

# SAMMY "MANGERS"

By BOB HOWE, Jr.

THE five-hour pass, signed sealed and delivered, sanctioned, censored and approved, was securely tucked in Sammy Brown's pocket. To be exact, the document permitted him to be absent from Headquarters "for the urpose of visiting the city of — until 6 P. M. "

Headquarters to Sammy meant prison, and he considered it easier for President Wilson to tour the world or the Kaiser to taxi through the Alps, than for him to be absent for five whole hours. Sammy was off Headquarters and all Sergeants Major. So he put all this behind him as he left the chateau and passed through the iron gate into the road.

So far as he was concerned the war was over — armistice, indemnities, abdications and all. A Thorneycroft was passing in the right direction, and he swung into the front seat before the Tommy driver had discovered him. He offered Tommy a real American cigarette, although he had a pack of "Ruby Queens" in his pocket. Tommy didn't say much, as he expected Sammy to tell how he got the pass which to him was more to be desired than a commission. After all, was not the Sam Brown belt named after him? And make out he wasn't going to have some eats. The pass read "for the purpose or visiting", but Sammy had long since substituted the word "eating" — in his own mind at least. Not until Tommy used the expression "fed up" did Sammy remember there was a war on. Even then it did not matter, for they were already passing through a busy street and the Grand Plaz with its military police was just ahead.

With a blunt "So long" and "Thanks for the hitch", Sammy alighted in the Square.

For a minute he was bewildered. Not since he left Hoboken, N. J., U. S. A., had he seen just such a sight. People were passing in every direction, civilians too. Little girls with baskets on their arms, boys with funny caps and no stockings, old men with wheel-barrows, WAACS, soldiers, and even automobiles with real live chauffeurs minus O. D. uniforms. He unconsciously did an about face and decided the town was a regular place, and just like New York, which to him was sufficient.

His reveries were rudely interrupted by a sharp voice inquiring whether he had a pass. Did he? He dove into his pocket, and for once a feeling of absolute disregard for the M. P.'s came over him as he exhibited the precious paper, striking a pose quite similar to the statue of Mercury on the Madison Square Garden Tower. The pass evidently satisfied the soldier cop.

And now for the eats. The officers' Mess Sergeant had told him all about the wonderful fried pullets, eggs, a la Benedict, and it was Sammy for Mr. Benedict's place "toot sweet". He chose the busiest of the rues that radiated from the Grand Plaz, and with but one thought in mind disappeared in the crowd.

How strange it seemed to rub elbows with real people again, and to gaze into shop windows, piled high with all kinds of food. He came to a particularly attractive looking shop, but upon close inspection found it to be crowded with canned sardines, cheese, salmon and a miscellaneous assortment of nuts — more camouflage bought Sammy — just like that old woman's store back in Oudezeele, and he passed on in disgust. Next

came an estaminet; then more sardine shops, a few bucheries, and another estaminet. He began to feel dubious, but presently he came to a fancy window full of pretty little bottles with gold labels. Anyway this was different, and, glancing up at a puzzling sign, which read "parfumerie", he entered the shop. A dainty little French girl with ribbons in her slippers appeared, and Sammy immediately thought how much like Mabel's her eyes were.

"What ees it vous please" puzzled him.

After all what did he want? He would not dare take perfumery back to the billet where the boys were, and yet she was so chic — yes chic — that was the word. He must buy something. A small box of face powder at four francs saved the situation, and Sammy bon joured out of the miniature Turkish harem and into the street as gracefully as possible, wondering what he would do with the stuff now that he had it. Anyway, she was some fille. Soon a candy shop hove in sight. Without hesitating he entered with the word "shockolate" on his lips. Another fille greeted him, only this one was not quite so chic and wore too many glass combs in her hair and no ribbons in her slippers. She produced a platter, piled high with silver cubes, which



Sammy examined skeptically. He tasted one, said "No bon", left half a franc on the platter and incidentally the shop. After all, why spoil a good meal with candy.

A boy came down the street loudly yelling, "Extra, paper". Sammy unconsciously asked the lad if the Giants were ahead, and received, "No compre" in reply. He bought the paper, expecting to read of a big murder or an accident on the Brooklyn Bridge. Glancing at the