Behind *the* Scenes *at* Camp

By EDWIN A. GOEWEY

***Drawings by* C. LE ROY BALDRIDGE, Staff War Artist**

Waiting to try out the "tin hats" on a practice hike

WAR never was and never will be anything better than General Sherman said it was; and the Germans and their allies, following the dictates of their diabolical kultur, have demonstrated that it can be made even more terrible.

But, and 'tis most fortunate that it is so, there is a lighter side to the war game, a side which is both human and humane, and one in which good fellowship and temporary gaiety camouflage that which is stern and terrible. And this brighter and sunnier side is to be found principally in the training camps and cantonments throughout the United States, where the conscripted masses of young manhood, drawn from all of life's devious walks, are molded into the splendid American soldier.

It has been the custom, ever since the first politician of this country took the stump, to refer, when speaking of the commingling of any considerable body of the resident population, to the "melting-pot" and its blending of ideas, ideals and customs, ultimately resulting in the betterment of all concerned. However, the poor old "melting-pot" has been greatly overworked, and candor compels the statement that in most instances the amalgamation was anything but the success the spellbinders would have us believe.

But the sentimental writers, in dilating upon the work done at the training camps, have pulled the ancient "melting-pot" from the shelf, brushed

The jazz musician is the cheer-up leader of every company.

Cleaning his rifle for inspection— the necessary, but tedious, task which is never ended.

Vaudeville entertainers of a kind are found even among the forces of the camp cook.

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The smart recruit, fresh from home, and the fighting doughboy, after a few weeks in camp.

away the dust and cobwebs and endeavored to make it again do duty in the circumstances. Its use, however, as applied to those places in which our young men are trained and fitted for service upon the European battle-fields is a misnomer.

To be sure the men assembled there are from all walks, they represent by birth and descent practically every race upon the globe, and, in education, culture, manners and intelligence, differ as greatly as the colors of Joseph's coat. But the greatest contrast between them and any other great assemblage of persons upon these shores is that they have come together for a common purpose and with the intention of reaching a physical and mental form to accomplish that purpose in the shortest possible space of time. There is no debate or divergence of views concerning what must be done; only a common desire to smooth away the rough edges and strengthen the parts that the completed product may be a great, splendidly adjusted and easily operated machine.

If similes must be used, let us say that the training camps represent a magnificent union of effort; a splendid consolidation of action.

A most important question is, how is this striking and imposing military product turned out? By strict discipline, compliance with hard and fast rules, obedience to and respect for authority? Yes, but these things do not constitute all of the training. The American camp is no Prussian "hog drive," in which men are treated with less consideration than animals, and in which all privates are taught that individuality and initiative must be subordinated to inflexible discipline.

The American warrior is brought to a wonderfully high degree of efficiency because, while made to comprehend that discipline and respect for authority are absolutely necessary, he is encouraged constantly to respect his individual manhood, and made to understand that his officers are his best friends, not driving him willy nilly, but working with and for him.

The writer has studied conditions surrounding the American soldier in this country ever since those memorable days in 1917 when he listened to the President declare that the time had arrived when the United States must enter the lists on the sides of the Entente Allies that civilization might be preserved; and watched the pacifists, fighting in the last ditch to further protect those who had sent the Lusitania to the ocean's bottom and outraged and murdered the helpless of a great part of Europe, beaten down one by one by the loyalists. He has

The irrepressible army storyteller who "served through that Mexican campaign."

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mingled with the men in the camps and cantonments on many and frequent occasions and speaks by the book in chronicling conditions there.

Every camp has its corps of fine, humane officers, its hard work, its humorous incidents and its good stories, But, for the purpose of illustrating the point that the men in the ranks are most quickly rounded into the desired form through the intelligent direction and advice and obvious interest in their well-being upon the part of their superiors, permit us to go back to the days, not long after war upon Germany was declared by this country, and to one of the first training establishments set up, Camp Mills, on the famous Hempstead plains, a stone's throw from the quaint little town of Mineola, Long Island, and immediately adjacent to one of the nation's premier aviation fields. Here was assembled the "Rainbow Division," consisting principally of National Guard regiments from all parts of the country, and many of which had seen service on the Mexican frontier.

The camp was laid out over a great stretch of level territory which previously had been used as pasture and farm lands and, in the early days, boasted of but few covered buildings or recreation resorts. One of the first structures to be erected, however, was a Y. M. C. A. "hut," and while the carpenters still were busy nailing it together, and the early contingents of khaki-clad youths were marching in and pitching their tents, the secretaries went in search of suitable ground upon which to lay out a few baseball diamonds and a football gridiron or two for the men.

As the secretaries were making their way over the greensward they espied, coming toward them, a tall, rather lean, soldierly appearing man in khaki, the insignia upon whose collar indicated that he was a regimental chaplain. The clergyman was the Rev. Francis P. Duffy, of the former "Fighting Sixty-ninth" Regiment of New York, a veteran of the Spanish-American War and the Mexican campaign and a recognized promoter of outdoor amateur sports. The priest and the secretaries knew each other well, and after greetings they joined forces and labored shoulder to shoulder until the men left for the other side. Because of their efforts this camp became a real athletic center, and not only were the men given the play and exercise they craved, but through the labors of this "sport committee," uniforms and paraphernalia were obtained and match games arranged with teams from rival camps. And every action of the priest and the Red Triangle representatives was backed by the camp's officers.

Camp Upton, another mighty Eastern cantonment, embracing seventeen square miles of territory, and arranged to accommodate more than 45,000 men, has been a picturesque as well as a busy place since established. This camp, located "a thousand miles from nowhere," was sadly in need of a first-class restaurant for its officers. Mrs. William K. Vanderbilt remedied the defect by erecting, a splendid "hostess house," with a perfectly appointed cafèteria and a reception and rest room, the size and furnishings of which rivaled those of the finest country home. The opening of the cafèteria was attended with considerable ceremony, but on the second day its doors were thrown wide for "regular business." When the time for the noon meal arrived there was a long line of officers of many grades, trays in hand, walking along the immense serving counter and helping themselves.

While thus engaged Major-General J. Franklin Bell, commander of the canton-

ment, and some of his aides entered. Instantly those at the counter began to make way for their chief and two white-clad men who had been clearing away hastened forward to wait upon him.

"No, boys, that will never do," said the General with a smile and a wave of his hand. "Go right back to your places. This is a real case of first come, first served, and everyone must help himself."

And the commander, after insisting that his aides take places in line ahead of him, picked up a tray, knife, fork and spoons, edged along until able to select his food, and then made his way to a table.

But, if anyone cares to encounter the very essence of democracy and good fellowship, he should visit the $30,000 home for convalescent soldiers built by the Red Cross at Upton, and note the hundreds of men of every creed, race and color there, playing games, singing and watching the entertainments, without the slightest evidence of past prejudices. In the sun parlor the writer noted three Americans, one Chinese and two negroes, all more or less bandaged, playing pool at the same table and laughing over every missed shot like a lot of school boys.