

THE DIGGER

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He wasn't so good with a rifle, couldn't
throw hand-grenades much,
And when in a fight, though his nerves
was all right,
He got in the other men's way;
But put him before a piano, believe me,
the kid had the touch;
He knew every note that had ever been
wrote—
Oh, Buddy, that soldier could play!
He'd make you feel classical music 'way
down to the tip of your spine,
Your pulses would thrill and the heart
of you fill
With songs and with marches of war,
Or you would be swaying to ragtime
that tingled and bubbled like wine,
Till sudden you'd find that with care
you was blind,
You didn't know why or what for!

He'd find an old battered piano some-
where in a ruined chateau,
With half the strings broke and the key-
board a joke
And both of the pedals napoo;
But if the white keys wasn't present
he'd play on the black ones, and so
He'd pick out an air we could whistle
to, there—
And say, but it cheered us, beaucoup!
For some guys is best in the trenches,
and others is best down at Tours;
But he done his bit with each key that
he hit.
His fingers was magical things
That wove us a spell of enchantment
against all we had to endure
And gave us the heart to go on with
our part,
By tunes from a boxful of strings.

He wasn't much use with a shovel,
though willing and anxious enough;
His hands wasn't made for the ditch-
digger's trade,
But they could dig down in your soul
And bring up your dreams and your
visions to make you forget life was
tough
Forget, for a time, all the muck and
the slime
Of some damned detestable hole.
No matter how weary or sleepless or
worn with the march he might be,
He'd coax from the keys any tune that
you please
If there was a box he could try.
And if I was passing out medals, I'd
slip him the old D.S.C.
The service he gave was to help us to
live
And help us to know how to die!

COMPLIMENTS EXCHANGED.

A smartly-dressed woman was sitting in
an omnibus, when a quiet-looking young
man, in getting in, accidentally trod on
her dress. She talked to him for ten
minutes, and wound up by saying: "A
gentleman would have apologised."
The young man bowed and calmly said:
"A lady would have given me a chance."

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