HISTORY COMPANY "E"
303 ENGINEERS

HISTORY
of
Company "E"

J.P.C. Roth

303d ENGINEERS
of the
78th Division

1917—1919

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ROCHESTER, N. Y.:
JOHN P. SMITH PRINTING COMPANY
1919

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INTRODUCTORY

For the officers, non-commissioned officers and privates of Company "E" this book is published in remembrance of the days spent together in camp, on our tedious, weary hikes through France, our activities in the St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne sectors and our "waiting days" at Les Laumes, France.

That our soldiering days are over is a blessing, a pleasure for us all; our comradeship and our friendship let live on forever; our tasks and trials were not always pleasant but we performed them cheerfully and willingly. We came into the army untrained, unused to the disciplinary ways of a soldier's life, but we have profited by our experiences, or if not, we were not real soldiers; we did what we were asked and bear no malice, no vengeance toward anyone, knowing that all tasks, no matter how disagreeable, were done in a spirit of duty and obedience to our higher commanders; we were victorious; we have a record to be proud of, praised many times by our superior officers; our work was always of the

best, owing to the personal interest taken by all; we should be proud of ourselves and our splendid record, hesitating not to keep on living and striving for the better things in life.

And for this "humble history," may it be said that we have striven to produce a story appealing and interesting to all. We have tried to cover all notable achievements, all interesting happenings and every point of interest to the company as a whole. We all have our own personal reminiscences of certain times and certain happenings. Fit them in the story as you read along; our book will be complete and the writers shall feel that their work is well done.

SGT. JOSEPH P. ROTH,
CORP. ROBERT L. WHEELER.

THE 78TH DIVISION

The 78th or Lightning Division is a National Army Division composed of men from New Jersey, New York and Delaware, with several of the Southern and Western states well represented.

Landed in England May 31st to June 7th, 1918; in France June 1st to June 11th, 1918. Commander: Major General Jas. H. McRae.

AREAS—Behind Hazebrouck, Nielles-lez-Blequin, to July 19th, 1918. Behind Arras, Roellecourt, July 19th to August 20th, 1918. Bourbonne les-Bains, American Zone,August 21st to 31st, 1918. Camp de Meucon, F. A. Brigade, to August 17th, 1918. Semur-en-Auxois (Cote-d'Or) American Zone, November 15th, 1918 to May 13th, 1919.

SECTORS—Limey and Puvenelle sectors, St. Mihiel Front, September 16th to October 4th; Grand Pre, St. Juvin Sector, Argonne Front, October 16th to November 5th.

BATTLES—St. Mihiel Attack, September 12th to September 16th, 1918. Limey sector, St. Mihiel front, September 16th to October

4th. Argonne-Meuse Battle, October 16th to November 9th, 1918.

Losses—Killed, 1,091; Wounded, 5,947; Missing, 360.

Mentioned in General Orders 232, Meuse-Argonne Battle; in General Orders 238, St. Mihiel Attack. Special Commendation from Corps and Army Commander upon persistency and generalship in capturing the stronghold of Grand Pre.

HISTORY OF COMPANY "E"

CHAPTER I

Organization of Company and Training at Camp Dix

When Congress declared on April 7, 1917, that "a state of war existed between the United States and the Imperial German Government," the thought came to each and every one of us, that sometime, somewhere, we would be called upon to do our part in backing up the honor of our beloved nation which had been so unjustly trampled upon. If we could have foreseen that we were eventually to become members of Company E, 303d Engineers, we would not have hesitated for one moment to offer our services immediately to our country, that we might sooner join this splendid organization of good fellows whose pride and spirit were unequalled, who have labored hard and endured much, who have fought in two of the toughest sectors of France, who were in the fight at the finish taking part in the Grand Pre offensive in the Meuse-Argonne Sector, which unlocked the door to Sedan and final Victory and created history for the "78th Lightning Division."

The Selective Service Act was the Government's choice as the most efficient, justifiable means of getting together the army that was to represent America in this great conflict. Cantonments and camp sites were quickly laid out; the wheels of the big war machine were put in motion; barracks were rapidly raised to house this new army and inside of three months the first draft contingents were arriving at these camps to undergo a period of intensive training which would fit them for this new life. To Camp Dix, N. J. goes the honor of training and raising the 78th Division and to Camp Dix, N. J., our memories shall ever draw us to those first days when Company E was in its infancy.

The organization of the company was effected on September 3, 1917, by the assignment and presence of Capt. Robert A. Greenfield, 1st Lt. Theodore S. Babcock, 1st Lt. Merl B. Breese, 2nd Lt. George L. Beaver and 2nd Lt. Manly L. Mackey. Further organization was effected September 8th by the arrival of Sgt. William McGrath and Cpls. William E. Allen and Charlie Connors from the regular army who were sent as instructors to the incoming army of raw recruits. On October 11th, 126 recruits joined the company, being picked men from the Infantry and Artillery branches of the Division, who

had already put in two weeks of training and were familiar with the first rudiments of army life, chief among them being Reveille—the one formation of all which never found a backer or admirer among us. Training was begun then as a company, the men taking up their new duties eagerly and showing no little rivalry for the many non-com. positions open. Recruits came in from time to time, officers were transferred and replaced, many skilled men were transferred to other organizations at other camps which were getting ready to leave for overseas. In short, we were for the first four months a sort of replacement organization. In the late Spring of 1918, we were recruited to full strength, everyone had his place and his own particular duty. We were eagerly waiting for the hour of departure and the time when we would take our places alongside our French comrades and prove to the world that our training and education in this new life was not in vain and would be rewarded by a victory, even though we saw ahead of us sleepless nights, hunger and cold, misery and suffering and perhaps grim death in "No Man's Land." We were out to win and win we must, for Uncle Sam never turns back, no matter how disagreeable the task or how dark and rough the path ahead might be.

Hard work and drill alone were insufficient to produce a well trained soldier. A policy of "all work and no play," would bring forth results that would prove contrary to the end in view, which is absolutely necessary to the success of any army—the high morale of the troops. Our Regiment erected a large Assembly Hall within our camp area, which was completed in December, 1917. Picture shows, vaudeville, boxing bouts, and basketball games were put on from time to time, and everyone had occasion to enjoy his spare moments after training hours. Wednesday and Saturday afternoons, as well as Sundays, were laid aside for rest and recreation. Week-end leaves were granted from Saturday noon until Monday morning and the rush for trains on Saturday noon resembled a swarm of bees seeking their hive in a body. Likewise the incoming trains brought their quota of visitors for those unable to get away, and a busier station was never seen or written about. Everything possible was done to encourage the boys in the way of pleasure and good fellowship. During the Holidays, one-half of the company were permitted to visit their homes at Christmas time and the remaining half at New Years. For many, this was their first visit home since donning the khaki colored uniform and preparations for the

trip were begun two and three days previous. The Supply Sergeant was a busy man, and often a no-good fellow, changing old uniforms for new, issuing shoe strings and the like, and sometimes being unable to was given "special mention" by the disappointed "buck" while rehearsing the story with his Buddy. Of course the poor "buck" wanted to show a splendid front in the old home town, so he was not to blame for a few words of profanity aimed at the Supply Sergeant who acted as though "he had to pay for those d——n clothes himself!" During the early months of 1918, and up until a few weeks prior to departure for overseas, many were given furloughs, so that mostly everyone in the company had an opportunity of visiting home before sailing. There were a few who took matters in their own hands and left camp without permission. Those of us who did so can well remember the occasion and it is not deemed necessary to mention the names here or what punishment was meted out to them upon return.

The winter of 1917-1918 at Camp Dix was very severe, as those of us who were present will testify. Old Jack Frost took hold with a vengeance, but undaunted by his efforts, we continued our training as best we could under the conditions. In real severe weather,

classes were held indoors, problems discussed, miniature bridges erected, drill regulations thrashed out and all theoretical points were thoroughly gone over. Calisthenics were practiced in the squad-rooms and in less severe weather, hikes were taken once a day across the snow-covered, wind-driven fields.

With the parting of Winter and the coming of Spring and fair weather, came a busier training period. The day was not far distant when we would be called upon to start forth on our journey overseas to participate in the "Battle of Nations." To that end every effort was exerted towards putting on the final polish. The company was divided into different engineering sections, as: Reconnaissance, Signal, Bridges, Roads, Demolition, Fortifications, Transportation and Administration, each different section training at its own line of work. Rifle practice was taken up on the camp range in order that we might learn to snipe off the Hun efficiently; bayonet drill was part of our training; trenches were laid out; dugouts constructed; barb wire erected; a complete battlefield mapped out. Gas drills were held, each man passing through the gas chamber; regimental reviews were held weekly and finally a Division review was pulled off. We took part in a regimental practice march and tent pitching,

marching to Columbus, N. J., where camp was made, returning to our barracks at night. This was our first taste of a real hike with light pack and rifle. The day was very pleasant and as we marched along, we sang and joked and soon were perspiring under the rays of the hot sun. A fifteen minute rest was enjoyed each hour and when, about noon, we pulled into a large vacant lot, we were a tired and hungry bunch. Tents were pitched in rows, each company having its own street. A dinner was prepared, which, while not served in courses, was just as fully appreciated and "seconds" were in big demand. The regimental band furnished music after dinner while we basked in the pleasant sunshine, unmindful of what the future held in store for us. The shrill whistle of the "Top" soon brought us back to our sense of military duty and the next ten minutes found us standing by with packs swung in position, waiting for the command of "Forward, march!" The return march was without incident outside of a few remarks from the boys as to the ever-increasing heat, and when camp was reached about 6:00 P. M. that night, all agreed as one, that it "was some day." Relief was sought and obtained under the cool showers and it was a happy, clean family that discussed the day over the supper

table that night. The training of the company progressed rapidly and favorably under the guidance and instruction of the officers, made possible by the good will and spirit of the men, and by May we were ready and willing, each and every one of us, to take a fling at the Hun and his damnable policy of "World Dominion."

On May 6th, 1st Lt. Warner King and 1st class Sgt. Robert G. Swan left camp as members of the Division advance detachment, bound for over there. About the middle of May, orders were received that the Division was soon to sail for overseas service. Everything was hustle and bustle. Extra equipment was packed for shipment. Boxes were piled high in front of the barracks marked with the "A. E. F." stamp and the camp presented the appearance of a huge warehouse. The company office was as busy as the New York Stock Exchange on a record breaking day. Papers and records were piled high, while Sgt. Roth with his able assistant Cpl. Hulse, worked like beavers clearing away the mountain of paper work and when the last letter was written, the final period struck on the typewriter, records passed as O. K. and packed away, there came over the office a stillness hitherto unknown therein—a pleasant state of quietude that

none but those connected therewith appreciated. A few changes were made in the personnel of the company, some being rejected at the final overseas examination for physical unfitness and others transferred in to fill up the vacancies. Those who were rejected resigned themselves to their fate with feelings of deep regret. That they must be left behind and taken from a company of men they had trained with and learned to know as comrades and friends was a bitter disappointment.

The final day of parting arrived. Excitement was at its height. Visitors were excluded from the camp that the last moments might be made less sorrowful for us by the tears of mothers and sweethearts. While each and every one of us desired this last meeting, we realized down in our hearts that it was better not to happen. Letters were written and final good-byes sent through the mail. All day long the prospective trip was discussed by the boys and all seemed happy and anxious to get started. All company records were in good shape, the office closed, packs made up and all was ready for the journey. The officers then present with the company were Capt. Greenfield (Commanding), 1st Lt. Babcock, 1st Lt. Breese, 2nd Lt. Soden and 2nd Lt. Aiken. Sgt. Robert J. Scanlon was

"Top" and thus commanded, we were ready for our trip. We waited through the long hours of the night, having a farewell lunch in the barracks at midnight. At 2:30 A. M. Sunday morning, May 26, 1918, we assembled in front of our barracks. Capt. Greenfield commanded "Squads right" which echoed out through the early morning stillness and the column marched away towards the railroad station, leaving the barracks, which for eight months had sheltered us, solitary and despondent. The train was boarded in due time and at 3:30 A. M., we pulled out of Camp Dix, headed for Jersey City—and France.

CHAPTER II

The Voyage on the Kashmir

We reached Jersey City about 7:00 A. M. that same Sunday morning. On each track within the immense train shed, troop trains were pulling in. Some had already emptied their loads and were making room for others; the station was alive with a mass of khaki colored soldiers laden down with heavy pack and rifle, on business bent. They were in the best of spirits and cheerfully took to this first phase of the trip. Thorough discipline prevailed and as quickly as they were unloaded they marched through the station to the docks where ferries were boarded, transporting them down the Hudson River to the camouflaged transport ships waiting at the Brooklyn dock to ferry these fighters across the Atlantic. No cheering crowds were there to urge us on and bid us Godspeed on our journey. Instead, there were but a few handfuls of early morning travelers who gaped at us inquisitively, wondering perhaps to themselves if we would ever come back alive, and if beneath our mask of cheerfulness there was sorrow in our hearts. But not one of us

sorrowed, not one weakened. We were cognizant of the fact that we were leaving behind homes and mothers and did not know what the future held in store for us. The seed had been sown and we were there to see it produce results, contrary to any opposition or obstacles that might lie in our path.

Like those who went before us, so we too followed after, filing out on the dock where arms were stacked, packs unslung and a rest obtained for nearly an hour, while awaiting the ferry. Across the Hudson lay the city of New York which was the object of our discussion, its towering sky-scrapers stretching themselves up into the placid blue sky,

bearing silent witness of the scenes around them as well as that of the company of Engineers resting behind stacked arms. Up and down the river the boats and barges plied in busy maneuverings; a ferry boat would dump its load of passengers into the City of Jersey to be swallowed up in the traffic, forgetting soon the boys they saw behind the stacked arms as they passed the dock; the whistles of the tugs and ferries shrieked out warningly as they darted in and out; the whole scene was a bedlam of bustle and noise. Our ferry boat arrived. We were packed on, having not much more than elbow room, the whistle was sounded, the engine put in motion and we gradually pulled away from dock, steaming down the Hudson and leaving Jersey City to its fate. We passed Lower New York and Battery Park, around Governors Island where Uncle Sam had a large store of equipment and ammunition as well as the Headquarters of the Eastern Department of the Army; while off in the distance, the Statue of Liberty looming up, seemed to inspire us with a greater love and devotion for the tasks ahead of us. All these scenes were taken in by us with great interest, for to many of us this was our first excursion on the Hudson. We crossed the East River to Brooklyn, docking at the Bush Terminal

where we unloaded, entering the huge warehouse where roll was called to assure that no one was missing.

Outside in its slip, the transport Kashmir, the memory of which to us shall be immortal, was tied fast. Its bunkers were full of coal, its holds laden with food and water in readiness for the coming voyage. She was an old British freighter from the P. & O. line, and judging from her appearance and makeup, was not recently launched. The outside glistened with a new coat of gray paint, and she seemed to hold her head high with pride and deceit at her latest attempt to appear as she did once before, many years ago.

Down in her holds, where once was stored fruits and products on her trips from Britain to East India, were arranged tables for mess and on the ceiling at about eighteen inch spaces were hooks, from which at night plain canvass hammocks were hung, in which we reposed after struggling vainly to master the art of climbing into them, which was as difficult as walking slack wire. On the front, middle and rear well decks were the galleys or "cook shacks" in which the meals were prepared. Mounted on the aft rear deck was a three-inch gun manned by British sailors who stood guard day and night, hoping to view the periscope of some danger seeking

submarine and display their aiming abilities by sending forth the leaden pellets with accuracy and destruction. In the center of the boat off the hurricane decks were the first class staterooms, and above the offices of the ship commander and the lookout. To the front and rear were the second class staterooms and below decks, deep down in the dark, poorly ventilated holds, were the quarters for the bucks and others. Still deeper down, were the big engines which were to pound away incessantly until we were safely landed on foreign soil, their coal-eating boilers being fed by dark skinned natives from East India, who labored unceasingly midst the tremendous heat for the paltry sum of a shilling a day.

About noon we embarked, marching in single file up the narrow gangway, each man being checked off and issued a pink ticket which entitled him to a hammock, a place at the mess table, two meals a day (breakfast at eight, dinner at four), scarcely enough room for himself and equipment and all the pure air he could inhale while on deck. The officers drew first class staterooms; the non-coms. above the grade of sergeant, second class staterooms where three meals a day were served, while the rest of us crushed and jammed down in that deep-down hole where

light was scarce and pure air unknown. Surprise was plainly visible on the faces of all as we crowded in, not a pleasant surprise, but a surprise of disappointment as we tried to figure out where we could put all our equipment, how we could eat and sleep in this crowded space. We decided, for we had to decide, as there was no alternative. Packs were jammed under the tables, hung overhead on the beams and crammed wherever a little available room presented itself. At four that afternoon, we had our initial meal on board the Kashmir. Two men from each table, there being eighteen at a table, climbed three flights of narrow stairs to the "chow shack" where the cooks portioned out enough coffee and slum, supposed to be enough for eighteen, and dashed it into a couple of buckets. Down below the other sixteen men waited for their chow, protesting at the long wait which sometimes occurred due to waiting in the chow line on deck; then when the chow-carriers appeared there was a loud shout, a wild scramble and many an argument because someone probably got one more bean or a little more coffee than his neighbor. Supper over, mess kits were cleaned up, tables mopped and all climbed on deck to get a last view of the surroundings and to get our bearings in our new home. Our quarters

and the coming trip were the main objects of discussion and unanimous ridicule. Darkness soon came and with it the desire to sleep and dream as on deck there was nothing left to do. Down in the hold, all was excitement and there was much amusement as we swung our hammocks for the first time. Many a fall was taken and many a scene took place which can never be duplicated. That first night nor the nights following in the hammocks will never be forgotten. Clothes were not taken off, excepting our shoes, as we had no place to lay them and besides it was cool and musty. Many a one thought of home, pajamas and white sheets, but soon dozed away to sleep, tired out from the long, busy strain of the day.

During the night the Kashmir pulled out from her moorings and anchored off the coast of Long Island where we found ourselves the next morning at Reveille. At 7:30 A. M. we started on our journey. For a while we watched the beautiful scenery along the shore, the lovely bungalows and mansions until eight o'clock beckoned us to lower ourselves into the hold where we indulged in a repast of coffee, oatmeal and a few ancient hard boiled eggs. The 122nd Regiment of Field Artillery made up the larger part of the passengers and Col. Foreman, the Illinois wild-cat, was their

commander and likewise the dominating factor in all doings for the rest of the journey. The engineers did not stand any too well in his favor and many a misfortunate one got bawled out for trifles, a few being put in the brig for trivial offenses, which earned a bad name for him among us, as well as becoming the unknown recipient of many an army curse. Life belts were issued to each man on board and from then on were our constant companions, being used for pillows at night. To appear on deck without one meant a sure spell in the brig.

The days following varied with different happenings and humor. Our third day at sea was perhaps the saddest. The weather was dismal, the ocean rough and the Kashmir dipped and rolled in the turbulent sea. Many of the boys weakened and bestowed upon the fishes a free lunch, ofttimes polluting the decks at "hurry calls." The drizzling rain wet the decks and the stairways and made walking a new art to be learned and perfected. The scenes at mess times especially were funny enough to make Charlie Chaplin envy their originality. Men with a pail of coffee in one hand and a pan of stew or dessert in the other were an object of pity. As the boat rolled the decks slid out from under their feet and they would end up with a sudden bump that

shook their systems from stem to stern; almost miraculously stew was transferred from the pan to the coffee pot; a slip of both feet would bring a pan of cowardly eggs down on the head of the carrier, making him look like one who was just getting an egg shampoo in a Fifth Avenue barber shop. Descending the companionway was the most difficult proceeding of all. The stairs were slippery, the boat rolled, necessitating additional precaution, and down would go stew and all, showering those below with an unwelcome rain of chow, which caused much mirth to the onlookers and extracted curses from the recipients. Some more discreet than others would sit on the stairs, clinging tightly to their buckets and descend step by step as an infant just learning to creep. Those waiting below were oftimes disappointed in not getting their full share of eatables and the misfortunate carriers were roundly scored.

Throughout the daytime, when it was not raining, everyone camped on deck to get the air and watch for subs. Most of the time was spent in lounging. Some picked out a secluded spot and sought pleasure in reading. Others, too sick to see or enjoy anything, stretched themselves out to die, their palid countenances and unshaven faces being subject to both pity and laughter. Crap games

were numerous and fortunes changed hands from hour to hour. Monte Carlo had nothing on that place except polished mahogany furniture, velvet carpets and dazzling chandeliers. No little rivalry existed between the Artillerymen and Engineers, and it is safe to say that when an artilleryman ventured into a game with his brother engineer, he was bound to come out loser if squeezing and fighting counted as victorious assets. It was a long time between meals, so long that our appetites, tantalized by the fresh sea breezes, brought us to a point where we could devour anything (outside of bully beef) and call it delicious. A canteen was open on the hurricane deck each day, where candy and fruit could be purchased for a small fortune. Life drills were held daily, each company having its allotted place on deck and number of life rafts to be used if the opportunity presented itself. The water was a greenish blue and icy cold as it splashed and churned in mighty upheavals and a dip therein was far from a pleasant expectation for any of us. There was no cause however for such an icy bath as no subs appeared to mar the peacefulness of the journey and if one had, we entertained grave apprehension for its safety, due to the fact that our gunners while at practice just before entering the "danger zone" placed

three shots directly in one spot in the briny deep.

The morning of June 6th beamed bright and fair and brought us within the "danger zone" where many an unprotected ship had been the victim of those deep sea terrors. As we came up on deck that morning, we saw a new stage setting had taken place that carried with it a feeling of reserve and safety. Ahead, to the rear and sides of us were many small English destroyers which had come to meet us and escort us safely through the last lap of our journey. It was a wonderful sight to see them as they darted back and forth with great speed and agility, patroling the sea as far as the eye could see, now running close, now darting off in the opposite direction, cutting the water like a knife and throwing a gigantic spray and splash that hid them from our view every now and then behind a dazzling maze of salt water. Ever ahead of us was a large U. S. Battleship which had been with us throughout the journey. A feeling of easiness came over us all that day and we dispelled from our minds the thoughts of a bath in the cold, cold sea.

The morning of June 7th was the occasion of much joy, the beginning of what proved to be the most pleasant day of our journey. After being eleven days at sea with nothing

to view but the vast expanse of salt water and the few transports that lazily kept pace with us, it was with bewildering amazement that we gazed once more upon land that morning. We were passing through the Irish sea, and the cliffs of "Bonnie Scotland" were as pleasing to the eye as the shores of "Emerald Isle" on the opposite side, both of which vied with each other in wondrous beauty and where we concentrated our thoughts with deep feelings of praise and thanksgiving that our journey was almost over and the harbor of safety was near at hand. When evening came, just as the sun was lowering down behind the hills, we steamed into the harbor of Liverpool and our journey was at an end. Small tugs and fishing smacks darted hither and thither and cheers and hand wavings were exchanged in the passing. In the distance many inhabitants on the shores waved a hearty welcome to us. The town presented a beautiful picture, its long rows of neat brick houses standing out distinctly like a new trimmed hedge, the church spires silhouetted against the horizon, where the golden sun was slowly sinking into oblivion. A large dirigible which had hummed overhead the whole day on the lookout for enemy subs, now passed from view beyond the hilltops, satisfied that we no longer needed her pro-

tection. Small tugs came to our rescue and towed the Kashmir into dock where after much struggling, straining and maneuvering she was finally made fast and her work was done.

Orders were received that we would disembark in the morning, so after an hour or so spent on deck indulging in a cool smoke and a few words of appreciation for our safe landing, we descended for the last time into the hold, where for the first time in eleven nights, we were not rocked to sleep by the rolling of the ship. We were up early the next morning and surged on deck to view the surroundings. We were in a slip between large warehouses and cargoes and supplies were being unloaded from other boats near by. Many little waifs crowded the docks and for our amusement, we pitched pennies to them to see the scramble which was promptly stopped by an officious red-nosed "Bobby" in blue helmet and sporting a flowing red moustache. At ten o'clock the process of debarkation began and we single-filed off the boat, grabbing each a heavy barracks bag and carrying them into the warehouse from where they were later shipped to meet us at Calais. All was completed at noon when we marched to the railroad yard where a train of side-door coaches awaited us, into which we jammed as usual, fighting for

elbow room. It proved to be a real fast train, faster than any we have ridden in France. Our first glimpse of England well satisfied us that it was beautiful and rich in well kept farms and gardens, with neat ivy covered brick houses dotting the landscape at close intervals. At Rugby, we stopped for fifteen minutes where coffee was served by Red Cross girls, whose smiles added a pleasing flavor to the beverage. A short hike was taken through the village, the purpose of which was to take the kinks out of our limbs and not to show off on parade. Once more we got under way, and at dusk, we passed around the outskirts of London, where we were wildly cheered by the population at the crossings. Bully beef and hardtack formed our lunch on the train and when darkness came on, we settled back in our seats to await the end of the ride which was hourly getting more tiresome. It came about 10:00 P. M. when we pulled into the Dover Station alongside a waiting Red Cross train. The town was dark, necessitated by the fact that "Jerry" was accustomed to play overhead and had often dropped his unwelcome messages of death and destruction thereon. A dull silence prevailed as we trudged through the streets and we neither sang nor whistled as we were accustomed to do. The long train ride, the

heavy packs and rifles, the darkness, all tended to depress our spirits. We encountered a steep hill which nearly proved to be our undoing, and weary and exhausted, we stopped about midnight on "Victoria Heights" where we were billeted overnight in a large vacant mansion. No beds or cots were there to greet us; nothing but the bare walls and the hard floor, on which we made a bed of our two blankets and were soon sleeping the sleep of the peaceful, forgetful of whether or not we were in England or America.

CHAPTER III

At Rest Camp No. 6

Our whirlwind trip across England had resulted in a slight drowsiness and we "sawed wood" industriously until the rays of the sun shone through the barrack windows and awakened us with thoughts of breakfast. With sounds closely resembling those heard at the zoo when feeding time rolls round, the company rose as one man, sought its mess kit and hastened to the mess tent at the back of our sleeping quarters. There we received our breakfast of oatmeal, meat, bread and tea, cheese and jam being by some strange oversight omitted.

After breakfast we received orders to "get them packs made up and snap into it!" and about 9:30 A. M., we marched down the hill which we had ascended with so much fervent profanity the night before and tramped through the streets of Dover to the docks. There we sat down to relieve ourselves for a few minutes of the weight of our packs. At our feet the sunlit waters of the English Channel lapped softly against the docks. Little tugs bustled in and out with much frenzied tooting of whistles; fishing craft lolled

comfortably at their moorings; and occasionally on the horizon the rakish looking hull of a destroyer showed in sharp silhouette. The white chalk cliffs, the fortress that frowned above them and the city huddled at their feet completed the picture.

After a wait of an hour or so, we embarked on the diminutive steamer, formerly a Belgian hospital ship, which was to convey us across the Channel to Calais. On her decks we resumed the acquaintance of that intricate contraption, the fore and aft life-belt, the former subject of some of Col. Foreman's best orations. By the time these had been adjusted and guards posted at the life boats to keep a clear space in front of them in the event of a submarine attack, the shores of England slipped away from us and we were plowing through the water towards Calais. The short voyage was without incident, except for a few cases of sea-sickness which may or may not have been hangovers from the Kashmir, and shortly after one o'clock the shores of France rose on the horizon. First the vague, indistinct bulk of the sand dunes loomed in the distance; then a yellow strip of beach nosed up out of the water and finally amid a continuous bellowing of whistles, we slid into the harbor of Calais, to us the gateway to the Western Front.

There is a place in France, the memory of which is deeply imbedded in the hearts of all that portion of the A. E. F. which passed through Calais; and the mention of this name is to that gallant body of men a sign of antagonism, just as the appearance of an orange ribbon on the seventeenth of March is to a good Irishman. It is Rest Camp No. 6.

Rest Camp No. 6 is situated in the sand dunes and can hardly be distinguished from them. Large portions of the dunes get into the tents and smaller sections into the tea and the man who does not carry around in his shoes at least a ton of assorted dunes is an object of respectful attention. As we stood and looked at the small conical tents, half filled with mud and badly ruptured at one side, which were expected to house some sixteen to eighteen men, there came to our minds General Sherman's optimistic words about war and with them the firm conviction that he had grossly understated the case. This conviction was strengthened when, after dumping our belongings in the tents, we filed into the mess hall and partook of a thin watery stew, which it would be a scandalous libel to call slum, together with those twin bulwarks of the British Empire, cheese and jam. We were told, however, that we ought to be "bloody glad to get it!"

Other disillusionments were in store for us. After dinner word spread that the canteen near by sold beer. A large percentage of the company immediately grabbed their canteens and departed swiftly in the direction of that establishment. The first one of the shock troops who reached his objective, came out with a glad smile on his lips, carefully removed the stopper from his canteen, took a long breath and raised it heavenward. After one swallow, he removed it and spat, remarking sadly "This ain't beer." Another dream shattered.

Such was our introduction to Rest Camp No. 6. Near by chattered and gibbered a camp of Chinese coolies who stared at us with frank curiosity and sought to entice us into the purchase of rings and other souvenirs. British Tommies came to loiter and inquire if there was anything in that story about that new gas of Mr. Hedison's. And every night from far away to the east, came a sinister mutter and rumble that told of the struggle that ebbed and flowed about the hard-held lines.

Calais itself was thronged apparently with all the armies of the world. Short, wiry Englishmen; tall, broad-shouldered, deep-chested Australians; stocky Highlanders; lean Canadians; bearded Frenchmen; dark-skinned

Portugese—all the uniforms of the Allies jostled each other in its narrow streets. Crowds of children beset the wandering American with cries of "Souvenir!" and estaminet keepers smiled sweetly on him, corroded his stomach with vin rouge and short changed him, all with that delightful courtesy which is so distinguishing a characteristic of the French nation.

On the second day of our stay in Calais, we received our barracks bags and joyously recovered toilet articles, cigarettes and other personal belongings. It was about this time that the rumor factory opened full blast, its energies being concentrated on the circulation of reports relative to the new and deadly gas supposed to have been invented by Mr. Edison. Among the things which this destructive fluid was supposed to have done, was that it had back-fired and killed three divisions; to have destroyed boats some ten miles out to sea and to have melted the buttons on the coats of all the policemen in towns along the Rhine. The civilian population of invaded districts had been given solemn warning to move out and in short, there was going to be an awful time when somebody, presumably Mr. Edison himself, pushed the button that released the awful blast. As we write this, we wonder in our humble way just

what became of that deadly compound—"boy, page Mr. Edison gas!"

June 11th, our third day in Rest Camp No. 6, was a busy one. In the morning we hiked some ten miles to a British gas school, where we were equipped with British masks and for the first time listened to the thrilling story of the "small box respirators." We also passed through a gas house where we underwent a brief session with lachrymatory gas, after which we passed through cloud gas which closed the day's instruction.

On our way back we stopped at a British storehouse and were issued two bandoliers of British ammunition apiece. When we returned to Calais we were marched to another warehouse where we turned in our Eddystone rifles and received the British Lee-Enfields in return. To us, fresh from our Camp Dix experience of the laborious issue of overseas equipment, with its frenzied checking up of extra shoe strings, bacon and condiment cans and similar articles, this rapid fire method of equipping a company was a revelation.

In the afternoon the work of stripping us for action was completed by turning in most of the contents of our barracks bags. One blanket, one suit of underwear, two pairs of socks and one pair of breeches, one blouse and the barracks bags themselves went out

of our lives forever. There only remained just what we could carry on our backs and loud was the mourning over articles of personal comfort that had to be salvaged. We heard that in the due course of time those bags, like homing pigeons, would return to us, but up to date they are still A. W. O. L. We saved everything we could, however, for we had not yet reached the stage when a blanket and a towel were sufficient equipment.

Our stay in Rest Camp No. 6 was drawing rapidly to a close. That night, word went round that we were to move the following day. Undisguised shouts of joy greeted the news, for so far as we could see the only purpose of the place was to make war-worn British Tommies glad to get back to the front. The "charge" of a detachment of troops who had spent a full week in that imitation Sahara would be a truly fiendish thing to behold.

Rest Camp No. 6 was our first experience of the hardships of a soldier's life. In that way, it probably did us good, for thereafter, whenever a pup tent leaked or a billet proved too small for the number of soldiers assigned to it, we could always grumble philosophically "well, anyway, it's better'n that damn Calais!"

CHAPTER IV

In the British Sector

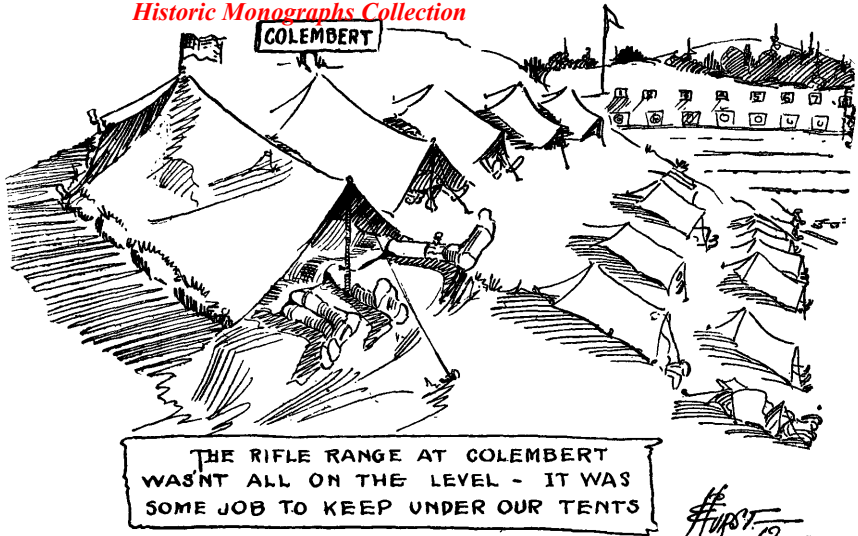
On the morning of June 12th we were destined to depart from the knee-deep sands of Calais, which fact caused not the least bit of hard feeling amongst us. The sun rose bright and warm, the herald of morn, and was soon scorching down on the sands at our feet where we spread our equipment and rolled our packs, taking along the largest portion of the sands. For three days we had struggled and lived amidst these sands and we cheerfully hastened to make ready and bid them farewell. We had also vainly striven to appease our appetites with the sparing amounts of jam, cheese and tea which were daily served us as apologies for regular meals. Conditions elsewhere could not have been much worse and we were at least willing to exploit them.

Full packs, new gas masks and rifles were slung on our backs and we struggled through these sands for the last time, out onto the main highway where we ambled along more easily on the hard macadam road. It was about five miles to Fontainette and when

we reached there we were ready to call it a day, as the heavy packs and wool clothing had caused us to become wet with perspiration under the sweltering rays of the torturous sun. Here at Fontainette was a rail-head and our side-door Pullmans were lined up ready to receive us. Prior to entraining we were issued a sandwich and five or six be-curranted tea biscuits which constituted our noonday lunch en route.

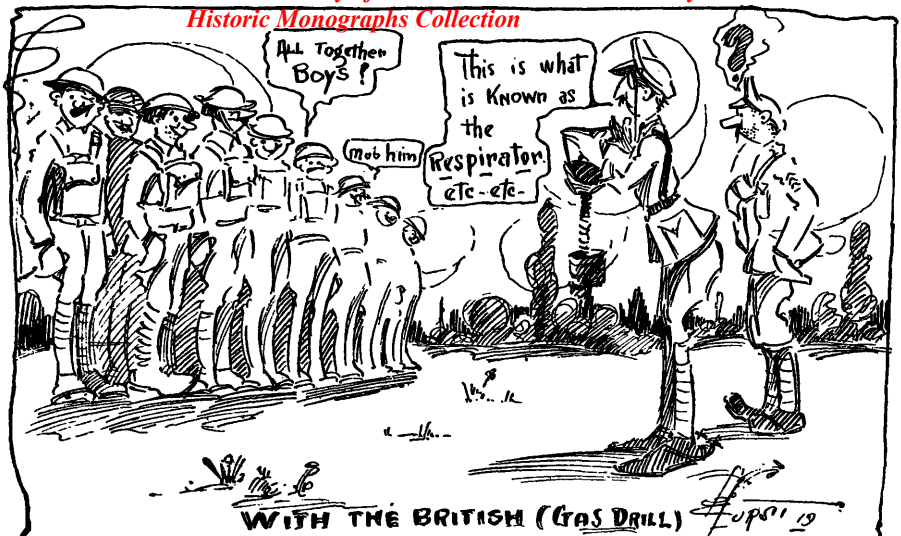
We were roused from our reverie about 4:00 P. M. that afternoon by the sudden grinding of brakes and the bump, bump of our cars as they jerked back and forth in an effort to come to a dead stop. We had reached the village of Lombres and had taken at least four hours to journey not more than thirty kilometers. After much juggling and searching for our own equipment we eventually ended up in company formation on a spot of France more appealing to one's sense of beauty than those sands of Calais. From here we proceeded a few more kilos to the village of Lart, where we rested overnight in bell tents provided by the British. A small creek flowed near by which temptingly beckoned to us and we were soon splashing and gurgling in its cool waters, just as we used to do in our childhood days.

After a refreshing night's sleep we again took to the road the following day. Hiking was just beginning for us then, as we found out later. Our transportation along with the rolling kitchen, was to follow after, but due to some unforgiveable error they pursued a different course and as a consequence we were obliged to go without dinner on the road that day. All afternoon we trudged along, taking the wrong road on one occasion and having to retrace our steps for many kilos, which greatly prolonged our march, added to the already numerous blisters accumulated on our feet and bringing forth curses for those responsible for the war. We reached our destination at Henneveaux about 7:00 P. M. and found that the transportation had arrived ahead of us, had partaken of their own dinner and were quietly awaiting our arrival for some hours. Tents were pitched in an orchard, supper hastily prepared by "Mac," the Irish cook, and "Nutting," the steward of "The Great Lakes" fame. There was no need for "call to quarters" that night, for we were all safely laid away immediately after supper. The long painful hike of that day had brought us to a stage where we needed neither rocking nor sleeping powders to soothe us to sleep.



The morning of the 14th found us hiking in the direction of Colembert, at which village we camped until the 22nd. Here we lived on a side hill that much resembled the "Cliffs of Dover" with hard chalky soil into which we dug a level spot, that we might not cascade down the incline during the night. While here we constructed a rifle range, which stands as a monument to the memory of the first work of Company "E" in France. We can never forget the words of our Captain on the first morning as we assembled for work: "Men of E company. Today we will start on our regular engineering work!" And we did. Picks and shovels flew fast and by night we had made quite an impression in that chalky soil. The range being completed after eight days we retired from the hills of Colembert and sought other conquests in the village of Bellebrune.

We took possession of the village of Bellebrune on the 22nd day of June and had not quite got our camp located when we were greeted by dirty-faced mademoiselles who persisted in thrusting upon us chocolate, oranges and wormy figs for a small fortune each. Then to add to our troubles we were given bayonet, gas-mask and infantry drills by British instructors, as well as lectures on the usage and upkeep of the "small box res-



pirator." Here, too, we were introduced to Col. Metheun of the 18th Northumberland Fusiliers, who lectured to us and proved to be a friend of all as well as a witty monologist. We were pleased to serve under his direction while here and he showed his appreciation of our efforts by sending the following letter of commendation at the time of our departure:

General Officer Commanding,
78th Division, A. E. F.

Dear General:

I wish to bring to your notice the splendid work done by Colonel Markham, the Officers, N. C. O.'s and men of the 303rd Engineers during the four weeks we have been with them.

As the time for training was limited, we had to ask them to do a tremendous lot, and I can assure you everyone did all they possibly could to help carry it out.

It has been a great pleasure and honor to us all to be with such splendid fellows. You are indeed fortunate to have such men in your Division and I feel sure that they will do extremely well in whatever tasks they are allotted to carry out.

I do not think the war will last long when your men get into the line, and I wish you all every success.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) J. A. METHEUN,
Lieut. Colonel Commanding
18th Northumberland Fusiliers

The morning of July 3rd wrought a great change in "E" company. On that morning Capt. Greenfield assembled the company around him and said with trembling voice, as he tried to suppress a tear: "Men of E company. You are going on a long hike today but I am not going with you. I wish I were. I would rather go with you as your Captain than back to the United States as a Major. You will give a good account of yourselves, I know you will." And thus he took leave of "E" company and with him went the good wishes of the entire company, for we lost a good friend, a man who had the good of every man in the company at heart. He was sent to an A. E. F. school at Langres and later returned to the States, where he was promoted to Major and assigned as an instructor at Camp Humphreys, Va.

We left Bellebrune that morning under the charge of 1st Lt. Babcock, who proved to be a worthy successor to our departing Captain. After a long hike we arrived at Bonningues about 6:00 P. M., where we pitched our humble shelter tents and lost no time in turning in for a night of blissful sleep. The following morning we rose early, folded our tents and packs and proceeded on our journey. This was on the Fourth of July and by way of a celebration we ended

our hike about noon on a rifle range just outside St. Omer, where we spent the afternoon and evening, until darkness, trying our luck in hitting the "Bulls-eye." During the afternoon, Col. Markham delivered an address to the entire regiment, calling attention to the spirit of independence which this day was uppermost in our minds and also that soon we would be actively engaged in fighting for the independence of the world from the fear of German militarism. He also expressed his opinion that the war would be over before the coming winter. We listened with much interest and were thoroughly impressed by his statements as he was an exceptionally good speaker, possessed with the rare power of holding everyone's attention. At night a German air-raid party came over and proceeded to bomb St. Omer with what seemed to be a thousand or more high explosive bombs, judging from the noise of the explosions. This proved to be a very noisy Fourth and I believe without a doubt that it was the noisiest celebration that any of us had witnessed. With the parting of these night raiders quiet came over the camp and all were soon pounding away in the land of nod, the stillness being broken only by the muffled tread of the guard on the soft earth as he wearily paced his post.

The day of July 5th found us tramping along the hot dusty roads and many a one's poor blistered feet called out for mercy, while his back strained and ached under the weight of his pack. A short rest was obtained at noon-time as we frowned over our frugal meal, which was far from sufficient to satisfy the demands made by our never satisfied stomachs. Lederzeele was our stopping point that night and as we formed for tent pitching at the end of the hike a sigh of relief went down the line as packs were hastily and in some cases viciously slung on the ground. Relief was obtained for our tired, aching, blistered feet by bathing in a near by creek and administering some foot powder which some of us were wise enough to tote along. The estaminets in town furnished liquid refreshment that night, after which sleep was easily obtained.

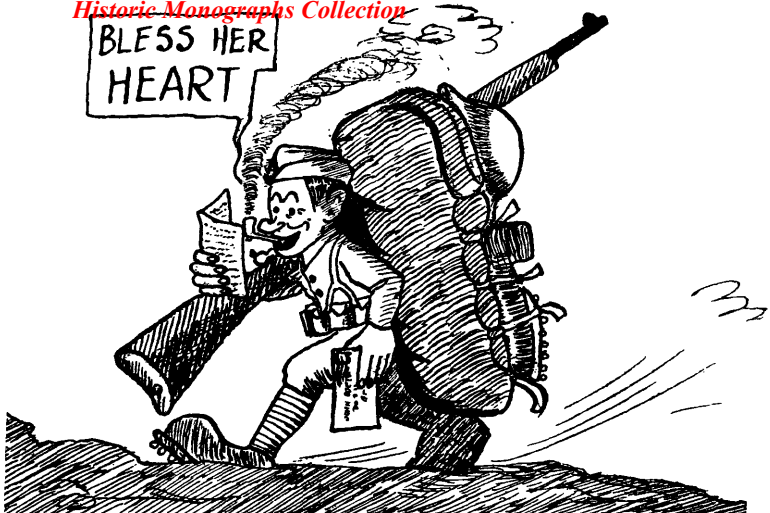
We were roused by the harsh sound of the bugle at four-thirty the next morning. Almost like magic the camp disappeared and at six o'clock, before the sun peeped over the distant horizon, we marched off, leaving behind but a vacant lot which to a casual observer showed no signs of the busy camp life that had taken place the night before. This was the third day of hiking since leaving Bellebrune and while we were gradually

getting toughened to it, we longed again for a permanent camp where hikes were less frequent, meals more regular and many little comforts could be added to our home from day to day. At noon we halted for our usual mid-day lunch, which this day happened to be a hot liquid stew and hard tack. The sun shone clear and bright, and in the field alongside where were stacks of newly raked hay we stretched ourselves out at ease, dozing away quickly in the lazy atmosphere only to be rudely disturbed by the sharp shrill of the whistle. A short after-dinner hike brought us to a field in the vicinity of Oudezeele, which ended our long hike. Tents were pitched under shelter of trees bordering the outskirts of the field which offered natural camouflage and a screen of protection from aerial observation. Walls of earth two feet high were thrown up around our tents as a safeguard against danger in case of air-raids. After several days had passed by we were comfortably settled and the camp rapidly took on the appearance of a permanent one.

Oudezeele was in the Ypres sector and a reserve line of trenches was being established in this vicinity, preparatory for an expected push by the Germans. Much barbed wire was strung, trenches dug, concrete observa-

tion posts erected, drill and regular engineering duties performed, putting everything in readiness for a stubborn defense in case of an offensive by the enemy. Almost every night Jerry's planes maneuvered overhead in an endeavor to locate munition dumps and our camps, but were never very successful owing to the watchfulness of the "Tommies' " anti-aircraft batteries. Many a night we laid restless, listening to the purr of the engines, invisible in the dark sky, as the shells burst and searchlights flashed, making it impossible for Fritzie to work effectively. Ever through the day and night there came to our ears from out the distance the dull booming of the artillery and occasionally in the daytime we witnessed an aerial battle which was a wonderful sight to behold. The weather at most times was very favorable, which brought to us a desire to be back home and oftimes a touch of spring fever. Here and there over the landscape a huge windmill, fanned by the soft Flanders breezes, slowly turned its large paddles lazily through the air, while the surrounding fields of early wheat dotted with wild crimson colored poppies presented a charming picture for the artist's brush.

It was pouring rain on the morning of July 27th when we made up our packs, ready



for another hike to new localities. Before noon we were all pretty well soaked to the skin and needed but a rub and a change of clothing to complete our bath. It was a long, tedious hike for us that day after having rested our legs at Oudezeele for more than three weeks, and there was not a one of us but what was ready to quit when we reached Helfaut about 6:00 P. M. that night. Here, for the first time in France, we secured billets, many of us good rooms with an "honest-to-God bed and white sheets," and the tap, tap of a shoe or mess-kit driving in tent pegs was missing on this night. Many had a chance to get their clothing dried out by the fireside of some hospitable French woman, at the same time indulging in a repast of fried eggs and chips, together with some strong, hot coffee, after which beds were quickly sought. It is needless to dwell upon the endless chain of comment that passed around on our hikes as we all have our own personal reminiscences, which may or may not hold pleasant memories.

On the afternoon of the 29th of July we reached the city of St. Pol, billeting in its environs. Here again we resumed our infantry training and also learned the art of throwing hand grenades. One day we marched out onto the main highway and

lined up on the roadside, where, amidst our cheers, the King of England passed by in his limousine, en route for a tour of inspection throughout the English sector. On the 12th of August we paid our respects to Col. Markham, who was leaving the regiment to take charge of light railway construction, and there was sorrow in the hearts of all of us that day for we keenly felt the loss of a Commanding Officer whose place could not be easily filled.

Hiking those days seemed to be our main occupation and on the 13th we started out again bag and baggage, ending up at Denier, where was located a rifle range on which we tried out our prowess as marksmen. Our tents were pitched in the woods on a side hill, where we cleared away the thick underbrush, making a soft bed on the earth of twigs and leaves. The night was clear, myriads of stars twinkling high in the heavens, and soon there came to us the faint drone of the aero engines, increasing momentarily in violence until they seemed to be directly overhead. The anti-aircraft batteries began to bark and in answer there dropped to the earth numerous bombs which exploded with a terrific force, but not within close enough range to cause any harm. For at least a half hour these planes hovered overhead,

the batteries and planes each trying to outdo the other, while we lying in our shelter tents hugged the ground pretty closely, a few less discreet venturing outside to view the doings, risking the chance of getting punctured with a stray piece of shrapnel. A decision was reached when Jerry withdrew to his own domain and once again quietude settled over camp and the stars twinkled as before with a seeming satisfaction that no harm had befallen us.

Our range work being finished we moved again, this time arriving at Savy, near Arras, about noon of August 15th, where we billeted in large unused hospital tents and some in smaller bell tents. Here we were employed in erecting Casualty Clearing Stations for the British, which work progressed rapidly and was favorably commented upon by the British officers in charge. Just below our camp was a narrow gauge railway operated by the Tommies, on which supplies and ammunition were carried to the front line, which was then near Arras and the famous "Vimy Ridge." To the west was a large airdrome which was almost nightly the object of many an unsuccessful raid by the enemy. Over across the hill to the east was the Red Cross First Aid Station where the wounded were being brought in night and

day, many of whom passed away to the land of the unknown within its portals. The "Tommies" and "Scotties" proved to be fine fellows and won a place in our hearts which we shall always keep in reserve for them. They were quick to pick up an acquaintance and we, as beginners, eagerly devoured their stories of bravery and suffering which their three and four years of experience had taught them. Their stories of being "fed up" with war and prayers that "Fritzie" would come over and get them did not strike us as being made in jest. Our two months in the shell-torn battle area later on, proved to us that it was a life that could not be lived for any great length of time without a man's nerves becoming shattered and he himself becoming despondent, welcoming death as a pacifier of all troubles.

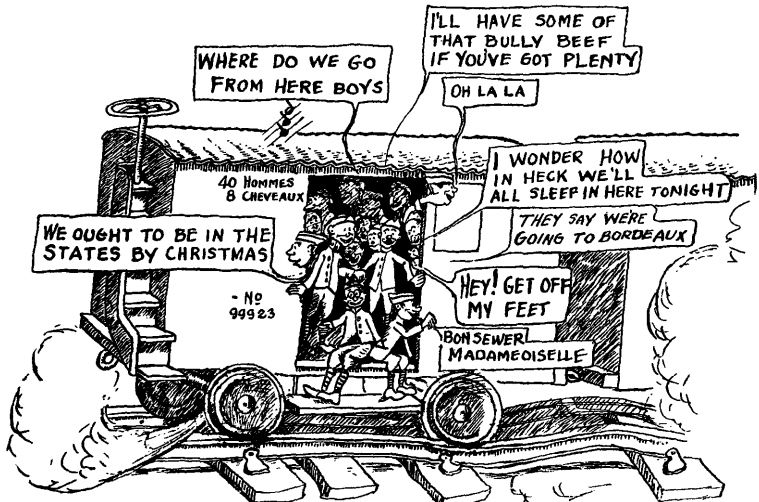
Our work on the hospitals was never finished as we were ordered to pack and move, such orders always mystifying us as we never knew whither we were bound or why. It was our solemn duty to obey and like good soldiers we always obeyed, trusting to the guidance of those over us to make the wisest moves where the best results would be accomplished. We willingly broke camp and as we marched away wondered more as to where we were going than we did about the outcome of the war.

CHAPTER V

Trip to American Sector

On the morning of August 20th we bade farewell to the village of Savy and incidentally to the British Sector. For, although at the time we did not know it, we had at last severed connections with our old friends, jam and cheese and were bound for the American Front, where, according to popular report ice cream was served daily in the trenches and morris chairs were installed in all dug-outs. Later we found these reports to be somewhat overdrawn.

After a morning spurt in the necessary work of breaking camp, we moved out at last under full packs and hiked seven miles to Ligny-St. Flochel station where we found the rest of the battalion packed in close order around the little station at which we were to entrain. Here also we discerned certain miniature box cars bearing the inscription, "Hommes 40 - Chevaux 8," which were evidently designed to carry us somewhere. Judging from the condition of the cars the "Chevaux" had been the last occupants. With groans and curses of relief



we got out of our packs and with one accord sat down beside the track and waited for something to happen. It happened. In a few minutes we fell in line and were each presented with a nice new rifle, well coated with cosmoline, and shortly after were given some hardtack of the reinforced variety. This ceremony having been concluded, rations were issued and in groups of various sizes we climbed into the train.

It was some time, however, before the said train showed any signs of going anywhere at all. We waited and employed our time in establishing claims (which were always contested) to the most comfortable portions of the floor and in a last battle with that strange concoction known as "Mackonichie." At last after several preparatory toots from the engine the landscape began to glide past and we knew that our journey had begun.

By this time it was nearly dark and as little profit was to be gained from looking out at the monotonous procession of two-by-four villages through which we passed, we turned to the task of getting settled for the night. Trouble promptly ensued. Hob-nail shoes crashed against unwary shins, blankets and slickers departed mysteriously from their owners and were reclaimed amid violent arguments and the night at last

resolved itself into a series of heated debates over the burning question of "where the H—l am I going to sleep?" Several curious and venturesome spirits elected to spend the night on the roof, while the peculiar looking cage which is supposed to be the residence of the brakeman became an objective to be gained at all costs. In the course of the evening friendships which had endured all the various tribulations of the soldier's life were badly strained, so badly that invitations to come on outside were frequent. As the train, after a period of stops and starts, was now moving at a fair rate of speed, these challenges might seem a little unreasonable. But as the last argument was settled by compromise, the last cigarette butt finished and to the "thump, thump" of the car wheels, the peculiar tangle of arms and legs which a few hours before had been an orderly looking platoon of Engineers subsided into something remotely resembling sleep.

The morning of the 21st found us still bumping over the rails. About ten o'clock the rumor reached us that we were nearing Paris and seats in the door were immediately at a premium. We passed through St. Denis and shortly after entered the outskirts of that great city to which all members of the A. E. F. go when they die. I don't

know what we expected to see—probably a large gathering of mademoiselles waving American flags and blowing kisses at us—but these are my impressions of Paris that day arranged in convenient form. It is probably the shortest guide book in the world:

1. One member of the S. O. S. (colored) reclining against a brick wall.

2. One small child endeavoring to negotiate the sale of a bottle of cognac to a thirsty Engineer.

3. One barge on the Seine River.

4. Three street cars.

5. A row of dingy tenement houses.

After a two hours inspiring view of various coal piles we finally left Paris behind us and pursued our journey. It was a bright sunshiny afternoon and the blue skies and the sight of the green meadows and pretty villages through which we passed combined to put all of us in better humor than we had been in the night we entrained. Later in the day we stopped for a cup of coffee and took advantage of the wait to shave and wash. This somewhat necessary function was followed by supper of bully beef and by a general onslaught on a tree loaded with small, hard green apples. It can be truth-

fully said that the stomachs of no other army in the world can successfully get away with a combination like that.

Night descended at last and as everybody was pretty well tired out with the long bumpy ride, we once more attacked the problem of passing the night in comparative comfort. The series of bitter disputes of the previous evening had resulted in a better understanding of how to distribute ourselves on the floor and the ensuing night was marked by very few of the loud and picturesquely worded conversations which had added so much joy to our life during the first few hours of our journey.

Morning disclosed to us a countryside in sharp contrast to that through which we had rolled and bumped the day before. Instead of the placid meadows and hillsides a panorama of deep gorges and wooded slopes unrolled itself to us as we dangled our feet from the doorway or craned our necks from the windows at the side of the car. One of those inevitable rumors, born in the idle mind of some K. P. or dog robber, reached us to the effect that we were nearing the Italian border. It gained strength when certain individuals of Italian birth confirmed it, adducing as proof the fact that the sky was a much deeper blue than that of the

preceding day, but died an untimely death when we passed through Chaumont, the headquarters of the A. E. F. Now at last we knew something about where we were. We had passed out of the land of "gold flake" cigarettes and had arrived in the "Bull Durham" sector.

Things began to look more homelike now. American soldiers in real honest-to-gosh O. D. began to appear in little groups around the stations; American trucks boomed along the roads driven by American drivers and urged on by American profanity, and once we passed a regular Yankee baseball diamond—a sight which stirred us almost as much as a free-lunch counter would have. Occasionally a train laden with doughboys passed us amid shouts of "Hello Buddy, what outfit?" "Throw away them damn packs; they won't be any use to you where you're going," and other cheerful remarks. Once we passed a swarm of German prisoners laboriously shoveling sand, and rubbered at them with a curiosity which was only equalled by theirs, as they stared back at us with the bland, child-like interest of a crowd watching the antics of some newly discovered animal. Many of the senior members of the firm of "Me und Gott" were mere boys,

proof of the fact that Germany's man power was at last beginning to wane.

We passed through Langres and toward noon received the welcome news that our journey was almost at an end. Once more we made up our packs, which in the course of our two days' ride had become sadly dilapidated, sorted out our mess kits and rifles and eagerly awaited deliverance from the bondage of "40 Hommes, 8 Chevaux." About one o'clock the train stopped and amid loud and repeated bellows of "all out," we detrained and dumped our equipment on the platform of the station of Jussey.

The usual wait ensued, during which we stretched ourselves out in the sun and rested, or made successful raids on a drinking fountain nearby, which was of course immediately put under guard. In France no water is fit to drink until it has been made thoroughly undrinkable by the introduction of large doses of chlorine, iodine or blue vitriol. This results in the well-known war cry of the estaminet keeper, "Finish beer!"

At last, tired and sweaty, we struggled into our packs and set out on our hike for billets. We passed through Jussey, where that part of the population under twelve years of age greeted us with wild squeals of welcome, and the remainder looked up at us

from their vin blanc with mild interest. We soon passed through the town, however, and were out in the country with only the dusty roads ahead of us.

The hike which followed was one of those things which must be seen to be appreciated. The stifling heat, the clouds of dust stirred by hundreds of pairs of tired feet, the grinding weight of our packs, the grunts, groans and curses, the stragglers who dropped at the roadside and the non-coms who exhorted them to stick it out for God's sake, are all the things which cannot be described in language fit for publication. Suffice it to say that at last after reeling off some seven miles of dusty road we arrived in the village of Barges, and saw awaiting us that sight which is the most cheering of anything in the world to that part of the A. E. F. which tours France by the hobnail express—the billeting detail. So this part of our story ends happily with a supper of steak and potatoes and a bunch of tired bucks resting luxuriously on the straw in various barns and sheds.

CHAPTER VI

Training in American Sector

A day-to-day chronicle of the doings of Company "E" in Barges would be a somewhat tedious affair. So perhaps a description of the various phases of our life in that typical rural community may suffice to give the reader some idea of how one unit of the A. E. F. spent its time waiting for the orders which were to start it on its long journey to the St. Mihiel front.

Barges is a pleasant little village ringed about with wooded hills. It possesses one estaminet, where vin rouge, of a quality warranted to make a rabbit spit in a bulldog's face, is sold; one store which does a thriving trade in canned goods and odorous cheese; one cheese factory and a number of inhabitants whose prosperity and social standing is indicated by the relative size of the manure piles in front of their doors. Its streets are narrow and winding, and down them, when the morning sun tints the walls of the old stone dwellings with a delicious crimson, amble big soft-eyed cattle, driven by milkmaids who have apparently stepped right out

of a musical comedy. There are big stone wash houses where from morning till night the village gossips discuss their neighbors affairs over the piles of soiled linen, and there are eggs and milk in abundance; and there are also mademoiselles who are perfectly willing to be inflicted with the peculiar brand of French spoken by the A. E. F. In short, Barges is just a quiet little French town of a type grown familiar to us, but friendly and hospitable beyond anything we had known hitherto.

We were billeted here and there about the town in various barns and outbuildings, and being by this time pretty well schooled in the art of making ourselves comfortable, settled down like the old campaigners we were not. Our rations were good and an issue of Bull Durham descended upon us like a blessing from heaven. Furthermore we were paid, something which had not happened to us for some time, and needless to say, there was revelry by night and court-martial in the morning. During the long hot days we were drilled and drilled, bayoneted some thousands of imaginary Dutchmen, perfected ourselves in the mysteries of the "small box respirator," skirmished over the same hard fought field a hundred times and endured the mental horrors of inspection. They were

days piled with hard work, but pleasant days for all that and in the months to come, we were often to say with heartfelt longing, "Gee, I wish I was back in Barges."

On the morning of the 28th, word suddenly came that we were to move. We didn't believe it at first, for hadn't we just started to build a bayonet range? But this rumor proved true, and about 2:00 P. M. we moved out bag and baggage to the accompaniment of cries of "Bonne chance!" from the inhabitants. Once more the long dusty road winding away over the hill and dale—a veritable long, long trail indeed; once more the sore feet and the aching shoulders, the fifty minute hike and the ten minute fall-out; once more the bustle and confusion of making camp—this time in an open field near Beaucharmoy, after night and a drizzly rain had fallen. This was our first experience of making camp at night and for the first time rang out a disgusted howl of "T'hell with pitching tents; I'm going to flop where I am!" We had covered sixteen miles that afternoon and after "Mac" had served us with a mess kit of slum, we laid down and went to sleep with but very little ceremony. Ten minutes after the last argument over "seconds" had been settled (MacDonald winning on points) there was not a sound in the camp, but the

tread of the sentries and the occasional neigh of a restless horse.

Next morning we awoke and after stretching ourselves and indulging in a small section of bacon, rolled up our packs and prepared to hit the trail again. Right here should be mentioned the fact that from now on packs began to mysteriously decrease in size. This will always be one of the unexplained mysteries of the war.

Canteens were filled—that is those of us who were wise enough filled them—and at ten o'clock we moved out and the longest day's hike we ever experienced in France began. It was cloudy when we started, but toward noon the sun came out in all its splendor or brutality, whichever way you want to put it, and from then on, it was at least fourteen degrees hotter than a locality frequently mentioned in the Bible and ordinary conversations. Hour after hour, we pounded wearily over the road, the well known overseas cap performing its function of making it easier for the sun and harder for the army, and all down the long column, black curses poured from the lips of the boys whose most violent exclamation had hitherto been "darn it" or "gosh." Those lucky individuals who had been favored with early advantages in the study of English in bar rooms and lumber

camps sometimes talked about the heat for as much as five minutes without repeating themselves—talked about it eloquently and beautifully too—and continued to talk for the duration of the march. Man after man fell out overcome by the heat and refused to be spurred to action by the assertion that "we ain't got far to go!"

So the long afternoon wore away. Twilight found us limping wearily into Brainville after a hike of over twenty miles. Brainville, or the greater part of it rather, is situated on a hill and be it recorded and remembered that the Top Sergeant was moved to accept the aid of the tail of a homeward bound cow in ascending that same eminence. We made short work of the job of finding billets, and after supper which (although it consisted largely of corned willie), tasted good to a tired man, we went to sleep without any trouble on straw or stone floor.

We remained at Brainville from August 30th until September 4th, during which time we applied ourselves again to that interesting pastime known informally as "squads east and west." In the intervals not taken up with this popular sport, we played havoc with all the plum orchards in the vicinity or wandered around visiting friends in other regiments. It was at this time that Sgt.

When Dubbin came into
our hearts

Greenman left us to attend 3d Corps Training School.

Our rations were uniformly good while we were here, and altogether we put in quite a pleasant three or four days, except for the above mentioned "squads east and west" and frequent tricks of guard duty. Brainville itself was a sort of dingy dilapidated village clustering about an old church which perched itself on the summit of a hill. The ratio of estaminets to houses was somewhat smaller than in most French towns, the only one of any pretensions being located down by the railroad track. It boasted of a mechanical piano and some of the worst wine in the world.

It should be mentioned that at Brainville, that peculiar substance known as "dubbin" came into our hearts and at every one of the frequent inspections the following dialogue took place: "Private so and so, did you put dubbin on your shoes? No sir! Did you hear the order? Yes sir! Sergeant take that man's name!" Meanwhile visions of a street cleaning detail floated before the eyes of he of the dubbinless shoes—visions which usually bore fruit.

On September 4th, having built an incinerator and made other preparations for a long stay, we suddenly received orders to move.

Amid loud complaints, for it was near supper time, we went through a process mentioned several times before and in due season fell in on the village street. There we waited until ten o'clock, making the night hideous with song and engaged in speculation as to where we were going. We mentioned nearly every known country in the world except Siam, which was an oversight much to be regretted. There was no particular reason why Siam should have been slighted.

At eleven o'clock we obeyed the command of "Fall in" and slinging our rifles, moved out in the rear of "D" company. It was our first night march, and a night march is an altogether different matter from a hike made in the daytime. In the daytime, however hot or dusty or rainy it is, there are always little villages to pass through and bewhiskered villagers to yell at and mademoiselles to wave to; but at night, everything is blotted out but the white strip of road ahead. The little villages are dead and silent for fear of air raids, and the only sound is the rumble of the wagons ahead or the roar of a motorcycle as it rushes past. There is no singing or smoking and conversations die out or are limited to questions about the time and remarks about the weight of the pack.

At 5:00 A. M. we made camp in a field near Harreville-les-Chateurs. Next morning dawned cold and rainy and during the all-day drizzle which ensued, we lay in our tents and slept. After supper, we broke camp and waited for the orders to move out again. As night fell and the stars came out over the wooded hilltops the regiment uplifted its voice in song. According to the war stories you read (written by old maids and members of the Home Guard), they should have sung "Just before the Battle Mother" and songs of similar nature. A strict regard for the truth however, compels us to record the fact that the heavens rang with "As we go Marching," "The Roaring Engineer" and the beautiful ballad which begins:

"We got mice in our billets, lice in our straw,
The cooties that crawl on us have no
regard for law."

Down the line the songs echoed, old songs and new songs known only to the army. So the time passed until ten o'clock when we crawled into our packs and trudged off into the night again. It is needless to describe the hike minutely, its only outstanding feature being that we passed through the sizeable town of Neufchateau. According to history, Joan of Arc once passed through this city with her papa, having been turned out of

house and home because of the old man's inability to keep up the rent. At four o'clock we made camp in a wood to the accompaniment of bull-like roars of "Put out them lights!"

The following day was spent in the usual way the day after a night hike is spent—that is in sleeping, smoking and grumbling. In the course of the afternoon, Joe Tremba fell in with several Russian soldiers and judging from the enthusiasm with which he greeted them, they must have come from his home town, for the air was filled so thickly with Russian for a time, that several men took cover as a precaution against shrapnel. It is also worthy of note and record that we showed our generosity and incidentally our innocence by bestowing much Bull Durham on passing French soldiers—an act for which we later cursed ourselves. At the present writing we part with it for one franc per sack.

The day dragged itself out finally, and at nine o'clock the road and the Top Sergeant again beckoned to us and we set out on what proved to be the last stage of our journey. Toward midnight, we arrived in the little village of Valincourt and after clambering up the inevitable hill, which always seemed to greet us at the end of our hikes, made camp in a plum orchard. Tired as we were, we

were amused and actually laughed when Sgt. Heath after inquiring wearily of the billeting detail if this was really the place where Company E was to take up its abode, issued this informal command: "Attention men! Pick out a soft place and flop!" Needless to say we flopped. In the old days we "took interval to the right" and pitched tents while the Sergeants squinted anxiously down the line until the tents were arranged in a perfect geometrical pattern. But those days were over and from now on, our soldiering was to be distinctly of the rough and ready variety.

We stayed in Valincourt four days—days that were largely taken up with consigning to the salvage dump, regimental equipment that was not needed. It was here that the first detachment of "cooties" made their appearance in the first platoon; and to a good many of us the place where we camped has always been known as "Cootie Hill." It was here also that we received our first issue of iron rations, on which occasion Pvt. Quinn, out of the wisdom born of several years in the army, gave vent to the following prophecy which was to be abundantly fulfilled in the future: "Well from now on I suppose the cry'll be—Somebody stole my corned willie!"

Of course by this time it was apparent to all of us that we were destined for something a little more serious than "squads east and west" and so we were hardly surprised when on September 10th, we received the familiar order to roll packs. Where we were going we had no idea, although some of the boys still clung to the wild thought that we were headed for Italy. The rumor that we were to ride in lorries had penetrated into camp, and since up north, on the English front, everybody from Thomas Atkins the British soldier to One Lung the Chinese laborer, seemed to be transported by this means—while we usually hiked—we were filled with pleasant anticipations. At least, we weren't going to hike! Within the next few hours, we were to learn that there are worse things than hiking.

Shortly after dinner we made up our packs in a drizzling rain and fell in. The drizzle soon increased to a downpour and by the time we had reached the main road to the town of Chatenois we were all in a very moist condition. On that day many of us contracted a violent dislike for water.

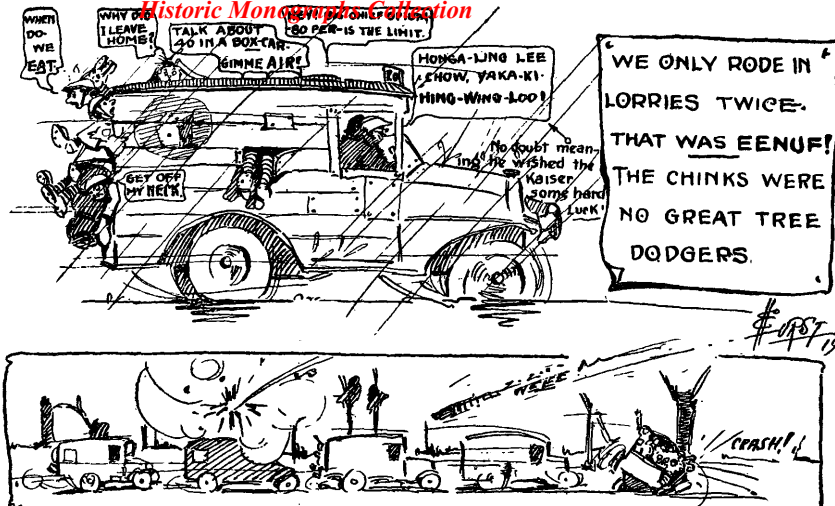
We had not gone very far up the road before we found that the rumor about the lorries was true. There they were, crowded tailboard to radiator in a column that

stretched away down the rain-soaked road as far as the eye could see, and by each one stood a chattering Chinese driver. On we plodded through the rain and mud, with the water squelching in our shoes and a steadily deepening conviction that the particular trucks that were destined to convey the 303rd were somewhere on the other side of France. It could hardly have been as far as that, but we all felt as if we had covered about five miles before we finally halted beside a truck and a grinning Chinaman ushered us in. We stowed our rifles under the seats and our packs wherever we could—mostly on the floor where everybody walked on them.

There were eighteen men in a truck and things were more or less crowded, to put it mildly. Everybody's legs were mixed up with everybody else's and if anyone got up to change his position, he usually stepped on someone and was told about it promptly and forcibly. About the first thing most of us did was take off our shoes and empty out a couple of pints of water apiece. After this necessary proceeding had taken place we relapsed into profanity until a series of violent jars, accompanied by a stream of high pitched Chinese announced that our journey had begun. Slowly we jolted over the roads. The drizzling afternoon faded away into

twilight while we sat and watched the dreary landscape slide past. Talk finally died down. You can't swear even at the weather indefinitely. The best vocabulary has its limits. So we ate a little corned willie and by the time night finally blotted out the muddy road and made ghostly and indistinct the rows of trees that bordered it and turned the trucks that followed ours into formless, rumbling monsters, there was not a sound except the steady splash of rain or an occasional sputter of conversation among the Chinamen. Now and then the column stopped with a jarring and grinding of brakes and occasionally when this happened, little glows of light by the roadside gave notice that the Chinks were seeking comfort in their beloved "hop." This, however, didn't seem to prevent them from asking us at frequent intervals for a "cigalette."

Sleep except in fits and starts, was practically impossible, so there was nothing to do but smoke cigarettes and make the best of things. The pouring rain had turned the roads into a treacherous sea of mud and the little French trucks slewed from one side of it to the other like very unseaworthy ships. Once in a while, one went into a ditch and stayed there; and during the night, there were several collisions. We were lucky how-



ever, and managed by some unexplained means to keep in the road.

So the night wore on. We passed through towns where the houses, darkened as a precaution against air-raids, loomed dark and ghostly like dead cities of the past. It was in one of these that a little incident happened that for a time roused us out of the troubled doze into which we had finally sunk. We had halted in what seemed to be a good sized town. One of the boys poked his head out of the rear of the truck and seeing a girl passing down the street called out "Bon jour, mademoiselle!" And back came the answer, wonder of wonders, in good clear Yankee speech: "Hello boys!" I think we all shot up out of our seats about six inches and for a little while things became quite cheerful in our truck. She may have been as homely as a hedge fence for all I know, but I think everybody in that truck will always have pleasant memories of the voice that cheered up a bunch of sleepy, tired soldiers with a simple "Hello!"

Along about ten o'clock the driver's helper whose principal duty seemed to be to get out and put a block under the wheel when the car stopped, crawled into the truck. We gathered from the motions he made, that he was cold and wanted to get warm, but by this time we were pretty well out of sympathy and all his

entreaties were met with the response: "Get to hell out of here, John!" So he finally crawled out and probably resigned himself to his fate for we saw no more of him.

As a matter of fact, those Chinamen were a great help to us during the night. If the truck lurched in the ditch or keeled over at an angle of forty-five degrees, we cursed the Chinks; if our legs got cramped or somebody during the process of stretching himself, stuck his foot in somebody's eye, we cursed the Chinks again; if a helmet dangling precariously from a nail descended with a loud clang on somebody's skull we once more vented our wrath on the unoffending little monkey-faced men. It didn't hurt them a bit and did us a lot of good.

Dawn came at last, cold and rainy and found us still rumbling along the road. We stuck our heads out and wondered where we were, but no information was to be gleaned from the landscape, so we ceased to worry about little things and turned to the important question of whether or not there was going to be any chow during the next twenty-four hours. Just at that particular minute, our chances seemed to be very slim. But while the argument was in progress, our journey suddenly came to an end. The column halted and the Chinaman who had sought our

hospitality so unsuccessfully the night before came to the rear end of the truck, waved his arms and delivered himself of that much overworked word "Fini!"

We clambered out of the trucks and found ourselves on the edge of a wood. All the way down the road similar groups were stretching themselves, sorting out their packs and rescuing from the interior of the trucks small articles, such as helmets, mess-kits, shoes and other equipment which had become separated from its owners. Rifles were sorted out and finally the company assembled, struggled into its packs and proceeded down the road in a column of twos. As we got farther into the woods, we kept meeting small groups of Americans, mostly attired in blue fatigue suits, and once we passed a detail of Italian soldiers whose greenish uniforms were a novelty to us.

At last we turned off the main road and stumbled down a path that was sometimes ankle deep in mud. Occasionally we passed a big American truck, heavily camouflaged with branches. The path wound and twisted until we finally came out in a clearing which gave us a view of a range of wooded hills in the distance and a few old trenches in the foreground. In the shelter of the woods we pitched our tents or lay down on our shelter

halves according to our different inclinations. The sun came out for a little while and dried us out; and after a couple of hours sleep, we all felt better and quite able to eat a good dinner. This however, couldn't be done until a detail had carried rations from a dump which had been established some distance away and set up the kitchen. Work such as this occupied a good part of the afternoon, but for all that, we found time to get pretty well rested up.

When evening came the eternal question of "When do we eat?" was finally answered by the welcome howl of "come and get it!" and we fell in for the one formation that is never missed under any circumstances. We never knew tomato stew could taste so good. Again came the order to pack up and "fall in on the stacks," so tents were struck, packs rolled and the few remaining condiment cans sent sailing into the bushes by the owners. The rations, kitchen equipment and officers baggage had to be loaded on the wagons and it was dark when we finally got into our packs, slung our rifles and in column of twos, struck out of the woods. We soon left the path by which we had come and in single file, picked our way over a path which made all the roads we had travelled up to this time seem like a ball-room floor. It was pitch dark—not the darkness of night in the open where

objects can at least be faintly discerned, but the inky blackness of a closed cellar and the only way we could proceed was by hanging on to each other's packs and by continually yelling at each other. Occasionally an officer's flashlight shone for an instant, then snapped out. The night was full of the noise of the snapping twigs as we stumbled over the rough pathway and as often as anyone fell there were remarks suitable to the occasion.

At last the path ahead grew lighter and we finally came out into an open field sloping down to the road which wound away into darkness. Over the far away rim of the hills came the occasional distance-muffled thud of artillery. We had heard it at intervals during the afternoon—sure indication that we were not far from the mysterious place known vaguely as "up the lines." Rumors had reached us of a big drive preparing, of artillery crammed hub to hub for thirty-five miles, and although most of us were ignorant of our whereabouts (beyond the fact that we were in the American sector proper) we knew that the 78th Division was going to have its share in whatever was brewing.

We passed by the first battalion, which had preceded us out of the woods and halted in the midst of the field. There we took off our packs and sat on them. As it is as long be-

tween showers in France as it is between drinks in the United States on New Year's Eve, it began to rain. There was no option but to get into our slickers and be as comfortable as possible, which under the circumstances was a little difficult. We were all glad when the long wait was at an end for it was midnight when we fell in again and made our way out on the road.

Then the march began. One night hike is much like another. There are the same stops and starts, the same rumbling wagons, the same grumbling over sore feet and the same query of "When the hell are we going to fall out?" It was pitch dark and it soon became necessary to send out connecting files. In the darkness it was difficult for them to keep in touch with the company ahead and at the same time preserve connection with the main body of "E" company; and more and more men were detailed for this purpose. Out of the night the shouted commands passed down the column and "Halt" and "Forward" followed each other in such close succession that the Sergeant barely got one command out of his mouth before it became necessary to give another.

In all the country around us there was no sign of life; not a light showed nor a dog barked and except for the splashing of our feet as we

trudged over the muddy road, it was still—a stillness that was abruptly broken as we came over the brow of a little hill after about three hours hike.

It was said before that while we were waiting outside the woods, we had heard the occasional sound of artillery fire, the same distant grumble that we heard many times before and had grown to pay little attention to. Now, as we topped the little rise, the skyline seemed to burst suddenly into flames, and the growl of the cannon changed into a full throated roar—a roar that beat and hammered at the brain and almost deafened the ears. Crash followed crash and mingled with the red flash of the guns shone the soaring Vary lights against the blackness of the sky. It was the barrage, the overture of the first performance in France of an exclusively American cast. In some of the brief intervals when you could hear yourself think, I remember Ed. Mahoney calling back to Cpl. Nassau: "Jason, do you think you'll like it up here?"

Through the continued roar and bellow of the guns we plodded on up the road which rapidly grew worse and worse. The water was ankle deep at times, especially at a railroad crossing which recalls itself to my mind from the fact that it was here that one of the boys dropped his rifle in the mud, while trying to

fasten up his leggin which had come undone. I have often wondered just what use he'd have put that rifle to, if it had become necessary to use it and had decided that he might have been able to trip some Fritz up with it. Outside of that it was a bad bet.

Finally we turned off the road and entered the fields, stringing out in single file. Ignorant as we were of where we were headed for, a lot of us began to think that we were entering the front lines, especially as the barrage had increased in intensity. In fact, we were right among the heavy artillery, a fact which became apparent, when after stumbling over the field for what seemed an endless space of time, we entered a woods again and made camp. The roar of the big guns was deafening here and the concussions fairly shook the ground. Some of the boys' tents were knocked flat about as soon as they stuck them up.

Here in the wood, despite the noise of the barrage and the rain and our wet clothes, and the wetter ground, we lay down and went to sleep. We weren't very long about it either as I remember. For the most of us, there was no such thing as pitching a tent that night, and we made ourselves as comfortable as we could with our shelter halves and blankets. I didn't remember much after I lay down, for

I must have been snoring in a very few minutes.

And while we were sleeping, the doughboys went over the top and wiped out the St. Mihiel salient. But we didn't know that for a day or two, at least not the full particulars and even if we had, I don't believe any of us would have stayed awake to celebrate very long. At least not on bully beef and water.

CHAPTER VII

In the St. Mihiel Sector

In the morning a faint, discouraged sun shone through the clouds and awakened us. From the several puddles in which we had slept the night before we emerged with a universal yawn and took stock of our surroundings. We were in a hollow surrounded by wooded hills, from which at intervals came the flash and boom of the big guns. The roaring anvil chorus of the night before had changed to a spasmodic hammering—evidence that the first phase of the drive was over. A big naval gun only a few hundred yards from where we were camped gave forth periodic bellowings that shook the ground, but aside from its occasional Hymn of Hate there was little to suggest that the battle was still in progress. We spent the day in drying ourselves out—that is, in the intervals when the sun shone—and toward evening received orders to make up the upper part of our packs in order that the work of breaking camp might be attended with as little confusion as possible. We received a new issue of iron rations at this

time with the usual injunction not to eat them without orders and when night fell, promptly inserted ourselves into our pup tents with the wise intention of getting as much sleep as we could. Early in the evening our transportation moved out on the road shepherded by Sgt. Wicks, who did his best to drown out the still active artillery with violent trumpetings at his horde of mule skinners.

At 2:30 A. M., aroused by the Top Sergeant's well-worn whistle, we tumbled out and packed up again and at 5:00 left camp. As we passed our transportation we received shovels from the tool wagons and having secured these to our backs by various devices, moved out on the road, the scene of the eventful march of the previous night. Comparative quiet, shattered occasionally by the crash of a gun, brooded over the landscape and it was only when we entered a little shell-wrecked village that we received news of the progress of the offensive.

The town was crowded with soldiers who imparted to us the cheerful information that the Marines when last heard of were fifteen miles past their objective and still going strong. A wandering mule-skinner later increased the total of miles to twenty-six and an M. P. raised him by the sensa-

tional statement that the Americans had penetrated the outer defenses of Metz. The farther we went the wilder became the rumors and we began to wonder if the can of bully beef we carried could be made to last until we received an issue of sauerkraut the other side of the frontier.

"How far are the Germans?" was the query addressed to a lean, angular M. P. who lounged against a tree at a fork in the road. "Well," returned that worthy, deliberately shifting a cud of tobacco about the size of a door-knob to the other side of his face, "You'll find a few hundred of 'em down in the next town yonder, but they're what you might call kind of subdued!"

At St. Jean we unslung our packs and rid ourselves of the more weighty part of them, that is the part containing our blankets and extra clothing. These we placed in a pile and carrying light packs, rifles and shovels continued on our way. As we passed through St. Jean an ambulance lumbered by us. It was empty, but the floor of its interior and the stretchers that lined it were covered with a dark, unmistakable red. Heavy artillery drawn by tractors trundled past, striped with green and yellow like poisonous snakes and bearing on their sides such fem-

inine titles as "Dixie Girl," "Miss Liberty" or "Theda Bara."

Our way lay through hilly country over wretched roads by the sides of which, hidden by the underbrush or concealed beneath elaborate camouflage, peeped forth the muzzles of guns of all sizes and calibers. In fact, the thing that impressed us most about that march was the amount of artillery with which the countryside had been packed in preparation for the thrust that had swept the salient clear of the Boche. Occasionally we passed through a partially ruined town crowded with water carts and G. S. wagons, driven by mud-begrimed drivers and drawn by American mules and horses, most of whom were of the variety known as crow-bait. Once in a while we came across a motor truck stalled in the ditch, its motor roaring in an effort to get free and its driver rending the heavens with blasphemy.

We finally halted in a field beside the road where we ate a little bully beef and laid down for a short rest. Then we moved on again and halted in another field where "F" company, who accompanied us, proceeded up the road to a place where some repair work was needed. It was while we were here that we saw our first German prisoners—a melancholy group clothed in ill-fitting uniforms

and shepherded by the ever-present M. P. One of the boys discovered a German from his home town of Paterson, N. J.

As our services were not required on the road that day we marched back to St. Jean where we camped on a hillside whose slope was approximately forty-five degrees. Sleeping on a hill is an acquired art. After due consideration my advice to the beginner is to picket himself firmly to a tree.

The next day, September 14th, we returned to the road and went to work on the all important work of repairing it. The sight the road presented was an unforgetable one. For miles and miles it was blocked with a close-packed jam of motor trucks, G. S. wagons, water carts and automobiles. Drivers slept complacently on their seats, munched their hardtack or more frequently engaged in that pleasant game of chance sometimes called African Golf, but more familiarly known as craps. Automobiles, laden with be-starred generals waited humbly behind chow wagons for the jam to loosen and when it did the whole torrent of transportation would go roaring forward to be dammed in perhaps five minutes by another tie-up.

In a soldier's life, the first hostile shell he hears is always a thing to remember, and

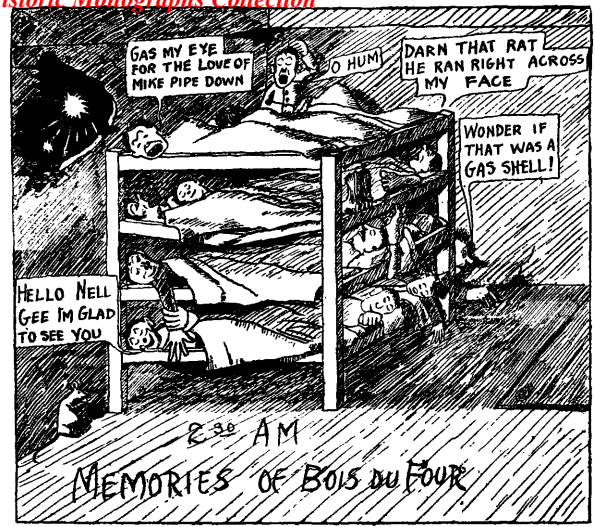
it was on this day that we first heard the long drawn whine of shrapnel. There are no statistics available as to where that shell burst nor did we wait to gather them. Instead we went into immediate retirement in a near by trench which was densely populated with others who judged it advisable to go away from where they were, among them a lieutenant accompanied by his horse. While we remained there arguing as to "how near the damn thing hit," the usual idiot howled "Gas!" and obedient to the instructions received in training days we held our breath and adjusted our masks in something under six counts. We waited patiently for the cry of "all clear" while our eye-pieces blurred and saliva gurgled in our mouth-pieces, and at last came to the usual conclusion of the American soldier that gas is preferable to a slow death by strangulation in the "small box respirator." Carefully removing our masks we found the air polluted by nothing worse than a French cigar in the mouth of a passing Poilu and thus rather undramatically ended our first experience of shell fire.

During the afternoon Major Gausmann rode out to inspect our work. He dismounted and left his horse standing in a field beside the road. As he stood talking to Major Judge there came a sudden moan of an

approaching shell, followed by a terrific explosion. We had a vision of a cloud of dust and dirt. Our Major's horse reared convulsively on his hind legs and we waited to see no more. When we emerged from the ditch we found the horse badly perforated with shrapnel and in a dying condition. The incident was closed by a bullet which put the animal out of its misery.

The next day we moved camp to a woods near Mamey. While we were clearing a space for a picket line a sudden sputter of machine guns from overhead caused us to look up. As we stared, a big observation balloon which hung like a mammoth sausage over our heads suddenly burst into flames and a rapidly diminishing speck in the sky showed where some daring German aviator, with the consciousness of duty well performed was scooting for the Fatherland. Another speck dropped like a stone from the balloon, then hung and wavered in the air as the parachute opened and at last drifted lazily off behind a clump of trees. We closed our mouths which had been open for some five minutes and remarked in chorus, "Some show!"

While in camp near Mamey we continued our work on the road without further incident worthy of notice. On September 17th



we moved camp to Bois du Four, near Thiacourt, the site of an abandoned German camp. With customary thoroughness the late occupants had turned this stretch of woodland into a veritable city of comfortable dugouts, roofed with corrugated iron and equipped with electric lights and easy furniture. There were bowling alleys for Fritzie's recreation and beer gardens for his intoxication and a neat well-kept cemetery for him when his work of spreading Kultur was over. The lanes that wound through the forest were marked with signboards bearing the resounding names of "Kaiser Wilhelm Strasse" or "Kron Prinz Strasse," and the like. On one of these some Yankee had scrawled "Pershing Avenue—Now and Ever."

In their hurried retreat the Germans had left behind large quantities of all kinds of ammunition as well as a few pieces of artillery and machine guns. They had also abandoned all kinds of engineering supplies, corrugated iron, barbed wire, picks, shovels and tools of all description. The presence of such a wealth of military stores is in itself a crushing denial of the characteristic German statement that the St. Mihiel salient had been abandoned for purely strategic reasons.

This captured Home for Aged and Decrepit Huns now bristled with the muzzles of the guns of the artillery who jointly occupied the woods with us. We found them to be a fine set of fellows and aside from a slight disagreement when we tried to appropriate corrugated iron from the roofs of their officers' dugouts to those of our own, got on with them very well indeed.

When we first moved into the Bois du Four we made our camp in a patch of woods so thickly choked with underbrush that the use of bolos was necessary in order to clear a place to pitch a tent. At night gas-guards were stationed around the camp with rattles, which, when provoked into action, emitted fiendish noises calculated to arouse the soundest sleeper. No night passed without the prolonged and frequent use of these instruments. A gas alarm usually starts in the following manner: A shell explodes near somebody's dugout. The gas guard sniffs and smells something peculiar. (You usually do near the front). It may be a dead horse in need of immediate burial or a pair of socks in equal need of cremation but his not to reason why. With all the strength of his lungs he bawls "gas!" and makes the night hideous with his rattle. The next guard takes up the cry and the next and

next, and in five minutes the surrounding country is filled with hellish clamor and with perhaps half a division struggling into masks.

Daily we continued our back-breaking work on the roads. The scene of our labors was now in the town of Regnieville. Once upon a time Regnieville was probably a pleasant enough little village but the hammering of four years of warfare had left it a disjointed heap of ruins. A lack of stone forced us to use most of what remained on the roads so the few remaining walls of Regnieville were pulled down and utilized to make life easier and speech less profane for the constant stream of traffic that moved ever toward the front.

North of Regnieville the Germans had contrived an ingenious trap to halt the first rush of supplies and ammunition to the front line. The road had been excavated to a depth of fifteen or twenty feet and the cavity thus made, bridged with a flimsy structure of boards. This when covered with dirt gave the appearance of a perfectly solid road bed. It became necessary to construct a solid road around this trap, which, it may be mentioned, did not work. This was in itself a work of no little difficulty as the trucks which constantly passed over the road had

turned the detour into a foot deep slough of mud.

In fact, the whole surrounding country literally teemed with similar devices for delaying the advance of pursuing troops. At a short distance from the laboriously constructed false road already mentioned, a twisted mass of metal showed where a "tank trap" had done its work. The fields were littered with hand grenades, some of which when picked up were found to be attached to mines which exploded with disastrous results. Gathering souvenirs was also a hazardous pastime, the peculiar German mind being fertile in inventions designed to blow the too-curious Yankee into Kingdom Come.

Work on any road in the neighborhood of the front is often monotonous, but seldom altogether without incident. The constant procession of motor trucks which roar past; the laboring ration wagons and water carts which toil by drawn by that useful and sometimes blood-thirsty animal, the government mule; the groups of soldiers, unshaven, tired and dirty who filter back from the lines for a few days' rest, all form an ever-changing picture which attracts the eye. Once in a while a group of prisoners, either captured at the front or discovered hiding

in a dugout, flocked past us. Amid one such group trudged an old woman, haggard and careworn, ill-clad and sorrowful, with a basket on her back containing her pitifully few possessions. Beside her a little girl limped painfully along. A man laden with a heavy bundle completed the trio—three generations released from the oppression of the German invader.

So day after day the work went on. During this time we suffered our first casualties. Private Ryall Gibbs was wounded by shell fire on September 14th and on September 19th Private Eugene Lefeve, familiarly known as "Frenchy" was also slightly wounded by shrapnel. At this time also Lt. Hawk, who had gained for himself the respect and esteem of every man in E company, was transferred to the 7th Engineers, while Lt. King and Sgt. Swan left us to take up liaison work with the 309th Infantry.

On September 22nd we moved our camp to the side of a hill, overlooking a narrow gauge railroad which had been partially destroyed by the retreating Germans and was now being rapidly repaired by American Engineers. Here we constructed dugouts or rather shacks, out of whatever material came to hand. It is safe to say that no two of them were alike. Some were real dugouts

with roofs entirely covered with earth, but the majority were mere shanties, whose roofs and sides were of corrugated iron taken from the shrapnel proof trenches with which the Bois du Four was seamed and criss-crossed. It was no easy matter to free these sheets of iron from the layers of dirt and stone with which they were covered and drag them perhaps a quarter of a mile to camp. As is always the case there were loud disputes over the ownership of building material and the mournful wail of the unlucky buck who "left three sheets of that there iron right here when I went to mess—an' now where is it?" was heard with a frequency which grew tiresome.

Our food consisted of bacon and bread for breakfast with an occasional dab of rice; for dinner either stew or that grand old standby, corned beef; for supper "stars and stripes" (otherwise known as beans), coffee, black and strong of course accompanied every meal. On occasional red letter days we had steak or roast beef or perhaps pudding, while prunes, of the good old boarding house variety appeared frequently on the bill of fare. At this time a new system of "feeding the animals" was adopted, the different platoons falling in for mess in rotation. The platoon which was first in line

had the privilege of falling in first for seconds—if there happened to be any.

Canteen supplies—cigarettes, smoking tobacco, chewing gum and canned fruit, were sometimes obtained in limited quantities and a canteen was opened on the hill above camp, where those of us who were lucky enough to get there first could purchase those coveted luxuries. Sometimes we received an issue of cigarettes and Bull Durham and once a Y. M. C. A. girl appeared mysteriously out of the unknown and made cocoa for us. Aside from this one instance we saw very little of the Y. M. C. A., no workers of this organization being attached to our Regiment. A couple of boys, hearing a wild tale of a "Y" located at Thiacourt tramped up there one day. Upon encountering heavy shell fire they turned around and footed it trippingly for camp and thereafter went no more to Thiacourt unless duty called them.

The weather varied from rainy to rainier, with infrequent sunshiny days. On days when the sky was clear aeroplanes swooped and darted far above the treetops. Sometimes a plane returning from the lines dropped a dart bearing a message for the artillery and its receipt was usually acknowledged by the grumble of the guns. Fritz occasionally shelled unpleasantly near our camp on

which occasion we spent a few anxious moments in our dugouts. Lights were forbidden after supper and even the flare of a match was sufficient to call down on the offender the wrath of the First Sergeant.

As the last days of summer were succeeded by those of autumn, the weather grew colder and we were issued a third blanket together with our long-lost overcoats. Some of us installed stoves in our dugouts which were not of much benefit to us, as we could not light a fire in them at night. One of them blew up one morning with a roar like that of a high explosive shell. In fact the only benefit we derived from the labor of dragging these rickety affairs out of their former resting places in German billets was the satisfaction afforded by being able to toast a little bread occasionally.

Although we were within a mile or two of the lines, Reveille was still a regular morning function, absence from which meant extra detail. Great was the delight of the "bucks" when several sergeants missed this popular formation one morning and spent the day laboring in a ditch in consequence. Rifle inspection also took place and added to the joy of life by necessitating a little extra work every afternoon after we returned from the road. Life was no glad, sweet song even

if we were in a comparatively safe position, that is if any place within range of Fritzie's able and active gunners could be called safe.

Regimental guard was another affliction which descended like a crown of thorns upon the heads of the rank and file. The posts were many and far apart and were usually located in some impenetrable thicket where the corporal of the guard with his relief was wont to flounder in distracted search of the sentry, who was usually engaged in rending the heavens with queries as to why he was not relieved. By the time a relief was posted it was usually time for the first sentry relieved to go on post again.

No account of our activities in this front would be complete without reference to the constant succession of rumors which every day made the rounds of the dugouts. It must be borne in mind that at the front all rumors are supposed to be "official dope." Mr. Edison's gas and the Invasion of Italy having been abandoned, the rumor mongers concentrated their energies on a terrible barrage which was to last seventy-two hours and was apt to start any minute. We listened for it in vain. This particular bubble having burst, were our leading fictionists discouraged? Not they! A captured German officer had offered a hospital

orderly one hundred dollars for every shot fired after midnight of a certain date. We remember that night well and often wonder where that product of militarism gets his cigarette money now.

Occasionally we got hold of a copy of the New York Herald which gave us some inkling of how things were really going at the front. It is a peculiar fact that nobody knows less about the progress of a war than the men who are engaged in the operation. Most of the rumors, however, revolved around the probable date of the Division's departure for somewhere else. According to the pessimists we were to remain where we were and live a sort of Esquímau-like existence during the following winter. On the other hand the more optimistic liars held that, the war being nearly over, we were to march merrily to a seaport, there to receive our campaign hats and wait for the boat.

The news of Bulgaria's surrender, the first authentic bit of information we had received in some time, was hailed with general rejoicing. For the first time items began to appear in the paper indicating that the Central Powers' house of cards was upheld largely by twospots and that Austria's defection was imminent. Visions of a Christmas dinner in the States began to float before

our eyes and once in a while some hard-laboring buck was heard to mutter over his shovel: "No ma, I can't eat any more turkey."

Our activities were not entirely confined to road building as we put in several hard days' work at paving a water point, building a bathhouse and camouflaging, besides salvaging much barbed wire, stakes and engineering material from the deserted German trenches. Finally when on the noon of October 3rd we returned from work, we received orders to stay in our quarters that afternoon. At once we knew that something was up and were not surprised when toward evening orders came to pack up and prepare to move.

CHAPTER VIII

In the Meuse-Argonne Sector

At about 10:30 P. M. October 3rd, we took our last look at our homes of corrugated iron and after a small-sized riot over a box of hardtack which couldn't be taken along, filed silently out of the Bois du Four and down the quiet, ghostly road. Our route lay through Limey, with its gutted houses and empty streets where not even the bark of a dog greeted our entrance. Save for the presence of a lone M. P. the town was as empty as a shell. On and on we marched through the darkness, past ruined villages and darkened fields where hills and ruins were silhouetted against the distant horizon, lit up every now and then by flashes of artillery and Vary lights, until about 4:30 A. M., when the column halted in the Bois de la Reine. The next morning we slept late and were only aroused by the fragrant whiff of Bottinelli's slum, which brought us up to the kitchen at double time.

All day long we basked contentedly in the shade of the big trees, talking, smoking and listening to the familiar strain of the

Regimental Band. It sounded good to hear "The Darktown Strutters Ball," "The Stars and Stripes Forever," "A Baby's Prayer at Twilight" and other old favorites. And best of all, at night we lay down and slept a sleep undisturbed by the bellow of the panic stricken guard.

The following day we received a much-needed issue of new clothing and shoes, and in the afternoon struck tents, rolled packs and left the Bois de la Reine. We hiked twenty miles that night and camped on a hillside overlooking the ruined village of Mecrin. So tired were we that only the confirmed hash-hound limped down the hill to the kitchen to get a bucket of slum and a cup of coffee before turning in. We awoke in the morning to find the streets of Mecrin echoing to the tread of the Infantry. For hours the column of muddy olive drab wound through the town, the faces of the men seamed with weariness and their rifle butts still caked with the clay of the trenches. Many of them twirled German canes and once in a while an officer stalked by clad in a gorgeous fur overcoat which was obviously not of U. S. issue. Some of the companies were pitifully few in numbers, for shrapnel and machine guns had taken a heavy toll up beyond Thiacourt.

About noon a commissary truck rolled into town and halted only a short distance from our kitchen. Amid the cries of "Watch my mess kit," and "Lend me five francs" the cooks were left with poised ladles as a confused mob forsook the mess line and clamored around the tail-gate where two perspiring Q. M. privates dealt out candy, jam, cigarettes and cigars. All day long the attack kept up and only the departure of the last franc put an end to the onslaught. By the time we finally pulled out of town in the early twilight of an October day our packs were decorated fore and aft with dangling cans of jam, candy and cigars until we looked like walking confectionery stores.

During one of our hourly fall-outs, as we sat panting and cursing by the roadside there reached us the sound of distant cheering. It grew louder and louder until "D" company of our own Battalion up ahead of us took it up and we began to wonder audibly what the Hell had happened. "Official Telegram. Austria accepts peace on President Wilson's fourteen points," was the word passed along. Wow! what a cheer went up! Tired men shook hands and danced in the road and if there had been an estaminet around that prohibitionists' paradise, no one knows what would have happened.

Everybody braced up immediately and for as much as two miles excited discussions of the big news took the place of the usual grumbling. But after a time we subsided into our usual plod, plod and such remarks as we made had more to do with the duration of the hike than that of the war.

The billeting detail which had preceded us had given us solemn assurance that we did not have far to go that night and Sgt. Barry, the leader of that collection of unbridled imaginations, went so far out of his way as to come back five miles in order to tell us that we had only one mile to go. Billeting sergeants will have their little jokes—as we discovered after twenty miles of muddy roads. We encamped in an open field during a pouring rain, and as some protection against the elements was necessary we were forced to pitch tents without the aid of pins and poles. Sure it can be done. You carry a rifle and a knife, fork and spoon don't you?

In the morning the rain ceased and the sun came out, reviving our drooping spirits and drying our dripping clothing. We made our packs again and loafed about most of the afternoon, sleeping, talking and panhandling at the various company kitchens, whose smoke arose here and there about the field. An alarming rumor spread around.

"Lorries again, huh? Well, I'll be (deleted by censor)!" It was all too true. There were the little French camions wobbling down the road in a chugging column and there were the little Chink drivers hunched up in their woolly coats. We uttered a few low moans and prepared for the worst.

But our second trip by camions proved to be a remarkable improvement on our first—a circumstance which may have been due to the fact that, profiting by experience we stored our guns and packs away in a more systematic manner. In consequence although nobody had any too much room, there were fewer loud arguments and battered shins. We piled into the trucks about five o'clock and in a few minutes rolled off through the gathering dusk and the dripping rain. We talked a little, ate a little bully beef, smoked a lot of cigarettes and settled ourselves down for an all night's ride. About 10:30 P.M., just as we had fallen into a doze, the camions stopped with a jerk which almost precipitated us out of our seats, and a jabber of "Fini, Fini!" warned us that it was time to descend. So we clambered out onto the muddy road and got into our packs while the rain beat down upon our soggy overseas caps and trickled down our necks. In a short time the command of "Forward" was

given and we set off through the rain and darkness for camp. About 1:00 o'clock we halted in a wood and threw off our packs and in the mud and rain laid down to sleep.

In the morning we moved our camp to another part of the woods and barely got our tents pitched before a violent hailstorm beat them to the ground. "Nice place to come for a rest" said the company. "Whose woods have we wandered into anyway?" It soon developed that we were near Rarecourt on the outskirts of the Argonne—once more within the sound of the big guns. The three days we spent here may be passed over briefly. Rations were short, and monkey meat and chicken a la Thiacourt appeared with dismal regularity on the bill of fare. Moved by the pangs of hunger Joe Tremba wandered out into the recesses of the forest and ate several thousand toadstools. (He is still with us.) Most of us, however, strolled to the nearby kitchen of a regiment of colored engineers and bummed bread until the black and perspiring cook groaned: "If you all doan' keep away how I goin' to feed dese heah culled boys!"

On the second day of our sojourn in the woods we received a bath at Rarecourt. As the entire division was also scheduled to go through the baths that day, the allowance

of two drops of water per man which we received was probably liberal enough. As we came back the roads were choked with German prisoners and we heard rumors of another big drive up in the Argonne. By this time the theory that we were "going back for a rest" seemed to have been definitely abandoned.

On the afternoon of the 10th, rested and refreshed, we once more set the mud of the woodland roads squelching beneath our hobnails and skirting the town of Les Islettes marched ten miles to La Chalade. As we turned into the open field which was to be our camping place for the night somebody exclaimed, "Looks like Coney Island." And so it did. Every cook and K. P. who possessed a candle had lit it, in a praiseworthy attempt to locate a suitable kitchen site as soon as possible and the result was a brilliantly lighted hillside which must have been visible for some miles. Cause and effect were not separated long. From overhead came the deep, full-throated drone which has no counterpart.

"There the son-of-a-gun comes" was the cry, followed by a stampede for the nearest ditch. The sinister drone continued as if a giant bee was buzzing over our heads and began to be punctuated by the sharp, vicious

cracks of bursting bombs. The lights went out as if controlled by a switch and for some minutes the entire regiment waited prayerfully for the daring aviator to finish his job and go home. At last the hum of his motor died away and with much relief we emerged from the various holes and ditches in which we had taken refuge and went on with our rudely interrupted preparations for bed.

Happily our sleep that night was not interrupted by any more visits from Fritz and we awoke in the morning unperforated by shrapnel. About noon we broke camp and resumed our march. The country began to bear a different aspect now. Abandoned trenches and barbed wire entanglements made their appearances; a Red Cross flag flapped from a ruined church, and a constant procession of trucks and ambulances bore evidence to the fact that we were nearing the front once more. After about an hour's hike we left the level road we had been following and toiled wearily up a hill whose slopes were honeycombed with dugouts and pitted with the scars of shell fire. From its summit gaunt, naked tree trunks stood out against the sky. All around was silence and desolation. This was the Argonne—the wildest region of France—a cross between a vol-

canic eruption and a section of hell set aside to cool.

We camped that night near Mountblainville in a tangled patch of woods, and on the following afternoon hiked to the vicinity of Apremont, where we made camp in an orchard. Right under our noses was an abandoned German garden, well stocked with potatoes, carrots, onions and all sorts of vegetables and some ten minutes after our arrival strange and wonderful stews were simmering over hastily built fires. The retreating Huns had also left behind them large quantities of straw which we rapidly transferred to the interior of our pup tents.

Our four days stay here was spent mainly in loafing around the camp and rummaging the nearby German dugouts for souvenirs. You could find anything in their commodious underground homes from a plate glass mirror to a detective story, while Fritzie's rifles, helmets and gas masks were as common as the most ardent souvenir hunter could wish. A certain amount of work was done on the roads, but as the regiment was momentarily awaiting orders to move we spent most of our time rolling and unrolling packs, as one false alarm succeeded another. At last on October 17th we broke

camp and moved to the vicinity of Chatel-Cheherey. We had barely unslung our packs when the appearance of the landscape was suddenly altered by a violent explosion which disrupted the face of the hill opposite our camp and precipitated a shower of stones and dirt upon our heads. When the smoke cleared away the figure of Pvt. Quinn was seen skimming over the landscape. Having become engaged in conversation with some French soldiers he had wandered too near the scene of the explosion, a mistake which he speedily remedied by departing "toute suite," carrying with him, however, several bruises from flying stones. The explosion came from a German mine which was set off either by a time fuse or an acid connection.

We had barely pitched our tents when orders came to strike them again and make up packs. At one o'clock we set out through the village of Chatel-Cheherey, which like most villages of the vicinity had been altered for the worse by the shells of both armies, and pursued our way over the hilly roads, littered with abandoned equipment and ammunition, to La Besogne. As we turned off the road and ascended the hill, which was to be the site of our camp, we received orders to proceed in single file at

intervals of five paces—our first intimation that we were under observation by the enemy.

As we were establishing ourselves in a gully which ran along the ridge of the hill, news reached us that we were going up the line that night to build foot-bridges across the Aire River. It proved to be no mere rumor, for after supper the company assembled, rifles were loaded and tools distributed, and under the dim light of the moon we filed out of camp and took the road to Cheviers. A trip to the front is an experience never to be forgotten. The ghostly shell-torn road, the silent groups of machine gunners or doughboys, the lumbering field kitchens, the chugging ambulances and the occasional passage of a stretcher, borne shoulder high with a still white face peering out from under the blankets, all combine to stamp upon the mind an indelible picture of war as it is, and not as it is painted. Shells shrieked overhead and burst with a crash beside the road as the German gunners sought hopefully for that battered thoroughfare and as we entered the huddle of blackened walls that were all that was left of the town of Cheviers, there came to our nostrils the sickly odor of gas.

Passing rapidly through this town we reached the banks of the Aire and set to work. For material we had to depend on what scattered planks and timbers we could find lying about. Nor when lumber was obtained was the actual construction of the bridges an easy matter, involving as it did the plunging into the icy waters of the stream and at the same time keeping one ear open for the screech of a shell. But heedless of wet and cold the boys swarmed into the river like beavers and working like fiends constructed four bridges within the short period of four hours.

These bridges were from 110 to 139 feet long and were thrown across the Aire between Cheviers and Grand Pre at intervals of about a quarter of a mile. Each platoon had its own bridge to construct, but the conditions encountered varied to a surprising degree. The first platoon under Sgt. Heath, working in the vicinity of Cheviers had a comparatively easy job. Their bridge was constructed on the ruins of an old bridge destroyed by the Germans and as the piles remained standing the greatest difficulty encountered was that of disentangling planking from the floating mass of wreckage. Nor did the fourth platoon under Sgt. Swan, a little farther downstream, experience the

difficulties which were encountered by the third and second.

The third platoon under Sgt. Allen were hampered in their work by the swiftness of the current and the ruins of a steel bridge, which made it impossible to find good bottom for "A" frames. That method of construction having been abandoned after some unsuccessful attempts, the expedient was finally adopted of spiking together a raft two feet wide and long enough to span the stream. This was done on the bank and the flooring then floated across the stream. Uprights nailed at one-third points kept the structure in place, while to give it the necessary buoyancy 3 x 4's about ten feet long on three-foot centers were placed underneath the flooring and at right angles to it.

Farther down the stream near Grand Pre similar difficulties were experienced by Sgt. Klem and the second platoon. Here some sunken pontoons made work difficult and as these hidden obstructions rendered it impossible to secure good bottom the same method was followed as by the third platoon. Only in this case it was necessary to saw the flooring in two, float one section across, moor it and join the other section to it. Uprights nailed to the sides completed the structure.

It would be impossible to chronicle all the incidents of that eventful night. The brief outline given above can give little idea of the indescribable confusion which accompanies work done under cover of darkness, with salvaged material and within range of the artillery of an active and vigilant enemy. Throughout the long evening the banks of the Aire presented a scene of feverish activity in marked contrast to the stillness of the infantry in the support line along the railroad. In fact, most of them seemed rather to resent our presence as likely to disturb "Jerry" into unpleasant activity and were loud in their execrations of the "crazy engineers." They seemed to agree, however, that ours was an unenviable job and one doughboy in particular after observing a shell burst dangerously near a couple of despised "land improvers" announced decisively, "T' hell with that stuff; give me my little hole in the hill!" and started for the comparative safety of the front line. Most of us shared his desire for a hole to crawl in and pull in after us, for at irregular intervals the enemy shelled us methodically with high explosive and gas. In fact, so saturated was the river valley with choking fumes that it was difficult to determing whether you were being slowly gassed into

suffocation or whether it was just the normal state of the atmosphere. Luckily, however, we suffered no casualties—unless the sudden immersion of Sgt. Barenthaler's portly form in the waters of the Aire might be called one—and were all back in camp by 2:00 A. M.

In concluding the account of our activities that evening it may be stated that the bridges we built may not have been works of any particular architectural pretensions, but that they abundantly served their purpose—which is all that could be asked of any bridge—and that into the details of their construction went a degree of ingenuity and initiative, which reflects credit on the entire company, from the officers who directed the work to the tired, muddy "bucks" who trudged back to camp that night soaked to the skin and laid down to sleep in the mud of their shallow dugouts.

We slept late the next morning and spent the day in drying ourselves and our equipment in the sun. In the evening we returned to Cheviers and set about the construction of a bridge capable of sustaining the passage of light artillery and ambulances. There had been a pile bridge at this point but the Germans had completely demolished it by cutting every pile with explosives about eighteen inches above the water line. It

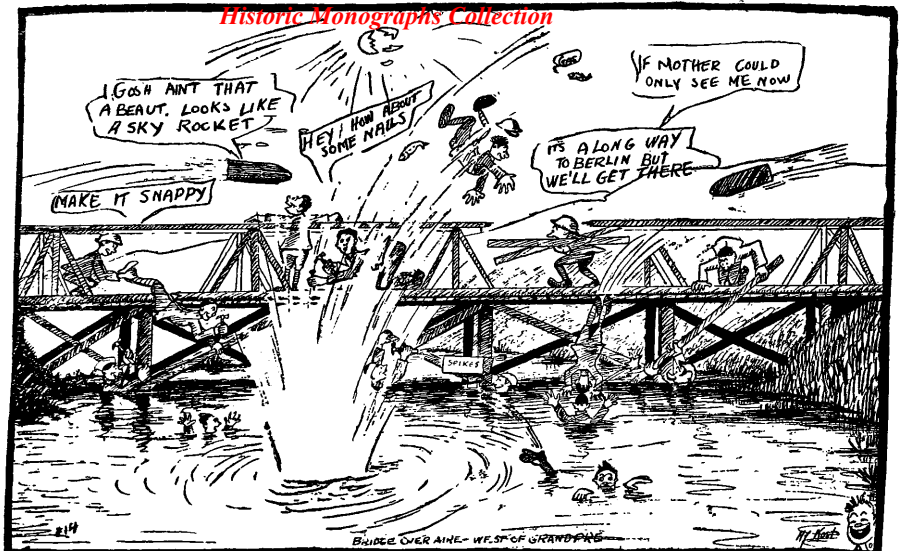
was decided to make use of the old piles by cutting them all to the same height, thereby saving considerable time and hard work. Five squads were engaged in the construction of the bridge, one to cut the piles, two to prepare the approach and two to gather material. For a short time the work went rapidly forward but suddenly the rattle of machine guns in the woods up ahead was drowned by a roar as of several express trains approaching at full speed, followed by crash after crash as the shells exploded along the river bank. This was not the perfunctory shelling of a road, the "well I suppose this has got to be done" kind of a bombardment, but a regular old-fashioned display of frightfulness. Shells plunged into the river, burst on the banks or crashed into the town itself. Everything in the vicinity was hit but the bridge itself and so near did the Kaiser's artillery come to it that men were knocked into the river by the force of the concussions while guns and belts laid along the bank were blown to pieces. Again and again we were driven from the job and again and again we returned, but at last it was decided that discretion was the better part of valor and we returned to camp. We suffered two casualties that night, Pvt.

Oates being severely gassed and Pvt. Genaitis wounded by shrapnel.

"Sounds a hell of a lot as if Germany wanted an armistice," was the general opinion as we drank our coffee that night around the field kitchen.

That same night four squads were sent out to construct single span bridges across two small streams and succeeded in making a satisfactory beginning, although the work was not completed for some days. We resumed work on the big bridge the next morning nothing daunted by the previous night's experiences and were once more greeted with the roar of shells. Substantial progress was made, however, all the piles being cut to the required height, and the work on the approaches completed without casualties. At noon orders were received that the bridge must be finished before October 20th, the following day.

The job was completed that night. We worked in shifts, each of the various details being sent out at different times and returning as soon as they had accomplished their part of the work. This course was probably decided upon to reduce possible casualties to a minimum and to avoid confusion. The route was also varied as much as possible. At 9:00 P. M. four squads were sent up to



put on the caps and cut the stringers. They were followed at 11:00 o'clock by four more squads who laid the flooring and set the guard rail. For once everything worked just as it does in the Engineer Field Manual and the last detail returned to camp at 2:00 A. M. with the welcome tidings of "Finish bridge." In the course of the evening 110 feet of planking was laid and spiked by four men in one hour. This will compare favorably with the work of any combat engineers in the A. E. F. Our work on these bridges was the result of favorable commendation from the commanding General:

HEADQUARTERS, 78TH DIVISION,
NOVEMBER 14, 1918.

From: Commanding General, 78th Division,

To: Commanding Officer, 303d Engineers,

Subject: Construction of the Bridges at Grand Pre.

1. Please convey to the members of A, B and E companies of your regiment who worked on the bridges at Grand Pre, my thanks for their good work and my sincere compliments upon the courage and devotion shown by them in their work

under heavy machine gun, high explosive and gas shell fire.

2. While my attention has been particularly drawn to the coolness and fortitude of these companies, I am not unmindful of the excellent and vital work done by the remainder of your regiment upon other bridges and roads and take this opportunity to make of record my high approval of the manner in which the roads, pertaining to this Division, were opened up and maintained during the advance through the Argonne Forest.

J. H. McRAE,
Major General,
Commanding.

This night's work ended our activities in the St. Juvin-Grand Pre sector for the time being. We rested the next day (which happened to be Sunday) and on October 21st broke camp and left La Besogne. We left the hillside where we had camped by a roundabout way and thereby luckily escaped having several casualties, for Fritz took this occasion to land several shells among the company which was hiking to relieve us. Again "E" company luck held good. We

Mess Time (*with action*)

hiked about eight miles that afternoon to a wood near Lancon which teemed with comfortable German billets built terrace fashion on the precipitous slope of the wooded hills. A detachment of French troops, however, established a prior claim to these luxurious quarters, and after clambering wearily up the hill we were forced to tumble ingloriously down again and pitch our tents beside the narrow gauge railroad which was to be the scene of our labors. We remained in Lancon four days. During this time we worked hard on the methodically wrecked railroad, putting in new rails and ties and reballasting the roadbed. A regiment of colored engineers was also engaged in the same work and substantial progress was made in putting the road in running order.

But we were not yet done with the Aire River. On October 22nd the first platoon under command of Lt. Soden and Sgt. Heath left to assist "B" company in throwing more foot bridges across at Grand Pre. Grand Pre at this time, although captured once, was still a sort of "No Man's Land" where American and German patrols frequently clashed. The Germans had not as yet been dislodged from the wooded heights beyond the town, while our line ran along the railroad that roughly paralleled

the river. This brief description of the existing situation is necessary to an understanding of the night's events. Our way led through the badly battered town of Lancon where German signs still stared at us from the tottering walls and American Engineers were busily engaged in cleaning up the debris with which the streets were choked. Outside the town we passed the usual procession of mud-bespattered trucks, the usual casuals looking for their outfits and the usual M. P. who never knows the road to anywhere. Every wooded hilltop bristled with guns and in the open fields hundreds of artillery horses cropped placidly at the scanty grass.

A K. of C. truck which supplied us with a welcome stock of cigarettes, chewing gum and writing paper was the occasion of a welcome halt at the conclusion of which we tramped off again, jaws working in cadence. Toward the close of the afternoon we turned off the road and stumbled over a muddy path, skirting the base of a hill from whose summit the big guns thundered without pause and at whose foot an anti-aircraft gun pointed its vicious nose inquisitively at the sky. We found "B" company comfortably established in an abandoned German prison camp. Here we had supper—

coffee, corned beef hash and bread and jam—and at the conclusion of our meal sat down to wait for darkness. After nightfall we marched silently out in single file loaded with tools, and preceded by "B" company set out for Grand Pre.

Passing through Senuc, which was crowded with French transport wagons, we moved in dead silence down the darkened road, lit only by the rays of a sickly moon. Once in awhile the flash of a gun on the horizon and a distant boom told of the never-ending mouthing of the artillery. On and on we went until a sudden choking sensation assailed our throats and a familiar musty smell reached our nostrils. Word was quickly passed down the line to put on gas masks and amid the confusion which such an alarm always occasions at night we dove into them and resumed our march. Stumbling and groping over the wretched road, loaded with tools and visaged like prehistoric animals we must have presented a sight only to be duplicated in a bad attack of delirium tremens. When we finally reached Grand Pre we crossed the railroad track and taking shelter behind a warehouse then doing service as a first aid station, removed our masks and wiped our foreheads. At this precise moment a large consignment of high explo-

sives arrived from the general direction of Germany, passing over the first aid station with an angry whine and descending in the field beyond with a loud explosion—an incident which fitly preceded an interesting evening.

Losing no time we immediately set about transporting "A" frames, balks and heavy planking to the scene of action. We crossed the track again and proceeded up the road a little way, finally turning off into a field as level as a billiard table and almost destitute of cover. The moon emerged from the clouds and under its rays the tall, slender trees that dotted the field, the heavily burdened figures that crossed and re-crossed it, and even the battered roofs of Grand Pre stood out with startling distinctness. It was distinctly a peaceful scene, in appearance at least—but the old saying about appearance being deceitful was destined to prove true once more.

As soon as we reached the bank of the river, "B" company went to work on their partly completed bridges while we kept them supplied with material from the dump behind the first aid station. When a sufficient supply of lumber had been accumulated we set to work on a bridge of our own. About this time the whistle of the German shells rose

suddenly to a shriller note, and from the river bank to the railroad and the first aid station the air was full of the angry crash of high explosive and the peevish squeal of shrapnel. Through this rain of shells the carrying detail, loaded with planking and "A" frames, had to pick their way, while the carpenters engaged in the actual construction of the bridges were frequently compelled to drop their tools and seek protection along the river bank.

But in spite of the previous bombardment (which the official communiques would probably call slight artillery activity) the work went on steadily. Our progress was hampered by the difficulty of finding good bottom for the "A" frames in the muddy waters, but this obstacle was finally surmounted and by one o'clock we had the stream partly bridged. As "B" company had finished its work about this time we collected our tools and hiked back by a roundabout way, skirting the river for some distance. When we reached the gully where "B" company was camped we roused the cook who accompanied us and obtained a cup of coffee and a slice of bread and jam. Having consumed this we toiled wearily back to camp and arrived there just in time for breakfast, after twenty-four consecutive hours of work and hiking.

On the third day of our stay in camp near the narrow gauge we finally moved into the billets on the hillside, the French having deserted them and gone on their way. We found them to be very comfortable homes, equipped in some cases with stoves and bunks. They were built into the hillside in tiers, which were connected with each other by rickety stairways. These latter zigzagged up and down the hillside in a bewildering manner and since our kitchen was located on top of the hill, the usual rush for mess was attended by feats of agility worthy of a mountain goat. It was easy to become lost after dark in this maze of precipitous paths and frequently the night was rent by mournful wails of "Where do I live—for God's sake where do I live?"

On the morning of October 26th we left our comfortable billets and moved back to La Besogne, following a roundabout route through the woods which finally brought us out near our old camp on the hillside. The next day the entire company went to work constructing a corduroy road at some distance from the camp. It was hard work felling and splitting the big trees and dragging them out to the road, but we welcomed it as a change from the eternal pick and shovel. Aside from the arrival of an occasional

shell—one of which was the cause of an exciting race between Sgt. Scanlon and "Louie," the K. P., for shelter beneath the field kitchen—the next few days passed without incident. During this time a detail under Lt. King and Sgt. Morgan was attached to "B" company, who were still at work on heavy traffic bridges at Grand Pre.

Persistent rumors of the "big drive" spread throughout camp and it was evident from the amount of artillery concentrated in the woods nearby that there was something up. There was much air activity; duels between Allied and German planes were frequent and on several occasions enterprising Hun aviators dropped propaganda amongst us which painted in glowing colors the joyous life we would lead if we would only march across "No Man's Land" chanting "Kamerad." In view of the fact that the Central Powers were obviously at the end of their rope their choice bits of literature struck us as a joke.

On the night of October 31st the fitful growl of the artillery changed suddenly to a thunderous roar and we knew as we lay in our tents looking out at the flaming horizon that the big smash had come. As dawn was breaking we were awakened by the shrill blast of the whistle and hastily slinging on

our belts, rifles and gas masks took once more the old familiar road to Grand Pre. From the wooded hills in the distance came the continuous chatter of machine guns; against the graying sky artillery flares and Vary lights shone like the eyes of enormous wild cats; while ever there beat against the ear drum the steady hammering of the Allied artillery as it poured a deluge of high explosives and gas into the German positions.

We turned off the road just before it enters Cheviers and filed silently down the railroad track past the shallow fox-holes of our former support line with their litter of blankets, shoes and all the thousand and one other things which the doughboy does *not* take with him when he goes over the top. Here and there a machine gunner loafed beside his piece, staring discontentedly at the distant hills.

We crossed the track at last and entered the town which the German artillery was systematically pounding to pieces. The air was full of whistling shrapnel and falling tile and by the time we reached the center of the town, the shelling became so severe that we withdrew to the cover of the railroad embankment. There we met Lt. Borneman and Cpl. Folsom, who with a small detail had been exploring the roads around Grand

Pre for German traps and mines since early in the morning, under continuous and heavy fire.

Our kitchen had arrived opportunely in a shelled gulley in the road near by and after a welcome meal of "sowbelly" and bread we returned to the railroad cut. There we crouched for a couple of hours until orders were received to enter the town again and clean the streets of the mass of debris with which they were choked. Shells were still crashing into the town, but in spite of all Fritzie's efforts the men stuck doggedly to their jobs and completed by four o'clock the work of rendering the streets free of passage for the artillery. Our task was not accomplished without casualties. Five were wounded by the explosion of a single shell—Sgt. Adams, Privates Greatehouse, Koerner, Harrison and Loderback. Shortly after four we returned to camp, leaving a detail from the first platoon under Cpl. Hall to patrol the town and repair any damage that might be done to bridges or roads during the night.

On the following day we returned to Grand Pre and continued our work. The day passed without incident. It was hard to determine just how the drive was progressing from the disjointed accounts which filtered back from the front line from time to time,

one doughboy being of the opinion that the 78th was "all cut to pieces," and another equally sure that the Huns were in full retreat. We returned to camp that afternoon, tired out and badly in need of sleep.

But there was no sleep for us that night. The German line had broken at last. About five o'clock a runner came panting in with orders to advance. Amid hurry and bustle packs were made up once more and we hot-footed it toward Cheviers. Upon our arrival in that pleasant village we piled into motor trucks and rumbled away into the night, on the wildest joyride ever indulged in by a victorious army. The fields beyond Grand Pre were a scene of indescribable confusion. Infantry, machine gunners, engineers and men of the Signal Corps stood around in groups, wondering what to do next. One question was on everyone's lips: "Where the devil is Fritz?" Where was he! That was the question. That morning he had been putting up a stiff resistance and now he was gone. Not even a sound of a gun broke the stillness of the dark, rainy night as we jolted over the road which was jammed with trucks laden with reinforcements. We passed a mine crater which a detail under Lt. Borneman was heroically laboring to bridge, and through the rain we plowed our way for-

ward. At last the convoy halted with a sudden jerk and we piled out. One thought was in our minds; we had reached the front line and were going into action. Instead of which we about faced and marched back to the Bois de Loges where we camped overnight.

The next day we broke camp and moved to a wood south of Briquenay, doing some road work along the line of march. The work was done under difficulties, however, owing to the heavy stream of traffic that was moving up the road. For the reserves were pouring in at last. Long columns of khaki crowded the fields and jammed the roads and every kind of motor vehicle imaginable, some carrying steel pontoons or observation balloons, were lumbering along the road on the heels of the scattered German Army.

After a good night's sleep we set out once more over the deeply rutted roads, littered with dead horses, wrecked trucks, abandoned piles of ammunition and the usual wreckage of a retreating army. A few deceased Germans lent variety to the scene. Three kilos brought us to Authe, our farthest point of advance, where a white shirt fluttered from the church tower—a pathetic supplication to the Allied artillery from the few old women

and little boys who inhabited the town. All the rest of the population, in accordance with a pleasant German custom, had been driven away to Germany like a herd of dumb cattle. Those who remained greeted us with bewildered expressions of people awakened from a four years' nightmare of brutal oppression. It seemed hard for them to believe that at last they were free from their gray-clad overlords and were once more under the protection of their own beloved tricolor, and the sight of the thousands upon thousands of olive drab figures that poured up the road toward Sedan caused them to open their eyes in wonder. But they greeted us warmly and found to their ardent satisfaction that the tales of American savagery told them by the Boche were the reverse of true.

We were quartered in the town in billets vacated by the Germans, but not by the cooties, and spent a comfortable night's rest in regular "honest-to-God" bunks. As our ration wagon and our Supply Sergeant had become all tangled up in the traffic down around Grand Pre we were forced to exist on a simple and nourishing diet of bully beef and hardtack for a day or two, eked out with handouts from neighboring kitchens. The town was crowded with troops of all divisions and all descriptions, for the tide

of olive drab was at flood now and even the stragglers who toiled along the road looking for their units were a respectable army in themselves.

That night was marked by two forms of enemy activity—an air raid which did no particular damage, and a violent attack on "E" company by some thousands of German cooties. It is only fair to state that the cooties made a much better stand than the German Army, which had so basely deserted them. On the afternoon of our arrival we went to work building a temporary bridge over the river which flows past just outside the town. The original bridge had been completely destroyed, but a few hours hard work resulted in the construction of a bridge which would serve its purpose temporarily. When this makeshift structure had been completed we started on a heavy traffic bridge of more permanent character. Two days of hard work and bad weather saw the finish of the job. Meanwhile the 78th Division had been relieved at last and our own infantry had started back for their well-earned rest. The town was crowded with weary but happy doughboys who brought the glad tidings that so far as the 78th was concerned the war was over. At noon of November 7th the last spike was driven in

the bridge and we too turned our faces away from the lines.

Back over the weary roads we trudged—carrying only light packs. It seemed like a return of the old days to have our blanket rolls carried in a truck once more. It is worthy of note that Pvt. Albright's equipment on this march consisted of a loaf of bread to which he clung with the desperation of a drowning man. We hiked some ten miles that afternoon, reaching the little village of Beffu toward nightfall.

In the morning after a good night's sleep we set out once more. Strange rumors began to appear—rumors so utterly nonsensical that we greeted them with scornful laughter. So the war was over, huh! That was a good one! Nor could the stories of M. P.'s or stragglers dent our pessimistic hides. We had heard that story too often. But at last, conviction began to soak in. For if the war wasn't over why did every French soldier we met wear a broad grin? Since our arrival in France we had seen much of the little bearded men in faded blue and without exception their faces had borne the look of men without hope. But now each Poilu's face was rent with a smile which stretched from ear to ear and from his lips came the triumphant words "Fini la guerre!"

"If they say it's 'fini' it must be!" was the general comment.

We slept that night in Montbalinville where Lt. Breese, who had been absent for some time at the Engineer Training School, rejoined the company. Our quarters as usual were in an abandoned German camp and so comfortable were they that we hailed with joy the rumor that we were to rest here for a day or two. But on the next morning in a drizzling rain the regiment took the road again. Before proceeding far we made the discovery that although "la guerre" might be "fini" and German delegates on their way to sue for an armistice, the weight of our packs remained the same. It was a long tiresome march that we made that day through the dripping forest with its splintered trees and sad crop of little white crosses, and we were glad when we came out at last into the open country. After a hike of about 12 miles we reached the town of Les Islettes where we billeted in a large mansion which had evidently seen better days as a hotel. Our kitchen was A. W. O. L. again, so we brazenly sought the hospitality of a casual kitchen whose fires flamed just across the road and after eating all they would let us, returned to our billets and slept the sleep which only a tired man can appreciate.

On the following day we received a bath and a change of underwear. This underwear when issued to us was supposed to have been as thoroughly purged of cooties as Grand Pre was of Germans when the 78th marched in. Like the doughboys in the latter case we "found out different." In the course of the afternoon we discovered a Salvation Army canteen where those of us who were still lucky enough to have a few scattered francs left, stocked up with cakes, chocolate and cigarettes.

That night our slumbers were rudely interrupted by a modern Paul Revere, mounted on a spirited motorcycle, who dashed madly through the town yelling at the top of a very excellent pair of lungs, "The armistice is signed!" With shouts of "Get off that stuff!" "Where'd you get that stuff?" "Take that man's name!" we rushed to the windows. But he was gone. From farther down the street came a volley of pistol shots, but whether the owner of the revolver was attempting to celebrate or trying to shoot the bearer of the glad tidings no man knoweth. Grumbling "same old stuff" we returned to bed.

The joke of it all was that the report was true. The next day as we marched through St. Mennehould a K. of C. Secretary (for

some reason we seemed to place more reliance on his words than on those of any one else) confirmed the rumor, and if that was not enough a stray copy of the Herald was sufficient to convince the most skeptical. The armistice was really signed, and without delay Sgt. Heath hastened to collect 100 francs from Cpl. Nassau, who shelled out quite cheerfully. Armistice bets, it may be remarked are the only class of wagers which are paid with a smile. After a short hike we reached Dampierre where we were billeted in a large and airy barn, whose owner was in a perpetual state of fear lest he should see his property go up in smoke before his eyes. Consequently we were forbidden to smoke in or near our billets, an order which caused much profanity among the cigarette smokers in the company (that classification including everybody in the outfit except the mules).

But more trouble was in store for us. After two days of rest we returned to the toilsome grind of "squads right and left" and those who flattered themselves that now that the war was over the trials of a buck private were also "fini" found to their sorrow that the I. D. R. knows nothing of armistices. From the moment when the forgotten strains of "first call" brought us out of the straw until twilight was ushered in by

"retreat" we drilled, drilled and drilled. Once more our gas masks still damp from immersion in the Aire River were explained to us; once more our rifles were cleaned and polished for inspection and freed from a liberal coating of Grand Pre mud; and to cap everything came a regimental inspection and review. Equipment was checked up, a proceeding which involved many laughable incidents—especially when tent pins and poles were the subject of inquiry. No, we didn't exactly rest in idleness at Dampierre. In fact, the only thing we really enjoyed about our five days stay in that cold and dreary locality was the arrival of our August pay.

And yet those days were not without their value. They brought us back to the old routine as nothing else could. They may be described as a sort of "Gold Cure" for the delirium tremens of the Argonne. By the 17th of November when we finally left Dampierre we had recovered from the excitement of the preceding month and aside from the presence of a few man-eating cooties had left behind all traces of our exciting experience in the St. Juvin-Grand Pre sector.

CHAPTER IX

At Les Laumes

Sunday, November 17th at 7:30 A. M., we broke camp and hiked with full packs from Dampierre to St. Mennehould, about five kilometers. Here we received our first shock from the sight of hundreds of returned French prisoners, released from German prison camps upon the signing of the Armistice just one week previous. Among them were a few women and children, refugees, who had been confined in towns held by the Huns and sharing an existence perhaps worse than the soldier prisoners. Their clothing and uniforms generally were of nondescript pattern and styles, faded and patched beyond imagination. Their appearance certainly did not add to our appreciation of the German "Kultur." They were simply ghosts of their former selves. The Red Cross, ministering angel to a devastated world and synonymous with care and comforts in all afflictions, was looking after their needs, feeding and caring for them until they could entrain for destinations that would place them among friends and relations and happier surroundings.

We too, were not slow in introducing ourselves to the young American lady who spoke French so fluently, and before entraining, were well refreshed with hot chocolate and sandwiches. Just before "All Aboard" was sounded a "Coolie" put in his appearance and bought a carton of cigarettes from an enterprising "Yank." He thought so well of his five-franc bargain that he sought for more cigarettes. Another carton was immediately produced and the Chinaman handed over another five francs, only to discover that he had been frisked and had bought his own cigarettes a second time. His lamentations were loud and long, but to no avail. The old gag worked again—not one of us could "comprez." A freight train pulled in about this time with "beaucoup" straw in several cars and as the ride threatened to be a long and cold one in the famous "40 Hommes, 8 Chevaux," we pitched in and transferred the straw from the late arrival to our combination day-coach, sleeper and dining car, the whistle shrieked and we were off at 11:45 A. M.

Heading south, we stopped at Birnville in the evening, lined up on the platform and were issued hot coffee containing a taste of cognac. Why these people spoil cognac with coffee or vice versa, we have been unable to determine.

Still travelling south, our engine gave a final spasmodic gasp at the little town of Chateau-Villan at 9:30 P. M. and she must have sat back on her haunches because, true to railroading methods in France, there was nothing done to relieve the situation until daylight. In peace times a soldier's appointments are never very weighty, so one night's delay caused little criticism. Another locomotive took us in tow while we were enjoying our bully beef and hardtack breakfast, so that at 2:45 P. M., we arrived at our destination—Les Laumes, Cote d'Or, France, on Monday afternoon, November 18th.

Our billeting non-com, Sgt. Jim Barry, had preceded us several days and wonder of wonders, he had succeeded in obtaining billets right in town. Negro engineers had partly finished a barracks capable of housing about eighty men, which we completed and occupied, the rest of us being put in vacant apartments with the townspeople as close neighbors. Les Laumes received us with open arms and high prices, the latter being nothing new for us, and so, after months of life in shelter halves pitched in woods, fields, mud-holes, trenches, etc., the old town looked like heaven to us, and we minded not the high prices (as long as we had francs in our pockets). Most of the men flocked to the

stores as soon as packs were unslung, and if the setting sun winks as mythology says it does, it must have winked and shook its head at this town whose stores were depleted to the satisfaction of the soldiers craving for sweets and to the chagrin of Dr. Dwyer, who doled out an extra supply of C. C. pills on the following morning to relieve several platoons of abused stomachs. Whether the officers suffered the fatigue and intestinal uprising that overwhelmed the "poor buck," deponent sayeth not, but be that as it may, we spent the next two or three days in recuperating from our orgy.

Then came the first days of drill, close order in the A. M. and open order in the P. M., as the war was over, all accepted this burden with camouflaged interest. Lt. King added a little attraction to our second day's drill by hiking the company to the top of the plateau in Alesia on the brow of which is erected a gigantic bronze statue of Vercingetorix the Gaulic chieftain, revered almost sacredly among the many heroes of that historic country. This monument was erected in 1860 during the reign of Napoleon III as a memorial to the men who probably had more to do with the history of the Gauls and their successors, the present French population, than any other one man with

the possible exception of Napoleon. It was on that very same plateau in the year 52 B. C. that Vercingetorix and his army of Gauls were forced to surrender to Caesar and his hosts during the Roman invasion. Much evidence of the Roman occupation is still to be seen around Alesia. A well-ordered museum in town contains hundreds of weapons, statuary, chariot and harness accoutrements, pottery and coins taken from the "Diggings," from which place additional relics have been unearthed by curious Doughboys during their regime in that locality. Remnants of the Roman wall around the old city of Alesia are still to be seen and when one considers the mammoth task that Caesar had to perform in order to dislodge the Gauls, one cannot help but compare the recent conflict with that of the long-dead Roman and Gaulic warriors. Ambitions that led Caesar on his historic invasion and his lust for power paralleled with the desires of the despicable ex-kaiser, should be a lesson to every wide-awake American. The present day boundaries of the several countries are living evidence that their ambitions were misdirected. Caesar lived his short span and died. The ex-kaiser is a man without a country today.

Here too, in Alesia, was born and lived St. Reine, martyr, who because of her Chris-

tian belief and refusal to marry a pagan was beheaded on a spot which is now the central part of the present town. History tells us that a spring gushed out on the spot of her decapitation, the curative waters of which are used to this day in a near by hospital. Each year during the summer a pageant is enacted in her memory and a beautiful church and monument pay fitting tribute to the Saint.

Within one hundred yards of our barracks, at Les Laumes, there is a bridge still giving service which was built during the latter days of the Roman Empire about 840 A. D. The remarkable thing about this bridge is its utter lack of keystone. Surely those early artisans built well.

We, as engineers, were naturally called upon to provide comforts for the other units of the Division so that life in the area might be somewhat more attractive to the khaki tribe than it had been for the preceding half year at the front while we were keeping "Jerry" stepping along, and to that end we installed a power saw in the local railroad yard and sawed lumber and fabricated 5,000 bunks to the tune of three shifts a day, eight hours each. All this work, however, did not block our chances of enjoying leave

and our first contingent of twenty-one men left for Vals les Bains on November 24th.

They were the envy of every man in the company as they entrained, but as we are all one big family, they were given a rousing send-off and their going boded well for all of us, for the very fact of "Leave" being instituted, held out a promise for every mother's son of us as rapidly as accommodations could be secured. In the meantime a reconnaissance section was started with Sgt. 1st Class Allen in charge of our section under the tutelage of Sgt. 1st Class Garrison from 303d Topographical Office. The roads in and around the territory were all surveyed both with allidade and prismatic compass so that not an inch of this locality was left unmapped, including roads, lanes, buildings, railroads, woods, bridges, and even the hills and valleys, for running contours was just as easy as "snapping it up" when "Jimmie" says "Fall in!" In the midst of the saw mill job the first leave contingent returned and were loud in their praises of Vals les Bains. Another "leave bunch" departed for Aix les Bains a few days later. This program has been faithfully carried out so that in successive order detachments of our company have promenaded in style and spent "beaucoup" francs in La Bourboule, Monte

Carlo, Nice and Grenoble, all agreeing on return that Uncle Sam's heart was in the right place. The privilege of a seven days vacation (not counting travelling time) with all expenses paid, in these garden spots of France has given us an entirely new and unbiased idea of France and her people. Had any of us embarked for the United States previous to enjoying "leave" the impression we would have carried back with us would not do justice to this historic country with its many honorable scars of past wars, its monuments, castles, feudal estates and ruins. Where is the red-blooded man or woman who had not longed for a trip to the Riviera, that fringe of Southern France which is washed by the deep blue Mediterranean and on whose slopes, jutting out in fantastic angles are the most beautiful chateaux that money can produce? The hotels, too, and there are hundreds of them from Marseilles to Mentone, appear under the tropical sky like huge cameos set against the hills with their white facades and rich red tile roofs. Monaco is alone worth going to see. Monaco means to the reading public Monte Carlo, but after a visit to the place let us say that Monte Carlo means Monaco, for were it not for the casino in the city the principality could never have built the Oceangraphique Museum and the

Cathedral, both of which are of the finest of their kind in the world.

But sight-seeing tours have not been paramount in this area. From January up to the time of leaving we have had a detachment of sixty men under Capt. Golden and Sgt. 1st Class Swan working the stone quarry at Pont Chevigny near Semur. To the consternation of the slow-plodding natives they installed stone crushers and blasted out rock in such quantities that the roads throughout this district were all kept in repair and maintenance during our stay there. During the month of March, Capt. Golden and Sgt. 1st Class Swan were replaced by Lt. Breese and Sgt. 1st Class Morgan respectively. Another detachment of sixty men under Lt. King and Sgt. 1st Class Klem operated at Montbard, keeping the roads in shape in that vicinity. Lt. Soden was attached to the 156th Infantry Brigade and was in charge of all the roads in the vicinity, road work being the most important item, due to the heavy traffic imposed upon them by the motor trucks and wagons, necessitating constant attention. Sgt. 1st Class Adams with details from the Second Battalion built a mammoth Y. M. C. A. and Chaplain Farreley arranged a splendid program of entertainments for our benefit. Shortly

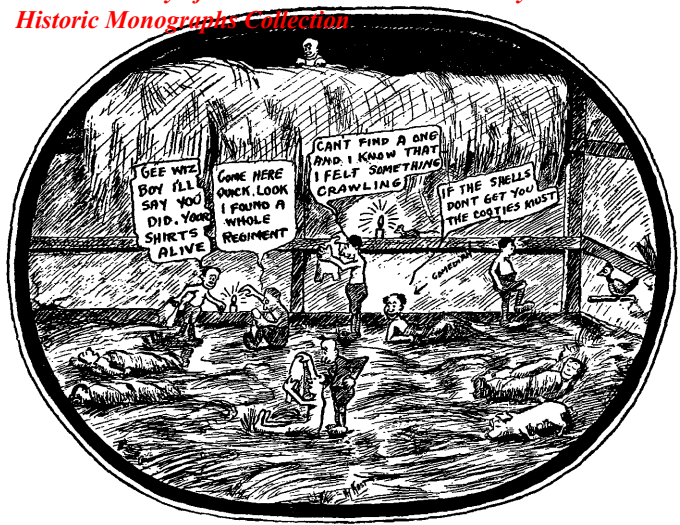
after the completion of the building the "Flu" epidemic necessitated its being commandeered as a hospital. A few weeks, however, saw the end of the "Flu" and the "Y" was once more thronged with soldiers eager to part with their francs in exchange for cigarettes and biscuits.

So the weeks passed by with their continued rounds of duties, varied by rigorous Saturday inspection and enlivened by occasional shows at the Y. M. C. A. It was by no means a hard life, but no matter how comfortable we might be in our snug billets or how full our stomachs were of slum (pardon, Signor Bottinelli, I mean "Meat Pot Pie Jardiniere") thoughts of home were paramount in our minds. The old song, "Home, Boys, Home" found a new meaning for us in those days as we speculated on the probable date of our departure, and so it was with a feeling of relief that we hailed the appearance of a bulletin giving the sailing schedule for divisions not slated for the Army of Occupation. We were to sail in May the schedule stated, and one and all agreed that it might be worse.

On March 26th General Pershing reviewed the 78th Division. We received the news only the night before his arrival and in the barracks that evening there was much fren-

zied overhauling of equipment, cleaning of rifles and dubbing of shoes. In the kitchen "Mac" fortified by vin rouge and a sense of duty, splashed whitewash wildly over everything in sight, principally over himself, while "Ira Muhs" whose status in the company had come to be something akin to that of a "landscape gardener," constructed out of stray bricks a large engineer castle right in front of the barracks door, where somebody who had dined not wisely but too well, promptly fell over it. Until long after Taps discussions raged as to the probability of the Commander-in-Chief's inspecting every rifle in the Division. Some felt that due to limitations of time he wouldn't inspect any, so—"What the hell are you shining up that pipe for?" while others more pessimistically took the view that "if he hooks anybody it'll be me!" and nearly wore out their Eddystones with frantic polishing.

During the evening the advance guard of the Division arrived in the form of various mud-bespattered machine gunners who were billeted in sundry unoccupied barns in the neighborhood and in the morning the roads echoed with the roar of hundreds of trucks bringing the remainder of the Division, as well as with the puffing and blowing of the tractors that hauled the big guns. In our



Any Billet—Any Time

barracks all was excitement, preparations and bad language, the latter being caused by a light luncheon of bully beef. At 11 o'clock we fell in, equipped with rifles, belts, bayonets, light packs and steel helmets and marched to the field near Regimental Headquarters at Venarey where the review was to be held.

As far as the eye could see the muddy field was covered with a sea of olive drab, relieved here and there with the scarlet of an artillery guidon. The air was rent with the blare of bands, the squeals of mules, the neighing of horses and the shouted commands of officers maneuvering their men into position. All was hurry and confusion. Officers, mounted on what were always referred to by courtesy as spirited horses, galloped hither and thither, or grouped themselves in mysterious consultation; buck privates chewed tobacco nervously and glanced apprehensively at their muddy shoes; while on everyone's lips was the question, "when is this damn thing going to start?" Over by the road and the bank of the canal a crowd of patient villagers stared curiously at the scene and no roof in the vicinity was without its group of watchers, clinging precariously to the chimneys or craning their necks out of attic windows.

The review was scheduled for two o'clock but it was well after that when the call of "attention!" echoed down the field, and a spare soldierly figure followed by a train of staff officers galloped on the field and passing us like a whirlwind disappeared in the direction of the reviewing stand, where the formality of presenting the Division took place. Of this we saw nothing, nor indeed did we see much of anything that took place in front of the stand, as we were stationed at the extreme left of the line. At intervals of two minutes or so we presented arms and during the time not occupied in this manner, waited nervously for the dreaded inspection. It seemed to every man that he was doomed to undergo a minute and searching scrutiny from the Commander-in-chief, accompanied by questions calculated to tie his faculties into a bow knot. We had been especially warned to beware of these questions and above all things to give some kind of an answer. In some quarters there was manifest fear lest the General should pause in front of some unlucky "buck" and demand to know "why is a chicken?" As science has never discovered the answer to this question it was the general opinion that the soldier thus interrogated would be shot at sunrise.

But it was by no means as bad as all that. General Pershing first galloped around the field on horseback and then proceeded to a more "minute inspection of troops," as the divisional order has it. This minute inspection, so far as we could see, consisted in walking at tremendous speed through every company in the division, meanwhile questioning the Company Commanders in regard to matters of rations, billets and drill. Occasionally he would hurl a question somewhere in ranks: "Where'd you get that broken nose?" "What did you have for dinner?" or some similar query. A moment's glimpse of his straight, athletic figure and he was gone, with a herd of panting staff officers striving to keep pace with him. After the conclusion of the inspection an interval ensued during which the various regimental colors were inspected and strips of ribbon attached bearing the names of battles in which the division has participated. And then we passed in review.

It must have been a wonderful sight that the villagers and the watchers on the house tops beheld. To the crash and blare of the two hundred piece band the whole mass swung into movement and poured, an avalanche of dull green, tipped with shining steel, past the reviewing stand. As each regiment

passed, the hand of the General swept to the visor of his cap in salute—salute to the veterans of the St. Mihiel and the Argonne, to the men who had endured the hunger, thirst and wretchedness of war, who had held the line at Grand Pre, fought their way through the Bois des Loges and chased the Boche into Sedan. It was a fitting end to the epic of the 78th Division, that review—a division which fought steadily and well without thought of future praise; whose achievements are written not in the screaming headlines of metropolitan dailies but in the blood of its heroes.

The review was over—all but a brief soldierly speech from the General to the men of the division packed in a dense mass around him, and tired and hungry but with a certain feeling of satisfaction nevertheless, we turned our footsteps back to the barracks and supper.

The big inspection over and the Commander-in-chief's dreaded presence removed, we resumed our monotonous duties. Daily we manicured the streets of Les Laumes and the roads of the surrounding country, for the word had gone forth that before the division could leave the area the highways of Cote d'Or must be thoroughly repaired. Accordingly they were scraped and polished and

scrubbed day after day by the details of engineers and infantry whose curses echoed to high heaven at the thought of "fixing up those damn roads for the frogs." Everything was done to the Cote d'Or except to sprinkle the statue of Vercingetorix with rose water and indeed the "Bubble" our leading newspaper, printed a heart-rending appeal to its readers to raise money to provide the ancient warrior with a pair of O. D. gloves.

By night, around the barrack stoves, the one topic of conversation was "when are we going home?" As in the lines, so in the S. O. S., rumors of all descriptions filled the air and the possessors of that mysterious something known as "dope," kept the minds of the company in a continuous turmoil. Among these amateur prophets "Dizzy" Congdon was chief, and it was a remarkable occurrence when that bright and shining youth failed to bound into the barracks with a bibfull of "bull." We knew of course that the division was scheduled to leave in May, but the exact date of our departure was the subject of many heated arguments.

Our lives were brightened materially by the arrival in Les Laumes of a real honest-to-gosh circus, consisting of four or five acrobats, two decrepit camels, one man-eat-

ing mule and a dog. This peculiar conglomeration arrived in Les Laumes on pay day and anchored in the vacant lot opposite our barracks. Although it was a source of endless amusement to have a show right next door their presence was not an unmixed joy, for a guard was immediately stationed in the road, whether to prevent the circus people from stealing the barracks or the company from molesting the camels no man knoweth. As things turned out, it developed that the camels were well able to protect themselves, for on the evening of their arrival one of them committed a violent and unprovoked assault on the person of "Judge" Steibeling, that ornament of the legal talent of Cote d'Or. Details of the encounter are lacking but it appears that while the Judge was peaceably wending his way homeward after an evening spent in the Y. M. C. A. (we assume that it is in the Y. M. C. A. that the Judge passes his spare moments) one of the ships of the desert backed him into a corner and ate large portions of his anatomy. The Judge declares that he had done nothing to provoke the camel and that in his opinion the animal must have been under the influence of liquor. Be that as it may we kept at a respectful distance from the camels thereafter.

The show itself proved to be the usual one-horse circus with all the old stuff that had been familiar to us since the days when we used to crawl under the tent or carry water to the elephant. A little tumbling, a few acrobatic stunts and a small energetic band whose repertoire included "Yip-i-yaddy-i-ay" and "Tipperary," comprised their stock in trade. But nevertheless for the two nights they showed in Les Laumes the tent was crowded with a large and enthusiastic audience and the aggregation of "20 artists, 2 dromedaries, 1 dog," left Les Laumes with "beaucoup" francs in their possession.

So the days passed by with their time-worn routine and one differed not from another save that the bugler occasionally blew "taps" a little flat. "Retreat" was held every evening in front of the railway station—an event which invariably collected a crowd of small children, dogs and loafers, who gaped uncomprehendingly at what must have been to them a strange and outlandish ceremony. Night after night as we mechanically did "parade rest" and "present arms" we wondered how many more times we were to listen to the strains of "Retreat" and "To the Colors" in France. Some of the boys began to talk of laying in several bales of service stripes for future use, for rumors

were persistent that the division's sailing date had been set back indefinitely. But one evening in the Y. M. C. A. came an announcement that hit us like a thunderclap. "7,200 of the 78th Division entrain for Marseilles." It was almost unbelievable and in fact so hardened were we to reports of this kind that some of us could hardly believe our eyes when on the 23rd of April the 153rd Artillery Brigade began to pour into Les Laumes, sweating under heavy packs but grinning cheerfully in the consciousness that they were going home "toute suite." The villagers gazed in sadness as the dusty column swung past. The "crazee American soldat" was going at last—but so were his francs.

Day after day the movement of troops continued; troop trains shuttled in and out with their smiling, cheering loads and in a wonderfully short space of time the last of the lucky seven thousand two hundred were on their way to Marseilles. As we watched trainload after trainload rumble out of the station a sort of forlorn, deserted feeling assailed us for by now it was a fairly well established fact that the engineers would not leave the area until it had been thorou ghy policed and all traces of American occupancy removed.

To us accordingly fell the disagreeable task of camouflaging with mud the abandoned site of barracks in the field opposite the stables; of tearing up the ground floor of the mess hall (just recently put in); of picking up little sticks and pieces of paper; of doing all the dirty little jobs that the inhabitants of the town were too busy to attend to. The language of the details who pondered over these pleasant tasks was not that of the Sunday-school room and the general conclusion seemed to be that the A. E. F. was paying a little interest on our debt to France. But as becomes good soldiers and government mules, we swallowed our discontent. Like the Light Brigade of song and story "ours not to reason why" so we performed our tasks as painstakingly as could be expected of human beings endowed with a sense of the ridiculous and waited impatiently for the time of our departure.

Several exciting ball games served to make the time pass more quickly than it otherwise would perhaps. There was plenty of good material for a team in the company and practice developed a fast aggregation of ball tossers who crossed bats with teams representing Headquarters, C, D and F companies. Aside from the unfortunate propensity of Sgt. Hoffmire to boot the pill all over our

parish, Cpl. Page's frequent excursions into Dreamland and Sgt. MacDonald's shortness of wind, it was a good team. It won a game once so it must have been. More excitement was aroused over the game between the non-coms under Sgt. Geyer and "Marble Ears" Young and the "bucks" led by "Mose Lennon, the sanitary man" and Pvt. Thomas Dubbin Jones. Rain continually put off the game but excitement was at fever height nevertheless and the peace of the barracks was shattered by the disputes as to the relative merits of the two teams. In proof of the strength of their convictions the bucks raised the sum of fifty torn and tattered francs and challenged the non-coms to cover it. This, after much hedging and stalling, they found themselves unable to do, and the game was played without the added interest of a side bet. It proved to be a regular carnival of errors, the bucks finally running out by a large score.

All the time while the events just chronicled were taking place part of the company had been in exile in the pathless wastes of Pont Chevigny, near Semur, where under the competent direction of Master Engineers Brophy and Hogle they had been operating a stone quarry. Large details of infantry

had been assigned to assist in the work and as they were recalled to their units to prepare to entrain for the port of embarkation it became necessary to reinforce the quarry gang. To those of the company remaining at Les Laumes fell the duty of filling up the ranks, and loud was the mourning when the sad tidings came in, for Pont Chevigny is to Les Laumes as Osceola is to New York.

It was a dismal morning on the first of May, when the last of E company descended from the trucks into the single street of Pont Chevigny. It was raining steadily and persistently, and the sight that met our eyes was in keeping with the gloom of the heavens above. A row of ancient, moss-covered stone houses, two or three hospital tents which were destined to be our future abode, a barn that housed the old timers of the quarry gang, and a bridge that evidently gave the town its name and offered by reason of its height an easy means for suicide to anybody weary of life in the clam mines—that was Pont Chevigny. Over it brooded the silence of death broken only by the distant rumble of the crushers in the quarry. All around was the solitude of the untraveled wilderness.

To say what we really think of Pont Chevigny would make this narrative unfit for

publication or a place on the shelves of any respectable library. We remained there about a week, turning out an average of 120 yards of stone per day and solacing our leisure moments at the town's lone estaminet where a lady familiarly known as "old haggle tooth" sold beer which was the town's one redeeming feature. Rumors declared that we would remain in this gloomy solitude until the latter part of May and even the excellent rations we received here were unable to quiet our grumblings. And if we grumbled what must have been the feelings of the men who had been there all winter, who had worked in rain and mud and snow day in and day out? There should be a special service ribbon for service in the rock quarry.

But one day the news came that our troubles were over and that we were to return "toute suite" for Les Laumes to entrain for Bordeaux—and home. Imagine the shouts of joy that greeted this announcement; imagine the revelry that ensued that evening in the abode of "old haggle tooth!" On the morning of May 11th we left Pont Chevigny bag and baggage on what was to be the first lap of our journey back home. By night time we were once more safely billeted in our "old home town" as it seemed

to us then after about six months of occupancy. The inhabitants were more than pleased to have us back, for during our short absence it had fallen into a dormant stage and the smiling and cheerful engineers were woefully missed. Handshakes and greetings were numerous and the stillness of night was broken by merry shouts of laughter and broken French, as we told of our experiences at Pont Chevigny. Sunday and Monday were spent in getting in readiness for the box-car journey that would bring us to our exit of the A. E. F.—BORDEAUX.

CHAPTER X

Homeward Bound

The morning of May 13th could not have been a clearer or fairer day to say farewell to the folk of Les Laumes, perhaps never again to partake of their hospitality. We were up at 5:00 A. M. rolling packs, and so happy and anxious were we, that we were all ready to depart before the appointed time to "fall in." At 6:30 we proceeded to the railroad yard where we boarded our Pullmans. This time being of the U. S. variety, they were more roomy and more modern of manufacture than our former conveyors the four-wheeled "40 Hommes and 8 Chevaux." After we were settled and had our packs arranged and places picked out, we emerged again and fell in line for breakfast which was served from our train kitchen cars. Many of the boys forsook the mess line and partook of their last repast at the home of their French admirers, returning afterwards with an armful of flowers with which the cars were decorated.

The regimental band filled the air with popular strains for at least an hour; smiling faces were everywhere; everyone was joyful,

for the long looked for day had at last arrived. Conversations were based chiefly on the speedy trip through Bordeaux. The bugler sounded "fall in" for the last time in this quaint old town and we all scrambled aboard. At 9:30 the whistle of the train shrieked out a warning blast and we were under way, guided by a distinctly American crew of railroaders, which fact filled our hearts with safety. We crowded the doorways and windows as we pulled out and slowly crept past the crowd of villagers who cheered loudly and waved to us a fond goodbye and "bon voyage." Our responding cheers were loud and long and shall long be remembered by the good people of Les Laumes and the members of Company "E." With increasing speed the village faded forever from our view and we settled down unresentingly, to view the passing scenery. Seats in the doorways were in big demand and those who obtained same, usually hung on until darkness and then left only because there was no more to be seen. There were the usual number of halts and stops for coffee and backing up and sidetracking that always molests the peaceful travels of a troop train.

It was a bright sunshiny day and the interior of the cars soon became hotter than was consistent with comfort. The "door-

hounds," as those individuals who were privileged to dangle their feet from the doorway were called, began to be the object of much envy and scathing remarks were addressed to them (to which, being in the strategic position, they paid no attention). Their critics, finding frontal attacks of no use, finally changed their tactics and adopted a sort of starving out process, which though requiring unlimited patience was bound to succeed in the end, as the "door-hound," like all domestic animals must be fed at least once a day.

Our rations, which had been chucked into the car shortly before the train left, consisted of bully beef, bread, one or two cans of beans and jam—"beaucoup" jam. As there was little to do except to eat, tremendous inroads were made into these supplies in the course of the afternoon, and even the bully beef with the bitter memories it awakened was bolted with enthusiasm. In the intervals between our impromptu meals we smoked, read what magazines were on board or engaged in discussion of the latest rumors—which as usual came out with the rapidity of baseball extras during a world series. According to the custom of soldiers, since the days when Caesar's billeting party arrived in the Cote d'Or, we shouted greetings at all women

under ninety or over nine, and were met in return with smiles and fluttering handkerchiefs. Charley Klaes however usually managed to spoil the sentimental effect by advising the ladies to "go wipe your nose" or "g'wan in and get busy with the dishes."

At all stops the all-seeing eye of the Battalion Adjutant was quick to detect any attempt to stray too far from the train. There seemed to be a sort of impression that large numbers of the soldiery were determined to remain in France at any cost and that only the severest measures could prevent them from going A. W. O. L.

Twilight descended at last on the quiet country landscape through which we were speeding, but it was long after dark when the last "door-hound" crawled back into the car and settled down for the night. Sleeping space was hard to find and harder still to hold, once it had been secured. Matters were usually adjusted either by violent duels in which hobnails at two paces were the favorite weapons, or by compromise whereby one disputant agreed to take his foot out of the other's mouth if the other would quit kickin' him in the ear. Everybody must sleep at least in some way or other with the exception of those sitting in at a quiet little game of

stud poker which raged all night over a pile of dilapidated francs.

At four o'clock, just as everybody had nicely settled down, we were aroused by the cry of "All out for coffee." The interior arrangements of the car being much disturbed by the consequent confusion of getting in and out, nobody went to sleep again. A light lunch of bully beef, bread and jam formed our breakfast and we once more resigned ourselves to another day on the train.

The second day's ride proved to be a replica of the first. The same stops and starts, the same anxious poring over thumb-worn maps, the same excitement every time a town of any size appeared—it would be tiresome repetition to recount all the commonplace events of the day's ride. Out of it all, one picture abides with us—the sight of the venerable Doc Love bounding from the car with waving arms and a piece of bread clinched between his teeth, in hot pursuit of a bottle of beer.

Late in the afternoon we stopped again for coffee, and most of us found time for a hasty wash before we moved on again. We were nearing the end of our journey at last, according to the official dope and were scheduled to arrive in Bordeaux at 2:00 A. M.

So we went peacefully to sleep, thanking the powers above that our last train ride in France was drawing to a close. Some twenty or thirty miles from our destination, however, our engine broke down and much valuable time was lost trying to fix it with a hairpin. During the interval while the train crew was thus employed, a thunder-shower developed the fact that the roofs of the cars were far from waterproof and the confusion in the box-cars was worse confounded by the efforts of those who were getting wet to find a dry spot. Luckily the shower was of short duration or the train would have soon borne close resemblance to an outing of the Bolsheveki.

At last the engine was prodded and coaxed into action, and about four o'clock, just as dawn was breaking we rolled across the Gironde into Bordeaux and dumped our packs on the platform of the station with many grunts and groans of relief.

The Battle of Bordeaux

Every American soldier, be he doughboy, artilleryman or engineer, participates in at least one great battle before he forsakes the shores of France for those of his native land. If he embarks from Brest he refers to it afterward as the "Battle of Brest;" if from

St. Nazaire as the "Battle of St. Nazaire;" if from Bordeaux he calls it the "Battle of Bordeaux" and several other things much less complimentary.

Upon arriving in Bordeaux, stiff and sore from your forty or fifty hours confinement in the good old box cars, you crawl into your equipment and march through the city and over the hills to the Entrance Camp. Here you remain until room is found for you and your outfit in the Permanent Camp. In our case the time spent in the Entrance Camp was only a few hours. Here also, they put over a terrible barrage of paper work, and the clerks, ivory ticklers and pen pushers were forced to labor industriously for about thirty consecutive hours, without sleep, in order to complete the battle as called for by the Government "red tape" generals.

Once in a permanent camp, you remain there until your ship comes in or hell freezes over. The first thing that happens to you upon your arrival in that wire encircled madhouse, is a trip through what is known as the "mill," which must be experienced to be appreciated. During this journey (which could give old man Dante and General Sherman several new ideas of hell) you are handed over to the S. O. S. body and soul. The S. O. S. is Simon Legree and you are

Uncle Tom, and when they crack the whip, you jump or say "uncle" or roll over or do anything else required of you. And you do it P. D. Q.

First you file into a mammoth building big enough to house a regiment and throw your rifles in a pile in the corner. Immediately after this, you undo your pack and bundle all your worldly belongings up in a shelter half, with the exception of your blankets which go out of your life forever. Carrying this bundle in one hand and clutching your identification tags in the other, you "follow the crowd" past one clerk who gives you a clothing slip to sign, and another who presents you with a barracks bag and a red cross bag, and directs you to another attendant demon on the other side of the room.

He addresses you in these words, making funny marks on your clothing slip all the time: "Have you got two pairs of drawers-twoundershirtstwoO.D.shirtsfourpairsof socksextrashoestrings?" There is more to his oration but it all sounds about like the sample given above and at intervals you gasp, "Yes, yes, I got that," or "No, no, I aint." When the ordeal is over you stagger out of the building with your clothing slip checked up, your Red Cross bag filled with your personal belongings and your barracks bag

crammed with equipment. One short breath of fresh air and you are in another building with your service record in your hand, answering those old familiar questions about yourself and the family cat.

And then after stumbling down the aisle and round a corner you enter the "mill" itself and the S. O. S. has you at its mercy. Seated on a bench opposite a door which gives entrance to the delouser, you undress at breakneck speed urged on by the yells of S. O. S. privates who were formerly the object of your scorn and contempt. A truck rolls out of the delouser's maw and on it you dispose your belongings with breathless haste. The truck vanishes and you are left, clad simply but beautifully in your Red Cross bag and a pair of shoes. In this costume you file by a medical officer who subjects you to a minute examination, and under a shower bath, where you scrub yourself with chemical soap. Then more doctors give you the up and down, the once over and the twice across for various forms of animal life. If you get by them the worst is over.

As you file by a counter your clothing slip once more comes into play and you receive all the equipment you lack, in addition to a new suit of underwear in exchange for the

presumably "cootified" one you have thrown away. You return to a seat on the opposite side of the delouser and in a few minutes the truck is trundeled out with your now disinfected garments. After putting on enough to escape arrest you cram everything else in your bag, rush madly out of the delouser, hand in your clothing slip and stagger out into the open air. You are through with the mill now and can say to those not so fortunate, "You'll like it—yes you will!"

* * *

"When are we going home?" That was the question on everyone's lips. The office force were driven to the verge of insanity by the constant succession of inquiring spirits who at every opportunity buttonholed, beset and bedevilled them for information, and at last took refuge in an attitude of blankest ignorance. Even "Dizzy" Congdon, general dispenser of misinformation, was mute.

But at last the real authentic "dope" came in. We were to sail on the Steamship "Santa Ana." As this information was strictly true of course nobody believed it, but turned receptive ears to wild stories of impending war. However, on the said Saturday, May 24th, the regiment, less "C" and

"D" companies, rolled packs and departed from the Embarkation Camp with many a fervent curse hurled in the direction of the "mill." Six kilometers—dusty, sweaty, French kilometers lay between us and the docks and proved a potent reminder to us of our days of active service. It is a matter of record, however, that nobody fell out, and toward noon, after threading the streets of various suburbs of Bordeaux, we arrived at the American docks and saw before us the blue waters of the Gironde.

More important and interesting to us than the spectacle of that beautiful river (associated in our minds with the historic boat ride) was the sight of the "Santa Ana" with her gangplanks lowered and a busy crowd of sailors evidently engaged in preparing her for an early departure. On the dock the 303d Engineers band (popularly known as the "Boiler Makers") vied with a French band in blare of bugles and roll of drums, attracting a curious crowd of French civilians and colored stevedores. It was a scene full of life and interest, but we were not destined to wait long in contemplation of it, for after receiving a welcome gift of chocolate and cigarettes from the ever present Red Cross, we filed over the docks and at last after a year of varied experiences set

foot on that which had long been the object of our hopes and dreams—the gangplank!

We found our quarters on the "Santa Ana" to be far superior to those into which we had been jammed, crammed and shoved on the well remembered "Kashmir." A ship's hold can never under any circumstances be made over into a palace, but on the "Santa Ana" we were at least spared the confusion and inconvenience of stringing hammocks, for upon our arrival in our subterranean home we found ourselves confronted with tiers of neat iron bunks which were the first of the species encountered since we left Camp Dix.

We had barely time to get our belongings stowed away and return to deck for a breath of fresh air when there came a warning toot from the whistle. The band (for once seized with some idea of the fitness of things) struck up "Homeward Bound"; a Red Cross girl on the dock waved her hand; Bill Naylor heaved a sigh of regret for the vin rouge of Les Laumes and slowly we slid down the river on our way back home.

Space forbids a detailed description of the voyage home. For the first day or two we encountered good weather, but thereafter the good ship Santa Ana rocked, wriggled and rolled all over the ocean and, although

the sailors scornfully laughed at the idea that there was anything like a storm on the Atlantic, it was all the storm we wanted. The rail was lined with wan looking figures casting not only bread but slum and beans on the waters, and for several days large numbers of engineers lay in their bunks too sick to brave the dangers of a trip to the upper air.

But the storm—for despite the opinion of the sailors we insist that it was a storm—subsided after four days and during the last few days of our voyage we floated over a sea as smooth as glass and as destitute of a ripple as the most peaceful of lakes. The days passed slowly with much lounging on deck, while the evenings were slightly enlivened by movie shows in the stern and barber-shop harmony in the bow. Daily our throats and noses were sprayed with some sort of disagreeable liquid which tasted like concentrated essence of hell fire and sent its victims coughing and spitting to the rail. Just what disease this process was supposed to avert no man knoweth, but at any rate the malady could have been but little worse than the prevention—at least to our prejudiced minds.

At last on midnight of June 5th the "Santa Ana" steamed slowly into New York

Bay and our journey was over. We were back in the States at last. The anchor was lowered and the "Santa Ana" lay quiet through the remaining dark hours of night. Early daylight found the decks packed with the returned warriors who gazed open-mouthed at the scenes around them, that seemed like a real paradise at last. In the distance the Statue of Liberty was vaguely discernible through the early morning mist and our hearts were filled with pride and also relief as we slowly awoke from our dreams to realize that it was really true and we were once more in the "Land of Liberty" with freedom from the bonds of army life close at hand.

At 7:00 A. M. the anchor was raised. Slowly then the "Santa Ana" crept up the bay, its decks packed with a frantic, cheering mob. Welcome boats came out to meet us carrying bands that ripped off such lively tunes as "Ja Da" and "How You Goin' to Keep Them Down on the Farm." That one of these bands happened to be composed of Jersey City policemen seemed to some of the New York State boys that there must have been a friendly feeling between the said band and the Jersey "heroes" (whether it was that some were former members of the Police Department or steady

customers it has not been ascertained) and so the New York boys gave the "Jerseyites" a final "razzing."

It was a time in our lives that we had long awaited and amidst the happiness and the thrills that passed over us we forgot all the hardships and privations we had undergone in France. Everyone craned their neck looking for a familiar face, flags and handkerchiefs were waved freely, "hellos" and "welcome home" were drowned out by wild cheers and shouts of joy, bombs were sent bursting into the air and such a barrage of chocolate and cigarettes was put over that each man collected enough to supply him for a week. When we finally tied up to the Brooklyn dock we entered the huge warehouse, unslung our packs and were again bestowed with a feed by the Red Cross, consisting of apple pie (our first in ages), ginger cookies, milk, candy and peanuts.

After a couple of hours of waiting, during which time we sent telegrams and cards announcing our arrival, we boarded a ferry and made for the "Pennsy" station at Jersey City. Here we were given a rousing welcome by the crowds that thronged the station and as we filed through in a column of twos, the line was broken by frantic mothers and sweethearts who embraced their long lost,

returning heroes. In the train shed the Red Cross girls once more showered us with oranges and candy. It was surely a plentiful day for us and we feasted as we would have done while in the front line far away from civilization if our dreams then would only have come true.

The ride to Camp Dix was without special incident and consumed about two and a half hours, during which time it poured rain, while we lounged contentedly in the cushion seats and pulled away at our cigarettes, munching chocolate and candy at the same time. So comfortable were the seats and so speedy the ride, so different from our rides in France, that most of us thought we were having a nightmare or the tremens. It seemed almost impossible that we were back again in the land of the living, going over the same route where over a year previously we had travelled on quite a different mission. The future then looked dark for us and unsettled, but now everything was bright and promising.

It seemed homelike to be back again at Camp Dix but our welcome was not any too pleasing to us there. Another delouser stretched forth its arms and beckoned us within its portals. We entered unwillingly and submitted to all the rules and knocks

laid down by "Mr. Delouser." When we emerged we were clean of body, in a bad frame of mind, our clothing was wrinkled but we continued "following the man ahead" and ere an hour or two had passed we were rid of all our equipment, except blankets, mess-kits and personal property. By night time we were established in our barracks and settled down to await the order of demobilization.

From Friday, June 6th, until Thursday, June 12th, we nervously paced the limits of Camp Dix, our thoughts concentrated on our main objective—discharge, and freedom from the much hated discipline and ever dominating rules of army life. For a man who has future prospects of a successful business life, the army holds little, if any, charms and the National Army was composed of almost one hundred per cent of such men who looked forward happily and anxiously for the final day of parting.

As a fitting ceremony to our fast approaching day of demobilization we were tendered a reception by our former Captain, Robert A. Greenfield, on the night of Tuesday, June 10th. He came down from Mount Vernon, N. Y. to welcome home his old company in which he had placed all his confidence and for which he had labored so hard to produce

a body of well-trained, disciplined, heroic soldiers. After a spread of ice cream, strawberries, cakes, cigars and candy was enjoyed we listened to speeches by Capt. Greenfield, Capt. King, Lt. Beaver, Lt. Breese and Capt. Babcock. Many members of the company responded with little talks, stories and songs and a very enjoyable evening was spent together. At the request of Capt. Greenfield we sang many of our old marching songs and concluded the evening's pleasure by chanting the "Star Spangled Banner." Cheers rent the air for all the officers and then we escorted Capt. Greenfield to the station in a body, he taking charge of the company and giving the commands, just for Old Time's Sake. This ended one of the most pleasant nights for Company "E," one that always will linger in the memory of those present on the occasion.

The morning of June 12, 1919, marks the last line of history for Company "E." We marched to the "Discharge Center," were paid in full, secured our discharge and were once more free and independent. Each and everyone of us have our own personal reminiscences of that morning which we daresay are pleasant for us all and shall be as long as memory lasts. Company "E" is dead physically, but its memory shall live on forever

in the hearts of its members, who can be proud of the records and the achievements attained while fighting in foreign lands under the colors of "Old Glory."

Lest We Forget

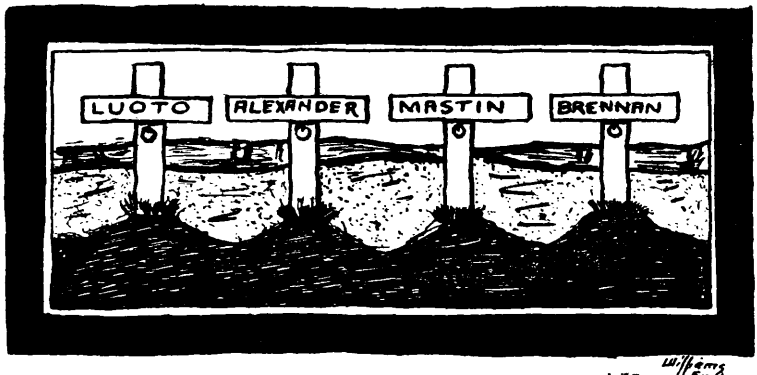
The deeds of those who gave up their lives in battle shall ever be recorded in the annals of history—history of this Great World War. There are those who shall ever carry a mark, a battle scar, be it caused by cold steel, bursting shell, rifle bullet or poisonous gas and who shall exhibit it proudly to their sons and daughters of the coming generation, laying bare all the facts, the dashing courage, the bravery and sufferings which they shared unselfishly with their comrades. To the survivors, the living heroes, shall be given much praise, for theirs is the right to live and enjoy, held in the highest esteem by mankind, just as they suffered and fought in the wildest regions of France, where self sacrifice was paramount and death never thought of.

It is fitting then that tribute be paid to those of our comrades whom we have left behind us, who lie abreast in serried ranks beneath the little wooden crosses that mark the mounds wherein they sleep, unable to share in the glories of the victory made

possible only by the sacrifice of their own lives, which is rightfully theirs. And to the mothers at home go out our sympathies. They too lived and suffered, bearing their sufferings bravely in the hope that some day there would return to their midst a great soldier, to ease again their troubled hearts. And in spite of all, these troubled gray-haired mothers continue to live on, knowing that he shall never come back to cheer them; live on unflinchingly with pride in their hearts, knowing that "he did all that was asked of him" and was called by the Great Almighty to a land where peace alone reigns, where sorrow and suffering is unknown. They have done their duty and done it well. The memories of these unforgotten heroes shall ever urge us on to the better things in life.

* * * *

Orville B. Alexander, Private. Drafted at Springfield, Ill. Assigned to company on May 19, 1918. Arrived safely overseas with company on June 7, 1918, at Liverpool, England. Present with company in St. Mihiel sector from September 12 to October 3, 1918, and in the Meuse-Argonne Sector from October 12 to November 7, 1918. While company was in training area at Les Laumes, he secured a leave of absence



"Lest We Forget"

to Aix les Bains, France, and while there contracted influenza and was sent to the hospital on December 10. He later developed broncho-pneumonia which resulted in his death on December 16, 1918. He was buried in the Municipal Cemetery at Aix les Bains, Savoie, France.

* * * *

August M. Luoto, Private. Assigned to company September 23, 1918 while in the St. Mihiel Sector. Present with the company through the Meuse-Argonne campaign. Contracted pneumonia while with the company in training area at Les Laumes, France. Died in hospital at Semur en Auxois, Cote d'Or, France, on December 22, 1918. Buried in cemetery at Semur en Auxois, Cote d'Or, France.

* * * *

Benjamin Q. Mastin, Private. Drafted at Oswego, N. Y. Assigned to company on May 4, 1918. Arrived safely overseas with company on June 7, 1918, at Liverpool, England. Present with company in St. Mihiel sector from September 12 to October 3, 1918, and in the Meuse-Argonne sector from October 12 to November 6, 1918. Admitted to hospital on November 6, 1918. Died while in Base Hospital No. 42, France, following an operation for appendicitis.

* * * *

William J. Brennan, Wagoner. Drafted at Buffalo, N. Y. Assigned to company on October 11, 1917. Arrived safely overseas with company on June 7, 1918, at Liverpool, England. Present with company in St. Mihiel sector from September 12 to October 3, 1918, and in the Meuse-Argonne sector from October 12 to November 7, 1918. Contracted pneumonia while with company in training area at Les Laumes, Cote d'Or, France. Died in 309th Field Hospital on February 16, 1919. Buried at Semur en Auxois, Cote d'Or, France, on February 17, 1919.

WOUNDED IN ACTION

Gibbs, Ryall C.	Private	Slightly wounded
Sept. 14, 1918		Thiacourt (near)
Lefeve, Eugene	Private, 1st cl.	Slightly wounded
Sept. 19, 1918		Thiacourt (near)
Oates, Patrick H.	Private, 1st cl.	Slightly gassed
Oct. 18, 1918		Grand Pre (near)
Genaitis, Paul P.	Private	Slightly wounded
Oct. 19, 1918		Grand Pre (near)
Hull, Oran D.	Private	Slightly gassed
Oct. 19, 1918		Grand Pre (near)
Adams, Orvel N.	Sergeant	Slightly wounded
Nov. 1, 1918		Grand Pre (near)

Greatehouse, George	Private	Slightly wounded
Nov. 1, 1918		Grand Pre (near)
Harrison, Harold	Private	Slightly wounded
Nov. 1, 1918		Grand Pre (near)
Koerner, Frederick	Private	Slightly wounded
Nov. 1, 1918		Grand Pre (near)
Loderbach, Edward	Private	Slightly wounded
Nov. 1, 1918		Grand Pre (near)

ROSTER OF COMPANY "E"
303D ENGINEERS

OFFICERS

CAPTAIN THEODORE S. BABCOCK
Pelham Manor, New York
1ST LIEUTENANT MERL B. BREESE
Wyoming, Penn.
1ST LIEUTENANT ROBERT J. PARMENTER
4323 Berkeley Ave., Chicago, Ill.
1ST LIEUTENANT WILLIAM E. SODEN
23 Chestnut St., Binghamton, N. Y.
2ND LIEUTENANT WALTER A. BORNEMANN
Montclair, N. J.
2ND LIEUTENANT WILMER W. HARTMAN
3602 Fairmount Ave., Philadelphia, Pa.

ENLISTED MEN

ADAMS, ORVEL N.
Sergeant, 1st class 131 Hamburg St., E. Aurora, N. Y.
ALBRIGHT, JAMES A.
Private, 1st class 455 South 6th St., Camden, N. J.
ALLEN, WILLIAM E.
Sergeant, 1st class 933 Fruit Ave., Farrell, Pa.
ALLISON, CORNELIUS M.
Corporal 1st National Bank Bldg., Waterloo, Ia.
ALTMAN, WILLIAM
Private 520 No. 6th St., Springfield, Ill.
ANDERSON, LESTER C.
Corporal Hilton, N. Y.
ARDERY, VIRGIL
Private 611 Pear Ave., Carterville, Ill.
ARENA, PETER
Corporal 17 Third St., Rochester, N. Y.

ATKINSON, LAWRENCE L.
Private Tuckerton, N. J.
ATKINSON, LINWOOD D.
Private 132 Lenox Ave., Oneida, N. Y.
BABCOCK, MYRON
Wagoner Whitelake Corners, N. Y.
BAERENBACK, MICHAEL, JR.
Cook 223 Second St., Union Hill, N. J.
BAKER, EARL O.
Corporal 830 E. Allen St., Springfield, Ill.
BARCLAY, FREMAN S.
Private, 1st class 14 Broad St., Lyons, N. Y.
BARENTHALER, PETER H.
Sergeant 152 E. Utica St., Buffalo, N. Y.
BARRETT, JOSEPH R.
Sergeant 18 Columbus Place, Buffalo, N. Y.
BARRY, JAMES J.
Sergeant 656 S. Salina St., Syracuse, N. Y.
BELDEN, LEON W.
Private 20 Lee Ave., Norwich, N. Y.
BELLOCCHIO, CHARLES
Corporal 619 Traphagen St., West Hoboken, N. J.
BIGWOOD, CHARLES
Private 842 Kember St., Camden, N. J.
BODE, HARRY F.
Private 405 Bloomfield St., Hoboken, N. J.
BOTTINELLI, NED J.
Cook 408 Syms St , West Hoboken, N. J.
BOURNE, WILLIAM C.
Private 61 Model Ave., Trenton, N. J.
BRADY, STEPHEN
Wagoner Weedsport, N. Y.
BRODERICK, WILLIAM L.
Private 162 Old Bergen Road, Jersey City, N. J.
BRZOSKOWSKI, WALTER J.
Private, 1st class 91 Quincy St., Buffalo, N. Y.

BUELTEL, HENRY N.
Private Johnsburg, Ind.
BUKOWSKY, ALEXANDER
Private 352 Fairmount Ave., Newark, N. J.
BURKE, JOHN H.
Private 145 Dayon St., Lawville, N. Y.
BURNS, SAMUEL J.
Corporal 148 Brighton Ave., Kearny, N. J.
BURZEE, CLIFFORD H.
Private 332 Fifth St., Detroit, Mich.
BUTLER, RUSSELL
Private 815 No. 10th Ave., Phoenix, Ariz.
CALLAHAN, FRANK S.
Private, 1st class 343 Prospect St.,Niagara Falls, N.Y.
CAMPBELL, DOW
Wagoner Box 446, Bainbridge, N. Y.
CARSON, FRANK B.
Private 16 Parkdale Ave., Buffalo, N. Y.
CESTONE, JOSEPH
Private 71 Glenridge Ave., Montclair, N. J.
CHAMBERS, JOHN
Private, 1st class 630 Herndon St., Springfield, Ill.
COLWELL, JOHN S.
Corporal Alexander, Ill.
CONGDON, RAY F.
Private, 1st class 5 Griffin St., Norwich, N. Y.
COOK, ALFRED F.
Private, 1st class 207 Otisco St., Syracuse, N. Y.
CRAIG, CHARLES E.
Private R. F. D. No. 2, Carbondale, Ill.
CRIMMEN, MATTHEW J.
Wagoner 430 Center St., Jamaica Plains, Mass.
CURLEY, GEORGE F.
Private, 1st class 43 Rexford St., Norwich, N. Y.
D'ANDREA, BELTRANDO
Private, 1st class Box 402, Holley, N. Y.

DAQUINO, JOSEPH
Private 42 Bishop St., New Brunswick, N. J.
DEFRANCESCO, DOMINIC, JR.
Private, 1st class 809 West 26th St., Erie, Pa.
DEPARTO, FRANK
Private 672 Fifth St., North Bergen, N. J
DELANEY, FRANCIS J.
Private, 1st class 224 Ontario St., Buffalo, N. Y.
DELVIDA, DOMINICK
Private 404 No. 18th St., Herrin, Ill.
DEVITA, NICHOLAS
Private, 1st class 5 Zoor Ave., Albany, N. Y.
DIMMOCK, REGINALD
Private 14 Upton Park, Rochester, N. Y.
DOWN, HERMAN A.
Corporal Newfield, N. J.
EASTBURN, JESSE J.
Private Bridgeboro, Burlington Co., N. J.
ERICKSON, CARL E.
Wagoner 223 Curtis St., Jamestown, N. Y.
ERWIN, ROBERT E.
Private 456 So. Market St., Marion, Ill.
EVANS, RAYMOND E.
Private, 1st class 735 Home Ave., Fort Wayne, Ind.
EWAN, EDWARD W.
Cook 398 No. Pearl St., Bridgeton, N. J.
FARRELL, TIMOTHY J.
Private, 1st class 281 Atlantic St., Paterson, N. J.
FOLSOM, MERTON W.
Sergeant Orchard Park, N. Y.
FORD, CHARLIE R.
Private Tamaroa, Ill.
FEGLEY, EDWARD, JR.
Wagoner 24 Stark St., Waterloo, N. Y.
GABALIS, LEVONAS
Private 2005 E. Adams St., Springfield, Ill.

GARABRANT, GIRARD B.
Private, 1st class 182 No. 4th St., Newark, N. J.
GAYLORD, EARL G.
Private, 1st class 77 Grove St., Geneva, N. Y.
GENAITIS, PAUL P.
Private, 1st class 109 Pade Ave., South Amboy, N. J.
GERBER, WILLIAM V.
Private, 1st class Maplehurst Farm, Somerville, N. J.
GETTY, JOSEPH V.
Private 42 Gist St., Pittsburgh, Pa.
GEYER, WALTER P.
Sergeant 477 Norwood Ave., Buffalo, N. Y.
GIBERSON, JOHN F.
Private R. F. D. No. 7, Carrollton, Ill.
GIESEKING, THEODOR
Corporal R. F. D. No. 1, Collinsville, Ill.
GILOMEN, AUGUST
Private, 1st class Highland, Madison Co., Ill.
GLEASON, GEORGE
Private, 1st class 250 Johnson St., Buffalo, N. Y.
GLOVER, LORAN
Wagoner Wayland, N. Y.
GREATEHOUSE, GEORGE
Private Clifford, Ill.
GREISHABER, LEO L.
Corporal 1323 Bailey Ave., Buffalo, N. Y.
GROPP, CLIFFORD L.
Corporal 1412 Linden St., Wilmington, Del.
GRUBBS, CLAY
Private 912 Perry Ave., Mattoon, Ill.
HALL, SEWARD C.
Sergeant R. F. D. No. 3, Saratoga Springs, N. Y.
HAMMES, RAYMOND P.
Sergeant Wyoming, N. Y.
HARRAWOOD, JAMES F.
Corporal 1305 Marshall Ave., Mattoon, Ill.

HARRIS, GEORGE W.
Corporal Box 92, Palmer, N. Y.
HARRISON, HAROLD
Corporal 633 Whitesboro St., Utica, N. Y.
HART, HARRY
Private, 1st class 34 Second St., Waterford, N. Y.
HAYNES, CLARENCE
Private 545 So. State St., Springfield, Ill.
HEATH, JAMES H.
1st Sergeant 291 Devon St., Kearny, N. J.
HELGESON, JOHN H.
Private 190 Linden Ave., Jersey City, N. J.
HENDERSON, WILLIAM
Corporal R. F. D. No. 1, New Brunswick, N. J.
HENRY, ROBERT L.
Private, 1st class 85 Church St., New Brunswick, N. J.
HEYDE, PHILIP H.
Private East Marion St., Marion, Ill.
HOEDEBECKE, FRED
Corporal Teutopolis, Ill.
HOFFMIRE, HERMAN L.
Supply Sergeant 5 Denison St., Binghamton, N. Y.
HOLSTER, CORNELIUS
Private, 1st class 256 Summer St., Passaic, N. J.
HOSPODAR, HENRY
Private 467 Johnston St., Perth Amboy, N. J.
HOWDERSHELT, SAMUEL E.
Private R. F. D. No. 1, Rowlesburg, W. Va.
HULSE, HOMER C.
Sergeant Hurffville, N. J.
JENNINGS, HAROLD G.
Private, 1st class 47 So. 12th St., Newark, N. J.
JONES, CHARLES H.
Private, 1st class Sterlington, N. Y.
JONES, THOMAS
Private, 1st class 11 Wash St., Granville, N. Y.

KAPITAIN, CHARLES G.
Private, 1st class 7517 Calgati Ave., Cleveland, Ohio
KEARNEY, JAMES F.
Private 420 Oak St., Scranton, Pa.
KEEGAN, WILLIAM S.
Horse-shoer Winthrop, N. Y.
KENNEDY, EUGENE
Corporal 51 Erie St., Lancaster, N. Y.
KETCHUM, GORDON B.
Corporal 18 Evergreen St., Rochester, N. Y.
KING, GEORGE
Private, 1st class Auburn Ave., Swedesboro, N. J.
KINNEY, EVERETT
Private Moweaqua, Ill.
KIRK, FRANK G.
Private 655 So. Park St., Elizabeth, N. J.
KLAES, CHARLES J.
Sergeant 7 Cottage St., Buffalo, N. Y.
KLEM, MAYNARD F.
Sergeant, 1st class 439 Avenue A, Rochester, N. Y.
KOERNER, FREDERICK
Private 539 Jefferson Place, Union Hill, N. J.
KOST, HENRY N.
Private, 1st class 472 E. 134th St., New York, N. Y.
KRONECK, SAMUEL J.
Private, 1st class Camden, Oneida Co., N. Y.
KUCHINSKAS, FRANK
Private 51 Gilmore St., Rochester, N. Y.
KUMMER, NORMAN G.
Private 403 Charles St., Knoxville, Pa.
KRAUSE, EDDIE A.
Private Beltrani, Minn.
LAFFERTY, HUGH
Private, 1st class Box 140, Silver Springs, N. Y.
LANTZY, AUGUSTINE J.
Private Spangler, Pa.

LARGE, CHARLES W.
Corporal 91 West Kenmore Ave., Buffalo, N. Y.
LARSEN, HELMER A.
Private R. F. D. No. 1, Burbank, S. D.
LENNON, HAROLD G.
Private, 1st class 411 Lafayette Ave., Buffalo, N. Y.
LEFEVE, EUGENE
Private, 1st class Hinckley, N. Y.
LEWIS, WILLIAM E.
Sergeant 163 Bird Ave., Buffalo, N. Y.
LITTLE, THOMAS
Corporal 1513 So. 8th St., Springfield, Ill.
LOCKHART, EDWARD A.
Private 1202 Halsey St., Brooklyn, N. Y.
LODERBACK, EDWARD E.
Private 908 Tuscarwas Ave., Barberton, O.
LOGIODICE, NICHOLAS
Saddler 19 So. Broadway, Nyack, N. Y.
LOVE, ELMER W.
Private, 1st class 2 East Ave., Newark, N. Y.
LOVELAND, HOWARD C.
Private, 1st class 508 Gifford St., Syracuse, N. Y.
MACCALLUM, WALTER W.
Private 101 Browning Road, Merchantville, N. J.
MACDONALD, PATRICK G.
Mess Sergeant 913 Wolf St., Syracuse, N. Y.
MAAS, J. BENNEDUM
Private Cochecton Center, Sullivan Co., N. Y.
MAHONEY, EDWARD J.
Private, 1st class 335 Summit Ave., Jersey City, N. J.
MALKOSKI, WACLAW
Private, 1st class 352 Bristol St., Buffalo, N. Y.
MALONEY, TIMOTHY M.
Corporal 552 Second St., Troy, N. Y.
MALPASS, HARRY
Private, 1st class 1226 Indiana Ave., Trenton, N. J.

MANCUSO, JOE
Private R. F. D. Route No. 30, Leroy, N. Y.
MARGESON, STEWART
Private, 1st class, 79 Brainard St., Phillipsburg, N. J.
MARKOVICH, STEPHEN
Private, 1st class 13 Smith St., Lackawanna, N. Y.
MCCLUNG, ANDREW
Private 1318 Broadway St., Macon, Ga.
MCCUMBER, LEON F.
Corporal Fulton, N. Y.
MCDONOUGH, JAMES C.
Private R. F. D. No. 1, Steubenville, Ohio
MCGARVEY, JOSEPH
Private R. F. D. No. 1, Glenmore, N. Y.
MCKELLIPS, HERBERT
Private 12 Silver Springs Ave., E. Providence, R. I.
MILLER, HAROLD D.
Private, 1st class, R.F.D. No. 1, Holland Patent, N.Y.
MILLER, FRANK E.
Private, 1st class Oxford, N. Y.
MOHAN, THOMAS J.
Private, 1st class 327 Dunellen Ave., Dunellen, N.J.
MORSE, CHARLES C.
Corporal Dundee, Yates County, N. Y.
MOLINARI, MARINO
Private, 1st class 34 Beaver St., Trenton, N. J.
MONTGOMERY, JOSEPH
Private R. F. D. No. 2, Pulaski, Va.
MORGAN, ROBERT G.
Sergeant, 1st class, 211 Lexington Ave., Rochester, N Y.
MORRIS, ROLAND A.
Sergeant 695 Elm St., Buffalo, N. Y.
MUHS, IRA M.
Corporal 305 Wilkins St., Rochester, N. Y.
MURPHY, JAMES T.
Private 200 Ashmore Ave., Trenton, N. J.

MYSHRALL, GEORGE W.
Private 94 Maywood St., Worcester, Mass.
NARDELLO, CESINO
Private, 1st class 705 South 3rd St., Camden, N. J.
NAYLOR, WILLIAM H.
Private, 1st class 278 Fourth St., Troy, N. Y.
NOE, BYRL
Corporal Greenville, Ill.
NOONAN, JOHN M.
Private 8 Second St., Bordentown, N. J.
NOONAN, RICHARD D.
Corporal 13 Speedwell Place, Morristown, N. J.
NUNN, GUY D.
Private, 1st class 30 Sherman Ave., Newark, N. J.
NUTTING, STANLEY W.
Cook Adams, N. Y.
OATES, PATRICK H.
Private, 1st class, 37 Garden Place, Edgewater, N. J.
O'CONNELL, WILLIAM J.
Cook 343 Fourth St., Buffalo, N. Y.
OKOLSKI, LOUIS
Private, 1st class Box 259, South River, N. J.
PAGE, HAROLD C.
Corporal 1437 South Ave., Rochester, N. Y.
PAPAZONI, VICTOR J.
Corporal 144 Sixth St., West New York, N. J.
PASCARELL, LOUIS R.
Private 530 Fellows Ave., Syracuse, N. Y.
PEDEN, WILLIAM L.
Sergeant 1000 Norman St., Bridgeport, Conn.
RANERI, VINCENZO
Private, 1st class 43 Carmine St., New York, N. Y.
REID, JAMES
Private, 1st class Nokonis, Ill.
REILLY, EDWARD J.
Private 7-A Waverly Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.

RICHARDS, GEORGE H.
Private 122 Southhampton St., Buffalo, N. Y.
ROSS, GEORGE J.
Private 838 South 8th St., Camden, N. J.
ROTH, JOSEPH P.
Sergeant 9 Edmonds St., Rochester, N. Y.
RUBINSON, ISRAEL
Private, 1st class South Fallsburg, N. Y.
SAFFER, RAY
Private R. R. No. 1, Middleton, Ind.
SMITH, HARRY
Corporal Keyport, N. J.
SNYDER, BARTLEY J.
Private, 1st class Moira, N. Y.
SPENCER, FREDERICK W.
Private Tioga Center, N. Y.
SPINK, HAROLD B.
Private, 1st class 508 No. Madison St., Rome, N. Y.
STAINES, GEORGE J.
Corporal Albion, N. Y.
STAMPEAN, JOHN
Private 357 12th St., Niagara Falls, N. Y.
STIEBELING, OSCAR F.
Private, 1st class 385 South Ave., Bridgeport, Conn.
STRAIN, WILLIAM C.
Private, 1st class 40 Duke St., Kearny, N. J.
STRAUB, FRIDOLIN, JR.
Private, 1st class Eldred, Sullivan Co., N. Y.
SWAN, ROBERT G.
Sergeant, 1st class 1338 Park Ave., Rochester, N. Y.
SWAN, THOMAS A.
Private 182 9th St., Passaic, N. J.
THOMPSON, HORACE
Private 44 West State St., Trenton, N. J.
THORNTON, FRANK P.
Private R. F. D. No. 3, Plattsburg, N. Y.

TRIESCH, GUSTAVE M.
Corporal 202 So. 10th St., Newark, N. J.
TREMBA, JOSEPH
Private, 1st class 181 12th St., Jersey City, N. J.
UHL, JOSEPH E.
Corporal 15 Jennings St., Corning, N. Y.
UTZ, CHARLES F.
Private Box 198, Avon, N. Y.
VONDY, ARTHUR H.
Corporal 21 East 39th St., Bayonne, N. J.
WALLBROWN, THOMAS H.
Private Duncan, W. Va.
WART, HARRY
Corporal 703 So. Puck St., Syracuse, N. Y.
WEINERTH, BURDETT
Private, 1st class Hartlot, Onondaga Co., N. Y.
WHEELER, ROBERT L.
Corporal Leonardsville, N. Y.
WHITE, CHRISTOPHER
Private 42 Waldron Ave., Central Nyack, N. Y.
WICKS, FLOYD D.
Sergeant, 1st class Lyons, N. Y.
WILEY, GEORGE L.
Private, 1st class 16 Norton St., Nashua, N. H.
WILLIAMS, JOHN E.
Corporal 32 Tyler St., Trenton, N. J.
WILLIAMS, MILTON H.
Sergeant 155 Grove Place, Utica, N. Y.
WILSON, LESLIE L.
Corporal 101 Lynn St., Ithaca, N. Y.
WILSON, VIRGIL I.
Sergeant 217 Franklin St., Buffalo, N. Y.
WLOSEK, JOHN
Private 5 School St., Passaic, N. J.
YAEGER, FRED
Wagoner 132 Grey St., Buffalo, N. Y.

YERKE, CHARLES G.
Corporal 67 Maple Ave., Gowanda, N. Y.
YOUNG, A. THEODORE
Sergeant Ohioville, N. Y.

Officers and enlisted men transferred from this Company while in France.

OFFICERS

CAPTAIN ROBERT A. GREENFIELD
122 No. Columbus Ave., Mount Vernon, N. Y.
CAPTAIN WARNER KING
636 Putman Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.
2ND LIEUTENANT HENRY B. AIKEN
Bells, Tenn.
2ND LIEUTENANT GLENN C. HAWK
Cleveland, Ohio

ENLISTED MEN

AMBROSE, BENJAMIN J.
Corporal 2135 Fillmore Ave., Buffalo, N. Y.
ANDERSON, ANDREW
Private 311 Madison Ave., Perth Amboy, N. J.
BORGYON, MORRIS
Private, 1st class Barnard, N. Y.
BOOTE, ALBERT C.
Sergeant 39 Wallace St., Corning, N. Y.
BRILL, MAX D.
Private 939 Jackson Ave., New York, N. Y.
BUCK, HOMER E.
Private, 1st class 20 Yalor Ave., Waterloo, N. Y.
BURTON, JOHN W.
Private, 1st class Nokonis, Ill.
CHURCH, THEODORE
Private Stamford, N. Y.

COCHRAN, CLARENCE H.
Private 1292 Hamilton Ave., Trenton, N. J.
COOK, FORREST L.
Private Westmoreland, N. Y.
COOK, RAYMOND
Private 704 Maryland Ave., Asbury Park, N. J.
CRONIN, DANIEL F.
Private 8 Charles St., Ilion, N. Y.
CUNNINGHAM, ARTHUR J.
Private, 1st class 218 Arthur St., Utica, N. Y.
CURTIS, ROBERT L.
Private, 1st class Millbrook Ave., Dover, N. J.
DARAGO, FRANK
Private, 1st class, 18 Prospect St., New Brunswick, N. J.
DARCY, JOSEPH J.
Sergeant Cazenovia, N. Y.
DEMPSEY, GEORGE J.
Private 105 East 8th St., Oswego, N. Y.
DONALDSON, CORTLAND B.
Corporal Box 368, Grantwood, N. J.
EDWARDS, BRINLEY
Private 140 Wood St., Frostburg, Md.
FELTER, MERLE R.
Private, 1st class Groton, N. Y.
FOSTER, CLARKE G.
Cook 14 James St., Auburn, N. Y.
GIBBS, WESLEY JR.
Private 2353 S. Broad St., Trenton, N. J.
GIBBS, RYALL C.
Private Main St., Great Meadows, N. J.
GILBERG, FRANK J.
Corporal 27 Palisade Ave., Union Hill, N. J.
GREENE, LEICESTER G.
Private, 1st class Sauquoit, N. Y.
GREENMAN, ARTHUR D.
Sergeant 4 East Main St., Cortland, N. Y.

GREENSTEIN, SAMUEL
Private 289 West Kinney St., Newark, N. J.
HARPER, KENNETH R.
Corporal 53 Clayborne St., Dorchester, Mass.
HARVEY, WILLIAM J.
Corporal 42 Grant Ave., New Brunswick, N. J.
HOFFMAN, WALTER A.
Private, 1st class 461 Alexander St.,Rochester, N. Y.
HULL, ORAN D.
Private 318 Stebbins Place, Plainfield, N. J.
HURST, EARL O.
Private 253 Parkwood Ave., Kenmore, N. Y.
IMPERIALE, JOSEPH
Private Grand St., Moonachie, N. J.
JANDREW, ROY W.
Private R. F. D. No. 1, Waddington, N. Y.
JOHNSON, WILLIAM A.
Private 347 East 78th St., New York, N. Y.
KRUEGER, WILLIAM J.
Wagoner 48 Hooker St., Kingston, N. Y.
KUBEK, MAX
Private 155 West Kinney St., Newark, N. J.
LAKE, CLAUDE L.
Private Edgewood, N. J.
LAWRENCE, GORDON A.
Corporal Cornwall-on-Hudson, N. Y.
LEWIS, FRED J.
Private Seattle, Wash
MACKIN, CHARLES
Private 104 West 7th St., Oswego, N. Y.
MCKEOWN, EDWARD F.
Private 1320 Maryland Ave., Wilmington, Del.
MOORE, ERNEST A.
Private 14 Flagg Ave., Jamestown, N. Y.
MORGAN, MICHAEL
Private 502 VanVorst Place, Town of Union, N. J.

NASSAU, JASON J.
Corporal Waverly, N. Y.
PATERMO, VINCENT J.
Private 33 No. Mississippi Ave., Atlantic City, N. J.
QUINN, HARRY F.
Private 74 Day St., Orange, N. J.
RANDALL, CLARENCE F.
Private 114 Myrtle St., Corning, N. Y.
ROLLINGS, CHARLES S.
Sergeant LaCenter, Ky.
RYAN, EMMETT J., JR.
Corporal 21 Cayuga St., Seneca Falls, N. Y.
RYAN, HAROLD W.
Private Cherry Ave., Aurora, N. Y.
SCANLON, ROBERT J.
1st Sergeant West Clinton St., Ithaca, N. Y.
SCHOEN, CHARLES F.
Private 292 Grey St., Buffalo, N. Y.
SCHRECK, FRANK G.
Private, 1st class 133 Woodward St., Rochester, N. Y.
SCHULTZ, EDWARD W.
Private 14 Adams St., Tonawanda, N. Y.
SCHUMAN, JOHN E.
Private 463 Riley St., Buffalo, N. Y.
THORSEN, OTTO A.
Private 3917 Fifth Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.
TOMEI, ARNESTO
Private, 1st class 35 Bennett St., Hornell, N. Y.
VALLEY, WILFRED J.
Private, 1st class Box 32, Reeds Ferry, N. H.
WELLS, FREDUS P.
Private, 1st class, 2323 West 16th St., Wilmington, Del.
WIENKE, HUGO P.
Corporal R. F. D. No. 14, LaSalle, N. Y.
WOODNUTT, CHARLES P.
Private 920 Stephen Girard Bldg., Philadelphia, Pa.

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G. H. Q.

AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

GENERAL ORDERS
No. 232.

FRANCE, *Dec. 19, 1918.*

It is with a sense of gratitude for its splendid accomplishment, which will live through all history, that I record in General Orders a tribute to the victory of the First Army in the Meuse-Argonne battle.

Tested and strengthened by the reduction of the St. Mihiel salient, for more than six weeks you battered against the pivot of the enemy line on the western front. It was a position of imposing natural strength, stretching on both sides of the Meuse River from the bitterly contested hills of Verdun to the almost impenetrable forest of the Argonne; a position, moreover, fortified by four years of labor designed to render it impregnable; a position held with the fullest resources of the enemy. That position you broke utterly, and thereby hastened the collapse of the enemy's military power.

Soldiers of all of the divisions engaged under the First, Third and Fifth American Corps and the Second Colonial and Seventeenth French Corps—the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 26th, 28th, 29th, 32nd, 33rd, 35th, 37th, 42nd, 77th, 78th, 79th, 80th, 81st, 82nd, 89th, 90th and 91st American divisions, the 18th and 26th French divisions, and the 10th and 15th French Colonial divisions—you will be long remembered for the stubborn persistence of your progress, your storming of obstinately defended machine gun nests, your penetration, yard by yard, of woods and ravines, your heroic resistance in the face of counter-attacks supported by powerful artillery fire. For more than a month, from the initial attack of September 26th, you fought your way slowly through the Argonne, through the woods and over hills west of the Meuse; you slowly enlarged your hold on the Orcq de Meuse to the east, and then, on the 1st of November, your attack forced the enemy into flight. Pressing his retreat, you cleared the entire left bank of the Meuse south of Sedan, and then stormed the heights on the right bank and drove him into the plain beyond.

Soldiers of all army and corps troops engaged—to you no less credit is due; your steadfast adherence to duty and your dogged determination in the face of all obstacles made possible the heroic deeds cited above.

The achievement of the First Army which is scarcely to be equalled in American history, must remain a source of proud satisfaction to the troops who participated in the last campaign of the war. The American people will remember it as the realization of the hitherto potential strength of the American contribution toward the cause to which they had sworn allegiance. There can be no greater reward for a soldier or for a soldier's memory.

This order will be read to all organizations at the first assembly formation after its receipt.

JOHN J. PERSHING,
General, Commander-in-Chief,
American Expeditionary Forces.

OFFICIAL:
ROBERT C. DAVIS,
Adjutant General.

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G. H. Q.

AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

GENERAL ORDERS
No. 238.

FRANCE, *Dec. 26, 1918.*

It is with soldierly pride that I record in General Orders a tribute to the taking of the St. Mihiel salient by the First Army.

On September 12, 1918, you delivered the first concerted offensive operation of the American Expeditionary Forces upon difficult terrain against this redoubtable position, immovably held for four years, which crumpled before your ably executed advance. Within twenty-four hours of the commencement of the attack, the salient had ceased to exist and you were threatening Metz.

Your divisions, which had never been tried in the exacting conditions of major offensive operations, worthily emulated those of more arduous experience and earned their right to participate in the more difficult task to come. Your staff and auxiliary services, which labored so untiringly and so enthusiastically, deserve equal commendation, and we are indebted to the willing co-operation of veteran French divisions and of auxiliary units which the Allied commands put at our disposal.

Not only did you straighten a dangerous salient, capture 16,000 prisoners and 443 guns, and liberate 240 square miles of French territory, but you demonstrated the fitness for battle of a unified American Army.

We appreciate the loyal training and effort of the First Army. In the name of our country, I offer our hearty and unmeasured thanks to these splendid Americans of the 1st, 4th and 5th Corps and of the 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th, 26th, 42nd, 82nd, 89th and 90th Divisions, which were engaged, and of the 3rd, 35th, 78th, 80th and 91st Divisions, which were in reserve.

This order will be read to all organizations at the first assembly formation after its receipt.

JOHN J. PERSHING,
General, Commander-in-Chief.

OFFICIAL:
ROBERT C. DAVIS,
Adjutant General.

HEADQUARTERS, 303RD ENGINEERS
78TH DIVISION

May 23, 1919.

REGIMENTAL BULLETIN
No. 27

1. The following letter from the Office of the Chief Engineer, American E. F., dated May 19th, 1919, is quoted for the information and guidance of all concerned:

"1. Now that the activities of our Army in France are drawing to a close and units are rapidly returning to the United States, it is my desire to place upon record and to make known to your command, my appreciation of their earnest efforts and notable accomplishments with the Expeditionary Forces in Europe.

2. The earnest application and good bearing of the regiment during the period of training with the British was a fitting prelude to its highly commendable work in both the St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne operations with the 78th Division. The arduous and varied duties of the sapper engineer were performed to the entire satisfaction of all concerned. The record of your regiment should be a matter of personal pride to every member of your command.

3. I request that you publish this letter to your command, thus carrying to the officers and men a final word of commendation for their many sacrifices and loyal devotion to our cause.

[Signed] W. C. LANGFITT,
Major General, U. S. A.'

By Order of Lieut. Colonel Browne,

WARNER KING,
Captain, Engrs., U. S A.,
Regtl. Personnel Adjt.

HEADQUARTERS, FIRST ARMY
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES, FRANCE

GENERAL ORDERS
No. 17

March 25, 1919.

In compliance with telegraphic instructions from G. H. Q., A. E. F., the 78th Division stands relieved from this Army on April 6, 1919.

The 78th Division, joining the First Army on August 30, 1918, participated in the following operations of this Army:

ST. MIHIEL OPERATION

The 78th Division participated in this operation first as a reserve of the I Corps, and later by holding the Limey Sector.

MEUSE-ARGONNE OPERATION

The 78th Division, having been relieved from the Limey Sector, joined the Army Reserve in the Meuse-Argonne Sector on October 5th. On October 15-16 and 17th, the 78th Division relieved the 77th Division along the southern banks of the Aire River facing Bois de Loges and Grandpre. While holding the Limey Sector, the 78th Division participated in several severe local engagements and the demonstration of September 26th.

Between October 15th and 31st this division executed continuous attacks against the difficult and strongly held terrain of Bois de Loges, Grandpre and east of Talma Ferme. The heights east of Talma Ferme and Grandpre and the heights to the north thereof were captured by hard fighting which included several "hand-to-hand" engagements.

The division participated in the Army's general attack of November 1, advancing between that date and November 5th approximately twenty kilometers and through the localities of Briquenay, Boult aux Bois, Chatillon sur Bar, Brieulles sur Bar, Les Petities Armoises to the heights east of Tannay.

The Army Commander desires to convey to Major General McRae (commanding the 78th Division) and the officers and soldiers of the 78th Division, his appreciation of the excellent services rendered by this division as a combat unit of the First Army. The Army Commander and the Army greatly admired the tenacity, and aggressiveness of the troops and the leadership of General McRae and his subordinates of the 78th Division during the hard and continuous fighting which resulted in the capture by the 78th Division of the heights east of Talma Ferme and of Grandpre.

The 78th Division in leaving the Army carries with it the best wishes of the Army Commander for its future abroad and in the United States.

By Command of Lieutenant-General Liggett:

H. A. DRUM,
Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:

H. K. LOUGHRY,
Adjutant General.

By Command of Major-General McRae:

A. J. L'HEUREUX,
Adjutant.