

ONE OUR WAY TO ANOTHER SCENE.....

There, a large French, British and Italian Cemetery very well kept, with a back-ground of solid rock wall, now sodded and covered with beautiful green grass. This huge mass of rock was one of Mein Herr Fritz's strong points in June 1918. The had set it up with machine guns, and the price they asked for final settlement was reached to unbelievable numbers of human lives!

FOURTH OF JULY OF WHICH AMERICANS THINK SO MUCH!"

The town of Belleau had been under heavy shell fire. Directly in front of our gun placements was the church--a total ruin except for the steeple, and the cross on top still intact! Resigrew on watch with me, sitting in the hole to my right; Mitch on the left facing the rear. Mitch was just stirring a can of French Canned Heat, solidified alcohol, which when stirred up and lighted gave off a small yellow flame. The crack of a rifle shot! The bullet landed in the rear bank of dirt just above short rib on Mitch, so close to his body, you could say without exaggeration, "a very close shave!" All that day that sniper kept Mitch, Renfrew and Hintz nailed down in that small hole!

That night our artillery opened up, put a barrage thru the town! We were relieved! When our barrage opened, Mein Herr Fritz opened with mustard gas--and saturated the woods! What we had to do to go through to get to the rear! Till you have hiked back thru heavilly wooded area with all your equipment on your back, total blackout: a gas mask on, glasses covered with moisture, you drooling like a miniature Niagara Falls; the throat so parched you would swear it was cut!---Until you have had such an experience, your education in Mad Man's abuse of the human body has not been completed!

BELLEAU WOODS.....

The Germans held the small French Village of Belleau directly in front of us, at the most 2500 yards from our hole in the ground. Orders not to fire unless Fritz started the show. Absolutely no chance to get out of the hole in daylight! Not enough length for one man to lie down in. One man on watch at all times behind the guns! Food served "ala cart" at night, French Bread with reinforced sawdust crust, can of tomatoes and water--which we had to use sparingly. If you ran out you went dry. This diet was a great weight reducer! Don't you know? What did we do with our empty cans? You would be surprised to know how many uses an empty tomatoe can may be put to, under that primitive way of life!

The huge pile of rock was very important in my life and to every member of the 95th Div. 1st. Battalion, 6th Regiment of USMC in June 1918! Around this rock the 95th Co. was dug in! Directly in front of this pile of rock, Buck Private Hintz, Resigrew, and Mitchell spent seven days in a hole in the ground, in front of our established line. This with just a small pile of dirt taken from the hole we had dug, and thrown up behind a small group of bushes in this otherwise open field, surrounded by a field of the farmer's blooming poppies!

BARRICADE.....

On this mound of dirt we had mounted a captured German Machine Gun with many rounds of ammunition, all in long belts packed in metal cans. A French Machine Gun had a weakness--they would jam under heavy fire! A cure--pick up the gun, slam the butt on the ground--continue in action! One automatic French Gun had a short barrel with large cone at end of barrel to kill the flash when used at night. It was semiautomatic, fired 26 shots from removable magazine. These magazines were carried in a French Muschet Bag.