THE DIARY OF A GERMAN SOLDIER

Readers should remember that this work has appeared as far as is known, only in a French edition, published in 1918 by Payot et Cie of Paris. It was written in and has been translated from the French—the French of the author, a German non-commissioned officer. Writing in a language not his own he has in certain places failed to make his meaning entirely clear and this will account for what may appear to be crudities or even mistranslations in the English version.

THE DIARY OF A GERMAN SOLDIER

BY

FELDWEBEL C_____
First Sergeant 88th Infantry
21st Division, 18th Army Corps

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PREFACE

A very few pages of these war memoirs will convince the reader that their author held an important position in the German army. Although Sergeant C—— only bore the chevrons of a non-commissioned officer, he was, nevertheless, virtually an officer in everything but name. His duties, as sometimes also happens in the French army, were akin to those of an officer. He played an important part on the so-called staff of his battalion. In turn, he was secretary, interpreter, and liaison officer. He frequently performed missions of trust and often carried confidential dispatches. Besides, he enjoyed all the prestige which the German army attaches to the rank of "Einjährig-Freiwillige." [1] He dined with his superior officers and, when not on duty, mingled with them on an equal footing.

[1] A young man of the upper classes, who, at his own expense, serves in the army for one year. There is no corresponding term in English.—TRANSLATOR.

The special and relatively independent position which this rather well-informed and observant young man occupied, from August 1st, 1914, to October, 1916, enabled him to see much and to give us a vivid picture, always interesting, though presented with extreme simplicity, of the events of which he was an eye-witness. As a matter of fact, C—— is no writer and kept a diary much more for his personal satisfaction than because of any literary aspirations. It is precisely because of this complete lack of pretension and because of the author's undeniable freedom of thought that it seemed to us that these memoirs would find favour in the eyes of the French public. We shall see some of those barbaric scenes and acts of vandalism which have dishonoured the German army, presented in broad daylight. C——, with great accuracy, gives the places, the date, and almost always the name, the rank and the unit of the German officers who so often delighted in overwhelming innocent civilians with all possible abuses, committed with barbaric brutality and lewd passion. In this

respect, the testimony of C—— constitutes a valuable document to support the indictment which the Allies have been drawing up against Germany for the past three years: those atrocious crimes, as for instance the secret massacre of twenty French civilians, both male and female, with bayonets, ordered at Braucourt on August 29th, 1914, by Colonel Puder, have been verified in every detail and with all necessary care.

This little book possesses still another interest of a purely historic nature; for these simple daily jottings in reality constitute the complete history, for the first two years of the war, of a German battalion which was closely connected with its regiment, its brigade, its division and often even its army corps. Even though the author is far from being an artist, or perhaps just because of that, this book faithfully portrays the aspect and the local colour of the different phases of the war on various fronts: Luxemburg, Artois, Picardy, Champagne, Galicia and the Vosges. For instance we learn under what conditions a Ger-

man division went back and forth between the French and Russian fronts and how long it took them to do it in those distant days when they still did.

In 1916, the author, thoroughly disgusted with Prussian militarism, decided to escape to Denmark, and it is from that country that this work has reached us. After fighting bravely for nineteen months both in France and Galicia, Feldwebel C—— was seriously wounded at the beginning of the attack on Verdun (February 23rd, 1916) and spent four months in a hospital at Frankfort. He had scarcely recovered when he was returned to the front. However, the surgeons again sent him back to Germany, where the authorities finally recognized him to be unfit for active service. He was transferred to the auxiliary service and was sent to join a non-combatant battalion which was working on the fortifications of the Danish border in Schleswig. Thus Feldwebel C—— left the German army after having discharged his full duty and at a moment when he was not under fire. His desertion has nothing

dishonourable about it and this is important as regards the extent of confidence which we should place in his opinions and criticisms.

We believe that this rather sternly written but complete book forms a unique document: the war experiences of a German witness, a brave soldier, but still very liberal minded and above all perfectly straightforward and sincere.

LOUIS-PAUL ALAUX.

Paris, January 15, 1918.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE DIARY OF A GERMAN SOLDIER

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On October 1st, 1913, I joined the 2nd Battalion, 6th Company, of the 88th Regiment as a "Freiwilliger." [1] My regiment formed part of the 42nd Infantry Brigade (21st Division, 18th Army Corps). As all the "Freiwillige" do, I entered the reserve officers' training corps.

As soon as war was declared, I was assigned, because of my knowledge of French, as interpreter and attached to the so-called staff of my battalion. I held this position for the first two years of the war and shared the fortunes of the second battalion up to the moment when I was transferred to the auxiliary service because of a serious wound which I received during the attack on Verdun on February 23rd, 1916.

Perhaps the reader of these simple cam-

[1] See footnote, page 1 of Preface.

paign notes will sometimes be tempted to believe that I have exaggerated a little. Nevertheless, in the following pages, I have only told of those happenings at which I was actually present, of those sights which I beheld with my own eyes. Besides I am sure that later on the tales of the inhabitants of the invaded territories will fully confirm these memoirs.

I

MOBILIZATION

IMMEDIATELY after the assassination of the heir to the Austrian throne at Sarajevo an almost undefinable restlessness was noticeable all over Germany. Many people said that this event could bring on grave complications in which Germany might be entangled and that it might even result in a European war. Alas, our anxiety was justified. As a matter of fact, on the 23rd of July, 1914, on the very day on which the Austrian ultimatum was dispatched to Serbia, an order of the general commanding the 18th Army Corps informed us that the manœuvres for which we were preparing had been called off and that we were to hold ourselves in readiness for a general mobilization order. From the 23rd to the 30th of July all the men from our corps who

were on leave were recalled and ordered to join their regiments with all possible speed.

At 3 P.M. on July 30th, 1914, the 2nd Battalion was ordered to guard the bridges over the Main, the railroads, and the approaches to the powder works at Hanau-on-the-Main. I, personally, received an order to take a detachment of twenty-four men to guard the great railroad bridge which crosses the Main between Hanau and Klein-Steinheim. Lieutenant Merbach accompanied us as far as the bridge, to give me the necessary instructions. I asked him to do me the favour of calling at the station for my mother whom I expected that day. Then, after placing my sentinels, I had nothing to do but watch the many trains crowded with soldiers which were continually crossing the bridge. My mother told Merbach that the 47th Artillery Regiment (11th Corps) had already left in field-grey. Every person passing over the bridge had to be brought to me and my instructions were to question them all carefully, keeping on the look-out for spies. Several officer-

patrols passed by, all cautioning me to watch diligently and to look out for everything.

At 4 A. M. on the thirty-first the soldiers who brought us our coffee told us that the men of the 5th Company were already in field-grey. A guardsman, named Wagner, from Flesheim, then called out:

"Well, that's something more than a hoax; it begins to look serious. This means that the Crown Prince has gained his point and the Emperor will not delay the declaration of war. Why should he care? His six boys are not going to be under fire; but we'll have to burn our fingers pulling their chestnuts out of the fire. We are going to sell our skins, but will you just tell me why and for whom?"

I told him to keep quiet or I would have to punish him, but he kept on:

"Oh, come on! Sir, there are many soldiers and non-commissioned officers too who do not want war. As for me, I am a socialist. . . ."

Again I told him to keep quiet, or I would have him taken to prison on the spot.

When I spoke to Merbach about this on the

following day, he told me not to punish Wagner in any way.

At four o'clock in the afternoon we were relieved.

In many places, in order to get back to the barracks we had to break through an enthusiastic and excited crowd composed mainly of women. The people were shouting: "Hurrah for the 88th!" "Long live the emperor!" and were singing patriotic songs at the top of their voices. In some streets it was impossible to make headway. The entire population of Hanau had turned out. Especially in front of the barracks there was an enormous crowd. Every time that a courier appeared the civilians fell upon him, shouting: "What have you got? Has war been declared? Not yet? What a pity!" It was a delirious joy. Where is that joy now?

We had hardly returned to the barracks when our company commander, Captain Otto Gaup, assembled us all in order to address us. During the ten months I had been in his company, I had more often seen him drunk than

sober. Sometimes we were forced to put him on his horse, for he would have been quite incapable of mounting unaided. This is about what he said to us:

"Dear soldiers:

"Great historic events are under way. Threatening clouds are beginning to obscure the political horizon. What will be the consequences of the Sarajevo assassination? Our enemies boldly dare to challenge us and are making use of assassins in order to have an excuse for war. They wish it. Very well, they shall have it. Come what may, we are prepared and we shall know how to receive them. Dear friends, I do not believe that I personally will have the good fortune to lead you on to victory, but I am sure that you will not only preserve the ancient glory of Germany unsullied, but that you will also bring back new laurels. Let us place trust in our Emperor and our government, in our people and above all in ourselves. With this hope I ask you to shout with me: 'Long live our Emperor and King!' "

Thereupon he shook hands with us and left. I overheard Lieutenant Dehes say to Lieutenant Popp: "He must surely have had a little too much to make him talk such nonsense."

On August 1st about half-past five a dispatch arrived at headquarters. As soon as the commanding officer, Kuhl, opened it he ran down into the courtyard of the barracks, terribly excited, shouting:

"Soldiers, men and women, old and young, listen, all of you. His Majesty the Emperor has ordered mobilization to commence on August 2nd. We are ready and since they dare to disturb our peace we shall show those brigands from across the Rhine and those assassins from St. Petersburg of what metal we are made. Dear comrades, long live our emperor, for whom we joyfully go to war and for whom we are ready to die." Thereupon Captain Raabe, commanding the 5th Company, with tears in his eyes, began to sing: "Heil Dir im Siegerkranz." [1]

[1] "Hail to Thee, Crowned Victor"—(The German National Anthem).

A beelike activity immediately reigned all over the barracks. Every one ran from one place to another without knowing why. Bayonets were taken to the armoury to be sharpened. Soldiers' relatives were coming into the barracks and soldiers were going out to the city. Every one was singing in the streets and civilians invited soldiers to have a drink, telling them: "See that you give the French a good licking!" Bells were ringing at full peal. Why? Because one nation was jealous of the other and because there were too many people in Germany and too little room for them. O bells, your former sweet sound was wild on that evening; you were no longer calling to Christians, but to bloodthirsty wild beasts.

On August 3rd a nun was arrested near the powder works on the suspicion of being a spy entrusted with blowing them up. Today she is a Red Cross nurse in the hospital of Saint Vincent at Hanau, caring for the wounded.

On the afternoon of August 5th, when all were ready to depart, a thorough inspection of

equipment took place. Major Kuhl handed over the command of the 2nd Battalion to Major Schmidt. Both addressed us, and we all shouted: "Long live his Majesty, the Emperor and the King." After that every one sang in chorus "Deutschland Uber Alles" and "Die Wacht Am Rhein."

Then we were told that we would leave at 2 A. M. Now that the hour of departure was close at hand, the courage of many a braggart began to fail and give place to a gloomy resignation. The food was quite tolerable that evening; some jokers called it a funeral feast. I went to the city to do a little shopping and to say good-bye to some friends. Later we assembled for the last time at the home of Lieutenant Popp of the 5th Company and then returned to the barracks.

II

THE DEPARTURE

In the barracks soldiers, instead of resting, were playing cards or writing home. They paid no attention to the officers and non-commissioned officers, who came in and advised them to sleep. At midnight the reveille sounded and coffee was served.

Moreover a fine racket had been going on everywhere in the city all evening long. The cafés and restaurants were filled with civilians and soldiers who had not reported at evening roll-call.

A crowd of people surrounded the barracks. There were many relatives of soldiers among them. An order had been issued preventing civilians from entering the barracks. In order to avoid affecting scenes and the farewells of sobbing mothers and wives, Major Schmidt decided to advance the hour of departure, so

that the battalion left for the station at ten minutes past one.

The band of the 3rd Engineers marched first. The people running alongside sang and yelled so that you might think you were surrounded by a crowd of lunatics. All windows were opened wide and filled with men and women in their night clothes, who shouted their good wishes and threw us dainties and cigarettes.

When we arrived at the station we were immediately ordered into the train so that we would be promptly and completely cut off from the crowd and farewell scenes would be necessarily brief. Only some officers' wives had obtained permission to stay on the platform. Lieutenant Eger's wife fainted after kissing her husband. While some ladies carried her into the waiting room, Eger, without showing any emotion whatsoever, calmly sought his compartment.

I found myself in a compartment with Lieutenants Merbach and Popp. All of a sudden the latter began to cry. Finally the train

started and passed out into the black night.

At Frankfort refreshments were waiting for us on the platform. The ladies of the Red Cross served the soldiers, who were almost all downcast. The ladies tried to revive their spirits and said to them: "Courage, friends; show that you are men, happy and proud to be permitted to shed your blood for the Emperor and the German fatherland."

Probably these ladies had nothing to do, and, being bored at home, they came to the station to pass the time. Otherwise they would not have talked such nonsense. It is certainly an honour to die for your country if it is attacked. But had we been attacked?

We had been ordered to remove our shoulder straps so that no one could tell to what unit we belonged. In the stations, when civilians asked us where we came from, we answered: "From hell," or "From the moon."

Various inscriptions were painted on the coaches, such as: "Paris Express," "Down with France!" or again "Further declarations of war received here."

In the morning, Popp, Merbach, Loffelhardt and I left our compartment for a car filled with baggage from which we could calmly survey the landscape.

Towards six in the evening we finally arrived at Zerf where we passed the night. We were coldly received by the inhabitants. These people had once been French and they remembered it. Captain Ziekenrath, Merbach, Loffelhardt and I were quartered in the home of a citizen who told us that all his beds were occupied by his wife and daughters. We had to be content with some straw which Merbach's orderly brought us. He had stolen it somewhere or other. We were so tired that we slept soundly on that straw, so soundly, in fact, that next morning we were late for roll-call.

On August 7th, 1914, we left Zerf. Our train passed through Irsh, Saarburg, Littdorf, Frissel, Nittel and Wellen, where we crossed the Moselle and the Luxemburg frontier. All the soldiers, tired out, were now sad and discouraged.

III

LUXEMBURG

It was about half-past eleven when we arrived at Alingen. Almost immediately Major Schmidt assembled the staff of the battalion in order to give us his instructions as to the treatment to be accorded to the inhabitants of the country. These people were really thoroughly familiar with the German language, but they pretended not to understand a word of it and insisted on talking French. The men composing the staff of the 2nd Battalion of the 88th Infantry were Major Schmidt; Lieutenant Wunderlich, aide-de-camp; Dr. Schafer, the head of the medical staff; Dr. Wolkewiz; Lieutenant Merbach; Sergeant-Major Hauser; Loffelhardt; and myself.

As interpreter, I was ordered to inform the inhabitants that it would be greatly to their

advantage to welcome the soldiers and to do their utmost to avoid quarrels.

Merbach, Loffelhardt and I were quartered on a woman whose brother had left Paris on August 4th, 1914. He told us that every one in Paris blamed the Crown Prince for starting the war. Merbach answered that he was only one of the many guilty ones. This woman gave us an excellent dinner. In the afternoon, the doctor inspected the men's feet because several of them had been complaining of soreness.

At five o'clock, the whole battalion was assembled on the road leading from Alingen to Mensdorf. Colonel Puder, commanding the 88th, greeted and addressed us. Then, led by a band, we left for the city of Luxemburg, arriving there at noon on the eighth. The natives who watched us pass showed without exception only hostility. Merbach, Loffelhardt and I went on ahead to order the people to place pails of water in front of their houses so that the soldiers, whose throats were parched by the heat, might have a chance to drink.

The battalion halted at Esch, five kilometres from the capital of Luxemburg. The men were put up in barns and the officers were billeted on the inhabitants.

Merbach and I were assigned to a priest who received us very badly, telling us that he could only give us one single bed. Merbach gravely replied that two young men could not possibly sleep in one bed, especially in the home of a Catholic priest. "What is your religion?" asked the priest. "I am a Catholic," Merbach answered, although he was really a Protestant.

Merbach and I were ordered to go to Luxemburg immediately to buy cigarettes and various things for the battalion. In the tobacco shop two ladies were behind the counter as we entered. Merbach told them in German that we wanted some cigarettes and that we would pay for them. The ladies pretended not to understand, and one of them said in French:

"Gentlemen, if you were French, I would give you everything you wish for nothing. But we cannot bear the sight of 'sauerkrauts.' "

"Madam," I answered in French, "be care-

ful of what you say and whom you address in this manner. Some day your words may come back to you in an unpleasant fashion." Thereupon she became thoroughly frightened and embarrassed, for she had not thought that we could understand French.

I reassured her, saying that I would not give her away. Then she decided to speak German, greatly to the satisfaction of Sergeant-Major Vetter who could now make the purchases on which he hoped to gain a fine profit. This swindler really resold these goods to the men for much more than he paid for them. His thefts assumed such large proportions that Major Schmidt was forced to remove him. Later on he was killed in the first engagement of the battalion.

Immediately upon his return to the cantonment, Major Schmidt invited us to have coffee, and then our time was our own.

Our priest received us a little more cordially this time. We dined with him. The dinner was so good that I did not pay the slightest attention to Merbach's puns.

On the following day, Merbach, Loffelhardt and I were ordered to make a careful inspection of the wagons of the battalion. While we were thus occupied, the other officers spent their time in the cafés, drinking and playing cards.

At seven o'clock we received the following order: "The 2nd Battalion of the 88th Infantry will advance from Luxemburg to Arlon, and will find out whether or not the city is still occupied by the enemy. Half a section of the 6th Uhlans will supplement the 2nd Battalion. Patrols commanded by officers and non-commissioned officers will reconnoitre."

By chance, we three, Merbach, Loffelhardt and myself, were again chosen by the commander to be sent to reconnoitre. Our hearts beat a little faster, but we could not object, since, as they say, orders are sacred. Soon we arrived in the city. Those inhabitants whom I questioned told us that the Belgian soldiers had just left Arlon, scarcely two hours ago. The city seemed quiet, so we returned to the

battalion where Major Schmidt ordered us to report to Baron Von Schenk, infantry general and commander of the army corps. He was then at Luxemburg. The general had a copy of our report made by his chief aide-de-camp, Major Martens.

Towards ten o'clock, the battalion, led by a band, entered Arlon. All precautions were taken to guard against an attack. Arlon was occupied by our battalion, a company of machine gunners, who set up their loaded pieces right in the heart of the city, the 6th Uhlans and a battery of the 63rd Artillery. The 5th Company took possession of the barracks of the city; the three other companies were billeted in various places. Brigadier-General Von der Esch and the chief of staff of the 42nd Brigade lived at the Hotel Continental. All the officers and non-commissioned officers had to live with the men in the cantonments.

But Major Schmidt gave Merbach, Loffelhardt and myself permission to live in the city at the house of the deputy-major. We stayed there up to the very moment of our departure.

IV

ARLON

When we entered Arlon, all the inhabitants, probably out of curiosity, were at their windows or doors. Bands were playing and the soldiers singing. The mayor of Arlon, a lawyer, was taken as a hostage and placed in the town hall under armed guard. The following proclamation was issued:

"To the citizens of Arlon!

"I am having the following proclamation made public and I hope that every one will heed its commands.

"The city of Arlon is occupied by German troops. Every one must submit to the will of the conqueror. Any infraction of the following orders will be severely punished.

"1. The inhabitants must welcome the soldiers and treat them politely;

"2. All arms and munitions must be brought to the townhall as soon as possible;

"3. The gathering of more than three persons on the streets is forbidden;

"4. The inhabitants must stay in their homes from 7 P. M. to 7 A. M.;

"5. From 8 P. M. on, there may be no light in the houses. Fires must be put out at the same time and no smoke allowed to be seen;

"6. Every person having any knowledge of the movements of the enemy, is asked to report all information immediately under pain of severe punishment;

"7. I have taken the mayor of Arlon as a hostage. He will be set free as soon as the population has conformed to my orders and as soon as other guarantees shall have been given.

"Arlon, August 10, 1914.

"VON DER ESCH,

"Brigadier-General."

A special detachment was ordered to announce this proclamation. It was composed of Lieutenant Popp, accompanied by two non-commissioned officers, two drummers, two

trumpeters and eight men with fixed bayonets.

I was selected to read the proclamation. At every street corner the drums were beaten and the civilians gathered to hear the reading of General von der Esch's orders. I had to read it at least thirty times before I was able to return to the house where I lived with Merbach and Loffelhardt.

We had hardly returned when Major Schmidt sent for us to order us to go to the city and requisition some bread and meat at the bakers and butchers. In the streets we saw lots of soldiers talking with the inhabitants by means of signs, which was rather amusing.

In several shops they told us that soldiers had taken things by force without paying for them and had insulted the proprietors. Merbach quieted these people by giving them vouchers. In one tobacco shop, a soldier had in this manner taken eighty francs' worth of cigarettes for his captain and had never come back to pay for them. Private Bessler, of the 6th Company, had gone into a jeweller's—supposedly to buy some jewellery. He stuffed

everything the woman showed him into his pockets, and was just about to go off with his booty when we came on the scene. Merbach boxed his ears and made him return the stolen jewels.

Towards half-past eight as Merbach, returning to Major Schmidt, was passing police headquarters a revolver was fired at him. He was not wounded. A policeman was just then standing in front of the door. He was immediately arrested and a council of war was hastily organized. It was composed of the following members:

Major Schmidt, chairman,
First Lieutenant Bertram, prosecuting attorney,
Lieutenant Eger, counsel for the defence,
Brigadier-General von der Esch,
A captain of the 63rd Artillery,
Lieutenant Kaufmann of the 6th Uhlans
} judges

I was the interpreter.

The accused was one Louis Empereur, a policeman of the city of Arlon, married and the father of four children. He had had so far an absolutely clear record with the German military authorities. Before the opening of the session, I was able to say a few words to him: I told him that he had a good chairman and I advised him to remember his wife and children and to be careful of what he said. He answered me that he knew what he had to do and that I need not worry about him. The session commenced and Lieutenant Bertram delivered his address. Empereur was accused of:

1. Having fired at the Prussian Lieutenant Merbach, without wounding him;
2. Having disobeyed the commands of the Brigadier-General's proclamation which ordered the inhabitants to give up their arms and to carry them to the town hall.

Since the accused did not seem to regret his action, the prosecuting attorney asked the

war-council to make an example of him by imposing the death sentence.

Lieutenant Eger, counsel for the defence, pleaded on behalf of Empereur, basing his arguments on the fact that no arms were found in his possession. But the accused cried out: "Yes, it was I who fired, and I have only one regret: that I did not succeed in killing a German!"

After this avowal he could only be sentenced. He was executed at 2 P. M.

At four o'clock some one fired on a patrol of the 6th Uhlans, but again without wounding any one. The shot came from a window of a disorderly house in front of which the patrol was passing. Immediately the Uhlans dismounted and, assisted by some foot-soldiers of the 8th Company of our battalion, went into the house where they commenced to maltreat the women and to plunder everything. After they had stolen all they could carry off they arrested two men and two women who were in the house and led them before the General. At the conclusion of a summary examination

the men were set free, after the girls had declared them to be innocent, saying that they themselves had fired on the Uhlans. They were immediately executed without a council of war. Then the house was given over to pillage. Everything that the soldiers could not carry off was broken or thrown out of the windows. The officers were greatly amused at soldiers who had put on women's chemises over their uniforms and were running around the streets in that costume.

On August 12th I left, by automobile, with Merbach, Loffelhardt and two men to reconnoitre in the château at B——. We had orders to take photographs and to satisfy ourselves as to the side from which a future attack might come. We had requisitioned six automobiles in Arlon. Loffelhardt, who was a good chauffeur, drove. German pickets outside of Arlon had taken such careful precautions and had dug so many ditches across the roads leading into the town that we were more than an hour getting across it.

The château of B—— was situated in the

midst of a large and beautiful park. As soon as we arrived, the caretaker came out to meet us. He took us into his own house where his sixteen- or seventeen-year-old daughter begged us to spare him. We told her to have no fear, for we were not waging war on civilians. Her mother was sick in bed.

After visiting the château, and appropriating some arms, we went down to the cellars, which were stocked with wine and all sorts of provisions. Merbach, who did not wish to carry off anything without orders from the major, sealed all the doors and gave the caretaker a paper forbidding any one to take away anything from the château.

As soon as we returned we reported to General von der Esch, telling him that we had not seen the enemy. Then we hurried to our major in order to tell him of our discovery. He gave us permission to return to the château immediately, and to bring back all the wines and provisions we wished. The drum-major accompanied us to lend a hand in case of need.

As we had taken all the keys, it was easy for us to re-enter the château. I immediately went in search of the caretaker, but was greatly surprised to find his house empty and in a frightful disorder. A labourer, passing by, told us of what had happened during our absence. Four German soldiers of the 42nd Brigade had entered the caretaker's house and after maltreating the inmates who fled in terror, had ransacked the place, amusing themselves by breaking whatever they could not carry off with them. I asked this man if he knew what these blackguards had done to the young girl, but he could give me no information on that score.

We then went into the château and had the contents of the cellars loaded onto carts and wagons, belonging to the place, which we found in the coach house. We also took away all the horses in the stables. While this was going on, Merbach on the first floor was cramming a large trunk full of linen. The non-commissioned officers, Lurch and Loser, as their share, were breaking open the drawers

and taking all the jewels and valuables they could find. They gave away many of them to their friends. September, 1916, found Paymaster Herbert of the 2nd Battalion still wearing a bracelet which he got at this time. We also took all the saddles and harnesses from the stables. Then the expedition started for Arlon. Major Schmidt congratulated us, saying that we had surpassed his expectations.

Up to August 17th, we led a fairly agreeable existence at Arlon and Luxemburg. Almost every day Merbach, Loffelhardt and I rode out in an automobile to reconnoitre. But Merbach always took us to Luxemburg where we spent our time. On our return we presented some sketch or other of a spot on which we had never set foot, saying that we had seen no trace of the enemy. And General von der Esch was delighted to have such fine soldiers.

On August 17th, 1914, we were ordered to leave Arlon which did not especially please the soldiers, for they would rather have stayed on there, eating, drinking, and smoking stuff stolen from the inhabitants of the country.

V

LENGLIER

We advanced for two days, reconnoitring right and left for fear of a surprise attack.

Finally on August 20th, 1914, war began in earnest for us. It was our first serious engagement and it showed me how a most gentle fellow, like my friend Merbach, could suddenly become savage in the excitement of battle.

It was about 6 A. M. and we had just left Tintage, where we had been quartered. We were marching along the road which leads from Martelange to Neufchâteau, taking all precautions necessary to our safety. Our battalion was leading. Behind us came the 1st and 5th Battalions of the 87th Infantry. The 80th Fusiliers and the 81st Infantry were on our left.

About 1 P. M. a patrol coming from Lenglier notified us that we could advance without

danger since that locality was not occupied by the enemy. After having some soup, prepared by the field kitchens, we resumed our march. All of a sudden, on our right, we heard an unwonted noise, altogether new to us. We knew right away what it was: a shell. Several dropped quite close to us. Major Schmidt immediately gave the following order:

"The 5th, 6th and 7th Companies will advance in skirmish line, taking shelter behind the hill which lies before them. The 8th Company will stay behind in reserve."

All the officers, sword in hand, marched in front of their men, as in a review.

The French and Belgians aimed very well and, sad to say, were aided by our own 27th Artillery who fired at us. After being reinforced by the 87th Infantry, Colonel Puder ordered the attack.

We could see now with our own eyes what war, which we only knew from books, really is. Men hit by a bullet flung up their arms, turned about and fell, dead or wounded. Everywhere one heard cries of pain and groans

mingling with the whizzing of bullets and shells, the hurrahs of the soldiers and the commands of the officers.

Captain Dunker was wounded twice and died that very evening. Lieutenant Eger, wounded in the hand, soon fell down in a faint. The 8th Company, which had until now been held in reserve, advanced in its turn to the left of the 5th Company.

All of a sudden the village of Lenglier began to burn and the two last named companies were ordered to take possession of it. The staff of the 2nd Battalion, to which I belonged, was now on the right wing of the 2nd Company. Lieutenant Brunn, an officer much loved by all his soldiers, fell just as he was giving an order, pierced through the heart. Non-Commissioned Officer Steinbach fell at the same time.

At last we actually entered Lenglier, which presented a sad spectacle. Houses were burning everywhere; the streets were strewn with the bodies of soldiers and horses. A Belgian officer was lying across a beam that was still

burning. His body was half burnt and his distorted face expressed horrible pain. This unfortunate man had fallen there, wounded, and must have been slowly burned alive.

Merbach and I, with our orderlies, were just then at a telephone post in the depot. All of a sudden we heard the screams of women and children. Going out into the street we saw a group of civilians, composed of four men, two women and five children, in the midst of a troop of officers and soldiers. Soldiers were kicking these unfortunate people and striking them with their rifle butts. The soldiers accused them of having fired at Colonel von Kriestein, commanding the 87th Infantry, who had just been wounded. He died in Germany shortly after. Their guilt could not be proven, for French, Belgian and German bullets were whizzing in every direction. Merbach took these unhappy people under his protection. In another house nearby a woman, holding a young child in her arms, was killed by a musket blow in the presence of her husband. He was later stabbed with a bayonet by a soldier

of the 87th. I do not know what became of the child.

In front of the station a young lieutenant of the 87th was ordering a non-commissioned officer and two men to set fire to the hotel, under the pretext that it was from there that von Kriestein might have been fired at. These three men first entered the hotel cellars in the hope of finding some wine. They found it, to be sure, but they immediately began to quarrel because the non-commissioned officer wanted to keep all the champagne for himself. So a man of the 88th was chosen to set fire to the hotel, which he did, floor by floor. Many houses were destroyed in this way.

About six o'clock Merbach and I were sent to look for the paymaster, in order that rations might be distributed. We followed a little path between two hills to the right of the station. Soon we met a group of German soldiers, a seriously wounded French lieutenant in their midst. When he saw us, this officer said in German: "Gentlemen, I beg of you to deliver me from these wild beasts." The

poor man had a bullet in his abdomen and seemed to be suffering intensely. Merbach suddenly became very much excited and answered brutally: "Take care of what you say and don't talk that way about brave soldiers who are fighting to deliver the world from the filthy French. As sure as I am standing here, I will not leave you until you have died before my eyes." "Lieutenant Merbach," said Paymaster Herbert who had just joined us, "remember that he is an officer like yourself and that he is wounded." But Merbach did not wish to listen to anything and sent us away. He remained alone with the dying man.

I told Major Schmidt of this affair and he ordered Merbach to take command of the 8th Company, whose captain, Zieckenrath, had been wounded. Two days afterwards, in the battle of Bertrix, Merbach was killed by a French soldier who dealt him a musket blow on the head. He was one of my best friends.

In the battle of Lenglier the 2nd Battalion lost five officers and sixty men.

Night fell and we lay down in the midst of the dead and wounded, whose cries we heard all around us. Our camp was in a place about two kilometres east of Lenglier, which continued to burn all through the night.

It was impossible for most of us to rest because we were all unnerved. Many soldiers thanked God for having protected them. Others boasted of having killed many Belgians and French. Whenever, utterly tired out, we began to doze a little, nightmares or shells would rudely awaken us.

At dawn we went on. For eight hours we marched around Neufchâteau, where a battle seemed to have taken place, and then we were ordered to bivouac at Bercheux.

We had the 87th French Infantry aided by a company of Belgian cyclists opposite us.

VI

BERTRIX

On August 22nd the reveille sounded at five o'clock in the morning. We marched off at seven, following the road to the left of Lenglier. After passing through Tournay-en-Ardennes, we entered the forest of Huquant where we snatched a moment's rest. Almost all the inhabitants of the village had fled precipitately, leaving their houses intact in the hands of the Germans, who were pillaging, breaking, and plundering everything. The soldiers, for their own amusement, were throwing furniture and dishes out of the windows. Schmidt, it is true, from time to time said that he would kill any one who went into the houses; but the soldiers did as they pleased and did not obey Schmidt or any one else.

At eleven o'clock near the Luchy forest, on

the way from Bertrix to Recogne, we received for the last time two days' rations. About two o'clock an order from the Army Corps was received. We were to attack immediately because the enemy, in great numbers, was getting ready to block our path, and perhaps to attempt to drive us back. Two of our companies advanced on the left side of the road and two on the right. We were assisted on the right by the 1st Battalion, and on the left by the 80th Fusiliers.

The 7th Company was ordered to form in skirmish line, occupying the outskirts of the forest, and to open the attack. The first one to be killed was First Lieutenant Bertram. He fell, struck by the bullet of a German soldier named Schleisinger, whom the Lieutenant had punished before the war by three days' imprisonment, and who wished to avenge himself, and had moreover so expressed himself to his comrades. His bullet made a little hole in the nape of Bertram's neck. This Schleisinger not only went unpunished, but a little while later received the Iron Cross for bravery. He

died in the hospital at Nesle of wounds received in battle.

The battle of Bertrix was one of the most important in which our battalion took part. The French occupied a favourable position and tried their utmost to prevent our advance. In order to avoid being driven back we had to sacrifice all our reserves. The fighting was desperate and both sides displayed equal valour. The French artillery and machine gunners aimed very well and caused us great losses. A great many soldiers fell, dead or wounded, and it was impossible to bring aid to any one because each one of us had enough to do to shelter himself from bullets and shells. At one time we thought that everything was lost and that we would have to retreat, when, fortunately, the 3rd Artillery Regiment of the Mayence fortress broke through the forest and arrived on the field. Hardly had the horses come out from the sheltering trees when they fell, overwhelmed by the French fire. Officers and soldiers set to work dragging the guns and pushing the wheels in order to be able to open

fire as soon as possible. Many were killed.

At last the 3rd Artillery was ready to fire and our cause took a turn for the better. Some soldiers of the 5th and 8th companies succeeded in gaining possession of guns belonging to the 18th French Artillery. The Frenchmen defended their guns, revolver in hand, and died bravely for their country. Then the Prussians cheered. The French, seeing a part of their artillery lost and one of their aviators fall, began to retreat slowly and to offer less resistance.

The battle was over for that day and the last rays of the sun gloomily lit up the field, covered with the wounded and dying.

The next morning, August 23rd, the conflict began again, but less violently than on the previous day. Still keeping in skirmish line, we advanced, leaving Bertrix on our left. The soldiers were hungry and many of them opened the knapsacks of dead French and Germans in order to find something to eat. Bertrix was burning and we advanced through a field of unmowed grain. We spent the night

between Fontenoille and Chassepierre on the French border.

The next day, at eight o'clock, we engaged in our first battle on French soil, in the neighbourhood of Matton, and in Matton itself.

VII

MATTON

On the morning of August 24th our battalion again happened to march at the head of the line. This did not please Major Schmidt or the soldiers at all because we had already lost more men than all the other battalions. But Schmidt was the youngest commander and he had to obey.

The French who were beating a slow retreat had assumed the defensive in the woods near Matton. We attacked them and a short while afterwards occupied their positions. Since we had no orders we stayed right there in the trenches until the 80th came to relieve us. The field kitchens, which were two kilometres behind us, were waiting to give us a hot meal. The men were satisfied and had already forgotten the hardships of the previous days. But their happiness was of short duration. In-

deed the French had just made a counter attack and had pushed aside the 80th, who lost the positions which we had gained. As soon as he was told of this, the Commander of the Army Corps, Baron von Schenk, ordered Schmidt to attack immediately. Schmidt replied:

"Your Excellency, my battalion has lost more men than all the others put together. My men have fought like lions. They have had almost nothing to eat for three days and they can stand it no longer."

"What's that? Are you not ashamed of yourself?" said Schenk. "You will attack immediately and the knapsacks will remain here."

Schmidt, with tears in his eyes, grasped the battalion standard and placed himself at the head of his men. He was seeking death. Because of this incident, Schmidt became popular with all the soldiers. On the other hand, he was unfavourably regarded by his superiors and ended by handing in his resignation in April, 1915.

Our artillery, which had done pretty good

work that day, helped us take Matton, which was already completely demolished, only a few houses remaining intact. When the 80th came to relieve us the soldiers exchanged musket blows and kicks. Our men called them cowards and full dress soldiers. Our officers said nothing but spat on the ground to express their disgust before their comrades of the 80th.

We had to go about twelve kilometres to get our knapsacks and at about 8 P. M. we took up our quarters in more or less ruined houses.

The soldiers broke everything that was still whole. They made fires of furniture and planks torn from the floors. They found a good deal of linen, especially women's underwear. Many men threw aside their shirts and put on women's chemises, which they said were much more comfortable in the heat. No one could forbid them anything, for most of them were drunk and would not obey. They quarrelled in front of the cellar entrances and had only one fear: that they might leave some wine for others. Often in their haste they forgot to turn off the taps so that the cellars were

flooded with wine. Besides, many officers, especially reserve officers, were the first to set a bad example.

I lived with Major Schmidt and his entire staff in the house of a retired French captain, that was still intact. He told Schmidt that he could not understand how, in an army like ours, which had such a reputation for discipline, the soldiers could be permitted to plunder and steal as they had just done at Matton. Schmidt asked me to answer him by saying that unfortunately he could not punish the soldiers because too many officers themselves had given such a bad example.

"How does it happen?" the old French captain went on, "that you mobilized so quickly? In France there was so little thought of war that we did not even have the time necessary to prepare for our defence."

Lieutenant Wunderlich made him understand that Germany had been preparing for a new war for forty-four years, while in France the people had only begun to think of such a thing about a year or two ago.

On the next morning, August 25th, at half-past nine Paymaster Herbert arrived with supply wagons in order to distribute provisions among the kitchens. Then we saw who the true thieves, the greatest plunderers, were. What had they not stolen? Full trunks, clothing, materials, clocks, phonographs and even umbrellas, canes and other things of no earthly use to a soldier. Beside the regulation wagons there were a lot of others loaded with loot. Some were entirely filled with wine. When he saw this Schmidt asked since when had he become a robber captain. The paymaster answered, without moving a muscle, that there had been no way of preventing the soldiers from entering abandoned houses.

"Fine excuses," answered Schmidt. "I believe you are war profiteers. While the soldiers at the front are sacrificing their skins, you gentlemen to the rear steal at leisure."

This band of thieves brought with them a quantity of provisions stolen from the houses and stores, and all sorts of poultry, geese actually hanging out of the wagons.

At 2 P. M. the regiment left Matton to march on Carignan. Along the road we could see ambulances and shattered wagons and the bodies of soldiers and horses which, because of the heat, were beginning to pollute the air. We also saw dead cows and pigs which the soldiers had left to rot after they had cut from them such meat as they wanted at the moment. It was the work of marauders who wage war for their own personal gain and only appear in their units to get their pay.

At Carignan, for lack of space, we had to camp out. On the twenty-sixth, we acted as reserves for the troops fighting around Mouzon. During the night it rained so hard that we had to go into the houses for shelter. Naturally the soldiers had to stay indoors and that caused some grumbling. I overheard Klein, a first class private, express himself as follows:

"Whenever there is anything good to be had, it's for the officers. As for us, they leave us wherever we are and don't even look at us. But let the battle come, then they are scared; they compliment us and flatter us because they

are afraid. Then they are just like little children, but when the danger is over, they resume their authoritative tone and treat us like dogs."

On August 27th, we crossed the Meuse, near Carignan, without any difficulty.

We encamped at Villemontry which had not suffered much. But the inhabitants complained of the raids and pillages of the soldiers who, through their threats, got money and other valuables.

In the evening every soldier received a bottle of wine. The men, already fed by the kitchens, nevertheless prepared another meal for themselves, composed of chickens and other provisions, stolen from the village. Indeed nothing was left of the chickens and geese except the feathers which flew around in the streets.

On August 28th, reveille sounded at five o'clock, the last reveille, alas, for the many of us who were to fall on that day.

VIII

AUTRECOURT

We formed part of the left wing of the 21st Division and participated in the battle waged in and around Sedan. We were stationed between Haraucourt and Autrecourt. The 25th Division was on our left. The French artillery aimed very well, but with small results, because most of their projectiles did not explode. The shrapnel shells were the most dangerous, because when they burst it was at a certain height and a shower of bullets rained down upon us. They caused us great losses. We were lying on the crest of a small hill to the east of Autrecourt and we could not possibly advance because of the murderous fire of the French, who shot at all those who were foolish enough to raise their heads.

Major Schmidt, Reserve-Lieutenant Beck,

Loffelhardt and I marched with the battalion, while Lieutenant Wunderlich, a drum-major and a non-commissioned officer stayed about fifty paces behind us with the telephone in order to keep up communication with the rest of the regiment. A shell, which exploded right where they stood, struck a telephone operator, so that he was literally cut to pieces, and wounded Lieutenant Wunderlich in the back and in the arm.

After we had surged forward and backward several times we ended by succeeding in getting into the village which was completely destroyed. As at Lenglier I saw half-burned corpses lying among the ruins. The wounded groaned and the frightened animals bellowed loudly in the stables.

It was about two o'clock when we entered Autrecourt. In order to try to see Wunderlich, I, together with the major, sought the field hospital which had been installed in the church.

A frightful spectacle met our eyes and our nerves were subjected to a severe test. At

first, it was impossible to find Wunderlich, so filled was the church with the wounded. We would have had to step over their bodies. Among others I remember the son of a merchant from Hanau-on-the-Main, who had lost both eyes. He screamed fit to break one's heart and kept calling for his mother. In his agony he tore off the dressing, and we could see how horrible his wound was. Others had one or two limbs shot away, or had their stomachs torn open by shells. Some bore their suffering resignedly; others on the contrary uttered loud shrieks.

In a garden, to the right of the church, were the French wounded. I must say that most of them did not scream, either because they were afraid to or because of national pride and for the sake of setting the Germans a good example of courage.

We asked the nurses why they did not carry these wounded Frenchmen into the houses instead of letting them lie out in the open. "We have no room," they answered. "Besides it is not cold during the night and they are well

covered." Let it be said in passing that the nurses are the greatest thieves on earth.

We camped north of Autrecourt. The companies assembled to report their losses in dead, wounded and prisoners. Only then I realized how hot the fighting had been. All the companies had lost more than half of their fighting force in dead or wounded.

Many of the soldiers walked over the battlefield to find their friends, but most of them were not ashamed to explore the pockets of the dead. To any questions they answered that they were looking for identification tags. To put these ghouls to flight it was necessary for Schmidt to issue a formal order, threatening to shoot immediately any man who should touch a corpse.

The Meuse flowed calmly at our feet, indifferent to all this wretchedness of which, nevertheless, it was the primary cause.

In order that the convoys might cross the river, the 21st Pioneers had built a bridge at Villers, just ahead of Mouzon. Because one could not see very well there and as the cross-

ing was making slow progress the Pioneers set fire to the houses nearest to the river. But the fires spread over the village and soon it was all aflame, so that one could see as though in full daylight. The general commanding the army-corps congratulated the 21st Pioneers.

IX

RAUCOURT

On August 29th, 1914, after having received a fresh supply of rations, we set out for Raucourt. During the march our new aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Kédor, especially distinguished himself. He was a booby who maltreated the soldiers who were already suffering greatly from the heat and from thirst. As they were not marching quickly enough, he threatened them with his crop, insulted them and called them dogs, pigs, band of peasants, herd of cows, etc. Nevertheless, during the battle, no one ever saw this hero, who preferred to stay near the kitchens where shells and bullets did not fall. This, however, did not prevent him from being one of the first in the regiment to receive the Iron Cross.

About 3 P. M. we arrived at Raucourt. Here something happened which ought not to

have occurred, but, honestly speaking, who in the German army still had any respect for the Red Cross, non-combatants, women, etc.? Not many.

The 87th Infantry which was in the lead had not neglected to take all precautions and had sent patrols in various directions. Some of these patrols preferred to remain quietly at an inn at Raucourt, rather than fulfil their mission. They stripped the entire house and after taking whatever pleased them, went into the cellar. There they seized a lot of wine, especially champagne, as was afterwards proved by the number of empty bottles lying about on the ground. It was not long before they were completely drunk. Then, whether it was the result of a quarrel, or whether it was by accident, one of the soldiers was killed by the sideboard in the dining room. He had been hit by the butt-end of a rifle which had opened his skull like a melon. His brain oozed out. His eyes, as big as fists, hung from their sockets. He was completely disfigured. So that no one could identify him the mur-

derers had hidden his papers and taken his military certificate out of his knapsack, which was still lying in front of him, with the contents all thrown about. What indicated that the murderers were not civilians was the fact that he still held his own gun and that the murderer's gun, the butt all covered with blood, was still there.

Lieutenant Kédor, the non-commissioned officers Dorr of the regimental staff, Hallenbach, Loffelhardt and I were the first to enter the house, for a crowd of civilians and soldiers had assembled outside the door without daring to go in. We immediately understood what had happened, and saw that only a German soldier could have committed the murder. Kédor said: "Who will denounce the criminals so that they will be punished for their crime? They will never be found. Nevertheless we cannot allow the honour of the German army to be sullied in this way." With these words he went out of the house and accused the inhabitants of Raucourt of having murdered a Prussian soldier.

Immediately under Colonel Puder's orders, First Lieutenant Schaffitzel, the adjutant of the regiment, arrested all the inhabitants of the houses near the inn, about twenty in number. These miserable people swore that the soldiers were fighting among themselves and that they were innocent. Whereupon Puder shouted: "Kill this whole crowd immediately even though the innocent will suffer with the guilty, and set fire to the hotel and the neighbouring houses." Perhaps he thought that one of these wretches might denounce some one else, but in this he was mistaken. However, before he could countermand the order the soldiers, like wild beasts, threw themselves on the fifteen or twenty men and women, condemned without a trial by Colonel Puder, and killed them wildly with bayonet thrusts. During this time others hastily set fire to the houses and to the hotel, which were in flames within a few moments.

Then the soldiers scattered over the whole village, maltreating and terrorizing all the in-

habitants. They were allowed full liberty to do as they pleased.

The battalion camped outside of the village in a field, where the bodies of French colonial soldiers were still lying about. We suffered much for want of tobacco. Major Schmidt and we ourselves smoked tea. The soldiers smoked dry leaves. Many stripped the dead in order to find some tobacco, which they re-sold for gold. Soldiers gave watches, rings and French or Belgian gold pieces in exchange for a few cigarettes. Where did all this money and these valuables come from since the German soldier is paid only five and three-tenths marks every ten days?

On the next day, a Sunday and a day of rest, a religious service was held at which the chaplain of the 21st Division preached, taking as his text: "Love thy neighbour as thyself." At half-past eleven a mass for the Catholic soldiers was held in the church of Raucourt.

Because we of the general staff were in want of wine, Major Schmidt told me to try and

sneak out with Loffelhardt and find some. So I started a little investigation among the inhabitants of the village who advised me to apply at a villa, situated at the northern limit of Raucourt. This villa was occupied by an old lady who lived there alone with her son and who was likely to have a lot of wine in her cellar.

When Non-Commissioned Officer Kumpfe, Loffelhardt and I presented ourselves at the villa we were thrown out by a young lieutenant who had already taken up his quarters there.

So we returned to Major Schmidt to tell him of the failure of our mission. Kédor, who was never afraid in such a case, said that we must return there with him. When we arrived the young lieutenant had gone away and we were able to see the lady at once. We explained the purpose of our visit, but she told us:

"Gentlemen, everything in this house has already been taken by the general who lives here."

"And where is this gentleman?" I asked.

"He has gone out," she said.

"Very well. When he returns you will show him our certificate of requisition."

Whereupon we went down into the cellar and immediately began to pack up some bottles of champagne and other wines.

As we were making ready to leave, with about thirty bottles, the young officer received us at the door of the cellar with these words:

"I'll teach you to drink my champagne! You drink water, you rascals!"

But Kédor, who was not afraid, shouted in his face:

"What are you saying? Who are you? What are you doing in this house?"

"I am the general's adjutant and I order you to leave this wine alone and to quit this place as quickly as possible."

"Shut up; keep your mouth closed! I am older than you. I believe you are only an impostor. You'll hear from me," answered the bold Kédor.

Finally we arrived at Schmidt's quarters with our stolen wine, but we could not drink

much of it since our departure was fixed for half-past four. We had hardly time to have a bite before setting out.

Barely six kilometres from Raucourt we had to halt in order to let other troops go by, because we were the reserves. This delay gave Schmidt an opportunity to send us back to get some more wine because we would probably be going through places which had already been stripped of everything by the troops preceding us. So I set out with Lieutenant Abraham of the 8th Company and Loffelhardt. All of us rode bicycles. We were delighted to be able to annoy the young lieutenant again. In the village Lieutenant Abraham stopped a moment to speak to some soldier acquaintances, so Loffelhardt and I went on ahead and presented ourselves alone at the door of the old lady's villa.

We knocked several times but no one answered. Then we jumped over the garden wall and removed the iron bar in order to open the door and put our bicycles inside. We were very much surprised to hear threatening words

in German. The door of the house was also closed so we climbed in at a window, and were soon in the room from which the noise came. There we saw a strange sight. In the room were Non-Commissioned Officer Kumpfe, who was one of our party the first time we had come for the wine, Janecke, a first class private, and the old lady. The latter was completely undressed and appeared about to faint. When she saw us she started to cry, probably thinking that we also had come to hurt her. I told her to dress herself and to tell us what had happened.

"About half an hour ago," she said, "these two gentlemen broke into my room through the window and asked for money. I told them I had none because my son had gone away and taken it with him. Not understanding French, they thought I was refusing to give it to them. I took them into the dining-room to give them something to eat, but they pointed their revolvers at me and dragged me into this room. I tried to make them understand that they would find nothing which would be of the

slightest value to them. Then the taller one" (this was Kumpfe) "sat down on my bed and made me understand by signs that I was to get undressed. In like manner, I tried to convey to him that I am an old woman, sixty-three years old, and begged him to remember his mother and to spare me such dishonour. Then this gentleman took a candle and set fire to my bed. I beg you to look at the sheets and blankets. Half mad with fear I tore off my clothes, ready to submit to the inevitable, when luckily you gentlemen came."

Then I explained to the lady why we had come back to see her, that she must not be afraid of us and that we would pay her in requisition certificates, which had the same value as current money. Kumpfe, now thoroughly scared, begged me to say nothing of what we had seen. Both he and Janecke asked the old lady's pardon. She also asked us not to say anything; because she did not want these men to be punished, and because she was embarrassed by the whole business. Loffelhardt and I promised her to keep it secret.

She asked us all to have something to eat, and you may be sure we did not refuse. Lieutenant Abraham, who had just arrived, also accepted her invitation and seemed very much pleased with the good woman. We did not tell him all that she had endured. After supper she herself took us to the cellar to get some wine. Since we could not carry it all with us, we told her to bury the rest, because I had marked on the requisition bill that we had taken everything; but I doubt if she did that. Later on, when Kumpfe wanted to order Janecke to do something, the latter said in a clear voice: "Raucourt." Kumpfe immediately turned pale and gave his orders to another soldier.

In the evening we rejoined the battalion, laden like mules, to Schmidt's great satisfaction.

The villages through which we passed were for the most part completely ruined, and in many of them even the churches were no longer standing.

Now the battle of the Marne awaited us, the

Marne where the French showed the stuff they were made of and where General Joffre closed the door on our hopes and illusions.

Here I wish to tell of some of the foolish ideas of our soldiers in order to show to what extent these illusions were spread about. We were to enter Paris immediately; that went without saying and no one doubted it for a moment. But all the soldiers were convinced that we would be in England very soon as well.

"How are we going to get to England?" asked one.

"Don't worry," replied another. "Wilhelm has already prepared everything. One fine day Dover will be bombarded from Calais and we will quietly set off for London where we can eat our fill of pudding."

X

THE BATTLE OF THE MARNE

We had the good fortune to remain in the rear-guard for five days until September 5th, 1914, when we were led under the deadly French artillery fire, to the north of Heiltz-le-Merupt, in order to take part in the great battle of the Marne. The French artillery aimed so well that on the march toward our position, we lost almost half of our fighting force, in dead or wounded.

We finally arrived at Heiltz-le-Merupt where we had to stop because the village was under fire. Always on the jump on account of the violent fire of the enemy artillery, we reached our positions between Sermaize-les-Bains and Pagny-sur-Saul, on the railroad, where we were sheltered. At this moment our communications with the rear were interrupted because of the close and violent fire of the

French artillery which was becoming more and more deadly. We were in relative shelter, but only if we lay in the water. A torrential rain fell unceasingly and we had eaten nothing since 4 A. M. We had to await nightfall before we could leave our disagreeable position where, if we were not shot to death, we would probably be drowned like rats.

At 10 P. M. two field kitchens approached. Without bothering to see to what regiment they might belong the men threw themselves upon them and stripped them of everything in the twinkling of an eye.

Soon Loffelhardt and I were appointed to take the reinforcements which had just arrived from Mayence out to the battalion and to scatter them among the various companies. Some old Hanau acquaintances of ours were with them. The important thing was that they had tobacco and cigarettes, which we had been deprived of for a long time.

We showed the newcomers to their companies. Many had only joined the colours six weeks before. They were beside themselves

at the idea of taking part in a great battle and screamed so that we were obliged to shut them up, for the French were hardly thirty or forty metres away from us. I had hardly spoken when the fusillade began again, very violently, and then it was hard to restrain these valiant warriors who began to run in all directions, especially to the rear. Soon Loffelhardt and I had to lie down flat in a pool of water.

The company orderlies were starting off with new recruits when the order arrived for an immediate attack on the French who were opposite us. That was a real butchery. For the first time, I took part in a hand-to-hand combat. Every conceivable weapon was used: the bayonet, the rifle butt and even the trench knife. The two artilleries thundered on and caused terrible losses on both sides. Neither French nor Germans gave any quarter and no one wished to surrender. Our attack failed, resulting only in enormous losses.

In the morning we saw Kédor approaching with the four company adjutants whom he had gone to look for, back where the field

kitchens were. He wished to enroll the new arrivals, but this was impossible because we had no lists and anyway most of them had been initiated by being killed, wounded or made prisoners. For a long while, in Germany, the many requests for information made by soldiers' relatives all received this simple answer: "Missing since the battle of the Marne." Many of these young soldiers did not even have identification tags.

On September 6th, the firing subsided somewhat, but it continued to rain in torrents. I was squatting at the bottom of a hole with Loffelhardt quite close to the major. All of a sudden a French shell fell right into our trench and tore six men to pieces.

About 5 P. M. Loffelhardt and I went to the rear carrying orders from the major to the paymaster. He was stationed with the baggage near Sagny-sur-l'Angle together with all the provisions of the 21st in charge of Rittmeister, a captain of the Hussars. Just as we came up the latter was questioning the mayor of Sagny-sur-l'Angle who had been brought

before him and accused of communicating with the French, and of warning them of all our movements by means of an underground telephone. This suspicion was all the more well founded because a German battery, which had only just taken up its position, was immediately wiped out by the French fire. A non-commissioned officer of the 6th Uhlans arrived in the townhall courtyard and ordered the soldiers to arrest all civilians. Three women, among them the daughter of the mayor, a young girl of eighteen, were found in a cellar which had been their hiding place, and were treated just like the men, that is to say with the utmost brutality.

We spent the night with the paymaster and were able to see what an easy and agreeable life these gentlemen of the Quartermaster's Department were leading. While we were doing without everything in the trenches a frightful waste was going on here. They did not deny themselves anything. Wagons filled with plundered goods were standing in line. Because it was raining, comfortable tents had

been put up. The paymaster invited us to have dinner with him and treated us just as though we were in a first-class hotel. Many excellent courses and all kinds of wine were served. Since Loffelhardt and I had had virtually nothing to eat for forty-eight hours, our appetites were enormous. Both of us were possessed by the one idea of profiting by this occasion, by eating enough for several days. Everything that we ate at that dinner had been stolen. A few steps from us some soldiers who were guarding the civilians of Sagny did not hesitate to show their utter lack of respect for the women in a shocking manner. These poor creatures could do nothing and they began to cry, but that did not prevent those brutes from keeping right on. The officers ought to have put an end to such conduct. Are not two officers always detailed to stay with the baggage? Where were they? Probably about to celebrate with stolen wine. They were waging war in their own way.

After we were quite refreshed we responded to the call of duty and rejoined our battalion

at about 4 A. M. We had to creep over bodies of dead men and horses and the ruins of wagons, guns and automobiles which littered the battlefield. It was impossible to walk upright without exposing oneself to the enemy fire. So we had to crawl. I shuddered as I touched the dead and reflected that perhaps a moment later I too would be one of these innumerable and unknown corpses. About half-past six we reached the crest of a hill. We offered a fine target to the enemy and their bullets began to whiz over us. So we hid behind a dead horse. Soon we saw some troops in front of us retreating in our direction. How great was our surprise to find that we were in the midst of the first, instead of the second, battalion. In answer to our questions we were told that the second battalion was now further to the left. We went there and I asked Major Schmidt why we had abandoned the railroad line. He said: "You have heard that the Germans with Von Kluck were twenty kilometres from Paris, but, you see, the matter fell through and we have to

beat a retreat. If this goes on, we shall soon have no more men left, for our losses are terrific." We remained there without orders, waiting to be taken prisoners.

"Charlot," Schmidt went on, "if fate wishes us to fall into the hands of the French while we are still alive, let us always stay together. Why didn't I learn more French at school? Well, that's understood, we'll keep together."

We remained there all day long; the French artillery fired to our rear and prevented us from retreating. They were also firing *at* us and killing many of our men, so that our position became intolerable. The stretcher bearers did not know where to turn next for the wounded were all crying out at the same time, calling them from every direction. Some men began to stick their handkerchiefs on their guns to show that they wished to surrender, but the French did not pay the slightest attention to us, only answering by bullets which very often hit their mark. Every one was demoralized. In order to calm the men, higher officers told them that we were retreat-

ing as a precautionary measure, but no one believed that. The soldiers had no compunction about shouting right at the officers: "Yes, yes, you were too hasty with your Paris story. Now the French have given us a beating which we shall never forget."

Finally, on September 8th, about 7 P. M., we escaped out of the death-clutch of the French. We were ordered to begin the retreat, which was wretchedly accomplished because of contradictory orders and counter orders. First they would send us in one direction and then in another. If we had just halted in a spot where we could get a little rest, another order would immediately come telling us to leave it. This uncertainty among their chiefs exasperated the soldiers, who sometimes even began to insult the officers. Many men, dead beat, refused to go on, but stayed where they were, surrendering to their fate.

On September 9th, about 4 A. M. our regiment was ordered to act as rear-guard of the division and to send out patrols composed of trustworthy men. Until further orders, the

bulk of the rear-guard was to occupy the southern part of the Sommeilles forest.

It had stopped raining and the sun was shining brightly. Our little staff made themselves as comfortable as possible on the edge of a sand pit. They brought us coffee from the kitchens. We took it with pleasure and were discussing recent deaths when a French shell, bursting quite near by recalled to us the fact that the war was not yet over. Lieutenant Kédor, who was dangling his legs over the edge of the pit, all of a sudden rolled down, upsetting our coffee and shouting: "Help! Quick! I'm wounded!" Dr. Wolkewiz and two nurses came running but he got up alone and feeling himself all over said: "I thought that a shell had torn me to pieces. But, thank God, I see that there is nothing the matter with me and that I am safe and sound." We all laughed at the courage of this hero, who went on: "Major, I had a narrow escape; that shell whizzed by my ears, so that I thought surely the end had come. It's good that those simpletons aimed badly."

The major answered him: "Kédor, I haven't laughed so much since we mobilized. And just look! the whole battalion is doubling up with laughter. It remains to be seen whether it's on account of your heroism or your acrobatic stunts."

Kédor, who was ill-natured, got angry at these remarks and began to pick a quarrel with the soldiers. But he had hardly opened his mouth when they called out, shaking with laughter: "Help! Quick! I'm wounded!"

In order to end this scene, Schmidt sent Kédor to the kitchens to get us some more coffee.

Soon we continued our retreat. Von Kluck's artillery galloped madly by, with infantry men who could no longer keep up and who did not wish to fall into the hands of the French, hanging onto the gun carriages.

In the villages through which we passed there was no longer any question of maltreating the inhabitants. Some of them asked us if we were looking for the road to Paris. Schmidt, for whom I translated these sarcastic

questions, did not get angry and only shrugged his shoulders.

At six o'clock we arrived at Hans where we were to encamp with all of the 88th, the 87th, the 6th Uhlans and the 63rd Artillery. The streets were so crowded with guns and wagons that it was impossible to get through. Officers swore and yelled and soldiers did what they chose. Many of the non-commissioned officers were soundly thrashed by privates. While I was going for orders for the brigade I saw Lieutenant Anspach of the 3rd Battalion swearing at an Uhlan who had touched him with his lance in passing. The Uhlan answered him in a rage: "Shut up, you great big thief; now you're getting back your courage because we're far away from the French. Be off with you, you poor coward, otherwise you'll get something more." Anspach paled and went off. I myself had removed the collar of my cape in order to pass unrecognized, for I realized that the troops were not respecting their superiors just then.

The night passed quietly for the men, but

we were kept busy with orders and counter orders.

We left Hans on September 11th about 3 A. M., in skirmish line, and retreated eastward, crossing the trenches between Hans and Somme-Tourbe.

About six o'clock we were relieved by regiments who had not yet been tried out, and we in our turn relieved the Guard which had been beaten at Rheims.

Such was the part which our battalion played in the battle of the Marne.

XI

RHEIMS

We were marching northward in the direction of Vouziers when we were suddenly ordered to change our course. Upon consulting maps, we found that we were being sent to Rheims. Our march on that city was a veritable forced march, for we made about fifty kilometres in one day. Colonel Puder shouted to us: "Well, we'll have to pull other people's chestnuts out of the fire again. It seems that the Guard has been licked and no doubt we're being sent to replace it."

It was at Bourgogne that we met the first soldiers of the Guard. Our men received them with sorry jokes. "Well," they said, "here you are, you brawlers from Berlin. Did the French give you a good licking? You just look at us to see what real soldiers are. You're nothing but full-dress soldiers. You know

how to shoot off your mouths; but when the battle comes, you throw away your guns and beat it " The officers said nothing and laughed in their sleeves. Those remarks assured them that we would do our duty and would efface the failure of the Guards who had lost the fort of Brimont. We were being sent to recapture it.

At first no one cared to attack because of the accuracy of the French artillery fire. But Brigadier-General von der Esch ran all along the line, striking the backs of the soldiers with his sword. Thus it was that the brigade retook the fort of Brimont. Afterwards von der Esch told the officers that this was the best way to make the soldiers advance, and to recall them to their duty.

While we were taking the fort we were continuously subjected to the terrible fire of the French artillery, which continued to pick off our men. Our paymaster Herbert, who now had to come a little closer with his supply wagons in order to distribute the goods, was horribly afraid but that did not prevent him from getting the Iron Cross.

During the afternoon of September 17th Major Schleguer of the 1st Battalion and our Major Schmidt ordered Loffelhardt and myself to go to Rheims in search of some champagne to celebrate our victory over the Imperial Guard. We left on bicycles by way of Auménancourt-le-Petit, Bourgogne and Fresnes. As we were coming out of Fresnes, shells began to fall around us. We thought that they came from our artillery whose range might be too short. We were positive that Rheims was not yet occupied by the French. On coming out of the woods, a regular rain of shells greeted us. We did not know what to do, and thought that the best thing would be to get into the city as quickly as possible. There we would be safe. As we were passing by a farm where a company of infantry was hiding the soldiers asked us: "Where are you going? Good luck to you!" All of a sudden we found ourselves in the midst of an infernal bombardment. Shells came from all directions and burst all around us. As we were going along that beautiful white road the French

artillery, who were really occupying Rheims, fired at us as though they were shooting at targets. Realizing our mistake, and seeing that we had long ago passed the German lines, we went back at a dizzy pace. We surely beat all speed records, for we had the whole French artillery firing at our backs to hurry us away and to give us courage. The road went uphill a bit, but just the same we rode on like world champions in order to get out of this hell. Schmidt, deeply moved, received us with open arms: "My poor fellows," he said, "what an unfortunate order! To risk your lives for a bottle of champagne! You had scarcely left when we were informed that our men no longer held Rheims and that the road was being subjected to a terrific bombardment. Luckily Heaven protected you! Was that you rushing along the road like madmen?" This story shows what German soldiers are sometimes forced to do. Surely Schmidt alone would never have given such an order, but Schleguer, a Prussian in the true sense of the word, would have insisted upon immediate obedience.

Several soldiers who had eaten their reserve rations were tied to a stake with their hands behind their backs. On this occasion Private Render of the 5th Company, who had served in the Foreign Legion in Africa for five years, said that there he had never seen soldiers subjected to such treatment and that all the stories told about the Foreign Legion in Germany were entirely false.

On September 19th, we were relieved and proceeded to Pignécourt where we took up our quarters on a large estate.

XII

THE MARCH ON ROYE

On September 20th we began our march towards Roye. About three o'clock we passed through Neufchâtel. We met detached groups of soldiers, belonging to other regiments, leading numbers of pigs, horses, cows, etc., which they had taken from the inhabitants. They said they were taking them to their regiments. Upon Schmidt's reminding them that pillaging was forbidden they answered that their superiors had ordered them to requisition these animals, but that they had not had time to rejoin their units, which had retreated too soon. In reality they were marauders. Neufchâtel had not been shelled, but all the shops had been plundered and the goods thrown helter-skelter into the middle of the streets. A strong box lay in the garden of a villa the windows and doors of which were broken.

On September 20th, Major Schmidt, Dr. Schafer, Dr. Wolkewiz, Lieutenant Kédor, Loffelhardt and I stopped at a farm on the road to Laon, not far from Neufchâtel, to rest and to quench our thirsts. A very sad-looking woman received us and asked us if we also had come to bring dishonour upon her daughters.

Schmidt told me to question this woman, so I asked her to tell us what had happened. Then she took us into a bedroom where she showed us the traces of the great crime which had just been committed in her house.

"Three or four hours ago at the most," she said, "three soldiers came here and asked me for wine and money. I told them that I had neither one nor the other and that I was alone with my two daughters. They told me to call my daughters. I tried to make them change their minds, but they would not listen to anything, and so, because I was afraid of their threats, I had to obey. Hardly had they appeared when the soldiers, like wild beasts, threw themselves upon my poor children and pushed them into this room, where, despite my cries,

they ruined them. One of them put his hand over my mouth and held me back, striking me the while. Here, gentlemen, you see the traces of this wild struggle. I think, from his insignia," she said, "that one of you gentlemen" (she looked at Schafer) "is a doctor. I beg him to give my daughters a careful examination so that he may testify that I speak the truth." Schafer was left alone with the young girls and came back a few moments later, reporting to Major Schmidt that they had been raped by those blackguards. These two poor young ladies, aged respectively eighteen and twenty years, no longer dared to look even at their mother, and stood ashamed before us.

We told the ladies that we would put in a complaint, but that it would probably have no result, for there were so many cads who made war in this fashion on innocent people. Schmidt told me to ask them if there was anything more we could do for them. They begged us to leave them alone.

Schmidt complained to Colonel Puder. The latter answered that he could do nothing

because it would be impossible to find those blackguards and punish them, just as it was impossible to punish marauders and thieves. "In that case," he said, "Germany might as well make peace immediately, for I see every one stealing and every one has rings on his fingers and jewels in his pockets. We would have to jail almost every one."

Schmidt said to me, regarding this affair, "Charlot, we speak badly enough of the Russians in Germany, but I think we are no better than they Perhaps we are worse!"

On September 21st, we proceeded slowly along the road from Lâon. The soldiers were singing. Lieutenant Kédor, who had a mania for tormenting his men, wished to stop them. But they all began to yell, imitating Kédor's voice: "Help! Quick! I'm wounded!" thus recalling to him his stunt in the sand pit, and making him furious. In his anger he went so far as to strike several men with his crop. During one of our halts, he saw some soldiers lying on the ground and struck one of them on the nape of the neck. This man

calmly got up, took his gun, loaded it and aimed at Kédor, who immediately began to run in a zigzag line, calling for his horse. We were at a little distance from this scene and were greatly amused by it. Colonel Puder held his sides with laughter. Schmidt had the soldier brought to him and told him that he had done right, and that he ought to defend himself against every individual who might attack him, whether friend or enemy. Colonel Puder and General von der Esch himself also congratulated the soldier. Kédor had disappeared. But since he was aide-de-camp, he would soon have to come back for orders. Schmidt took advantage of the occasion to say to him: "Kédor, you have already given us proof of your heroism by showing us that even in the face of great danger you keep your wits about you, and know how to get out of it. But the soldier, who surely would have killed you if it had not been for our cries and bursts of laughter, is still braver. In any case, you entertained us very well." Kédor was very much downcast for a short time, and left the soldiers alone.

On the twenty-third, we left for Fressancourt, La Fère, Chauny and Beaugies, where we halted.

Each company had sent ahead a non-commissioned officer to secure quarters for the battalion. The peasants of Beaugies, simple and childlike people, surprised at our strange uniforms which were not French and which they hadn't seen before, asked the quartermasters: "Are you Englishmen?" "Yes, yes," [1] the latter answered in order to get good quarters, and warned us, when we arrived, not to let on that we were enemies. These good people fought for the privilege of having soldiers live with them, and showed us all sorts of courtesies. Finally I could not refrain from telling them that we were Germans. They immediately ran away, as though a bomb had fallen in their midst, crying, "The Prussians! The Prussians!" It was very funny.

Thanks to my having made inquiries of the mayor, Major Schmidt and his whole staff were quartered in a comfortable farm where

[1] In English in the original.

we found food and some excellent wine which I had advised the major to send us. Several other officers of the battalion came to dine with us and, thanks to the wine, many were soon completely drunk, including our good Major Schmidt. About 1 A. M. I had to go to Maucourt for orders, and I learned that we were to leave at two o'clock. It was about one forty-five when I left Maucourt. I went to the police post to warn the trumpeter to sound the alarm and then returned to the major. I found them all drunk and incapable of understanding me. Thanks to Dr. Schafer, who seemed a little less intoxicated than the others, we finally made Schmidt understand what he had to do. He immediately ordered the officers to assemble their troops at the village gate within ten minutes. We were supposed to leave at two o'clock, but at two thirty the battalion had not yet been assembled, for while the officers were drinking the soldiers had been doing the same. Also a great many lazy fellows failed to answer the roll-call.

Before arriving at Guiscard we had to halt in order to let other troops go by. Most of the officers and soldiers threw themselves in the ditches along the road, to continue their interrupted slumber and to sleep themselves sober. Only a snap-shot was lacking.

At eight o'clock we passed through Guiscard and Libermont.

XIII

ERCHEU—SOLENTE—CHAMPIEU

Thanks to our artillery, it was comparatively easy for us to enter the village of Ercheu, which, like the rest, was the scene of the usual pillage. On our right was the 25th Division under the Grand Duke of Hesse-Darmstadt. The French were in possession of Solente, a very favourable position. The Hessians on our right were better located than we were and could advance a little. As for us, no sooner did one of our patrols venture out, than it was immediately shot down. Volunteers were asked for in vain; no one responded.

At nine o'clock we received the formal order to attack at midnight. Loffelhardt, who brought us the order, told us that things were not going well with us in Northern France and Belgium and that the cavalry had been ordered

to leave immediately by rail, because the English Army was offering an unexpected resistance.

So the battle of Solente took place the night of September 24th–25th, 1914. It was terrible. French and Germans fought with blind fury and neither side gave any quarter. The heroic defence of the French again caused us terrible losses, and we entered Solente at 5 A. M. only by literally walking over the dead and wounded.

The eldest son of Major Schmidt, who had joined the battalion only a short time ago, met his death in this slaughter house. The father's grief was heartrending. To those who tried to console him, by saying that his son had died for his country, he answered: "What do I care about your country? Why do we need a war?"

On entering Solente I witnessed a horrible scene. A German soldier had gone into a house to make some coffee. Near the stove was an old woman, sitting up in bed. On her right, an old man in a chair. About two feet

from this group, a young woman was sitting nursing her baby. A shell which had exploded in the room had mortally wounded the old woman in the head, the old man was cut in two, the soldier was lying on the ground, dead, while the young woman was sitting in her chair with her head cut off, but the baby in her arms was entirely unharmed. No one who saw this terrible sight could help crying.

During the whole day of the twenty-fifth the fierce struggle continued for the possession of the town of Champieu, which we had to take house by house. Our artillery aimed very well.

Near the City Hall were lying the bodies of more than sixty Frenchmen and dying horses, who must have been kicking about among the wounded. One dead Frenchman still held a German helmet in his hand. Opposite this scene the field kitchens were installed, and drunken soldiers were singing cabaret songs at the top of their voices. A phonograph was going and Private Schreiner of the 6th Company was playing a waltz on his accordion.

In one corner a Munich painter was calmly sketching the scene. In front of every house the bodies of French and Germans were lying all jumbled in a heap. One young Frenchwoman, who had just come out of a cellar where she had been hiding, started to shout in the middle of the street, "Down with the Huns!" She was immediately bayoneted to death.

Many Frenchmen who had suffered only slight bullet wounds were, nevertheless, found dead, their breasts pierced by bayonets or their skulls shattered by musket blows. The order, given by the brigade, to give no quarter, had apparently been carried out by killing the wounded.

On the twenty-seventh we buried the dead. The identification tags of the German soldiers were carefully collected, but no one bothered about the French, who were thrown pell-mell into the trenches, which were then covered with earth. An affecting ceremony was held when Reserve Lieutenant Beck and Major Schmidt's son were buried.

A woman of the village went mad and was sent to a lunatic asylum.

"Why all this massacre? this slaughter? What do those people who started this war really want?" said Colonel Puder himself, much affected by the death of Schmidt's son, for whom he had cared a good deal.

XIV

ROYE

On September 30th, 1914, we began the assault on Roye, the following troops taking part: 80th Fusiliers, 81st, 87th and 88th Infantry regiments of the 18th Army Corps; 82nd, 83d, 84th and 85th Infantry regiments of the 21st Army Corps. There were thus eight infantry regiments, not to speak of the artillery, who had previously destroyed the town, especially the northern part. This bombardment did the French much harm. The orphanage, which had been turned into a hospital, was set on fire and many of the wounded were burned alive.

We left the town in pursuit of the French. But, almost immediately, we had to seek shelter in a sand pit on the road from Roye to Amiens.

As we were coming out of Roye, six French soldiers who had not been able to rejoin their comrades, surrendered. Major Schlegler of the 3rd Battalion immediately ordered those soldiers who were standing nearby to shoot these unfortunate men. But not one of them would execute this barbaric command and all tried to get away. Then Schlegler with his revolver killed one of the French soldiers, telling his men: "If you don't obey me I'll kill you like him." So the remaining five prisoners were shot down by the soldiers.

Schlegler however couldn't boast for long of his cruelty for hardly had the last prisoner fallen, when he himself was shot from the left. He in his turn fell dead. Lieutenant Abraham delivered the funeral oration: "Such a death was too fine for this murderer."

At almost the same time, Kédor was quite seriously wounded, his right forearm being shattered by a bullet. The soldiers did not hesitate to say that the man who had shot at him had unfortunately not aimed quite accurately enough. Every one was happy about

it, and men came up to him, laughing in their sleeves, while asking him hypocritically: "Is the lieutenant suffering much?"

"No," answered Kédor, making a wry face.

"Come, come, buck up, and show that you are a Prussian officer," said Schmidt.

The latter showing his right hand, which had just then been slightly scratched by a passing shell, added:

"Now I've had enough of this rotten business—I'm going home. Let those who want to fight, fight! I don't!"

With these words Schmidt bade us good-bye and went to the field hospital. Right after this he left for Germany.

On the next day we heard that Colonel Puder had feigned illness, and that he also had left for Germany.

On our right the 25th Division had just taken possession of Soyencourt and Fresnay-les-Roye; the 87th took Parvillers.

On October 3rd, Lieutenant-Colonel Brentano was made commander of the 88th. Our new battalion chief was Captain Bartsch, a

former orderly of the commander of the 21st Division.

On that day we took Quesnoy-en-Santerre, which was in ruins. We found nothing there but some poultry.

On October 7th, 1914, we were joined by reinforcements from Mayence. Among them were many soldiers who had already been wounded and had recovered. They did not show any enthusiasm.

October 5th, 1914, the new trench warfare commenced for us. Each battalion spent two days resting behind the lines and then four days in the trenches. We took up our quarters at Carrépuits, near Roye.

From October 13th to 26th we stayed before Quesnoy-en-Santerre.

During this time the troops had the big job of digging and arranging the trenches.

On October 27th, the French attacked us simultaneously from three sides and we lost our first line trenches. When we reported this bit of news to Lieutenant Anspach, Regimental Adjutant, he said: "You are a band of

cowards, and you ought to be ashamed of being Germans." This Anspach, a fellow of Kédor's type, was himself the greatest coward in the regiment, and during engagements spent most of his time with the kitchens. Now he was almost always in a dug-out.

On October 28th, the army corps ordered us to attack in order to regain our first line trenches. But the French gave us a fine reception. We were completely beaten, leaving four hundred prisoners, two guns and four machine guns in the hands of the enemy. We also lost all our telephone apparatus, and had to retreat still further to a place about two hundred metres north of Damery. We had had nothing to eat for two days and in front of us lay more than two hundred German corpses.

Finally, on November 2nd, we were relieved and sent to rest up at Soyécourt until November 6th. Now we had to turn the trenches into veritable forts. They had to be very deep, with communicating passageways. Comfortable and safe shelters were dug, both

for officers and soldiers. There were doors, beds, chairs, mattresses. In our battalion we even had a piano. In December, electricity was installed. We were bombarded three times a day, but the shells did not do much damage. Every evening at nine o'clock the kitchens served us a hot meal, with tea, rum and other alcoholic drinks. At four in the morning they brought us hot coffee. Some men thought the life was quite bearable in comparison with our past sufferings.

XV

THE GERMANS AT ROYE

We now spent all our rest periods in Roye itself, in spite of the bombardments, and we remained there four days at a time.

A captain of the 80th was appointed governor of the city. He chose as mayor, a baker named Lefèvre, making him responsible for anything that might come up.

He had to draw up a list of all the inhabitants. All men from sixteen to forty-four were sent to Germany. Every one else had to work for the Germans.

From December on all the women had to wash for the German soldiers. They earned one franc a day, paid by the city with vouchers, while all contributions had to be paid in silver or gold. Others had to make sand bags for the trenches. The men cleaned the streets and pulled down houses which were too

badly damaged. Three, named by the mayor, acted as policemen.

As a matter of fact, the soldiers scarcely benefited at all from these rest periods, because every day they had one hour of company drill and at least two hours of battalion drill. At noon there was a medical inspection and a review; at one o'clock, patriotic singing. These prescribed duties had to be completed whether there was a bombardment or not.

Pretending that its steeple served as a target for the French artillery, the chief of staff ordered the church of Roye to be pulled down. It gave our engineers great pleasure to execute this order and soon only the foundations of the building were left. The chairs, stalls, the pulpit, confessionals and the pews were used for firewood by the soldiers.

These men preferred staying in the trenches to resting behind the lines; there they were really better sheltered from shells and furthermore did not have to drill.

The headquarters of the battalions and companies were permanently established in

Roye. Every evening the sergeant majors came to the trenches to make their reports. Some men who were in with the non-commissioned officers were permanently attached to the office and walked about town, running after women or getting drunk. The kitchens and all the offices were also at Roye.

Many non-commissioned as well as commissioned officers obtained mistresses, almost always by threat and violence.

On December 22nd, our battalion celebrated Christmas two days ahead of time because on the twenty-fourth, we were to go back to the trenches and it was easier to have a celebration in the city. The captain who commanded the battalion in the absence of Schmidt (who, since his recovery, was commanding a detachment at Ham) addressed us as follows:

"Dear Comrades:

"We cannot celebrate this German holiday in the midst of our families. A world of enemies is marshalled against us in order to crush

us and to seize our property, our wives, our children. Cowards that they are, they attacked us, but we've shown them that we're still the same old Germans who know how, sword in hand, to defend themselves and to protect their country. We are fighting, and we are ready to die for this holy cause. I ask you to shout with me:

"Long live his Majesty, Emperor William II.

"Hoch! Hoch! Hoch!"

Lieutenant Nolte of the 6th Uhlans thanked the captain and then some soldiers, grouped about a piano, started the song: *"Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht."* [1]

Just as they finished the last verse, a shell burst behind the wall, in the cemetery. Some soldiers who went out, came back and told us that several graves had been torn open and that the limbs and remains of the dead were scattered all over. This incident rather dampened our enjoyment of this "Stille Nacht."

When the celebration was over the soldiers

[1] Silent Night, Holy Night.

went back to their companies, where they got beer and alcoholic drinks in such quantities that soon all of them were disgustingly drunk. They scattered through the streets, knocking at doors of houses where they knew that ladies were living. It is true, patrols had been ordered, as is usually done on such occasions, but the patrols themselves and their commanders were as drunk as the others and instead of punishing them, they helped them make a racket, and cause disorder.

In our battalion we had a "Beer Evening," at which all the officers were present. One knows what that is. As long as it lasts no other drinks ought to be taken. But there were so many other drinks that soon the officers were as badly off as the soldiers.

On December 24th, 1914, our new chief, Major Rogge, arrived. He was a former captain of the 65th Infantry from Cologne, whence he had been removed because he was too cruel to his men. Then he had been sent to the General Staff at Berlin, where he was made a battalion chief.

After this he became commander of the fort at Stuttgart. Rogge, who was a great coward and was coming to the front for the first time, was very much afraid of shells. When he heard one come, he writhed like a snake. The soldiers hardly ever laughed when shells were falling into the trenches, but no one who saw Rogge could help laughing at him. As soon as he arrived in our dug-out his first question was: "Can one live here without being shot?" We tried to calm him by telling him that the enemy was not aiming at us, but at Roye. "You've done your work well," he told us, "everywhere I've been there's not a single house standing. What are all those graves which I saw along the road, marked with caps or helmets? Tell me something about a battle? What really happens?" Then Lieutenant Nolte gave him a terrifying description in which nothing was lacking—the shattered limbs, cries of the wounded, frenzied horses, etc. "Just imagine, Major, I saw one man walking in Tours, with his entrails coming out of his open belly." Rogge did not wish to

hear any more; he turned pale and drops of perspiration beaded his forehead. He did not eat anything during the entire meal. Nolte's talk had taken away his appetite. But he made up for it by drinking like a fish. Nolte signed to us to hide the wine bottles, because it seemed as though Rogge were going to leave nothing for the rest of us. It was astonishing to see how much that man could drink,—a professional would have been afraid to compete with him.

If it had occurred to the French to attack us that evening there would not have been much resistance, although we had taken the precaution of doubling sentries.

On December 31st, we celebrated New Year's Eve at Gruny, near Soyécourt, where we were resting. We heard the muffled roar of cannon and the sky was ablaze with red and white rockets. This did not hinder the soldiers from joyously firing their guns into the air in honour of the New Year which was to bring us peace.

In the evening every one was royally drunk.

In our battalion we were all gathered about Rogge, who presided. A drunken soldier tried to force his way in with his gun. After he had been thrown out, he came back with a sabre, and if it had not been for Dr. Wolkewiz, who grabbed my arm, I should have been stabbed to the heart. Rogge wished to have him shot but his comrades had already hidden him. This little incident, however, did not prevent us from going on drinking beer, wine and liquors. Soon several officers rolled under the table. Rogge was happy.

The soldiers were doing the same thing. They fought and made a deafening racket all night long. If there had been an alarm we could not have assembled even a single company.

On January 2nd, a French aviator hovered over our lines for a long while. Our artillery aimed at him in vain. Shrapnel burst about him, but he was not hit. After he had found out what he wished to know, he rose and returned to the French lines, to report. Our officers called the artillery "pigs"—"trash,"

etc., because of their awkwardness, but they only laughed. They had no doubt done their best because, for every aeroplane brought down, the battery received a barrel of beer.

A few days afterwards we received regimental orders to sound unexpected night alarms, whenever the battalion was not on the march. Under Schmidt these alarms had always taken place at nine o'clock, so that the men could have a night's rest. No one ever failed to report and Schmidt was always pleased. But with Rogge, everything was different.

On January 2nd, 1915, we celebrated the first six months of the war. Sergeant Major Hauser, secretary of the battalion, went to Rogge in the name of all the non-commissioned officers to ask him not to have the alarm sounded that night, because the non-commissioned officers were going to have a little party. Rogge promised. This is how he kept his promise.

It seems that the non-commissioned officers drank a great deal. But with us, as soon as

one emptied his glass it would have to be filled again, for Rogge's great pleasure was to make all his guests drunk. Some young lieutenants asked permission to go to bed, but Rogge would let no one leave. About 3 A. M. Lieutenant von Stein was so drunk that he had to be carried to bed. He looked like a dead man, for he no longer moved a muscle. This amused Rogge very much. At four o'clock Rogge ordered us to sound the alarm. We reminded him of his promise, but he answered, "This band of peasants has had enough sleep; they must not forget that they are soldiers." The orderlies left immediately to warn the companies. We tried our best to awake von Stein, but in vain. He did not stir. Rogge then told us to pour a pail of water over his head. This measure met with no success; von Stein continued to snore. So Rogge said to us, "Leave that pig there, the drunkard alone, since there is no way of waking him."

We repaired to the meeting place, where the companies were already assembled. But the soldiers were grumbling and many were

missing. Private Merkel, of the 8th Company, whom Lieutenant Nolte reminded that he had forgotten his saucepan, answered: "Yes, Lieutenant, but I'm not drunk as some others are." The officer commanding the 5th Company was missing, but when Sergeant Major Saltenberger reported this to the chief, the latter answered: "Go to the devil."

Rogge collected the commissioned and non-commissioned officers and said to them: "Gentlemen, this is disgraceful. If you and I can report, I am sure these peasants can do as much."

Sergeant Major Saltenberger assembled the non-commissioned officers of the 5th Company and imitating Rogge addressed them in the following manner: "Gentlemen, I'm very much pleased with your answer to the alarm. I promised you there would be none, but nevertheless, I had to disturb your sleep. I regret that the commander of the 5th Company should have been absent, for that's a black mark for us. I advise you, gentlemen, not to imitate him, for we superior officers, what-

ever our rank, ought always to set a good example. Good night, gentlemen. Break ranks." Rogge, who had heard everything, was furious but could do nothing. A few days later, Sergeant Major Saltenberger was declared unfit for service, by the doctor, because of his nerves, and was sent back to Germany.

Our new position (between Parvillers and Dumery) was more dangerous. All day and all night shells rained down on the trenches. Every day we had fifteen or twenty killed and wounded.

On February 12th, we were sent to Nesles for a two weeks' rest. The city had not suffered much but the inhabitants complained bitterly of the troops, who were plundering everything.

On February 24th, Lieutenant-Colonel Brentano reported sick and left for Germany. Rogge was made commander of the 88th. He "cleaned out the regiment," as he said. Anspach, the regimental adjutant, was made commander of the 7th Company, and von

Stein took his place with Rogge. Nolte, although only a reserve officer, was made Rogge's aide-de-camp—an unheard of thing, but Rogge could not do without him. Schiellein, a wine merchant from Mayence, who up to now had been in the quartermaster's department, lost his place and was sent with Anspach to the 7th Company. Rogge did this to avenge himself on Schiellein because he owed the latter a large sum and thought to get rid of his creditor by sending him under fire. A short time before he had asked Schiellein for several cases of champagne, and the latter had refused them to him, because he knew that he would never be able to collect for them. Reserve Lieutenant Rickert, a theological student, was made adjutant of the 2nd Battalion.

That same day, Rickert, Loffelhardt and I went to see Major Schmidt, commanding a detachment of young recruits at Ham, to talk over all these changes with him. He told us that there would be a great review in two days, and that he would then ask to be returned to his battalion.

The review did, in fact, take place before Grand Duke Louis of Hesse who said that he was very well satisfied with Schmidt's recruits and awarded the latter a medal for bravery. The training of the recruits was over, so Schmidt asked and obtained permission to resume command of his former battalion. All the soldiers were pleased, for they cared a lot for him and called him "Papa Schmidt."

Of course, relations between Schmidt and Rogge became very much strained. They hated each other and Rogge made use of every opportunity to criticize Schmidt.

XVI

THE FORMATION OF THE 56th DIVISION

On March 5th, we were ordered to throw away our guns and ammunition, because we were going to get Russian guns instead. We were also told to move our camp farther on, because the three battalions were to take up quarters on the next day in three villages between Ham and St. Quentin. The 2nd Battalion was to go to Fluquières. The convoys that were bringing ammunition to the batteries of the 210th, stationed at Soyencourt were there too. Loffelhardt and I called on the governor of Ham who was also the lieutenant of artillery in charge of the distribution of ammunition. He was living in the château at Ham. He greeted us pleasantly, and told us that Major Schmidt and his staff were wel-

come to live with him in the château. That night, for the first time since August 20th, 1914, we did not hear the guns.

In the town, where we went to find quarters for our men, we were badly received by the inhabitants who complained that they had had to entertain soldiers continuously for the last five months. One man said to me: "We no longer know how to protect our wives and daughters. All the Germans try to get mistresses, in any manner possible. The commandant always supports the soldiers, and besides he himself keeps a young girl whom he has made his mistress in his château by force." When we saw the commandant again we mentioned this matter. Laughing, he asked us if our officers also hunted women and were in love with some little French girls. Loffelhardt told him that we were a fighting unit, and not in the quartermaster's department—also that we waged war on soldiers, not on civilians and above all not on women.

"My friend, you're amusing," replied the lieutenant. "In any case, I'm prudently go-

ing to hide my angel so that no harm will come to her!"

With that, he left us, to do as he had said. Who was "his angel"? Probably some unhappy girl whom he was holding in the château.

We told Schmidt about this, but he only shrugged his shoulders and said that every one makes war in his own way. As the officer made our stay at Ham as pleasant as possible, Schmidt said nothing to him about it.

On March 8th we were quartered at Bohain where we remained for some time.

On March 11th we handled our Russian guns for the first time. Instruction in their use began immediately. We could not understand why they gave us such poor ones.

On March 15th, we received the following order:

"The 35th, 88th, and 118th Infantry, the latter two regiments forming part of the 18th Corps, will make up the 112th Brigade of Infantry which will be part of the 56th Division. Each battalion is to furnish twenty

men who will form a company of cyclists and accompany the staff of the division. The 56th Division will also comprise a squadron of the 13th Hussars and the 111th and 112th Artillery regiments, to each of which shall be attached three heavy batteries besides their regular ones."

The commander of the new division was a General Eberhard, who had been the instructor of Prince Joachim of Prussia. The commander of the brigade was Colonel Munter, who had commanded the 41st Brigade since December, 1914.

On March 19th, we were ordered to be ready to leave in the morning.

Our battalion, which thus far had behaved pretty decently, spoiled its reputation, on leaving Bohain by stealing a large quantity of wine. Some men of the 7th Company broke open the door of a cellar, which had been sealed by the commandant, and took possession of all the wine they found there. Almost the whole company was drunk. The sergeant major, named Dombach, had two

hundred bottles of wine loaded on a wagon, expecting to drink them later on with his friends. But he did not touch one of them, for we told Major Schmidt about it and he ordered it all to be taken for the battalion staff. So after all we were the ones to drink the stolen wine.

At 2 P. M. we took the train for Cateau, Charleville, Sedan and Attigny, where we were to stop.

The journey was gloomy, and the train no longer bore inscriptions, like there were on that which took us to Luxemburg in August, 1914, —"Express for Paris," or "Declarations of War received here."

Nature alone seemed oblivious to the war, for the meadows and grain fields were just beginning to turn green.

XVII

GIVRY

About 10 p.m. we were ordered to make ready to leave Attigny for Givry, where we were to stay until further orders. Loffelhardt and I set out to seek quarters for our staff and to find stable room for one hundred and twenty horses.

The governor, a cavalry captain, thought fit to stick Schmidt in a dirty room, which was already occupied by a sick woman, while the rest of us, the doctor included, had to sleep with the men in the barn.

Schmidt's rage may be imagined. He was all the more angry because right opposite to him a young cavalry lieutenant was strutting about a hotel, all by himself. The next day he told the governor that he wished to have the hotel vacated immediately, in order to make room for himself and his staff. The

magnificent lieutenant was ordered to pack himself off before noon. The latter then started to strip the hotel and to have all the furniture carried outside, not forgetting the "German stove." Knowing that it would be impossible to find even a single chair in the village, I warned Schmidt of the lieutenant's action, and he stationed a sentinel with loaded rifle in front of the hotel with orders to shoot any one who attempted to carry off anything whatsoever. He told me to inform the lieutenant of this order. No sooner had I delivered my message than this fellow yelled at me insolently:

"And who are you, my good fellow? Get out of my way immediately or I'll strike you in the face with my crop."

It was in vain that I told him that I was only giving him Schmidt's message. He wouldn't listen to anything I said.

Schmidt, told of this, sent me back with Rickert whom he ordered to bring the lieutenant to him, by force if necessary.

When he saw Rickert, the cavalry lieuten-

ant saluted him politely and followed him without any protest.

We had never seen Schmidt in such a rage. He shouted so that all the soldiers, who happened to be in the street ran to hide themselves; they expected that he would strike the lieutenant with his crop, and they did not want to have to testify against him.

As soon as the lieutenant appeared, Schmidt yelled at him: "How dare you, you miserable lazy fellow, insult and threaten any one who comes in my name? Stand still, not one step or I'll accuse you of insubordination. Give me your name! What's your business here? How can you have the cheek to strip that house?" In exasperation Schmidt brandished his crop.

The lieutenant answered: "I have the honour to report to the major that I was having the beds, the piano and all the furniture removed as well as the stove and all the wines of the place, because I consider them to be my property."

"Aren't you ashamed," answered Schmidt,

"to lie that way— But no, you're right —we're just beginning to find out that all of you in the quartermaster's department and in the rear are nothing but a band of shameless robbers, who spoil the reputation of the German army, while we are having our jaws broken in the trenches. See that the hotel is in order in one hour's time and that not a pin is missing, or I'll have you reported for stealing and that'll teach you to cut up and defy brave soldiers like us who have just come from the front."

Once we were settled in this fellow's quarters Schmidt asked me to try my utmost to find some eggs for breakfast, so I went to the house of a villager who had some chickens.

"I'll tell you, sir," he said, "I've got some chickens, but I'm not allowed to sell them, give them away or eat them myself, and the same with the eggs. Everything is at the disposal of the governor, who sends an orderly every week to see if I still have my quota. If a single one is missing, I've got to pay one hundred marks." Schmidt, who was in the

humour for putting an end to abuses, started a row at the governor's house and made him rescind his command. The grateful villager sent Schmidt a basket of eggs.

At Givry, I for the first time witnessed a case of insubordination. A soldier threw his gun down in front of Lieutenant Schaller, commanding the 2nd Company, saying:

"Here's your old gun— Stick me in prison; I'm tired of being treated like a kid."

Schaller had the man arrested and taken before the major after drill.

"Well, my good fellow," said Schmidt, "what's got into you? I'm going to give you a taste of the punishment you deserve, but because of your wife and children, Lieutenant Schaller's complaint shall go no further."

The man was tied to a tree with his hands behind his back and a sentinel with a loaded gun was stationed near him. The sentinel sat in a chair smoking a cigar, which showed the soldier that he had acted like a fool and that it was better to obey orders.

On the twenty-second, we were ordered to

Savigny because our division was soon going to return to the trenches. About two o'clock Loffelhardt and I wanted to go into Vouziers, but a policeman stopped us. No one was allowed to enter the city just then because the Emperor was reviewing the Guard. Extraordinary precautions were taken to insure the Kaiser's safety. A squadron of German aeroplanes flew above Vouziers during the whole of his stay, and he was protected by a regular iron wall. On the following day, the *Ardennes Journal,* a German paper edited in French, announced that his Majesty had gone to the firing line (Vouziers was then hardly twenty kilometres from the front) and had distributed Iron Crosses among his brave soldiers of the Guard (the same who had run away at Rheims and who had lost the fort at Brimont which we had been obliged to retake).

Vouziers was often bombarded by French aviators. The General Headquarters of General von Einem, Commandant of the Third Army, were located there.

After the review we entered Vouziers. The

soldiers of the Guard were walking about the streets, most of them drunk, because beer had been generously distributed after the review.

At Savigny, Kédor, who had had enough of the trenches, pretended that his wounded arm hindered him from riding horseback, and was sent to Mayence.

XVIII

IN CHAMPAGNE

On March 25th, 1915, we took possession of our new sector between Le Mesnil-les-Hurlus and Ville-sur-Tourbe, popularly called "The Devil's Hole." It was a nasty position, a place specially made for breaking one's neck. One was hardly sheltered there and had almost no communication with the rear. During the four days that we stayed in the first line trenches, we could get nothing from the kitchens. Each man, before he set out, got a three-pound loaf of bread, a bit of fat (butter or cheese), his canteen and two bottles filled with coffee. This had to do him for four days. The men were prepared to attack, their cloaks rolled up and their bags filled with hand grenades. Behind this position there was a second one called "support." Finally in the third line trenches were the reserves. We

were immediately sent to the first line. Never since the beginning of the war had we been in such a horrible place. We were surrounded on all sides by the bodies of dead Germans and Frenchmen, and since our trenches had a depth of hardly sixty centimetres, we frequently had to use the dead as bulwarks. All those bodies which had not been buried were a terrible sight. I do not know what prevented us from going mad. The French lines were hardly twenty to thirty metres from us. Because the two lines, far from being straight, made all sorts of turns, death approached us from all sides without our ever being able to tell whether the bullets were French or German. The trenches were so shallow that it was impossible to walk upright, and we had to crawl or doube up. We had no shelter, indeed it would have been useless for the French artillery, which never stopped firing, would have destroyed it and besides how could the materials have been brought to us? Every single man who wished to reach the trenches had to slip in between the dead. In various places

arms and legs sticking up from the ground helped to point the way. For instance, we said, "A few metres to the left you will see a hand sticking up from the ground wearing a wedding ring: the left wing of the battalion is about twenty metres in a straight line from there." In order to shoot we had to push aside bodies right and left, and since no one ever knew where they were shooting, because of the irregular line, many soldiers killed their own comrades.

Most of all, we were afraid of aeroplane bombs. We heard them start off, then all of a sudden we saw faintly a sort of a bottle way up in the sky—which, slowly describing a parabola, landed in the trenches and exploded. If we could have sought a shelter as soon as we saw them coming we might have had a chance, but where were we to go? When the bomb had burst all the men, who had lain down flat on the ground, raised themselves in order to see the damage. It was a terrible sight. One time, I remember I saw two men cut in tiny pieces and a third was so terribly riddled that

his body was like a skimmer. The head of one of the dead men could not be found. Since no one could be buried, the bodies were simply thrown in front or in back of the trenches. It is impossible to describe our sufferings and our anguish during those four days.

At last the moment of our escape from this hell arrived. But it took us more than three hours to get out of the trenches because we had to take great precautions. The battle field was really continuously lit up by French and German rockets and in order to get away we had to creep in between the bodies in single file so that we looked like a procession of ghosts. If one of our men was wounded we had to let him die there, for it would have been impossible to carry him to the second line, without risking our own lives. All of us had only one idea, to get something to eat as soon as possible for we were literally dying of hunger, since almost all of our provisions had been eaten during the first two days. At last we came to a place where a machine gun was set up and where the ground

allowed us to walk upright and to advance more rapidly. Unfortunately the French shells rained on, and killed many more of our men. Finally this bad half hour was over and we reached the auxiliary position. This really formed a part of the first line, for we were still only sixty or eighty metres from the French, but here there were shelters and we were in relative safety. The aerial bombs could no longer reach us, but the shells and, above all, the shrapnel poured down on us unceasingly; the stretcher bearers and nurses had so much to do that they could not even take time to eat. The wounded were transported to the rear, and the dead were buried in the regimental cemetery, prepared behind the shelter of Schmidt's staff. A helmet or a fragment of the shell that killed him was placed on each man's grave.

One day I was present at the funeral of a non-commissioned officer of the 2nd Company, who had just been killed. Shells rained on us from all sides, while several German aviators who had just arrived on the scene attempted to attack the French. While the

soldiers were singing a sort of a funeral hymn and were lowering the body into the grave, a bomb fell in our midst killing six men and wounding just about as many. We left the body without continuing the ceremonies, and every one hurried into the shelter, while a regular storm of French shells beat down on the cemetery.

At the end of eight days, if you count the time we spent in the first line trenches, we were sent to Ripont for four days' rest. It would have been better to have been left where we were, for there was no shelter at Ripont and the French artillery fire was just as bad. Nevertheless, we were able to get a shave for the first time in twelve days. When the artillery was not firing, the soldiers played cards or cleaned their new Russian guns. These often went off by themselves, and caused several accidents. On account of the steady fire we did not have to drill.

When our rest period was over, we had to return to our "Devil's Hole," where during our first four days we had lost fifty-eight dead and

as many wounded. All the soldiers were downcast and discouraged. We had hardly arrived when Rogge instructed us to be prepared for a night attack. The men got a mixture of tea and about ninety per cent. alcohol. Our attack, which met with no success, was led by Captain Baron von der Recke, who was seriously wounded. On the following day there came an order from the 8th Reserve Army Corps, in which we had been incorporated. The general complained of the cowardice of the battalion, which had failed in the attack, and impressed on us the fact that we had to make still greater effort to drive back the French who had succeeded in penetrating our part of the lines. The soldiers were broken hearted and many wrote home, thinking that it was perhaps for the last time. That evening the tea contained even more alcohol. Besides, a little while before the attack each group of eight men received a bottle of cognac, so that they all became veritable beasts. At eleven o'clock we crawled out of our holes like ghosts, slipping in between the

corpses. We lay on our stomachs, our knives held in our teeth, and our bags full of hand grenades, clutching our rifles, until the moment when the order was given to spring forward. Our men acted like wild beasts. Orders had been given to spare no one, and even the wounded were killed. But the French defended themselves like lions and we had to give way. The only result was, that about half of the battalion were killed or wounded or taken prisoners. We had to go back to our lines creeping in between the dead. French and Germans shot bright rockets into the air, so that the night was turned into day. The 35th and 80th regiments on our left and the 18th on our right never stopped firing all night long and the artillery and French machine guns made a great disturbance on their side. Schmidt said: "Isn't there a bullet for us too? When will this slaughter end?"

This time we were sent to rest between Gratreuil and Ripont in a place where the engineers had dug huge subterranean shelters, each one holding two hundred and fifty men.

These shelters were covered with earth and tree trunks, and were out of the way of the shells.

We had hardly arrived there when an order of the 56th Division commanded Schmidt to report sick and to leave immediately for Vouziers. Rogge had complained, accusing Schmidt of having through his incompetence caused our night attacks to fail. Schmidt was sent back, but he was looking for nothing better, and had several times refused to execute Rogge's orders. Once he had even said in my presence, that he had had enough of it all and that he only wished to be sent back to his family in Wiesbaden.

Eger, who, at the beginning of the war, had only been a lieutenant, was appointed to fill Schmidt's place, as battalion chief. He immediately acted like a brute. On the first day of his command he ordered out the band, and forced the battalion to goose step, while the shells poured down on them. As each shell whizzed by, the men trembled but Eger pretended not to notice it. He shouted at them, saying that what they were doing was not a

goose step, but a regular funeral march. It was only too true, for all of a sudden a shell burst to the left, killing three men of the 8th Company. Those standing near by were covered with blood and some of them were wounded, and fled. Nevertheless, Eger continued the parade as though nothing had happened, and ordered the names of the fifteen or twenty men who had disappeared to be noted, so that they might be severely punished. As to the three dead, Eger pronounced their funeral oration by saying to the other soldiers: "Take away those three pigs who didn't know enough to fall in battle and hurry up about it because our drill isn't over yet— Will you hurry? If you don't I'll run over you with my horse, and knock you all in a heap, you band of peasants."

In this way Eger celebrated his promotion as commander of the 2nd Battalion. Six months later, while still in Champagne, he did not himself know enough to have himself killed by a French soldier, for a *German bullet* found his heart.

When he went into the trenches, he always had something to criticize. He had the soldiers build a little hut above his shelter "to breathe a little fresh air," he said. He only stayed there when the French were not firing. They destroyed his hut before two days were over. The following day a note was found nailed to one of the beams which was still standing: "If you wish to take an airing, go into the trenches instead of sitting down in front of the dead and laughing at them. We are patriots, who are fighting for our country, not cowards."

Eger, half mad with anger, said all these pigs had eaten and drunk too much and that he would find a way to kill every one of them. "This evening," he said, "I'm going to treat them all as they deserve."

This was his vengeance, a regular drunkard's vengeance. Every day the companies got some rum. That evening he had only six bottles distributed to each company. The rest was drunk in our shelter. Eger had invited all the officers. Soon he and Lieutenant

Boettger, eighteen years old, became so intoxicated that they got into an argument and wanted to come to blows. Boettger was thrown out, and left in the trench, as dead, so that the fresh air might revive him. Eger was pushed into a corner. Lieutenant Tietz of the 6th Company and Lieutenant Schaeffer of the 7th even wished to tie him, in order to keep him quiet.

The German papers are full of tales of such rows, which are always attributed to the Russians. But, nevertheless, they sometimes also occurred in our army, the effect moreover of rum, stolen from the soldiers.

For several days, a rumour had been current that we were going to be replaced and that we would be sent to the Vosges or to Arras. No one knew just exactly what was going to happen. Finally, on May 2nd, 1915, we were relieved by the 65th Reserve Regiment. We were ordered to entrain on May 3rd, for Somme-Py. We did not know where we were going but we were all happy in the thought of leaving this hell, where so many of

us had been killed. About six o'clock it was announced that Lodz had just been captured by the Germans. All the assembled soldiers yelled "Hurrah!" But a storm of French shells fell on us and the hurrahs were replaced by the screams and groans of the wounded. There were two non-commissioned officers, Muller and Wolff, both of the 6th Company; one had his right arm shot off, the other both legs shattered. Both of them were expecting their commission as second lieutenants.

In the evening of May 2nd, we left for Somme-Py.

XIX

ACROSS GERMANY AND AUSTRIA

On May 2nd, 1915, about seven o'clock we reached the ruins of Somme-Py. We had some soup, and then got into the train which was waiting for us and was to leave about two o'clock. But first we attended to the loading of the baggage and the horses. It feels queer to travel without knowing where you're going. Some said we were going to Arras, because the men from Wurtemburg could not hold out any longer. Others professed to know from a reliable source that we were bound for Alsace. Those who said nothing were the most sensible, for even the station officials only knew the name of the next station, where we were to stop for something to eat. Our train was run as far as Sedan by soldiers of the 3rd Engineers. After that, we were in the hands of state officials.

At Sedan there was a two hours' stop. The station was guarded by soldiers and no one was allowed to go into the city. We were ordered to remove our chevrons and insignia because no one was supposed to know who we were or where we came from. That was an excellent way to confound spies.

At ten o'clock we left Sedan and the following morning, at four o'clock, we passed through Sarrelouis, where coffee was served. The day before everything around us had spelled ruin and desolation. Today we were back in civilization, far from the war and the thunder of the guns. We could hardly believe our eyes. The ladies of the Red Cross were very sympathetic when we told them that we came from Champagne. The coffee was excellent and the soldiers drank as much as they liked of it. At six o'clock we rode on toward Kaiserslautern. Now we were sure that we were bound for Russia, either to the Carpathians or on into Serbia. The soldiers were delighted, for they knew very well that the fighting was not nearly so severe on the Eastern front, as it had been

in France. They sang and seemed suddenly to have forgotten all the horrors of the war. What seemed strangest to us was that we no longer heard the whizzing of shells above our heads.

At eleven o'clock we arrived at Kaiserslautern, where Paymaster Herbert, Rickert and I were ordered to distribute provisions among the various companies. It all went very well and quickly, because everything had been prepared in advance. A meal had been prepared in the station restaurant for us, and you may be sure we did not leave a single crumb on our plates.

After dinner we took a little walk on the station platform to limber up. Many wounded were coming in from Argonne and the Vosges where they had suffered a great deal. A crowd had formed around one of the stretcher bearers. I went there and a Red Cross nurse told me: "It's a wounded Frenchman, who doesn't know any German." I drew nearer and spoke French to this soldier, whom I told that he had nothing to fear, because really it

was only the English who were hated in Germany. The man told me that in France every one was sure of winning the war, and of getting back Alsace and Lorraine.

All the way from Klein-Steinheim to Hanau the soldiers were joyfully anticipating passing through our own depot. They hoped to have the chance to see and kiss their parents and their wives. All along the tracks a crowd of civilians had rushed up to see the 2nd Battalion go by. I don't know how they learned of our coming. The train proceeded very slowly in the midst of the hurrahs of soldiers and civilians.

At the station, wounded officers of our battalion were waiting for us. Relatives and friends had been admitted to the platform. One may imagine what heartrending scenes took place. The meal served to the men was excellent—by far the best of the whole trip. Civilians overwhelmed us with dainties and presents.

We left Hanau at eight o'clock, on May 5th. We passed through Chemnitz and Goerlitz.

In the latter place the stop was rather long, the station being filled with the militia so that no one could go out. Two of our men succeeded in sneaking through the guard. They were stopped by the militia and taken to the station by six men with fixed bayonets. Eger asked them:

"Why did you go out?"

"We wanted to do some shopping," they answered.

"And you had yourselves arrested by these civilians." (This was Eger's term for all non-combatant troops.) "Aren't you ashamed to be in my battalion and to get yourself locked up by those donkeys who haven't been to war at all?"

Eger sent away the two soldiers without punishing them, because he hated all stay-at-home troops.

The food prepared for the soldiers was not fit to eat. The men complained and said that they would raid the station kitchen if they weren't allowed to eat in the city. The officers tasted the soup and told the station-master that

it was scandalous and wicked to treat soldiers just back from the front in this way.

In spite of that no one was allowed to go out, because we were to leave at ten o'clock.

At Koenigshutte we had our last meal on German soil, and entered Austria. We passed through Lansashutte, Kallowitz and Magsolwitz. We were in Galicia.

At Wadowicz we were served by the Austrian Red Cross ladies who were even more amiable than the Germans. They told us to lick the Russians good and plenty, so that the war would soon be over.

We met a train stuffed full with Russian prisoners. In some coaches the sick and wounded were lying all in a heap on a bit of straw. No one bothered about them.

On May 7th, we were at Neu Sandec and on the eighth, we got off at Biezc. From Neu Sandec to Biezc the train proceeded very cautiously, because the Russians had torn up some of the tracks during their retreat.

In the depôt at Biezc we saw huge piles of ammunition, machine guns and a considerable

amount of other material, which the Russians had abandoned in their retreat. Then we understood why we had been given Russian guns. Biezc was in ruins. War was to begin again for us.

Our trip across Germany and Austria had lasted five days.

The 56th Division was to assemble here and await orders.

Now we knew that we were to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for our dear allies, the Austrians, many of whom, as we shall see later on, did not themselves wish to fire on the Russians.

XX

IN GALICIA

We of the staff could not take a moment's rest, for we had to study maps and receive orders. We were going to take up quarters at Jablonica. We went ahead to prepare them. Our maps were not bad, but as the Russians had built new roads during the war, we lost our way twice. People of whom we asked directions would not open their mouths, and looked as though they were making fun of us. Our dear allies even refused to give us water. The roads were wretched. We had to carry our bicycles, sinking up to our knees in sand.

Because a battalion of the 118th Infantry and a hospital unit had preceded us, we could find no quarters for our men. It was all we could do to hunt out a place to house Eger who did not like to sleep in the open. The

place we found for him was an unbelievably filthy hovel, where about ten persons, men, women and children, slept in a single room, all jumbled together in two beds filled with straw.

A frightful, musty odour greeted us. A number of chickens ran unmolested around the room. We opened doors and windows, and began to clean up a bit, and chased the chickens out. A woman brought us sheets and fresh straw, and sent the family away. She only consented to this on the condition that she would be well paid; but she is still waiting for her money. Eger made a face when he saw his quarters. In spite of the airing the smell was awful. These people were accustomed to live on dung heaps, and this explains why there were not more epidemics. Moreover, wherever we went in Galicia it was the same; the people were repulsively dirty, and covered with lice.

Eger, Rickert, Loffelhardt and I had to sleep in this hovel. When we went in we found a young man and woman sleeping in our bed. Eger chased them out. The rest

of the family were lying on tables. Two old women slept on straw mattresses in front of the fireplaces. We could not close an eye all night for lack of air and because of the "cooties," which did not give us a moment's peace. On the following day we saw one of the women carefully inspecting the head of another woman. In answer to our question, she said she was looking for lice. We had obtained permanent guests during that night in the hovel. These new companions did not leave us during our entire stay on the Eastern front.

At ten o'clock we left for Jaslo. The battalion's march was very fatiguing, for the men were continually sinking into the sand. Rickert, Loffelhardt and I, who had gone ahead on horseback, met the famous General Mackensen, whose quarters were about two kilometres away. All the troops along the road cheered him. He passed by without saying anything, as though he were weary of hearing soldiers shout.

The Russians had blown up the great rail-

road bridge at the southern entrance of the village. The troops crossed the Wistoka over a pontoon bridge, built by our engineers. In order to proceed more rapidly we found a ford which our horses could cross easily enough.

The Jaslo station was completely destroyed, we could not tell whether by the Russians or the Austrians themselves. In any case it had not been done by those Russians who had just evacuated the town about four days ago because we could see that the work had been done long, long before.

The Galicians who stayed behind did not speak very badly of the Russians, except the Jews, who told frightful tales but at the same time seized the opportunity to cheat us terribly whenever we bought anything of them.

As the inhabitants did not understand German, we talked to them by means of signs. Rickert got down on all fours to show that he wanted a stable.

On May 10th we rejoined the rest of the division.

The 188th led, followed by the 88th Infan-

try, and the 111th and 112th Artillery; the 35th Infantry brought up the rear.

An Austrian regiment was marching alongside of us. Some of these men shouted insults at us in Polish.

"Cowards!" answered our soldiers. "You've gotten a good licking from the Russians, and now we've had to come to your help in this dirty country, full of lice."

The officers forbade the men quarrelling with the Austrians.

Columns of Russian prisoners were also going along the same road. Rogge, upon seeing them, said to his men: "Do me the favour of letting those pigs carry your knapsacks, and you take their tobacco and cigarettes." In an instant the soldiers had obeyed his order. There were many wounded among the Russian prisoners.

Everywhere the roads were in a terrible state, and the men, weighed down by their knapsacks, advanced painfully slowly, sinking in the sand. Eger spoke harshly to them, saying that they weren't making rapid enough

progress. He even threatened to cut down their rations. Howls of protest and cries of anger were heard among the soldiers. "Pack of thieves," they all yelled at once, "as it is we've got almost nothing to eat, because you take all the best stuff, and now you're shooting off your mouths, because you're on horseback and we've got to carry our knapsacks, while we trudge along in the sand. But one day the war'll be over and then we'll see who'll be the boss—who'll be the bravest then!"

Eger was furious and spurred his horse on the men, holding his crop aloft and wounding one man with it. Nevertheless, and although they all hated him no one dared move to give Eger a lesson. Rogge, whom he told about the whole affair, approved of it and said: "Those pigs need a bullet in their hides, it's a regular mutiny. The beasts don't even deserve to fall in battle." On hearing this we wondered who *did* deserve to fall in battle, for it was a well known fact that Rogge never ventured in a place where he might be under fire.

German newspapers reported that the Galicians had been maltreated by the Russians. We saw that this was absolutely false. During the six months of the Russian occupation everything was peaceful. The fields were cultivated and everything was ready for the harvest. It was the Germans, the so-called liberators, who on the contrary destroyed everything. And so the Galicians were very displeased that we had come to rid them of the Russians. Soldiers offered women rings and jewelry stolen in France, if they would give themselves up to them. Rogge himself ordered a good looking young woman to be brought to him for the night, saying: "What has been done by the Russians can be done over again by the Germans." Eger was certainly a tyrant and a brute, but he never showed himself to be the coward and satyr that Rogge was. Such conduct only served to spur on the soldiers who followed women into the churches where they had taken refuge. The Galicians will never forget their liberators.

The Jews never missed a chance to rob us

and always asked exorbitant prices for the goods they offered. In order to trick us the better they began by flattering us, saying: "Oh, what brave and generous soldiers the Germans are—oh, how great and good your Emperor is! How happy we are that you've delivered us from the Russians. The whole world admires the Germans. . . ."

But some soldiers who wanted a certain object did not hesitate to take it without paying, if the Jews asked too big a price. In such cases, Eger always sided with his men.

"You damned dirty Jews," he said to the merchants who complained to him, "how dare you cheat Prussian soldiers?"

The Jews had the cheek to answer:

"Captain, the Russians have robbed us so that we must sell our goods a little higher in order not to go bankrupt."

Eger was furious, and ordered them to be off at once, or he would have them beaten by the soldiers. The children of Abraham departed hurriedly. Eger formally authorized his soldiers to take anything they wished

without paying for it, if they thought the Jews were asking exorbitant prices. One can easily understand that the soldiers no longer refrained from stealing.

XXI

FIRST BATTLES IN GALICIA

On June 15th, 1915, we were quartered at Albigowa where we were to stay two days to make our final preparations for going into the first line trenches.

But at 4 A. M. we were ordered to leave immediately for Markowa, where we would find the general staff of the division.

Four hours later we found there the following order signed by the lieutenant general commanding the 56th Division:

"The 88th Infantry will march at the head of the 56th Division. No precautions must be neglected because the regiment is about to meet the enemy. I hope that the regiment will do its duty here as it has done it in France. I count absolutely on the brave and heroic soldiers of the 88th. This order is to be read to the troops."

The horrors of war were to begin again for us.

We left in the direction of the San and passed through the village of Przeworsk, where there were a great many wounded, for a fierce struggle had just taken place.

Since most of our German horses had fallen owing to the heat and the bad roads, we had replaced them by little Russian ponies which were much hardier.

In spite of the battle the inhabitants had chosen to remain behind. The Russians, during the entire time of their occupation of Galicia, had devastated nothing and had scrupulously respected persons and property. But we and the Austrians were now laying waste all the country. Dr. Meiniecke said to us:

"It's not surprising that these people hate us. Just consider! The Russians did not touch their houses, their gardens or their fields. We, on the contrary, destroy everything. In the houses and villages from which the Russians had just retired I did not see any trace of pillage as in France and Belgium. After

all these people have a right to complain about us."

But Eger answered him:

"Doctor, we're going to show these Slavish pigs, these lice-infested peasants, what stuff war is made of. We who have fought the Russians and French will force them to go down on their knees to us for a piece of bread. If I ask one of these brutes for a drink and get no response, I strike him across the face with my crop. I'll show them what a Prussian soldier is!"

No one said a word because Eger could brook no contradiction. He was a real Prussian, after Kaiser Wilhelm's own heart.

At six o'clock we were eighteen kilometres to the north of Jaroslav and on the banks of the San. The day before, the Russians had retreated, leaving their unburied dead behind. The struggle must have been desperate, and no mercy shown for the skulls of many of the dead had been smashed by musket blows.

We crossed the San on a bridge built by our engineers. Hardly had we reached the

other side, when Rogge ordered us to form in skirmish line. That was foolish, for as yet we had no idea where the enemy was and we didn't even know if we were to attack him.

Rogge assembled the officers in back of a little hill and addressed them as follows:

"At last we are going to match ourselves against the Russians. I hope, gentlemen, that you will exert yourselves to the utmost, to spare us the shame of defeat. During the combat I ask you to keep in close touch with me, so that I can from time to time give you the divisional orders. Captain Eger with the 2nd Battalion will advance against the enemy, about six or seven metres in front of the rest. The 1st Battalion will be on his right and the 118th on his left. Captain Radke with the 3rd Battalion will remain with me in reserve. Now, gentlemen, good luck to you!"

Loffelhardt and I handed our horses to our orderlies and took our bicycles, in order to carry orders of which the soldiers were to know nothing.

It was 7 P. M. We were advancing on

the village of Wiazownica, which we were to attack from the left. Hardly had we arrived within three metres of the village, when we were greeted by machine gun fire which did us no harm, however, because the aim was very bad. Eger ordered a rest and telephoned Rogge for instructions, but got no answer. So he had us advance again and many of us were killed and wounded. Seeing that we would gain nothing, Eger again stopped our advance. I stayed with him, Rickert and Loffelhardt in a sand pit, to which some soldiers a little later brought Lieutenant Daucher of the 8th Company. He had a bullet in his abdomen and seemed to be suffering intensely. He begged us to kill him. We had no means of affording him any relief. He died a little while afterwards. When the battle was over Eger had him buried on the banks of the river.

Eger, not knowing what to do, sent me with Loffelhardt and a first class private to Rogge, for instructions. Bullets whizzed all around us, we started to crawl, and finally landed in

the midst of the 2nd Company. They had been without a word from their battalion for four hours. A young reserve officer said boldly that Rogge had shown himself absolutely incapable of commanding his regiment. Finally we found Rogge's adjutant, Lieutenant von Stein, who, without listening to us, said that the orders were to take Wiazownica at two o'clock.

We extracted a written and signed order from him, because this young fellow was quite capable of issuing such instructions on his own responsibility to distinguish himself and so get the Iron Cross of the first class. We promptly returned to Eger, who immediately ordered the battalion to hold itself in readiness to attack.

We advanced without a single shot being fired at us. A patrol that had gone ahead returned to say that the town was heavily fortified. We told Rogge of this, and he said nothing. Eger then ordered us to attack and to our great surprise we entered the town without a single shot being fired at us and without

finding a single Russian soldier there. The enemy had retreated. Such was the capture of Wiazownica which was the subject of a magnificent communiqué and which all the German newspapers celebrated as a great victory of the 56th Division. The soldiers all laughed and made fun of us and above all of Rogge, who had not even yet arrived on the scene, so afraid and distrustful was he of the Russians.

Toward ten o'clock we took possession of the Russian trenches, which led from the town to the river Lubaczawka. Hardly were we settled there when we were ordered to return to the town: every one thought that our officers did not know what to do, and were embarrassed. Suddenly the first Russian shell hit us, killing about six men. As Rogge had announced that we would not resume our march for another hour we had time to bury our dead.

"Give no quarter," said Eger in the speech that he made on this occasion; "this band of

beasts deserves no pity. If you let yourselves be captured you will have to work in the mines of Siberia, with your feet in chains."

Punctually at one o'clock, our artillery opened fire. Our gunners aimed well and we were able to advance, pipes in our mouths and arms shouldered, without the slightest difficulty. Lieutenant Schaller, who was a forester by profession, advanced calmly, gun slung over his shoulder as if he were off for a hunt. The Russians were massacred in these woods by our shells and later we found their dead and wounded. It had been a veritable carnage.

The battle was now practically won, but we still had to capture Radawa to prevent the enemy from attacking our flank. Lieutenant Knell, at the head of a patrol that had only to fire a few shots, took the town. Its only defenders were a few Cossacks who retreated at a gallop.

XXII

RADAWA

Eger, who was in command, had chosen the best house in the town for us. As we were settling ourselves there in his absence an officer of the Uhlans who was adjutant of the 35th Infantry, came in and addressing himself to Loffelhardt asked us to get out and make room for him. Loffelhardt explained to him that these were Eger's quarters and that the latter was in command of the town.

"Shut your damned mouth," cried the trooper, "you fool, a one year volunteer. You think I'm going to sleep in a hovel full of peasants while you lounge about this beautiful house? Get out; away with you, and the quicker the better."

But Loffelhardt shook his head at the Uhlan who disappeared, furious, only to return a few

moments later accompanied by an elderly colonel.

"Where is that blackguard," said he on entering, and his eyes sought Loffelhardt. I took a hand. "What do *you* want," roared the old colonel. I tried to explain to him that we had been the first to arrive and that it was our place because the battalion was actually in the town while the 35th had only reached its outskirts.

"I see," said the colonel, "you are in league with this wretch."

Things were beginning to look serious for us when Eger arrived on the scene. As he never was afraid of anything, he explained the affair to the colonel, who went away leaving his adjutant to disentangle himself as best he could. Hardly had he gone when Eger, who did not have too much patience, said to him:

"What are you doing here and why did you make so much noise in my house? Do you think that you are in your stable? Get out of here and quickly or I'll have you put out by my men!"

The brave Uhlan did not dare answer Eger and left like a whipped dog. Eger told us that we should have kicked him out ourselves and showed him what proper treatment was.

We had a good meal with Eger, but could not close an eye all night because of the cooties. The suffering those creatures caused us while we were in Galicia was perfectly incredible.

The next day we repaired to the woods called Radawa, leaving the town of that name behind. We wandered about, first to the right then to the left. Apparently our officers did not know what to do. In the evening we returned to the town for food. Then the battalion encamped at the edge of the woods.

During this time the 35th threw up defences along the Lubaczawka to prevent the Russians from crossing. The Lubaczawka is a little river that empties into the San at Monasterz. We were to stay in this position for several days without advancing.

On the twentieth we began to dig trenches in the woods. Our men cut down great quantities of trees for dug-outs. They were offi-

cially forbidden to destroy things wantonly in Galicia, but the truth is that the German officers did exactly what they liked in Galicia and to the Galicians and all the Austrians in general.

During the night of May 21st we left the woods to occupy an excellent position between Radawa and Monasterz. We were well sheltered there, and only about twenty metres from the river where the soldiers could bathe.

Unfortunately, and it was the case during our entire sojourn on the Eastern front, the provisioning of the soldiers was badly managed, and the soldiers often complained of not having enough to eat. Where were the chickens and the good wines of France?

Rickert, who had charge of provisioning the battalion, came to Eger one day and said:

"I noticed some cattle on a farm five hundred metres from here. The owners refuse to sell them. How shall I get meat?"

Eger, delighted, immediately gave orders to seize the cattle. Lieutenant Bortger, Loffelhardt and I were ordered to accompany Rick-

ert with several men on this very noble errand. We went into the backyard of the farm, where several women and children were gathered. With tears in their eyes they implored us to leave them their cattle which constituted their entire fortune. Without them, they said, they would surely all die of hunger.

"What nonsense!" cried Lieutenant Bortger, "We'll take four cows, one for each company, and a fifth for the regimental staff. Come, men, hurry and be sure to choose the fattest ones."

The soldiers hastened to obey, but the poor women fell on their cows as if they were their children threatened by danger. It was impossible to loosen their hold. It became a veritable battle. The frightened cows ran into their backyard, dragging the clinging women along with them. The angry soldiers, encouraged by us, bullied the women and kicked them about.

One of the latter held her hand clasped to her breast, as though trying to hide something in her blouse. Bortger, perceiving this, com-

manded us to search her. We were scarcely able to make her let go of the beast, one of whose horns she was holding with her other hand. Bortger and Rickert [1] drew their revolvers and threatened to kill her.

By Lieutenant Nolte's order, he having also joined our expedition, the soldiers tore every stitch from the unfortunate woman, and there she stood quite naked before us all.

Then we saw that it was a crucifix that she held, clasped fiercely to her breast. The soldiers on seeing a naked woman let go the cattle and came to amuse themselves about the hapless creature who was crying from shame. Bortger and Nolte *then began to spit on this woman's body,* while Adjutant Hoffman of the 8th Company and several soldiers closed round her and touched her with their dirty hands.

It was only at the end of an interval that the woman was permitted to dress.

"What say you, Nolte?" said Bortger. "It certainly was funny. What a lovely picture!

[1] This Rickert had been a theological student.

I shall never forget it. I nearly died laughing."

"Too bad all the soldiers were there," answered Nolte. "Otherwise I should have . . ."

Bortger was to forget that scene sooner than he thought, as he was killed on the next day, May 23rd, 1915. He was buried behind the trenches without a single word of regret being spoken over his grave. At the moment that the body was being lowered, First Class Private Bender took off Bortger's leggings because the latter owed him some money.

On the twenty-fourth, between six and seven o'clock we suddenly heard the Russians "hurrahing" in their trenches. Thinking that they were about to attack us, our artillery sent them a shower of shells. They still continued their yelling and even began to sing. We did not understand what was happening, when suddenly the singing stopped and in the midst of the silence a loud voice shouted:

"Brothers, Italy has declared war on Austria. You had better surrender, as all resistance is henceforth useless."

This was not joyful news for the German soldiers. They said it was a diplomatic failure, etc. But Eger told them to have no fear, because the Italians were cowards, incapable of serious fighting, and that soon the Austrians would be in Venice. To annoy the Russians, the men were ordered to sing *"Deutchland Uber Alles"* and *"Die Wacht Am Rhein."* That evening, May 23rd, was of the pleasantest of the war for us, as the Russians and Germans both sang all through it—one from joy, the other out of spite.

On the twenty-fourth, Captain Lindwurm, who had been slightly wounded at Lenglier and had since succeeded in staying in hiding in Mayence, returned to his regiment, and being older than Eger, took command of the 2nd Battalion. The latter took command of the 10th Company. No one regretted his departure. But his successor was one of the greatest cowards in the army.

Lindwurm, who had not yet been in the trenches, was horribly afraid of catching the "cooties." He did not dare eat with us nor

touch anything that we had handled. He always spoke to us from a distance of five or six feet. He made fun of us, called us lousy fellows, and was ever so proud of being clean himself. Loffelhardt and I tried our best to make him catch some of the dirty little creatures but always in vain as we could not get near him. But at last Loffelhardt had an ingenious idea. We put a few of these insects into a match box, and during his absence put it, half opened, into his bed, and awaited the result. By the next day we knew that we had succeeded. Lindwurm asked us to dinner with him, a new and unheard of thing.

"There is no use in isolating myself any longer, because some day I'll catch these fleas anyway," said he; "it seems to be quite inevitable." It was funny to see him scratching first his arms, then his throat and legs all during the meal. "Gentlemen," said he at last, "I think that I have caught the damned things, though I don't know how it could have happened, I've been so careful to use insect powder all the time."

Then we showed him why the powder was of no use at all. A flea buried under a speck of powder would emerge from it as fresh and gay as ever. After that evening we always dined with Lindwurm.

We occupied this position until June 4th.

At our left was the 98th Imperial and Royal Austrian Regiment. One day a soldier from this regiment came to our staff and asked permission to speak to the commander of the battalion about a matter of importance. Eger was then in command during Lindwurm's absence. Here is what the soldier said to him.

"Some Russian prisoners of ours told us that their regiments are going to attack us this evening in order to retake the town. However, all of my comrades, who are mostly Bohemians and Czechs, have decided to make no resistance but to surrender as they have had enough of war. The officers have also decided to give themselves up for they know what's going on although they have said nothing. But I am a German-Austrian from Vienna and I don't want to see it all end this way.

That is why I come to warn you what those dirty Slovaks are planning to do."

Eger immediately telephoned for reinforcements. The 92nd Brunswicks were immediately sent to us. Our artillery was ordered to fire on the Austrians if they retreated. The 92nd was to do the same.

The Russians attacked at the hour that our informant had promised and as they advanced the Austrians began their retreat. But we were prepared for that very contingency. While Lieutenant Huck of the 5th Company of our regiment advanced against the Russians our artillery and the 92nd Brunswicks started shooting at the Austrians, who on finding themselves between two fires, began to advance again.

If the Russians had been able to hold their town our entire battalion would have been captured. On the following day, the Austrians were replaced by German troops at the request of the commandant of our division. Our officers spat in disgust at the Austrians and the men did likewise.

XXIII

LAST BATTLES IN GALICIA AND OUR RETURN TO FRANCE

During the night of June 3rd we abandoned our position to go to a bend in the Lubaczawka to the right of Radawa. On the fourth at eight o'clock we were to open the general offensive which was to put us in possession of the other bank of the river and drive the Russians out of Galicia. Everything was ready. We had an excellent bomb thrower in our trenches and a captain of the 111th Artillery who was with us to time the firing, thanks to his telephonic instructions (too far to the right, too far to the left, too near, too far), helped marvellously. This bomb thrower was a small cannon, about the size of a German machine gun. The gunner aimed, pushed the lever and the bomb mounted into the air with a sort of grumbling sound. It carried in the

neighbourhood of four hundred metres, and on bursting destroyed everything within a radius of about thirty metres. The explosion was accompanied by a cloud of heavy black smoke which took several moments to disappear. The Russians, demoralized by our artillery, surrendered themselves in a body. The captain told us that had we had the French to fight, things might have turned out differently for us, and that many of us would have fallen, as the latter were good fighters and knew how to defend themselves.

Toward ten o'clock the Russians had to draw on their reserves.

The 6th Company was isolated for a while and might easily enough have been captured. During the fight, Lindwurm, scared silly, had hidden in his dugout. When it became necessary for him to rejoin us, he had himself surrounded by six soldiers who served as a shield. This cowardliness did not prevent him from shortly becoming commander.

A little later we had to attack in order to get possession of the hill in front of us and

so continue to drive back the Russians. We also captured the woods to the right of the hill. During all this time no one saw Lindwurm. Rickert, Loffelhardt and I had all the responsibility. Without too great loss the battalion rapidly obtained all its objectives.

Until June 7th we occupied the line from Gaydy to Zaradawa, and then we continued our advance. During all this time food reached us irregularly and in insufficient quantities.

On the tenth we were in Dobra. The famished soldiers began to pillage the houses. Lindwurm was the first to approve of this.

On the eleventh we were the reserves in a wood north of Rudka. On the twelfth we were relieved; we then went to Rudka for our next orders. Our march was very painful. At Rudka we received bread, eggs, milk, butter and cheese. We sat down to eat without waiting for Lindwurm who was never about. He had spent the night in a hole that a child could hardly have crept into. Just imagine a man with a paunch sleeping in a cradle!

Such was the spectacle that the brave Prussian captain presented. It was hard for us not to burst out laughing when we saw him. As the Russians were still retreating, we dug a sufficiently large shelter and asked Lindwurm to join us. But he was paralyzed with fright and would not move but remained where he was, occasionally scratching himself on account of the fleas. Out of pity for him we dug a trench between his hole and ours so that he could join us without exposing himself. He almost wanted to kiss us and could not thank us enough.

On the next day we went to Dobza. The Russian artillery fire was intense. Lindwurm commanded the sections to advance on the run, but far from setting the example himself he remained on his belly in a trench. How could the soldiers be brave when their commander was such a coward? At Dobza, he had the impertinence to rebuke Lieutenant Schaller for having exposed us all to the enemy's fire by crossing the open field with his company. Schaller answered with some irony that he had

quite forgotten to ask the Russians not to fire while Commander Lindwurm passed.

At Dobza there was a Bavarian division. One of these regiments, the 19th Infantry, joined our division. On June 13th we passed Kawale, where a desperate battle had taken place two days before, apparently between the Russians and Bavarians. No quarter had been given and we found many Russians with throats cut and skulls smashed by blows from the butts of rifles. The Bavarians said quite frankly that it was far better for all the Russians to die than not to have enough to eat. Every one knew that our own rations were in truth insufficient. Anyway, the Bavarians made a practice of butchering their wounded and prisoners. A Bavarian lieutenant himself said that he gave no quarter. "It is serious warfare, war to the knife," said he, "and I want to see blood flow."

From Kawale we proceeded to Cisplice. We spent a bad half hour ascending a little hill where the Russians bombarded us heavily. The 7th and 8th companies had many casual-

ties and lost nearly all of their privates. Sergeant-Major Heer was wounded in the neck and lost his right arm.

We were now under a general who commanded a Bavarian army corps. We were ordered to take the village of Wolezasby. Lindwurm, following his usual custom, stayed behind with the telephone and it was up to us to lead the battalion. We took the village without very great difficulty or heavy losses. In the evening Rickert and I went to look for Lindwurm, who as I have said had been out of sight the entire day. When we told him that we were in possession of the town he had the audacity to say to us proudly:

"I am happy to be in command of so noble a battalion and I thank you, my friends, for assisting me so splendidly in the execution of my orders." When we were alone again we burst out laughing.

On entering the village we noticed a Russian captain at the edge of the road. He was wounded and apparently in agony. We went up to him to see whether we could do anything

for him. He had several bayonet wounds and had almost lost consciousness. As we raised his head he opened his eyes and said:

"Away with you, assassins! Why do your men commit such awful crimes? I was no longer an enemy when I surrendered with my company. Unarmed, we were all massacred. At least blow out my brains so that I may no longer suffer." We called the nurses and left him. Afterwards the nurses told us that they had ended his sufferings as it had been impossible to move him. In any event we knew that he had spoken the truth because we saw the Russian muskets piled up fifty metres behind the place where we had found him and his butchered men.

We occupied the Russian trenches until June 19th. Our staff was magnificently installed in a church where we had had fresh straw brought. A telephone installed in the sacristy enabled us to keep informed of all that happened in the trenches.

On June 20th we were ordered to seize the village of Dornach, scarcely fifteen kilo-

metres from the Russian frontier. Lindwurm made a wry face on hearing this; he told us that it was very easy for those gentlemen in the rear, well protected as they were, to give like orders.

"Captain," we said to him, "why do you not have yourself placed on the general's staff? Haven't you proved that you can direct a battle lying hidden in a wheatfield? You've been an adjutant for twelve years and know quite as much as a colonel."

Lindwurm answered, shrugging his shoulders: "I've tried everything. But it's no use; they don't want me."

The taking of Dornach was easier than we had thought. We found many dead there, besides dying horses and a lot of damaged material. One man had had his chest run through by a wagon pole. We also found three Russian soldiers killed by bayonet thrusts and stripped naked. Even their boots had been carried off. The inhabitants of the village had fled and numbers of frightened cattle were running all over the place.

Rickert seized eight calves and had them killed for our battalion (just the members of the staff). Dirrig, our cook, was delighted. The extraordinary thing was that we ate the eight calves in two days. There were only about fourteen of us, including the cook and the orderlies. It is true that we kept eating it all day long and without bread and that it was a long time since we had had anything so delicious. But still I never would have believed that one could eat so much meat.

On June 22nd the rumour was about that we would soon be replaced by a division of the 11th Army Corps. That very same evening indeed, we were relieved by the 44th Brigade of this corps. We left for Céwkaw, then for Oleszyu, where we were quartered. The city was full of Jews who sold vodka, an alcoholic beverage so strong that all the soldiers became drunk.

On the twenty-fourth we reached Polank, which had been almost completely destroyed by the Germans. Rogge installed himself in a house that happened not to have been dam-

aged, putting its inmates, including an old woman who was ill and in her bed, into the street. In the evening he had the regiment's band play.

On the twenty-sixth we went to Jaraslaw where we were to entrain to be killed elsewhere. We changed all of our wagons, but kept our little Russian ponies, which we were to take to France. For it was to France that we were returning after two months' absence. Our train went through Lancut and Cracow where we were given food. At last, on a Sunday, at five o'clock we reached the German frontier of Poland. A disinfecting plant had been put up so that we could at last get rid of our vermin. Everything had to pass through this establishment: men, horses, wagons, even the kitchens.

Each man made separate packages of his cloth and of his leather clothing. These packages were numbered for identification and handed in to be returned to us later. There we stood in our shirts. Then they took us to tanks in which we plunged into hot water up to

our necks. We soaped and scrubbed one another with a special soap which killed the lice and their eggs. Only then could we realize the damage these dirty little beasts had done. Some of the men's bodies looked like open sores. Then we had cold showers, and each of us got a fresh shirt and a pair of drawers and socks. These had been requisitioned in France and Belgium. They were of every imaginable colour: one man wore a pair of blue drawers, a red shirt and yellow socks; another had on a pink shirt, green drawers and black or white socks. In this outfit we went into a room where a meal was served us. It looked more like a masquerade than war and all the soldiers were very gay. Then we received back our clothes and leather garments which had all been submitted to a high temperature in a special furnace. Naturally they were in a frightful condition, but we were happy to be rid of our vermin.

XXIV

HERIN

Our journey from Galicia to France lasted five days. July 1st, 1915, we reached Brussels where we stayed for several hours. When we were crossing Germany the people had cheered us everywhere, but here no one noticed us.

July 2nd we were at Valenciennes, four kilometres from the town. Our battalion was quartered at Hérin, where we rested for quite a while from the effects of the campaign in Galicia. Lindwurm and Rickert were lodged in a castle. Loffelhardt and I found a place for ourselves in a small house where a woman and two children lived. All the 7th and 8th Companies were billeted, the 5th and 6th were quartered in the big breweries (those of Sauvage and Giran). The men behaved themselves well and there were no complaints.

The entire 56th Division was at Valenciennes and in the vicinity. The staff-office of the division was at Saint-Saulve with a motorcycle company. The staff-office of the regiment and of the 3rd Battalion was at Valenciennes itself. A company of machine guns was encamped between Hérin and Aubry continually on the watch for French and English aviators flying over the town. The 111th Artillery Corps with its ammunition train was at Aubry. All the cannon had been sent to Douai where there was a huge repair shop.

We had few duties, for the division was there to recuperate. On the ninth our general held a big review and distributed the decorations awarded by Emperor Francis Joseph to our soldiers who had fought in Galicia. Lindwurm was decorated by the general who congratulated him on his excellent leadership in Austria.

The soldiers grumbled and Sansler, a non-commissioned officer of the 6th Company, said, in a loud voice, "We—we are the ones who

did the fighting, we carry the scars of battle, but the cowards are decorated!"

After the review Lindwurm had Sansler brought to him and asked him how he could talk that way. Sansler replied that he had refused to be a reserve officer, that he had fought at Roye, at Champagne and in Galicia and that he had been wounded twice, but he had received no decorations. Two days later Sansler was made a sergeant-major and immediately received the Iron Cross which he put in his pocket. He did not care to wear it "like a coachman," he said.

On July 10th, our brave Rogge was made a lieutenant-colonel and Nolte received the Iron Cross of the first class. Everybody hoped that Rogge would be transferred to another regiment where he would be made a colonel.

On the eleventh an order was issued allowing fifty soldiers from each company leave of absence. At this news everybody was happy and all the suffering and injustices were forgotten. I had my leave and was preparing to start off at seven o'clock to see my mother

when I got an order to report to headquarters at Valenciennes to act as interpreter. All my efforts to go into Germany were futile, and Lindwurm in tearing up my leave, said, "After all aren't you in your own country just the same, since you said while you were studying to be a reserve officer, that those who have once lived in France wish to remain there always?" It was true, and it was this very fact that had prevented my being made a reserve officer.

What answer could I make to this coward who owed so much to Loffelhardt and me?

XXV

HEADQUARTERS AT VALENCIENNES

In July, 1915, military headquarters at Valenciennes were installed in the town hall. The mayor was authorized to keep several small rooms for himself and his assistants. The Germans turned the court house, where the water and fire departments had been located before the war, into a storehouse for revolvers, guns, munitions, bicycles, harness and other articles which they had confiscated. On the second floor was a civil prison and one for German soldiers.

In charge of headquarters was Lieutenant Colonel Spiers, who was a member of one of the Uhlan regiments of the 13th Army Corps. His adjutant who represented him when necessary was Captain Kolb. Reserve Lieutenant Korneman, a coffee salesman in civil

life, was also connected with headquarters. The court martial was composed of the Imperial Adviser Dr. Wunder (an attorney at Karlsruhe in civil life), Dr. Lewin, who represented him when necessary, and Sergeant-Major Sohn, interpreter and secretary. The last named was not always present for they distrusted him; but they were afraid to get rid of him because of the many secrets he knew which he might disclose to avenge himself.

In the right wing was the office where the French and Belgians who had charge of the food supply of the civilians received their passports.

The Food Commission was composed of a captain in the reserves, a lieutenant of the landwehr, several Americans, and a certain number of French citizens. Among the last I commend M. Dreyfus who did his best for his people and his country.

During the little while that I stayed at Valenciennes—that is to say until the 56th Division left for the front—I learned and I saw some very interesting things concerning the

regulations which the captured peoples were subjected to in this conquered village.

The civilians were allowed to be about the streets, frequent the cafés and restaurants and the public buildings from six o'clock in the morning till eight o'clock at night. The stores and the cafés were open from eight o'clock in the morning till seven o'clock at night.

Soldiers were quartered in almost every house.

The band of the 88th played every day in front of headquarters from twelve until one. On the door of the town hall hung the imperial flag of Germany and the royal flag of Bavaria. On a large shield were the words:

ETAPPEN KOMMANDATUR

During the day there was considerable traffic in the streets.

A German canteen sold only to German soldiers.

The officers and the men of these troops on the staff lived a great deal better than they did in Germany.

In addition to their salary or advanced pay, the commander received an indemnity paid by the town of thirty-five francs per day; the other officers received ten francs a day; the sergeant-majors six francs and the non-commissioned officers and soldiers four francs. Over and above this they enjoyed free lodging in the hotels for which they paid in four-franc checks issued by the town. In theory the indemnity was levied for food because their duties hindered them from eating as usual or at mess. But in reality everybody ate where it cost him nothing and pocketed the indemnity. They all ate at the Saint-Vincent barracks in Rue de Lille. Briefly one can say that the troops on the staff were maintained at the expense of the population.

Up to the present time the war had lasted for more than a year and everything that we had had been stolen; the requisitions always were excessive. We took everything that could have the least possible value. All the bicycles for example had been sent to Germany but we kept on finding more every day.

The mines and the factories at Anzin were operated by the Germans. Many civilians were forced to work in the mines at a pitiful wage. The fields were cultivated by their owners or by the peasants but the German government requisitioned all the crops and left to the owners barely enough to supply themselves with absolutely necessary food and with seed for planting the following spring. The grain was sent to a large mill at Valenciennes under the direction of a non-commissioned officer. The needs of the army were supplied and the surplus sent into Germany.

Many difficulties could have been avoided by the civilians if they had remained on good terms among themselves. But they often did not agree and complained of one another.

Fines were payable in German money and since the town had only paper money, the people were obliged to go to a money changer; this was very expensive.

The police at headquarters were veritable brutes, especially one called Ruff.

My duties were to act as interpreter for the

court martial, especially for Dr. Wunder, and to requisition throughout the town and its vicinity, motors, and certain implements, machines and tools for harvesting. It was thus that I frequently had an opportunity to communicate with the French awaiting court martial. The majority of the detained civil prisoners were charged with smuggling either letters or goods from France into Belgium or vice versa.

Thus a china manufacturer from Saint-Amand who often came to Valenciennes with a permit was arrested and accused of being an agent for smuggling letters between France and Belgium.

When arrested, they found no evidence on him and he swore that he was innocent. Nevertheless, he was fined five hundred marks and forbidden to leave Saint-Amand where his factory was.

Another curious affair was that of M—— and L——. A certain M——, a Belgian but a resident of Valenciennes, was arrested and accused of selling French newspapers

which came from Holland through Belgium. Here is the way this little game was played: some civilian members of the Food Commission were ordered to report at the Dutch frontier to purchase provisions. There the Dutch easily gave them some French newspapers. L——, editor of the *Gazette de Valenciennes,* sold these papers at fifteen francs apiece to M—— who lent them to the people for three to five francs an hour. When his customers had read them, he sold them at Douai. When he was arrested they found at his house several verses making fun of the Kaiser; this was another offence. During the prosecution Sergeant-Major Sohn never stopped annoying Mme. M——, who was very pretty, with his attentions, assuring her that if she would be agreeable he would do all he could to help her husband. L—— and M—— were fined one thousand marks each for selling French papers. M—— went to prison for three months for his verses about Wilhelm II.

The mayor of Marly, M. Druy, was imprisoned for travelling to France by way of

Holland and England to see his son who was at Brest. He had then returned. This trip was possible, for there was in France and Belgium a secret organization for people who wished to escape. Everything was ready so that the fugitives could cross the electrically charged barrier; they did this by means of a double ladder. Naturally that was rather expensive. Sometimes also the sentry was bribed. M. Dreyfus, member of the Food Commission of Valenciennes, thus provided for the escape of fifteen hundred young men. He was sentenced to three years at hard labour, about the same time that Miss Edith Cavell was condemned. As for the mayor of Marly, I don't know what his sentence was since I left Valenciennes before his trial.

Two women who struck some policemen were fined one thousand marks each and sentenced to three months in jail.

In the prison at headquarters there were quite a number of German soldiers awaiting court martial for overstaying their leave or for being absent without leave. There were

some also who had refused to obey orders and had said things against their officers. If their former conduct had been good, they were punished lightly, but they were always sent to the front line trenches and the actual infliction of their punishment suspended until the end of the war. If they behaved themselves they would then be pardoned. One wonders if many soldiers did not commit offences purposely so that they would be sentenced, hoping in this way to escape the war.

When Prussians and Bavarians were in the same locality, there would often be quarrels. In August, 1915, there was a veritable battle at Douai between the troops of these two countries; eight officers were killed and a great many men; there were also many wounded. Four hundred men were sentenced by the court martial at Lille to from one to twelve years in prison at hard labour. This affair was never mentioned by the German press.

Every Tuesday a trainload of soldiers, convicted citizens and persons sentenced to deportation, left for Germany. A great many in-

habitants were deported without having been tried,—simply by administrative act.

Every one at headquarters from Lieutenant-Colonel Spiers down to the police had had quantities of shoes made for themselves from leather requisitioned for the needs of the army. They sent these shoes into Germany. Dr. Wunder ordered the non-commissioned officers to act cautiously so that this trick should not be discovered and he himself would mark the cases *"Soiled Clothes"* with the headquarters seal.

The following, however, is by all odds the most interesting story I can tell of my experiences in Valenciennes:

At the automobile station at Valenciennes, there was a boy, from a Munich family, who was a chauffeur and who, although he had not done his year's service as a volunteer, went about with the officers: a young slacker of high birth. This young fellow who passed his time agreeably behind the lines had noticed a very pretty girl, about eighteen years old. Her mother kept an inn between Marly and

Saultain. The young chauffeur often came to the inn, always ordering the costliest wines and brandies, and trying in all kinds of ways to enter upon friendly relations with the girl. But the latter had such a violent dislike to him that she always left the room as soon as he entered it. Not to be discouraged, he followed her several times into the street but she always found a way to evade him. One day she met him in the market at Valenciennes. He had a scheme, and coming up to her orders her to follow him immediately. The young girl, very much frightened, follows him obediently, for as soon as a German soldier tells a civilian that he arrests him, the latter must follow without protest, even though he might later, after examination, be set free. The chauffeur leads the young girl to his house, pushes her into his room, turns the key and goes out again to perform his duties. At night he comes home to find his prisoner. A little while later he goes out again and gives himself up at headquarters where he says that he has just accidentally killed a young French

girl. They find the body of the young girl in his room; she had been shot through the forehead.

The chauffeur's story—absurd—is as follows:

The young girl had consented to give herself to him. As he was undressing, his revolver which he was in the habit of placing every night on the table next to his bed, went off accidentally and killed her.

The girl's parents accused the chauffeur of murdering their daughter whom he had entrapped because she had refused to give herself up to him. The medical examination showed that the girl had not been outraged.

The man was condemned to six months' imprisonment for arbitrarily imprisoning a person. The apparent fact of murder was overlooked. As he had spent five months in prison before his court martial, he was released a few weeks afterwards.

On hearing this wicked judgment pronounced, the girl's father protested violently, saying that the Germans were acquitting the

murderer of his daughter, that there was no such thing as German justice, etc. The poor man was immediately arrested and a few days later deported to Germany.

The old woman in mourning is now all alone in the inn on the Marly road grieving for her husband and daughter. This story was confirmed to me by Sergeant-Major Sohn who was at the trial. The entire headquarters staff, one and all, confirmed it. The murder and sentence made a deep impression on all the village but could not possibly cause more hatred than already existed for everything German.

My stay at Valenciennes ended on September 20th. That day I was ordered to report at Saverne, in Alsace, where my regiment was located.

XXVI

THE BATTLE OF CHAMPAGNE

(September, 1915)

On September 11th, I arrived at Saverne (Alsace), where my battalion was quartered. I was going to board with my friend Loffelhardt who lived with an Alsatian woman whose husband was a lieutenant in the reserves at the front. This woman told us that all citizens of Saverne (she spoke of the Alsatians) were positive that the war would give them back to France. All the Alsatians hated the Prussians cordially, especially since the Reuter and Forsner affair and had but one desire—to become French citizens once again. After dinner we took a walk through the town and talked with a few of the inhabitants. They all spoke French and pretended not to understand German. All of them told

us that after the war Alsace would again become French. They complained a good deal of the severe German administration which treated them like the French and Belgians of the invaded districts.

We were expecting to spend a little more time at Saverne when we were suddenly ordered to leave immediately for Champagne where the French were making a big offensive.

We broke camp that night in a disorder and haste that cannot be described. Many men took this occasion to desert. They were court-martialled later.

On the twenty-fourth at six o'clock in the morning we left for Savigny by way of Sarreguemines, Thionville, Longuyon and Vouziers. The train made very good time and we hardly stopped long enough at Longuyon to eat. Automobiles were awaiting at Savigny to carry us to the front in great haste. The road from Savigny to Séchault resembled the great boulevards of Paris, there was so much traffic. We could already hear the roaring of the guns and soon we passed the artillery posi-

tions at high speed. Never have I seen so many cannon so close to each other. We all understood that the French armies were making a huge effort to pierce the German line.

Before arriving at Séchault our automobiles had to slow down, so badly was the road encumbered. The French shells began falling in this region and of course did considerable damage.

For the first time we heard the terrifying noise of the aerial bombs. All the soldiers of the battalion, so happy only two days before, were now sad and discouraged for they believed they were going to their death.

At Séchault we left our automobiles and reached Ripont by a forced march. We were at the identical spot near the famous "Devil's Hole" where we had suffered so during May, 1915. The ground cut up by numerous shell holes was covered with carcasses of men and horses.

At Ripont we waited till night before going into our trenches. During the journey we had suffered several losses. Reserve Lieutenant

Abraham had been killed and all of us felt that we would never return from that hell alive.

We finally took possession of our trenches. They had been half destroyed by the French artillery and we had to get to work immediately right under the enemy's infernal fire, to put them in condition.

At daybreak the French attacked us after a terrific bombardment which had lasted three hours. If the French had not attacked so soon our positions would certainly have been wiped out. However, they were a little premature and the first of them to come at us were shot down or captured. The fire was fierce; we sheltered ourselves behind piles of corpses and we looked around us like madmen thinking our last hour had come. Never expecting to come out alive, we prayed for death to finish us off once and for all. We were not exactly nervous but we were dully resigned to the inevitable. The soldiers acted mechanically. We gazed stupidly at our comrades who fell beside us and we lay quietly down beside them as if we did not understand.

Naturally our brave battalion chief, Lindwurm, had, in accordance with his noble habit, preferred not to go into the trenches. He hid himself in a cave between Ripont and Gratreuil, and all of the responsibility of leading the battalion fell upon Rickert, Loffelhardt and myself. Greatly annoyed, we asked First Lieutenant Zietz, commander of the 6th Company, if he would take command of the battalion. He told us that he was not able to take such a responsibility upon himself, that he was not in action and that he had had enough, and that he would be delighted when this dirty business which consisted of killing and of being killed would be over. Then we found Lieutenant Dehes, who was on active service. He said he preferred to die at the head of his company and that he would carry out all the orders he received from us.

On September 26th hell was let loose. The artillery fire reached the height of violence, the earth trembled and many soldiers lost their minds, becoming living corpses. To stay in an underground shelter was to expose yourself to

being buried alive. The men wandered like mad through the trenches seeking shelter from death. All at once the French broke through on our right. Passing by our position, which could offer no resistance, and piercing our rear on the run they completely surprised our second line. The French continued doggedly toward Ripont. A few minutes later we saw their cavalry advance. Instinctively, our men began firing at this living target and a number of French troopers fell victims of their bravery. The frightened horses bounded at a gallop over the dead and wounded. Some dragged their riders along with them. Our artillery had immediately concentrated its fire on the French cavalry without concerning themselves about us, so that we were obliged to abandon our lines on the run, lest every man of us be killed by our own guns. We did not know where we were or what we were to do. We were surrounded on all sides by the French. Furthermore, it was impossible for us to surrender, as the German artillery swept the position, which was as untenable for the

French as for us. At last we arrived at the second line without knowing what we were doing. There we found heaps of dead and wounded Germans and several crazy soldiers, who were singing and laughing at the uproar. All the rest had been thrown into confusion by the French, who had taken Ripont and passing that place had pushed forward.

These brave men had to stop before a ravine between Ripont and Gratreuil, where the German reserves, waiting for them, opened fire on them. But in their dash, they would probably have overcome this new obstacle if unfortunately they had not found themselves just at this critical moment within the range of their own guns. There was nothing left for them to do but to surrender. Many of our soldiers told me afterwards that they were sorry for this for if it had not happened they themselves would have had a chance to surrender to the French and so be finished with the war.

Rickert asked Loffelhardt if we could not take advantage of this and retake our front

line. All our companies except the 5th, commanded by Dehes, had lost their officers. There only remained as leaders in all the ten battalions, Dehes, Rickert, Loffelhardt and I. We told Dehes to attack and we retook our front line, where we found only a few French soldiers, who surrendered, but were instantly killed at Dehes' orders, for the excitement was so great that no one showed any mercy. Dehes received the Iron Cross, first class, for this brave deed. After all it was only our 5th Company which advanced. The others refused on the pretext that they had no officers. Lieutenant Zietz was killed and his orderly, on his knees before him for half an hour, kept begging him to get up. The poor boy had gone mad.

Back in our first position we were able to get an idea of the awful massacre which had taken place. We literally walked over piles of dead and wounded, French and German mixed promiscuously. Cries, groans, the death rattle, veritable shrieks of pain arose from this field of slaughter. For a moment I thought I

was going mad like all the rest, for my mind seemed to ramble and my senses were benumbed. A great many men had become stone deaf and remained sitting on the ground, oblivious of everything. If you spoke to them they just stared at you with a stupid expression.

Naturally, on this day there had been no distribution of rations and we found our food by searching through the packs of the dead. The men preferred to search the French, who had white bread, boxes of sardines, chocolate and coffee in their canteens, but no spirits. Luckily, the canteens of the German dead were full of rum. Sitting in our ruined trenches we ate and drank mechanically, thinking of nothing and without bothering about the battle which was still raging on our right towards Somme-Py, where it must have been frightful, for the shells burst by the thousand, darkening the sky with a huge cloud of black smoke. The ground trembled as if there was an earthquake.

At last on September 28th there was a com-

parative lull and we were relieved in the middle of the night.

Thus ended as far as I was concerned, that horrible Battle of Champagne, through which I did not expect to live.

On the twenty-ninth, we bivouacked at camp Number Three, between Gratreuil and Ripont. Who had taken our places in the front line? We never knew, everything happened so rapidly, and the soldiers had taken off their epaulets, on which were the numbers of their regiments.

We were now able to count our losses. They were terrible. We lost more than two thirds of our force. Only three hundred of us remained in a battalion which, completely reorganized before we left Saverne, had counted a thousand men at that time.

Our battalion chief, Captain Lindwurm, who, as I have related, had refrained from taking command during the battle and had left us to our own resources, had the effrontery to assemble us and to speak to us in this manner:

"Dear comrades, I thank you for your courage and for your heroism. You bravely retook the positions captured by the enemy. I am proud to be your leader. You have obeyed all my orders and have covered the 2nd Battalion with glory."

Such words as these were quite incredible, coming from such a coward as he who, now that danger was over, acted as if he had saved the German Empire. Janecke, a first class private, at headquarters told Rickert and me what Lindwurm had done during the fight. On September 25th, Lieutenant-Colonel Rogge, through a non-commissioned officer, Zentgroff of the headquarters company, ordered Lindwurm to report immediately to him. Lindwurm promised to come, but didn't and instead hid himself in a dug-out at Ardeuil. The next day Rogge came himself to find him and said to him:

"Captain, I am sorry to have to tell you that I have proved that the officers of your battalion do not do their duty and do not obey the orders of their superiors. Before you, an officer of

this company disobeyed my orders and I had to complain about him" (he was speaking of Schmidt), "and yet he was not a coward. You, you seem to be afflicted with the same disease. I want you to note that I hold you responsible if the discipline of your company does not come up to what is expected and demanded of Prussian troops. I command you for the last time to rejoin your battalion and to lead it."

Lindwurm started out with First-Class Private Bastian, but he stopped at Séchault and Bastian reached us by himself. He transferred the orders signed by Lindwurm to us and warned us that all communications with the regiment would have to be sent to Lindwurm first for his signature.

All this did not prevent Lindwurm's taking command a few days later. He made us another speech at this time in which he had the nerve to speak of the awful battle of Champagne, which he would never forget. What he has certainly not forgotten was the fright he had had.

On October 8th we returned to the trenches with new recruits which made up for our losses and enabled us to reform our units. Seeing these new men one would think that Germany was at the end of her man power, for there were boys scarcely eighteen years old and grey haired men from forty to forty-five. Amongst them there were even cripples, the lame and some poor devils who had already lost a leg or an arm and were being sent to the front just the same.

On October 4th, General von Einem, in his order of the day, thanked us for our bravery. This order ought to have been read to the soldiers, but Lindwurm thought that unnecessary.

"Those whom it would interest," he said, "are dead, wounded or missing; those who are left have not enough sense to understand it. As to the new recruits, it is none of their business."

XXVII

DOUAI—IN CHAMPAGNE

On November 6th we left our Champagne trenches for the last time and started towards Arras. On the ninth we arrived at Mouchy and on the tenth we were before Arras, where we stayed as reserves.

Our men were quartered on the citizens. We were forbidden to have anything to do with the Bavarian soldiers, so as to avoid quarrels and disputes. We were also forbidden to hold communication with the natives, for it seemed that most of the allied spies were at Douai and Lille. This order did not, however, prevent monsieurs the officers from running after the women and trying by every means—almost always by force—to find mistresses. I can mention for example an awful scandal about our own battalion chief, the heroic Lindwurm.

He boarded with a respectable woman who lived alone with her daughter, a girl about twenty-four years old.

Lindwurm decided to become this young girl's lover and he told us of his intention. Rickert, who was a theological student in civilian life, gave him a good lecture and told him he was not conducting himself as a gentleman should. But the fine Lindwurm would not listen to him and straightway entered the young girl's bedroom. The latter told him that Monsieur the Commander must have made a mistake and that he was in a young woman's bedroom.

"My dear young lady," answered Lindwurm gallantly, "believe what you want but let me tell you that I have decided that you are going to be my mistress. Also please take note that all resistance will be futile. If you do not consent I will have you deported to Germany."

Rickert and I, who were in the hall, could hear everything until Lindwurm closed the door.

Rickert, disgusted, went to Lieutenant-Colonel Rogge's headquarters and asked to be relieved from duty as adjutant of the 3rd Battalion. Rogge demanded an explanation and Rickert told him about Lindwurm's behaviour.

"Don't get so hot, my friend," answered Rogge. "These little affairs happen in the best society, you know. Don't get excited. If every one had your scruples it would have been better for Germany never to have gone to war. Maybe you are a little jealous, my dear Rickert, but there are so many women in the streets that assuredly you can find some one to your liking."

Meanwhile, Lindwurm ordered all kinds of food taken to the old lady's house, chiefly dainties, old wines and liquors. When we returned he said:

"Gentlemen, I am your commander and the master of this house. I ordered these provisions and I invite you—no, *I order you* to help celebrate tonight my marriage with this young girl."

A few minutes later, I found myself alone with the girl who, weeping, said to me:

"He threatened to have me deported to Germany like all the rest. What would happen to my poor mother if she were left alone here."

Before dinner we again remonstrated with Lindwurm for uselessly making two women unhappy. But he answered:

"You go to the devil. That's the custom of the staff and I intend to follow it."

Loffelhardt, who sometimes spoke frankly, was indignant and did not hesitate to answer him roughly:

"Sir, if everything went according to custom, how are there the many slackers and cowards at the front, that these gentlemen and I are well acquainted with?"

Lindwurm paled but did not answer.

The bridal dinner was funereal; no one ate and no one knew how to act. The two poor women could hardly keep from crying and Lindwurm, crestfallen, did not know what to say and realized what a ridiculous and beastly part he was playing in this very sad comedy.

The atmosphere became so strained that he could not maintain his position. At dessert he spoke to Rickert and said he was sorry for all this childishness and he begged the ladies to forget it all. We all congratulated him on his virtuous resolution.

On November 23rd we returned to Champagne for the third time. There was now a relative lull on this front in comparison with the horrible battle of September and we were not so miserable. We occupied the same positions as before.

During our absence the engineers had stubbornly laboured at burying mines which were to explode under the French trenches. Our battalion was chosen to attack right after the explosion of one of these mines during the night of December 4th and 5th, 1916, at exactly half-past eleven o'clock. At the given time, a frightful report resounded and in front of us we saw a huge red flame suddenly cover the whole sky and rise upward in the midst of an eruption of earth and black smoke. One clearly saw as if on a luminous screen

several human bodies hurled to a great height by the force of the explosion.

Lindwurm, as I said before, gave his orders for half-past eleven. But no one moved except a few new men recently arrived in the battalion. Lieutenant Becker, only nineteen years old, immediately sent word that his company refused to leave the trenches, unless Lindwurm himself came to the front line to lead the attack at the head of his battalion. Lindwurm replied by repeating the order to attack immediately and said that he had to stay behind to direct all stages of the attack. One must admit that in principle he was right, but his cowardice in the past had exasperated the soldiers.

The delay caused by this incident made us lose all the benefits of the confusion brought about by the explosion of the mine. The whole affair was a failure and it was we who were the object of a furious attack from the French, who immediately seized their opportunity. We had to defend ourselves, and it was only through hard work and with great loss that we held our positions. The engineer who had ex-

ploded the mine and who wanted to win the Iron Cross of the first class, made a brave counter attack with his fifteen men. He was killed and all his men, except two who came back, were killed, wounded or taken prisoners.

At the close of the affair the regiment was severely reprimanded by the general commanding the army corps.

"It is an act of cowardice and a crime," said the general, "to refuse to obey. It is not the soldier's business what his superior does. He has only to obey and to execute the orders given him. If this happens again, the severest measures will be taken."

Rogge added his remarks to this reproach, accusing the regiment of mutiny.

As punishment the battalion had to stay in the trenches several extra days, but the soldiers made light of it, for existence was even more disagreeable when off duty than on. We were not relieved till the 13th of December. When we were sent to the rear, Rogge assembled the battalion and made a speech in which he said he was ashamed to be in command of

such cowards. He announced that sanction had been given for a certain number of men to be chosen from each company and sent to another regiment. When the men had withdrawn, hissing and grumbling, it was the turn of the officers and the non-coms whom he had detained.

"You have heard me, gentlemen. I have kept you to tell you that this disobedience is the result of your indulgence of these peasants, who do only what they want. You treat them as equals and they make fun of you and your orders. You must never speak to them in a friendly way, but on the contrary, treat them severely. The disgrace of the 2nd Battalion rests on me. I trust that a like occurrence will not take place again."

When Rogge was gone, Harnishmacher, who was serving as an officer, said:

"Rogge is great on making speeches but he never comes within the lines himself and prefers to soak himself with wine and in the company of the biggest drunkards of the regiment. I would like to be selected to leave this regi-

ment, which is nothing but a society of antiquated fighters and cowards."

Lindwurm listened to all of this without saying a word.

During the seven hours that the battalion was resting, they tortured the men by prolonged drills as punishment. Many became ill, but Major Fisher of the medical corps said to them: "As long as you can stand on your feet I'll pay no attention to you."

One day a man of the 7th Company, who was in great pain and whom he had just sent away in this manner, took a gun by the barrel and struck him a terrible blow. Dr. Fisher, almost beaten to death, fell fainting and had to be sent to the hospital. The man was arrested and put in prison, where he hung himself during the night. This accident made the officers a little more careful during the next few days.

On December 21st, we returned to the trenches. We had not been relieved when our turn came after the explosion of the mine, so the 3rd Battalion spent Christmas in the

front line trenches. Christmas Eve, Lindwurm sent the men great quantities of wine and rum. There was at least one bottle for every four men. The result of this generosity could not be in doubt; everybody was drunk and if the French had attacked us then they would have captured the whole battalion without firing a shot. New Year's Day was celebrated in the same way in the trenches only they gave out less alcohol in order to avoid the general drunkenness of Christmas Eve.

When we reached our resting place behind the lines on January 4th lectures were given every day for the men on the soldier's duties, still on account of their disobedience on December 4th. The men had to repeat and memorize the twenty-nine rules of war.

The first article is as follows: "I swear before God Almighty, to be faithful to His Majesty Wilhelm II, King of Prussia, Emperor of Germany, never to desert him, to help him and defend him under all circumstances on land and sea, in peace and in war."

On January 15th, 1916, after another sojourn in the front line we were relieved by the 81st Reserve Regiment of the 18th Corps, and sent before Verdun to take part in the Crown Prince's big attack on this fortress. It was there that I was severely wounded at the beginning of the attack.

XXVIII

VERDUN—FRANKFORT—MAYENCE

From January 16th to February 18th, 1916, we rested at Savigny without once going into the trenches. Without a doubt they wanted us to recover our strength for the big drive against Verdun.

On February 18th we left for Thionville, where we spent the night in barracks located near the station. The nineteenth we were at Stenay, where the Crown Prince had his headquarters, then at Réville, where we rested for several hours. During the night we went into the trenches between Brabant and Beaumont. We were placed between the 35th and 118th regiments of the 56th Division.

On February 21st, 1916, toward five o'clock in the morning a heavy artillery fire began such as we had never heard before, even in

Champagne. From the whizzing of the shells we could tell at once that only the heavy pieces were being fired.

At nine o'clock we were ordered to attack and take the fort of Bras on our right. The French put up a strong resistance and we advanced very slowly. The battle of Champagne had certainly been terrible, but it was nothing compared to what was going on here in the thick of the fighting. One felt that the methods used were of such magnitude that it was beyond the power of the imagination to grasp it. The fire of the heavy German artillery was something terrific; the sensation was as though every conceivable kind of engine of war had been gathered together. We were engaged in a huge battle in which one regiment was nothing at all. It was no longer a question of giving and obeying orders (I am speaking of what concerns a battalion); that was impossible. We ran forward, for to retreat was just as dangerous as to advance. We were between two fires: the German artillery firing before us and the French on the site

which we had just left. At last we arrived at the first French trench. We thought we could take it easily, but we were wrong, for the few soldiers who were holding it fought desperately. In several places the wounded kept on fighting furiously before they fell under our blows. Not a section surrendered; such were the orders given the small detachments and even isolated individuals. At last we were in possession of the trench, which had been completely ruined by the heavy German artillery. It was a frightful chaos of human wreckage. One heard groans which seemed to rise from the very bowels of the earth—the cries of the unfortunates buried alive in their shelters. We were forced to instal ourselves in these positions and lie down to escape the fire of the French artillery. On the twenty-second we had to search through the packs of the dead for food. We were not exactly hungry but we did not know what to do, and we ate mechanically.

The following day, the twenty-third, Lindwurm ordered me to go to the rear with a sol-

dier to report to the head of the regiment that the battalion had been entirely broken up and that many soldiers belonging to other regiments were mixed in with us.

We left the trenches. The shells were bursting everywhere. We had not gone quite sixty metres behind the line when suddenly I saw my companion fighting like mad while I felt a blow on my right side. I fell—I remembered afterwards—screaming "Help" like a fool. Then I fainted, and I have never learned how long I remained unconscious.

When I opened my eyes I was in a bed in the field-hospital at Stenay. It was February 26th. The orderly told me that I had been brought to the hospital during the night of the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth.

I had a wound in my right side. At my request the head surgeon promised me to do his best to send me to the hospital at Frankfort-on-Main, the headquarters of the 18th Army Corps. He kept his promise.

The twenty-eighth I was sent away by automobile to Longuyon and was taken at once

to Frankfort in a Red Cross train, a wonderful hospital on wheels, very comfortable, and well organized. There was in my compartment a French lieutenant and an Arabian officer, both wounded at Verdun. The doctor gave each of us an injection of morphine and we fell asleep.

I woke up in the hospital at Frankfort, installed in a comfortable room together with the French lieutenant.

I was extremely well taken care of by the doctors. Concerning the ladies of the German Red Cross, I wish to say that they make life very hard for the English and the Germans but pet and spoil the French like little children. I had the proof of this at Frankfort. The lady who looked after the French officer and myself was the wife of Dr. S——, who was at the front. She gave the lieutenant absolutely everything he wanted, even what the doctor forbade. To me she refused almost everything. As she spoke a little French she would come when her patient was not asleep to chat with him. The Frenchman, who had

noticed that she refused me everything, told me that he would ask her for whatever I needed as if it were for himself. As a result all my desires were gratified without her knowing it. She did not know that I spoke French, and did not bother about what she said to her lieutenant in front of me. She asked him questions about Parisian life, especially about the women. "Don't you miss your sweethearts? It must be very sad for a young man like you to be separated from his little friend," etc., she would say simperingly. I who heard all this and saw her little intrigue enjoyed myself immensely where I lay and made a great effort not to laugh on account of my wound. Sometimes when she got too tender the French officer politely begged her to let him sleep a while, because he felt tired.

As soon as she left the room we laughed so hard that we forgot our sorrows.

One day while we were dozing she came in softly. I made believe I was sound asleep but watched her out of the corner of my eye. She gazed lovingly on the slumbering

French officer and then bending over him she kissed him on the forehead.

On March 20th I had the joy of kissing my mother. Our hospital nurse, Mme. S——, having discovered that I understood French had me removed to another section, where I was taken care of by an orderly. I stayed at the hospital till June 26th. I had a fifteen-day furlough, which I planned to spend at Fulda with my mother. I was not entirely well, for my mother was opposed to a dangerous operation which the doctor wished to make and which he told me would either completely cure me or prove fatal.

During my fifteen days of convalescence I was able to see the suffering of the civilian population of Germany.

On July 10th I reported at Mayence where I found our battalion of young recruits whom I drilled for about twenty days.

At last on August 1st I rejoined my battalion at the front which was not far from Verdun, between Neuvilly and Aubréville. Lindwurm, Rickert and Loffelhardt were still

there. All the other officers were dead, wounded or missing. They were all sad for the big drive against Verdun had failed and our position was anything but agreeable. Loffelhardt and I were thoroughly disgusted with this war in which, however, we had done our duty and risked our lives so often for more than two years.

On October 20th my wound which had not healed well gave me so much pain that I went to the hospital at Valenciennes whither my battalion had returned. I was sent back a second time to the hospital at Frankfort where they dismissed me in two days telling me that I would not have to return to the front. On the twenty-eighth I received my ticket at Hanau for Ober Jersdal in the north of Schleswig on the Danish border.

XXIX

AT THE DANISH BORDER

I was enrolled at Ober Jersdal in an auxiliary corps assigned to the duty of building defences on the Danish frontier. Captain Kopp, my chief, gave me permission to live in the town.

In crossing Germany I was able to notice the many precautions taken to prevent espionage and indiscretions. Travelling officers had to remove their epaulets so that no one would know to what regiment they belonged or where they had come from.

I went on duty with my new battalion on November 10th. Almost all the soldiers were war cripples.

We had to dig trenches from Hadersleben to Tondern in case of an English attack by way of Denmark. Our sector extended from Nieder Jersdal to Aokaer and Skovby where

all cultivation had been destroyed. Huge tunnels had been excavated, regular catacombs and deep concrete trenches fortified by hidden cannon and machine guns. At Skovby I counted in a small space six of the heaviest guns and twenty-four machine guns placed in concrete shelters. At Nieder Jersdal a family were forced to leave their house so that the basement might be mined. A barrier of wires heavily charged with electricity was stretched from Nieder Jersdal to Ober Jersdal. The source of the current was underground. Countless wagons were bringing the materials necessary for the fortifications to Flensbourg.

All the inhabitants of this country with whom I had occasion to speak talked Danish and considered themselves Danish. They did not like to speak German. . . .

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(Here end Feldwebel C——'s Memoirs)