

## THE INCINERATOR

When the drifting sands of McAllen smothered the fires of *The Incinerator* last December, and the RIO GRANDE RATTLER coiled itself up in the embers for a long bunk fatigue, it didn't expect to hear drill call blown again so quickly. Times have changed since the Cactus Campaign of 1916. The transition from chaparral to shrapnel has been sudden. *The Incinerator* burns again, but it burns green wood. The lines of our mouths are straighter. Our eyes are more fixed. Our ideals are grimmer and more definite. Nevertheless, in spite of the earnestness of our purpose, there is always time for a smile, even with the eight-hour drill schedule. The same old mistakes are made. The same wags wag, and will as long as a camp is a camp. The old RATTLER is dead. Its infant progeny, THE WADSWORTH GAS ATTACK, takes its place with a toothless smile of greeting to the 27th Division, U. S. A.

The nearest thing to a Rio Grande Rattler we see hereabout is one of those taxis which run between the camp and Spartanburg.

Sweaters without sleeves. Fingerless gloves. Why not socks without feet or pants without legs? As you were, kind friends. We still have all the members charged to us on our property accountability slip at birth ready to show at inspection.

And suppose the thrifty quartermasters at Washington get wind of this idea? We will be issued the blouseless sleeve and the soleless shoe.

The captain struggled in vain to drill his company. They walked as if their shoes were filled with the cook's biscuits. They just wouldn't drill. Finally, he lined them up before him. "Any man too tired to drill step one pace to the front." As one man, they executed the first proper movement that afternoon, all except a little fellow in the rear rank. The captain looked at him affectionately. "At least, there is one man in the outfit!" he cried triumphantly. "Why didn't you step out with the others?" "Captain, I was just too tired to move," replied the Buck.

It is rumored that the man who invented the Sibley stove is the same one who invented the brown derby, creases in trousers and the non-commissioned officer. The police are working on the case.

Speaking of Sibley stoves—do your Christmas shopping early.

### A Hero's Letter to His Sweetheart

Dear Mabel:

I haven't wrote you for some time now I've had such sore feet lately. When they broke our regiment up and transferred me to artillery I thought I was going to quit using my feet, but that was just another rumor.

Thanks for that box of stuff you sent me.

I guess the brakeman must have sat on it all the way down. It was pretty well baled when it got here, but that don't matter. Thanks for the fudge. That was fudge, wasn't it, Mabel? Thanks for the socks, too. They don't fit me, but that don't matter. I can use them for something. A good soldier never throws anything away, no matter what it is. Thank your mother for the half pair of gloves she sent me. I am going to put them away. If I ever get all my fingers shot off, they will come in mighty handy.

The artillery is different from the infantry in lots of ways. They make us work harder. At least, there's more work on the schedule. I know what the papers mean now when they say that "the artillery's very active on the western front."

We do a drill called a Standing Gun Drill. The name's misleading. I believe it was first invented by a troupe of Jap acrobats. They make you get up and sit all over the gun, and no sooner do you get comfortably settled than they make you dismount again. Seems like they didn't know just what they did want us to do.

I don't like the sergeant. First day out he kept saying, "Prepare to mount!" and then, "Mount!" Finally, I went up and told him that as far as I was concerned he could cut that preparedness stuff, 'cause I was always ready to do what I was told, even though it might be the middle of the night. That's me all over. He said all right, then, of course, I was prepared to scrub pans Sunday.

I don't care much for the horses. I think they feel the same towards me. Most of them are so big that the only thing they are good for is the view you get when you climb up on them. I took my first riding lesson the other day. It didn't last long, 'cause as soon as he started I fell off on my head. The sergeant said that if I hadn't used my head the way I did I would have been hurt sure.

A fellow can get a hot shower down at the Spartanburg Y. M. C. A. now for a nickle. I go in every other week or so regular. I believe in this sanity stuff at any cost. That's me all over. After you've paid your nickle, they give you a little towel and a hunk of soap like a watermelon seed free. As soon as you begin to use the soap, it acts just like it looks and shoots across the room. Then you have to stand there and wait till some other fellow starts using his while he is facing in your direction. They build the showers so close together that if a fellow is a big strapper like me he is standing in three at the same time. One on one side scalding hot, the one on the other side cold as Greenland, and the one in the middle kind of undecided. But what do I care, I say, when I am doing it for old Glory? That's me all over.

Well, I got to quit now and write a lot of other girls. Thanks again for the box of stuff, although it was so busted that it wasn't much good, but that don't matter.

Yours till the war ends,

JIM.

## The Volunteer

Why didn't I wait to be drafted

And led to the train by a band  
And put in my claim for exemptio ?

Oh, why didn't I hold my hand?  
Why didn't I wait for the banquet?

Why didn't I wait to be cheered?  
For the drafted men got all the credit,  
While I only volunteered.

And nobody gave me a banquet,  
Nobody said a kind word.

The puff of the engine, the grind of the wheels  
Was the only good-bye I heard.

Then off to the training camp hustled,  
To be trained for the next half year,  
And in the shuffle forgotten,  
I was only a volunteer.

And perhaps some day in the future,

When my little boy sits on my knee  
And asks what I did in the great war,  
And his little eyes look up at me,  
I will have to look back in those eyes

That at me so trustingly peer  
And tell him that I wasn't drafted,  
I was only a volunteer.

After we have taken out half a dozen Liberty Bonds, enough insurance to keep us comfortably during our declining years in the Old Soldiers' Home, made an allotment to our tailor and dentist, we are advised by the higher authorities not to throw the remainder of our money round foolishly. No; save your money, so that after the war you can buy the Singer Building or a Ford or something like that.

## Overheard on Guard

"Who's there?"

"Officer of the day."

"Hell! I thought it was the relief."

Officer of the Day (to him of the 15th)—  
Sentry, what are your general orders?

Him of the 15th—Yas, suh, boss. Ah walks mah post and takes everything in sight.

"Halt! Who's there?"

"Colonel Nutt and wife."

"Advance, Colonel Nutt, to be recognized.  
Wife, mark time."

Dear General:—I take my pen in hand to write and inform you that in private life I am a parachute artist. I therefore claim exemption on grounds of dependency.

Yours truly,  
Percy Cheeze.

Motto for a camp shower bath: Cleanliness is next to—impossible. E. S.

## Wasted Wind

Got a one-cent stamp?

How do the Germans manage to stick out?

When are we going away?

Any drill this afternoo ?

Sergeant, I haven't any trousers for guard.  
What'll I do?

Can I be excused from drill to wash my clothes?

Who used all the hot water in the showers?