

Mud on Their Boots, Doughboys Settle Down to Plodding War Like Dads Fought in France

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WITH 3D ARMY, ALSACE-LORRAINE, Oct. 10 (Delayed).—
It rained today.

Chances are it will rain again tomorrow and doughboys won't be able to cross any road without carrying most of it away on their boots.

The romantic mile-chewing war appears to be finished for the present.

GONE ARE the exciting days when the speed-loving G. I.'s raced ahead in tanks, their pennant-like aerials flying in the breeze.

The fighting has settled down to the muddy, plodding business that so irritated their fathers who fought in France.

Victory is close but the fighting is tough.

Sometimes—as in Ft. Driant—they speak of gaining 50 yards with the same exultation they

used in describing the capture of an entire city.

They know now that they may fight through this coming winter. Chill winds, whistling through their tents and bucking against their jeeps, tell them that.

THEY know, too, that the Germans definitely have gained their second wind and are fighting more desperately than they did in the days around St. Lo.

Every day, almost every hour, they kill Germans or get killed.

DESPITE all of this the boys seem curiously unaffected.

Like all soldiers in all wars, they are homesick.

They grumble about the food and cuss the cooks.

And they wish they could flop in a hot bath in Paris.

But they remain completely confident of their ability to sweep to Berlin.

I HAVE asked many of them how they would feel about fighting through the winter. Most of them grinned. Others laughed aloud at the question.

"Hell, we wouldn't like it at all." Then they invariably added:

"We reckon it sure would burn our old man."

They were referring to Lt. Gen. George S. Patton.

SOMETIMES, it seems as if

these top sergeants, lieutenants

and captains are more worried about how Patton is going to feel about the situation than they are over a possible winter campaign.

The explanation seems to be that fighting together since Aug. 1 has welded them into a close team and what Patton feels his 3d army feels, too.

They seem to believe firmly that come mud or hell or high water, if their "old man" stays happy everything is bound to be all right eventually—even if the war isn't over by Christmas.

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