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A N A R M I S T I C E K N I G H T I N P A R I S

A BUCK O'DEE Story



They said they'd back me to their last yell and thrift stamp. The best people in town was at the station to cheer me off to war.

WHEN I come back from France, a dough-boy private, the flags had been taken in and the cheers was throttled down to a polite yawn whenever the Big Brawl was mentioned. But I didn't mind—much.

NOW I respectfully present my memoirs, and although I agree with General Sherman as to war in general, I guarantee that these will be wrote up in elegant language, containin' nothin' that the most puritanical lumber-jack can't read aloud to a band o' timber wolves.

TRAVELIN' from Blancfort to Huitchateau by way o' Paris is just like doin' a prowl from Boston to New York by way o' Cedar Rapids, Ia.

But I ain't the first bird with army travel orders that gathered honey by wreckin' a bee line. Any A. E. F. tourist which didn't make the ou-la-la detour to gay Paree whether he belonged there or not was overlookin' a fat chance to hover twixt heaven and hoosegow—and have some story to tell his grandchildren when grandma is out o' the room.

Well, I'll tell the world and all its radio ear muffs that I saw Paree!

But let me get back to where I was before I started to tell you. We was in the defensive sector up in the Vosges, and the major general of the Curly Wolf Division proclaims that even if we are on the defensive we're goin' to be as oh-ffensive as possible; so everybody started out with a chip on his shoulder to get a rise out o' Heinie. I'll say we did!

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*While Tony continues to give the drum
a Salvation Army massage I sounds off
a la town crier*

One night a raidin' party started out with a bag o' them chips in the form of hand grenades on our shoulders, and we had no sooner rounded the moon-lit corner o' Dead Man's Hole when all them German typewriters started duplicatin' messages o' hell on the black carbon o' night. What was left of us clumb back to our lines, draggin' and carryin' them as was too done up to crawl. My made-in-Germany memento was a nip in the shoulder, and after amblin' to the dressin' station I reported to the company. It wasn't nothin' serious—just the sort o' scratch to inspire a born iodine painter.

Two days later my skipper gets an order from regimental H. Q. to detail one non-com to report to Corps Gas School at Blancfort. The captain then sends for Corp'ral O'Dee and tells me he's decided that as a trench raider I'm a great gas meter inspector. And to the old Odor Academy I goes.

One month at Blancfort nearly made a mess out o' me. I lost my corp'ral's stripes and my reputation as a pillar o' decorum and most everything but my appetite. The last day o' the school we graduated as gas experts with appropriate speeches and gaspipe selections by the Phosgene Quartette. Then we started out to celebrate, and by nightfall the village of Blancfort looked like a minin' town on paynight.

A doughboy sergeant named Tony Gazzolo, who come of a old New England family, and myself, we proceeded to rout out the old town crier and borrow his drum for a consideration o' one franc, three centimes and half a loaf of American pale punk.

Tony bruises the drum up and down the Rue de la Boushwaz, and as its after noof p.m., and all the natives are on the kwee wee for hot news from the front, they pour out o' their domiciles, hopin' it's the long expected bulletin of "gair finnay." Well, these here villagers make a wooden shoe circle around Tony and me, and while Tony continues to give the drum a Salvation Army massage, I sounds off a la town crier, somethin' like this:

"Extree! Swiss navy sinks Kosher submarine division off Five Points, New York. Extree speshul! Russian spy poisons Kaiser while disguised as dachshund in royal liverwurst. Double Extree! Shipyard workers strike for more pay and poached marshmallows with their afternoon tea!"

Finally the Military Police get within earshot, and the upshot of it is that poor Gazzolo is pinched and rapped for a drumhead court martial. As for me, I had my travel orders back to the old regiment in my pocket, and when them Millinery Pests with red hatbands put in appearance it's my cue to *travel*.

There's a special car leavin' for Huitchateau, our division headquar-

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ters, in the mornin'. But I don't wait for such slow, official accommodations. With the M. P.'s still on my trail, I hops a midnight freight on the main line, and by daylight I'm rollin' in the direction of Orleans, and from a friendly frog brakeman I learn that direct connections can be had from there to the place of all places — PAREE!

MAYBE my heart didn't go pit-pat-mike when I heard that magical *nomme de bliss*. Paris, the city of my dreams. Why, I could remember back to my kid days, when I indulged in burlesque shows and other innocent diversions, and I always fished a thrill when the blonde soubrette stepped out in front of the lovely demi-tessies and gurgles:

"Oh, girls! So thi-s-s is Par-r-ris-s!"

And now I was really on my way to the burg which means to Romance what Washington, D. C., means to rumors!

At Orleans I come out of my place of hidin'. Early next mornin' I was on my way to Paris on a fast train. Maybe a little crap game I got into with some Yank railway men in the yards at Orleans had somethin' to do with my luck. I took them steam-kettle aviators down for about everything they had except maybe their license to toot a peanut roaster whistle. When their kale was gone they offered me free transportation to anywhere. And I shall always have tender feelin's for the engineer who let me ride to Paris in the tender of his engine. I was disguised as a reel of fire hose, so the inspectors failed to spot me whenever they searched the locomotive's iron lunch box.

To make a long story snappy, I got to Paris. And thereby hangs a parlor tale.

There's a motto they used to print on all-day suckers that great minds runs in the same channels. Well, Paris looked like a national convention o' the great minds of the A. E. F. Everybody from a jigadier brindle to a refined mule skinner shared the notion that if they had travel orders to move from one pin-point on the map to another, they could detour by way of Paris and get away with it. Lots of 'em did. Others didn't, on account of meetin' M. P.'s and other jail fellows well met.

Some reception was what I got when I hit the capital of la belle France. Bands playin' on nearly every corner. Trumpeters soundin' off in the balconies. Cannons firin' salutes. Fireworks sprayin' the Boche-cleared horizon night and day. Airplanes divin' and cuttin' French pastry designs with smoke!

The population was mad, clean *mad* with joy. They was holdin' street dances and singin' "La Marshallay" and a new American hymn the gobs had taught 'em, "We Won't Lope Home Till Mornin'." As for the allied armies, officers and men, they was gettin' soused by the numbers.

As I said, it was some reception for a lonely, busted corp'ral of doughboys from Skaggerack, N. J., to have handed him on the occasion of his first visit to Paris. But, of course, this here royal welcome wasn't *entirely* in my honor; the fact that the Jerries had just signed an armistice with the allies, and all hostile firin' had ceased on the western front had somethin' to do with the excitement. Of this my native modesty has me convinced. Anyhow, it was the wildest celebration which ever shook a live town to the scuppers of its floatin' debt.

At last the world was safe for democrats! Civ'lization was no longer on the anxious seat. But that didn't rid one Private Buck O'Dee of anxiety when I thought o' them Paris M. P.'s.

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A fellow O. D. hobo in the switchyards at Orleans had gave me the low-down on the eight-minute eggs with red baby-ribbon halos on their stetsons.

"Them Paris M. P.'s is *hard* what I mean," says this box car bombardier. "If they pick you up you're a gone goslin'. Gettin' shot at sunrise is a light mornin' appetizer compared with the strafe-stuff they give you in the Paris clink."

SO while the native population is festive and the allied armies succeeds in gettin' thrown out o' the best places, there's one stranger in town who watches his step and is very wary goin' down the Boul-ward des Capucines, keepin' his glims peeled for anybody which might want to snoop into his travel orders and credentials. Why, I'm feelin' almost as guilty as a profiteer!

Along about the Boul' des Italiens I am witness to a scene which proved beyond all doubt how grateful is the Parisiennes to their rescuers from across the seas. A bevy of mad'moisselles is busy kissin' all and sundry Americans which pass that way. They seems to be particular ravenous toward Y. M. C. A. secretaries, who they take for officers o' shock troops. Mad'moisselles to the right o' them, midinettes to the left o' them—theirs not to wonder "Y."

And while I'm figurin' some way to get myself exposed to that barrage of carmine pencilled smacks, I bump right into a stranger, and from the way he doesn't budge I know he's built solid and is, in fact, a crowd by himself. At least I thought he was a stranger. But one more look, and I lose my appetite for kissin' games along with my breath.

I know this big bozo. I know him all the way from Skaggerack, N. J. Mike Burleigh and me was raised together in our home town, but instead of growin' up like playmates and chums, we've been heavin' rocks and ribaldry at each other ever since we was knee high to game cocks. Mike belonged to the Old Quarry gang, which is noted for singin' folk songs and weavin' daisy chains and cripplin' coppers in its territory west o' the tracks. I am a member o' the Sweeney Social and Athletic Club, named after its patron and benefactor, One-Eye Sweeney. Our gang is very famous for its annual Maypole dance and Ibsen lectures, which generally winds up in a cadenza of busted glass, pistol shots and ambulance gongs.

Well, I ain't laid eyes or a empty bottle on Mike Burleigh since the World War pulled us apart. The last time I had took issue with him was at a ball game, when it was my distasteful duty to swing on him with a Babe Ruth potato masher. I hit Mike square in the outfield, and then he sort of pulled himself together and chased me off the zone of battle, and I didn't stop runnin' until I was six kilos beyond my little gray home in the west.

THAT was the *last* time we had exchanged greetin's, and, oh, the surprise to jar into Mike Burleigh here in Paris. You'll get some idea o' my pulse register when I add that Mike was wearin' a ring-round-a-rosy hatband, a .45 gat, a sawed-off baseball bat and a big brassier on his arm which bore the cordial insignia, "M. P."

I was overcome. I was too jammed full for words.

Mike was on duty. His bulldog chin set square between his ears in a military manner. For a moment I thought the stuff was off—that he'd noticed my whereabouts when I dashed against him. But no, he kept frownin' upon the osculatory massacre.

My well-bred knuckles itched to sock him where he wasn't lookin'. Oh, what

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a chance! But all of a sudden somethin' inside o' me held me back. I don't know just what it was. But takin' my cue from my hammer heart, I beat it far away from that rue de la rudeness.

It was a narrow squeak for me, and I almost felt like celebratin'. Cries of "Vive la Francais" and "veevee la Mareek" and other success slogans filled the air. The crowds and accents was thickenin' wherever I turned. It was movin' day on the Place de la Concorde; allied soldiers and gobs was haulin' captured German cannon around, while flocks o' mad'moiselles was perched on the caissons. Around here the M. P.'s was not in evidence, except in the way of a grease spot or two. An army of assorted Australians, Alpine chausseurs, Welsh gunners and Kansas seafarin' men was doin' a lock-step around the square, but as I was never partial to jail-yard pastimes, I gold-bricked the detail and slunk to a side street.

Here in a little quiet, my hands went in my pockets to see if I'd been frisked for the seventy-five francs I rolled from the railway engineers, and great was my joy to discover that even the pick-pockets had declared a holiday. Hands in my pockets, head bowed down with financial respons'bility, thus I was when a large figure in uniform flashed past me on the narrow walk, and then in a high-pitched voice of authority he sounds off:

"Halt! Young man, c'm here."

I about-faced. My paws was still in my pockets when I seen who had addressed me so abrupt. It was only a major general.

Blinkin' and stutterin', I tried the right-hand salute, but it was only a weak imitation o' policin' the eye for Pittsburgh clinkers. In the meantime, before I could be sentenced to be hung or shot, I seized the chance of givin' him the quick up-and-over. He was the high-rankin'est major general I ever laid eyes on. He had more medals than silhouette targets had patches. I guess he wore every decoration from Congressional Medal to Belgian police-dog tag. His chest glittered in the low, descendin' sun like a tin peddler's van. He had hero wrote all over him in metal polish.

My respect for him went into high when I lamped three wound stripes on his left wing. A major general with wound stripes! Why, I wouldn't of been more surprised the next minute to see a stripeless zebra. Or a lazy flea.

"Young man, my—er—orders to you were to ap-p-proach."

My approach was sliced, through sheer nervousness. When I was within six paces o' the general and a general sweat, I raised my hand to chop off a real Curly Wolf Division salute. The next thing I knew I was *shakin' hands* with him!

"Young fellah, I'm glad to know you. Glad to shee you in shuch a sh-sh-shober condition on the day o' the arm-tish."

It was the general who had grabbed my fin and now he kept shakin' my arm until I was afraid it would shake loose. Standin' so close to the major general, somethin' told me that he was what in polite social parlance is known as partly plastered. Or what mah jongg mandarins would call three sheets in the East Wind.

"You're a shnappy young fellow—I like y-y-your looks," says the high-rankin' rum victim, still pumpin' my arm.

"Yessir," I responds, "yessir, yessir."

I'm just runnin' over with the old yes-syrup, when the general put his arm around me, the one with the casualty coupons on it, and leads me away to the haunts of festivity, and finally we reaches the Place de l' Opera. We're really chummy by this time. The major general is tellin' me that we are

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all pals together, now that the war is finney, and that there's no more rank, only that some are ranker than others—and he breaks off his discourse to bawl the pin-feathers off a Q. M. second-louie which fails to salute him. Far be it from me to gloat, but from the look in that shave-tail's eye, I knew that he got my gloat.

We are now in the full swing o' things. Arm in arm, the major general and me hit the grand promenade, and woe to the Yank captain, major, or even colonel which failed to salute him—I mean us—on that alley of free and unlimited salutations. If anybody was surprised to see a general and a demoted corp'ral weavin' along arm in arm, they didn't show it, because anything was likely to happen that dizzy day.

At the Boul' des Capucins and the Boul' Montmartre we was prevented from crossin' the street by a brown-painted officer's limousine. There was a major general's flag flutterin' at the bowsprit, and on the rear seat was a loot'nant colonel and two majors of the staff. They was takin' it easy and enjoyin' the sights o' Paris en fete, and therefore they was quite overdue in payin' their respects to a major general standin' on the curb and takin' their mud on his elegant aviator's boots.

For a minute my general let out a low growl which failed to disturb the staff style show, but pretty soon he busts loose with a roar like a peace conference in a lion's den, and they all jump to attention as if kissed by a trolley wire.

"Don't you rec-nize me, a maizher-gen'ral o' the A. E. F.?" says my glitterin' chief. "Whazza-matter with your arms? Come to attensh'n. Here, chauffeur, hold that car. You offishers get out. I wanta take your names. You need a lesh-shun in mil'tary c-c-court'sy."

Quakin' in their boots, the staff officers piled out o' the staffmobile and lined up at the curb. They was now salutin' with both hands and without the numbers. My major general took their names and org'nizations, and told 'em that they was makin' a bad impression on his young friend here, meanin' *me!*

From their pained expressions these staffies looked like they had aides de cramps, as they tried to offer their apologies. But the general didn't wait for 'em to grovel in the rich Paris mud. Grabbin' me by the collar, he lifts me bodily into the big car, jumps into it himself, slams the gate and tells the army chauffeur: "Go ahead!"

The machine glides away, leavin' those staff officers wonderin' just what had happened. The chauffeur didn't ask no questions of us, even if the car did belong to some other general. My hunch was that these staff officers had been joy-ridin' without permission and they had no legitimate squawk when they was outranked and outed by a full major general.

"Well, it seemed like a doughboy's dream. Me doin' Paris on the cushions of a staff car! If my buddies in B company could only see me now. If my captain and my top-kicker could only snap a bull's-eye view of their gas expert lollin' in a major general's limousine. And then I thought of Mike Burleigh, my sworn enemy from the old home town and now a hard-workin' M. P. If he could only singe his eyebrows lookin' at this pageant o' promotion!

While my major general was acceptin' the salutes o' the allied armies, he got sort o' confidential with me. In fact, he let me in on a bunch o' secrets that buck privates ain't supposed to know until they read about 'em in letters from the home folks six months afterward. My major general had just

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come back from Chaumont, he said, where he got decorated by General Pershing. Before that he'd paid a social call at British grand headquarters, where the king had pinned on him the Order o' the Gallus—or the Garter—I forget which. The King of Italy had also remembered him very kindly with the clasp of the Knights of Ravioli, or somethin' equally valuable.

No wonder my major general was celebratin'! He took a kind interest in my welfare, and when I told him I was a fightin' fool from the Curly Wolf Division and a graduate o' Gashouse University, his delight was unboundless, and he says to me, he says, that I must stay in Paris as his guest for a week or two, and that he'll see if he can't get me transferred here as his pers'nal orderly.

A general's orderly in Paris! I can't express how disorderly my thoughts was just then.

While I was cuddled up in wild ideas and soft cushions, our car was stopped by a traffic snarl o' humans and machines, mostly Q. M. camions full of yellin' Yanks and poilus.

"Vive l' Amerique! Vive le general!"

Somethin' warm and muscular grabbed me around the neck. I recognized it as the arm of a Parisian grisette. She had just clumb aboard the general's car to show her love and appreciation for Uncle Sam's boys. At the same time there was a resoundin' smack, and I saw that another frilly Fifi had laid holt of my major general, and was now orientin' his whiskers for osculatory attack.

It was certainly ladies' day on the main drag. At least a dozen fair damozels swarmed over that boulevard boat and they took turns salutin' the general in their warm, emotional way, while I came in for seconds and salvage smacks which flew like sparks off a flywheel.

When the motor parade finally started up again, we found that our car had been annexed by two permanent passengers o' the female persuasion. One of 'em was a straw-colored sheba which went by the name o' Cloquette. The other little playmate was a roguish little front cover effect from La Vie Parisienne, and if her name wasn't Flo-Flo it ought to of been, so I dubbed her that from the jump. Flo-Flo was ready to take me in for better or for worse, and I wished the boys could see me *now*—as I held both her little hands in mine where I could keep my eyes on 'em, at the same time keepin' a firm anchor on my roll of beaucoup francs.

La, la! So *this* was Paree!

My major general suggested a light supper with champagne for a chaser at Nero's, and then a box party at the Folies Bergere. I knew better than to contradict a major general when he's layin' out a campaign of operations. Flo-Flo and Cloquette were ready for 'most anything exceptin' murder and stereopticon Chautauqua lectures, so we wouldn't have no difficulty inducin' them to accompany us to Nero's and shovel in hummin' birds' eyebrows and drink a few quarts o' liquid opals and pearls.

So leavin' our chauffeur at the curb, with instructions to stay parked there or be put in irons, we made our grand, spectacular entrance in Nero's world-famous eatin' house.

"Gangway for a major general and his orderly," I sounded off to the uniformed footmen at the gold and marble entrance.

Once inside the gaudy joint, I managed to broadcast an "Attention" which made itself heard above the orchestra, buzzin' o' conversation and drum-fire o' corks. The next moment my major general made his appearance at the top

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o' the grand staircase, Flo-Flo hangin' on one arm and Cloquette on the other, and his chest reflectin' the lights with his Croix de Guerre, Medaille Militaire, D. S. O., Order o' the Vermicelli, Order o' the Royal Suspenders, Order o' the Belgian Boiled Owls—and every other hero decoration that ever brought joy to the safety pin trust.

My "Attention" was a howlin' success. The way that crazy armistice crowd o' officers o' all nationals leaped to attention is somethin' I can never successfully forget.

"Rest!" I blurts with a top-kicker accent when we take our table. Over a hundred pairs of spurs slides under tablecloths, and the serious business o' allocatin' the wine crop o' France is resumed with renewed vigor.

But the "attention" we got from the Sam Brownes was nothin' to the kind o' attention a flock o' pirate-faced waiters was now givin' us. Flo-Flo and Cloquette was medium hungry. Diggin' themselves in at the appetizer course, they advanced across the menu under a heavy barrage o' girlish chatter, until they had ordered the waiters to bring everything from the kitchen exceptin' the goose grease and skillets. My major general was looking ponderous over his glasses at the wine list. But I wasn't bothered as to the cravin's o' the inner man. Oh, if the boys could only see me—

Then I was forced to smile. A self-important captain of M. P.'s came wingin' down the aisle. Ever since I had picked up with the major general I had been enjoyin' a good laugh on these self-important billy swingers. I was forced to laugh again, for behind the captain there's a big M. P. sergeant, which ain't got the brains to remove his campaign hat before a gentleman and ladies, not to mention officers. What ho, it was shellin' M. P.'s! At least two squads o' red hat-band huskies was now paradin' between the tables, lookin' over everybody with searchin' eyes.

"Donnay moy kat bottay Pommerey see voo play," my major general commanded the head waiter.

Just then somebody tapped him on one of his double-starred shoulders.

It was the captain of Military Police.

"Come along, John Cashmore!" growls the M. P. skipper.

"Why, captain, such insolence—"

"Don't kid us, Cashmore. We've got you pegged. Will you come with us quietly or will we have to get rough with you?"

My major general stood upon his rights and dignity.

"This is an abominable outrage. Captain, leave this restaurant with all your men at once or I'll—"

"It's the old game—you've worked it once too often, Cashmore. We've been on your trail this afternoon, and now we've got a new charge, appropriatin' a government car, to slam against you."

Suddenly my major general's arms was wrenched behind him by two husky soldiers. Something clicked, somethin' rattled. Handcuffs on a general!

Was my eyes framin' up to deceive me? No, Flo-Flo and Cloquette seen exactly what I seen, and they let out a shriek at this outrage of pinchin' a good provider just when he was on the point o' buyin' them the place. And then they began to protest their own innocence of any crime in fluent and frantic Montmartrese, and the general tried to quiet 'em by sayin' he could explain everything.

Well, he had lots to explain. In the first place he wasn't a real major general. I found this out afterward, as well as the fact that he was only a international crook who had took up the profession of impersonatin' American and English officers. His last racket was when in the disguise of a

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Q. M. colonel he had sold a whole park o' motor trucks and row of American warehouses for several hundred thousand francs to a wealthy but trustin' French colonial, who when he went to claim his property found that the near-colonel's signature wasn't worth a buzzard's claw mark. After this flurry in in high finance, Cashmore might of gone into comfortable retirement. But he had the promotion bug the same as everybody else. So he promoted himself to major general in one jump, and on Armistice Day he walks boldly across No Brains Land, his fatal errors consistin' of gettin' slightly lickered, pickin' up with a buck private, stealin' a government car, entertainin' mad'moisselles and sportin' wound stripes.

But while they was fittin' ex-General Cashmore to a nice pair o' blue bracelets, I sort of wondered what *my* fate would be. I was not left to wonder long. A heavy hand grabs my collar and I am lifted almost out o' my field shoes and breeches woollen O. D. 1 pr.

"I'll take care o' *this* one, sergeant."

"All right, Mike. To the cooler wit' im!"

And with that, Mike Burleigh executes handcuffs right and left in snappy fashion, and I found myself launched in the retail hardware business. While I stared at them hard Houdini ruffles now adornin' my wrists, Mike o' the M.P.'s jerks me by the arms and half drags, half shoves me across that noisy café and out into the chilly night.

There was me, the personal prisoner of my sworn enemy from our home town of Skaggerack, N. J., him and me havin' been raised together just like two wildcats.

Mike steered me along the festive rue in silence. Even the mad'moisselles with ticklers sort of drew aside when they lamped that hard-boiled M. P., draggin' his desperate prisoner to the dunjin keep for keeps. I had blithe visions of a hangin' party in the mornin' after a night spent in a damp cell in rheumatism row, down in the lowest gallery o' the catacombs beneath the river Seine. Some prospect for one as was to be personal orderly to a major general.

We switched off the boulevard into a narrow windin' lane. Here the night airplane protection was perfect, no street lamps bein' in sight. It was a lovely place for a murder, I thought, as our footsteps re-echoed from the ancient stones.

All at once Mike stops me with a wrench and grumbles. "Hold out your hands!"

I held 'em forth. Mike's hand went to his hip. He fumbled—I thought it was for his wooden billy. But no, whatever it was went straight to the keyhole of my handcuff lock. Sweet music—a click, and my hands was free.

"Now beat it, kid," is Mike's command, as the iron works hits the pavement. "Mooch yourself out o' here while the coast is clear and the goin' good."

"But Mike, you don't mean—" I gasped.

"Sure thing, I mean it. What the capital H do you think I'm tellin' you to beat it for if I don't mean it?"

"But think o' yourself, Mike. What'll *you* do when you report back without your prisoner?"

"Kid, that's my business. But say, here's a idear. You might sock me on the glim, and then they'll think I put up a fight."

"Put them bangles back on my wrists, Mike. I ain't goin' to get you in wrong with nobody. Take me to jail, Mike, you're a real pal—"

"I ain't been no pal o' yourn, or any bum which belongs to the Sweeney Athletics. But this is Armistice night, and it's the time for the Old Quarry gang and the One-Eye Sweeneys to lay down their arms with the rest of 'em."

"That's the way I feel too, Mike. I

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saw you today on the Boul' des Italiens, and I was tempted to wallop you in the mush. But I didn't have the heart."

"Maybe I didn't see *you*, Buck! I had a mind to pinch you then, only I remembered that, after all, you was from the old home town where we was boys together."

"Good old Skaggerack."

"Beats Paris every time, eh, kid?"

"You said a jugful. Put 'er there, Mike."

And in that dim and dusky Paris street two warriors from Skaggerack, New Jersey, shook hands for the first time.

At that moment a wanderin' Yank bugler somewhere nearby was reachin' the end of his repertory, his closin' number bein' "Taps." We bowed our heads, Mike and me, for our buddies who had gone west.

Then we shook hands again. Mike went his way, to explain how he had lost a prisoner, and I went my way to—well, you got some ideas as to what I would have to explain when I crept back to my old outfit in the Curly Wolf Division.

And that's the real ringside story o' the end 'o the Great Conflict. You see, it wasn't till us two birds from Skaggerack got together that the peace dove could really call "Time!"

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