned.

It differs from the scattered training camps of the French and British Armies and the few that the American Army has here, each devoted to a single branch, in being a consolidated group of several

such schools. This is the American plan for economy of administration. It has the added and important advantage of permitting the easy co-ordination of courses that fit into each other.

As now constituted, the schools in this group can care for nearly 11,000 students. Each school takes commissioned and non-commissioned officers alike, and the enrollment is about equally divided between them.

The lengths of the courses differ slightly in the various affiliated schools, but five weeks is the general period of a term. The longest, aerial observation, is six weeks. There's one course which practically all the students of all the schools are required to take, that lasts three days.

"And an equally important course it is, too," declared the President of the university as he outlined for me the work of the institution. One would say so. It is the course in defense against gas attacks.

With terms of five weeks each for the majority students, and a necessary interval of a week between outgoing and incoming classes, the university is prepared to graduate eight classes a year, of a thousand or more men each. It was established last September, definitely expanded about the middle of October, and has been steadily increasing its capacity ever since.

All Branches But Two

There are now ten departments or schools, all but two of which are conducted on the main campus. These two are not far away, and are under the same presidency and general direction.

To pass through all ten, absorbing everything that they have to offer, would be to learn practically everything that is known, up to the latest flick of the watch, of the art of modern warfare in every branch except heavy artillery and flying. These are taught elsewhere.

Here, for example, infantry officers are taught the latest angles of their many-sided jobs, from setting up drills to sniping, from trench routine to liaison with the artillery. For the infantry officer must know an amazingly number of things, and the number is increasing with every day of war experience. He must be the expert of his command in every branch of its work.

He must know the surest way to land a hand grenade in the enemy trenches at the particular quarter-second when it will do the most good. He must know machine guns and automatic rifles as if he had invented them. He must know the meaning of every highlight and every shadow in an aerial photograph of the enemy trenches opposite him. He must know to the ultimate detail how to follow the harraige fire when his men go over the top.

He must know these and a hundred other things, all in addition to the supreme art of commanding men. Of seeing that they have the regulation allowance of socks when they take to the trenches. Of insisting that they grease their feet properly. Of making sure that their rations are well cooked. Of keeping them cheered up when tobacco runs low or when the mailman doesn't come around with letters from home.

"Real Dope" Is Taught Here

Much of the work of the infantry school, of course, is similar to that of Plattsburg and other officer training camps at home. But it gains intensity here, and sees the constant introduction of new tricks fresh from the fighting lines, by the fact of being in the very heart of the war zone.

The instructor who tells the class what to look out for in a trench raid, either ours or theirs, may be a British or a French or an American officer who within the week has been in a trench raid himself. To be in intimate touch like this with the actual fighting from day to day and to work within inspiration of its sound, is one of the privileges of the university.

Most of the instructors are American colonels and majors and captains who have supplemented their previous training by study of their specialties in the English and French training schools, and in their lines as well. But the lecturers include officers from the other armies who have won prominence as authorities in different branches of war.

Each student of the infantry school is expected before he receives his diploma to be a master of the art of withstanding a gas attack. This has a department to itself, but its course fits into the courses of the other schools. Which is one of the advantages of the university system our army has adopted.

In the gas school the men are taught to use gas masks. It is not so much that they are given descriptions of the various types that have been introduced by the kindly Germans, and the ways in which these are most quickly and surely detected. They are told some of the results of gas attacks from the experiences of the English and French, and the permanent effect on individuals who are gassed.

Speed Tests in Gas Mask Work

Next they are given masks and taught to put them on quickly. Speed counts. With certain kinds of gas it counts so much that "do it quick or don't bother to do it at all" is the axiom. Quickness in getting the masks adjusted becomes a point of rivalry among the men, and they tell of the various records that have been made as they might talk of a hundred yard dash.

Then come the gas chambers. These and open-air demonstrations supplement the theory of the class room. For the school is nothing if not practical.

Down the road from the campus, as I drove toward it in the morning, there came a platoon of queer looking individuals walking heavily through the mud. At a distance they might have been the mythical men from Mars that Wells used to write about. As we came closer, the individuals resolved themselves into students out for a practice hike wearing their anti-gas regalia. They were learning to advance through a gas zone, and there was no make-believe about the thoroughness with which they were fitting themselves for the front.

Different types of masks and respirators which experience has shown to be the most useful, methods of "spotting"

AN ODE TO MY WINTERFIELD UNIFORM

By O. M. SERGEANT PERCY WEBB

O Winterfield, my Winterfield, I really must confess, You quite surpass most any class Of uniform or dress!

And yet the shades of coat and pants, Oh, uniform of mine, Are brown and green, while in between, There is a color line!

There's class to your patch pockets; still, I've reason to suppose They call them "patch" because they match

Some other fellow's clothes. And while across my tightened chest I feel your buttons bind, How could I fail to know the tail Is flaring out behind!

Then when I'm walking through the town, I hear the people say, While giving me the "up and down," "What is he, anyway?" "Is he one of the flying corps, A home-guard, engineer— A Belgian or a Britisher On furlough over here?"

O Winterfield, my Winterfield! Whatever your merits be, You're good enough for Uncle Sam.

And good enough for me. For though your pants were salmon pink, Your coat were emerald green, The man inside could say with pride, "I'm a U. S. MARINE!"

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STORIES OF THE LORRAINE LINE

CUSSING TO A GOOD PURPOSE

Someone had just remarked that the American soldier swears.

"But he swears for a d— good cause," said the bayonet instructor. "You start your bayonet practice feeling kind of passive toward the Boches. By the time you've been jabbing and cussing for fifteen minutes you find you've cussed yourself into a hot rage against the dirty murderers."

The bayonet school is in a hollow. There are about thirty dummies dressed like Huns swaying in the breeze in the posture which Sammy thinks would be most appropriate for the Kaiser and the Crown Prince—ropes around their necks and feet clear of the ground. In shell holes on the ground there are more dummies with a tag stuck on each vital part. Beyond, where the floor of the hollow starts sloping upward, is a line of trenches and still further, midway up the slope, is a row of sticks with jam cans perched on top of them.

Thirty rangy militiamen lined up in the snow at the start of the "track." The instructor signaled and they crouched.

"Go!" he shouted. "Get the —s. Cut their — hearts out."

With fierce yells the men sprang at the swinging rows of Huns. "Ee-fo-oo, you dirty —," screamed the quick little bantam on the end as he threw himself at the Hun. His bayonet did its dirty work and he slammed the Boche with his rifle-butt just to make the job a certainty. "Ee-yeep, Yaheewe! I am, am!" yelled the next man, and his face was a picture of rage. "You lousy, lousy killing —!"

All down the line bayonets were flashing and thirty American boys cursed like madmen. They swept on to the shell holes, still howling their profane warcry and skewering the prostrate Huns. They dropped into the trench and commenced sniping the Jam tins. Every tin dropped.

"Guts and discipline and give 'em h—," said the instructor. "That's our motto."

BOUND HE'D EAT IN COMFORT

"Hey, Lieutenant, better not run on that road. Fritzke can see it plain as day and he's been dropping shells on it all morning."

The warning came from a mud-spattered doughboy, seated on the tumbled bricks of a destroyed farmhouse with his mess-tin full of beans held between his knees. Mud and khaki make a perfect camouflage. You wouldn't have noticed him if he hadn't yelled.

The staff lieutenant on the way back from brigade headquarters stopped his car. The shouting warning was supplemented by the unmistakable "racket" of traveling shells—that invisible express train sound. Two "HE" shells slammed the surface of the road just ahead and tore holes in the crushed rock, hurling stones and chunks of steel in five directions.

The lieutenant and his driver got out. It was right on the edge of a crushed farm grange. A seven-work netting camouflage was supposed to hide the road, but in eighteen months of stationary fighting thereabouts the Boche has obtained accurate registry of the town and road both, despite camouflage.

"Come back in town here, Lieutenant," called the soldier from his rockpile luncheon. "Most of them bit the road or go clean over into the Rue de Victory. It's safe here."

The Boche was starting up again. He tossed ten shells on the road and about thirty more into town.

With each shell the lieutenant, the driver and the infantryman ducked their heads and after each duck they looked up with sheepish grin at one another. One high-explosive missile went low over their heads and poked another hole in the Swiss cheese front wall of a destroyed dwelling across the street. It struck square in the middle of the "Chocolate Mommy" sign.

"Bull's-eye," said Sammy, looking up from his hopeless search for a morsel of pork among the beans.

"Say," he demanded, turning to the driver, "what do you guys get to eat? Last night we had slum and I couldn't

find any potatoes in it. Today we get pork and beans—only it's theoretical pork."

The shelling became fairly hot. Several hundred shrapnel and high explosive shells broke over the town, in the ruins and in a row along the road. "Yanks" and "Polius" appeared in twos and three from unobservable nooks in the ruins and hurried to the dugouts down under the masonry.

In these towns you'll notice that all the emergency dugouts have their entrance facing toward interior France, away from the direction of enemy shells. They are placed in the lee of a standing wall whenever there's a wall standing.

"Wonder where that one went," said the driver after one loud burst. He ran through a hole in the wall to investigate a fresh shell-hole at close range.

The lieutenant was under fire for the first time. However he felt about it he maintained an outward calm—almost unconcern—for the benefit of the gallery of enlisted men.

A head poked out of the nearest dug-out.

"Hey Fat," yelled the man in the dug-out. "Come on in here. You'll get hurt if you stick out there."

"Well, a man's got to eat, hasn't he?" Fat called back. "That dugout stinks so a fellow can't enjoy his chow down there."

The lieutenant called his driver. They climbed back into the machine and began a two mile run parallel to the front, under enemy observation all the way.

"Well, I've done my part—I warned 'em," said Fat, appearing the ultimate bean.

COOKS TO DOLE THE SUGAR

CAMP FUNSTON, KAS.—Food conservation here and in other camps throughout the country has even gone to the bottom of the soldiers' coffee cup. No longer will he please his "sweet tooth" by digging into the sugar bowl and dipping out two, or perhaps three, spoonfuls of sugar to make his black java more palatable. Hereafter the cook will dole it out to him.

EDUCATES THE OFFICERS

Maneuvers, Says Southerner, Serve a Useful Purpose

How eager the soldiers of a certain American unit were to get into action is demonstrated in a story told by a commanding officer who was watching a maneuver just before the troops went to the front.

Six doughboys were resting on the side of a hill after spending a hard day climbing through mud to capture "Hudenburg," a "d" "Mackensen" trenches that existed only on maps prepared for that particular problem. They had done the same thing many times before.

"Well, boys," drawled one lanky Southerner, "we're all anxious to quit this playin' and go up. And I suppose we'll get up some day when we get through educating these officers!"

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RENNES—Gérard, 1 Rue Le Bastard.
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AMERICAN UNIVERSITY UNION IN EUROPE

8 RUE DE RICHELIEU, PARIS
(Royal Palace Hotel)

OBJECTS—The general object of the Union is to meet the needs of American university and college men and their friends who are in Europe for military or other service in the cause of the Allies.

MEMBERSHIP—The Union is supported by annual fees paid by the colleges and universities of America, all the students and alumni of which, whether graduates or not, are thereby entitled, WITHOUT PAYMENT OF ANY DUES, to the general privileges of the Union, and may call upon the Union in person or by mail to render them any reasonable service.

HEADQUARTERS—On October 20, 1917, the Union took over as its Paris headquarters the Royal Palace Hotel, of which it has the exclusive use. This centrally located hotel is one block from the Louvre and the Palais Royal station of the Metro, from which all parts of the city may be reached quickly and cheaply.

REGISTRATION—The Union keeps an accurate index of all men who register at its Paris headquarters or at its London Branch, 16 Pall Mall East, S. W. 1. It is anxious to get in touch with all college and university men in Europe, who are therefore urged to register by MAIL, giving name, college, class, European address and name and address of nearest relative at home.

A "DUD" IS JUST A FIZZLE

Tommy Atkins Coins Us a New Bit of Handy Lingo

LONDON.—Now that "camouflage" has definitely rooted itself in the English language as a synonym for deception and bunk of any kind, American slanguists should be ready to take "dud."

DUD, adj.; totally defective; zero in degree; of no account; worthless.—Dictionary of 1918.

Some ready-witted Tommy addressed himself one day to a huge German shell that had fallen near him but failed to explode. "You dear old dud," beamed the Tommy. Since then all harmless shells, bombs or cartridges have been known as "duds."

From explosives that do not explode, the word soon extended itself to fighters' vocabularies until it became the thing to describe idle parts of the front as "dud sectors," war weary Boches as "dud Fritzies," and battles that fail to develop into expected big actions as "dud shows."

The British front passed the word along to the American front, and now, by these tokens, "dud" is officially sent home as one of the first of the American souvenirs.

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