

WITH THE FIFTH ARMY, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ MINTURNO FRONT, April 18---

~~XX~~ In the Garigliano Valley where Jerry can look right down your throat from his position on the heights and can, if ~~he~~ ^{with his 88s} fancies, snipe ~~at~~ anything that moves, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ the sight of two GIs strolling casually through the ~~XX~~ fields might be expected to call forth profane comment regarding their sanity.

It doesn't, though, and the MPs from their dugouts at the cross-roads and the gunners from their hidden batteries yell greetings or swap banter and wish them well because they are doing a job for everyone up here.

They are the linesmen - these wandering pairs - and they are all over this front, day and night, fixing lines broken by mortar or shell fire or shorted by the treads of tanks.

Some come from regimental or battalion headquarters and some from the signal sections of division or corps. Their work is very simple - just find the break and splice it. It's simple, but hardly monotonous. Some days they are up within sniper or machine gun range of the German lines and sometimes they work through fields the engineers have not yet cleared of mines. They can almost always be reached by mortar or shell fire and frequently are. And then at night there are the infiltrating Jerry patrols who take great amusement in cutting the lines and then waiting in ambush for the repairmen to come along. Hardly a tiresome job.

The linesmen of the ----th Infantry are billeted at rear regimental headquarters about a mile back of the forward outposts. There are about a dozen of them, all members of the regiment's communications company, commanded by Capt. James Browning, who is small and quiet and smart and comes