Attorney C. F. Lauer Writes of Death of One Member of Company A on the Front Line—Was Occupying a Supporting Position on Aug. 4, but Subsequent Letters Indicate That the 108th Is Now in Thick of Fight.

A letter received by Miss Edith Lauer of 120 Rutgers street from her brother, Private Charles F. Lauer, Company A, 108th Regiment, and from other members of the 27th Division in France, indicate that the men of what was formerly the Third New York Infantry are now in the thick of the fighting in France. Private C. F. Lauer is a lawyer and a judge of Supreme Court Justice J. J. Rodenberg. Before his enlistment he had offices at 724 Powers building. In his last letter home dated in France on August 4, he speaks only briefly of the activities of the regiment, but he does say: "We are all well except William Davison, not from Rochester, who was killed by machine gun fire in the front line. We now occupy a supporting position where the artillery fire is quite active, and hope to see the front line soon.

Mr. Lauer's letter indicates that different companies of the 108th Regiment were being sent to the front line in turn, and that his company's chance had come. Shortly after this letter was received, his brother, William E. Lauer, who enlisted soon after the United States entered the war, received his first experience in the trenches. He wrote from Camp Wadsworth and went overseas with the first contingent from Spartanburg.

Captain Farmer's Close Call.

Captain John H. Farmer, of Company C, 108th Regiment, writing to his brother, Judge William F. Farmer of Spartanburg, says:

"We had our first taste of the trenches and it wasn't so bad. Had my baptism of fire on my birthday, August 3. There were no casualties; two lads were slightly wounded. It was sure an interesting and at times an exciting trip. Had just nicely got out of our little dugout when Fritz started to shell us. He sure made it warm for an hour or so.

"We were under shell fire practically all the time we were up there, about two weeks. We gave him a good strapping a couple of times, and he returned it good and proper. This time I had two Lewis automatic machine guns on outpost in close support to the front lines. They were buried in the ground.

"We knew the fun was coming and at what time. The first gun was without any real protection but the second was C. C. Got caught at first and it was real warm. Fritz landed everything imaginable around us and finally the battalion held the line alone. It was a hard stunt. Was wet through and through every time we charged. Had a close call when a 9.2-inch shell hit his dog-out but failed to explode. He tells of his experience in the trenches and how there was there with his company for forty days.

This was the second phase of our training," writes Captain Farmer. "We were first mixed with other troops by individuals. Then platoons were merged, and finally the battalion held the line alone. It was a hard stunt. Was wet through and through every time we charged. Had a close call when a 9.2-inch shell hit his dog-out but failed to explode. He tells of his experience in the trenches and how there was there with his company for forty days.

PRIVATE WILLIAM DAVISON.

Company C Has Baptism Of Fire.

Company C, 108th Infantry, had its baptism of fire on August 8, writes Corporal J. Michel to his mother, Mrs. E. Thompson of Warner. Corporal Michel's letter says:

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The next day we spent in the trenches under heavy gas and H. (high explosive) shell fire. Luckily we weren't wounded this time. We had two wounded at this time. We got very little rest as we had to wear our masks almost all day. "Jerry" evidently knew we were coming over and so tried to shake us up as much as possible. That was goodbye. When Fritz started to shell us, we opened fire and continued to shell us as much as possible. That was goodbye. When Fritz started to shell us, we opened fire and continued to shell us as much as possible.
**Rochester Men Shock Troops With 27th Division In Drive On St. Quentin-Cambrai Front**


The 27th Division, composed of men from Western New York, made a wonderful record in the St. Quentin-Cambrai drive, a record which brought warm commendation from SirDouglas Haig of the British forces who spoke of “the utmost dash and bravery” of the American forces of which it was a part in the drive. The two American divisions broke the Hindenburg line and advanced five miles, taking 5,000 prisoners and many guns.

Eye-witnesses say that the New York men went over the top in an overwhelming, irresistible wave, shouting as their battle cry, “Lusitania!” It had been learned from prisoners that nine divisions of the German troops were awaiting the attack. Each man who went over the top knew that he was going into what would probably be the hardest fought battle of the war and he went into it with the determination to do his part in making it also the most successful for the Allied forces.

Following in the train of the large concourse of tanks, the Americans forged ahead through the early morning mist and the smoke and vapor of the thousands of shells which had been sent over in preliminary bombardment. At one point the Americans waded and swam a waterway under steady machine-gun fire and took the opposite bank from the enemy with shouts and laughter.

The drive lasted from 6 o’clock in the morning until 9 o’clock, when, at a signal, the American forces opened their ranks to allow the support of Australians to come up and take their places. By this time the prisoners were being taken back in droves and the shock troops of the Americans were ordered to the rear to recuperate after their supreme effort.

Letters are arriving which tell of the part taken by the Rochester men. who are members of the 108th Regiment, part of the 27th Division, in the big drive. The casualties are said not to have been heavy considering the intensity of the drive and the fact that the division was used as shock troops.

In a letter to H. L. Saunders of Fairport, First Sergeant Charles Bates of the same village writes of a terrific battle in which the members of the 108th Infantry took part. Sergeant Bates is a member of Machine Gun Company, 108th Infantry, and writing under date of October 6, he says:

"You will no doubt be surprised to get this letter from me, after hearing of our casualty list. I was reported killed, but like all bad money turned up at the finish. I will try my best to give you a bit of an idea as to what our division was ordered to do.

"And I can tell you that I hope and pray that we never see it again like that. What few of us came back are still trying to figure out how a man could possibly live under such fire.

"I was in command of a platoon as we happened to have one of our officers away at school at the time, so I had to take his place. Well, it's a good job he was away, for the others were killed, as we were a heavy company left now anyway. I have not heard the report on the Fairport boys that are in this regiment yet, and I can't state as to their welfare, but our losses are very high. In one company a corporal came out in command of the company. We had a corporal come out in command of one of our platoons.

SEVERGEANT CHARLES BATES.

"Well, the line was captured and the Hun was still going, and I hope they never let him stop till he gets to Berlin now. Then I'll eat my Christmas dinner in Fairport.

"Our chaplain is Chaplain Ward from Buffalo. Gee, you should see him. This man was a sight that our boys will always remember. When the machine gun fire and whiz bangs were coming in all directions, that fellow walked from one man to another, dressing the wounds and taking charge of stretcher bearers. And I might say that Jerry delights in cutting the stretcher bearers because they are helpless. That's his idea of good stuff.

"I am not going to try and tell you what a battlefield is like, because I don't believe any man can do that, but I think if I ever come back I will be very drunk when I try to recall it.

Describes Terrific Battle In Which 108th Took Part

Overwhelming Indebtedness Faces German Government

(BY Robert J. Bender, U. P. C.)

Washington, Nov. 1.—Complete surrender of the Central Powers to the forces of civilization is drawing nearer, official Washington believed today. Already mittel-Europa has been crushed by the Allied armies. Austria's oldest capitulation is expected momentarily in the wake of her frantic appeal for an armistice on the field of battle.

When this comes Germany will face the world alone. How long she will hold out is a matter of conjecture, but authorities here believe not more than six months.

Germany, these authorities say, must be weighing thoughtfully the consequences of the defeat of her Allies as she awaits the call for surrender from the Versailles conference. Austria's exit from the war, military authorities point out, will expose the entire southern German frontier, where morale is the weakest and where feeling against Prussia is most bitter. Bavaria, Saxony and Silesia would be the first points of contact with Allied troops and Munich, Dresden and Breslau, leading south German cities would be the first cities feeling a drive from the Austrian side.

Great Burden of Debt.

Debts are now haunting the Germans. Already the Hohenzollerns face the probability of having to repudiate the government's debt at home in order to square its debts to the world. This, or vast taxation measures to meet the outstanding bonds of $40,000,000,000 and payments which the peace table will force for territories devastated by the Germans, appears certain, officials say.

Government repudiation of its debt to the people, officials here say, would make the people's power supreme.

The Krupps, for example, with millions of marks invested in government securities, would be reduced suddenly to a position where they no longer would constitute a menace.

Stolen From Belgium.

Estimates of the damage done by the Germans in Belgium place a loss of approximately $4,000,000,000 on Germany. This has grown up from fines, levies, war contributions, removal of raw and manufactured products to Germany and wholesale destruction of property. The German invaders levied in fines and contributions upon the Belgians $40,000,000 in 1914; $80,000,000 in 1915; $130,000,000 in 1916; $160,000,000 in 1917, and to October 1, 1918, they had collected $72,000,000.

Heavy Demands.

Belgium lost approximately $1,300,000,000 worth of raw and manufactured products, machinery and other industrial equipment to the invaders, according to a published German boast in 1917. The same announcement estimated that German destruction to Belgian territory aggregated approximately $2,400,000,000. These figures do not include the deportation of 1,270,000 Belgian men into Germany, whose production was entirely lost to their home land.

Billions in plundered wealth have been charged against the Huns to northern France, Serbia and other invaded sections. These debts will demand a reckoning at the peace table.

Definite developments from the Versailles conference are expected soon. It was said today that it was quite possible Germany would get the armistice terms and pass on them before they would be published to the world. Agreement on basic peace principles is imminent, according to reports.
Further Details Of Fighting At St. Quentin And Cambrai; Part Taken By Rochester Men

Heavy Casualties Among Members of 108th Regiment in Breaking Through Hindenburg Line—Disregarded Withering Machine Gun Fire and Bullets From Aviators.

Letters received today from men of the 108th Infantry give still more details of the big drive at St. Quentin in which Rochester men took so gallant a part. The point where the 27th Division broke the Hindenburg line, between Cambrai and St. Quentin, had been five times attacked by British troops which had been unable to break through.

The young, fresh troops of the American division, associated with the troops of the British and Australian forces, went over the top and through the German line without a halt, though many of their number fell, killed or wounded by the hail of machine gun bullets fired from low-flying German airplanes, or by the high explosive shells and shrapnel which were poured over on them in a bombardment such as had never been seen before.

Killed in Action

Private Fred B. Ayers, 1010 Bay street.
Private Albert J. Haag, 323 Orange street.
Private Austin J. Malally, Rochester.
Private William Curran, Rochester.
Died From Gas Attack

Private Harold M. Wallis, Barnard.
Died of Wounds

Mechanic George W. Trott, Mt. Hope avenue.
Sergeant Howard L. Shepard, Fairport.

Seriously Wounded

Corporal Daniel J. O'Hara, 86 Lorimer street.

Missing in Action

Private Frank B. Bauer, 49 Rohr street.

Wounded in Action

Private Maurice B. Ayers, 1610 Bay street.
Private Harold J. Herr, 22 Fairbridge street.
Corporal Bruce Marley, Rochester.
Private Robert Mullin, Rochester.
Private Maurice Benedict, 66 Brighton street.
Sergeant J. A. Glenn, 70 Montrose street.
Corporal Arnold W. Ross, 1149 Atlantic avenue.
Private Sidney Thompson, Rochester.

Private Daniel Allaire, 73 York street.
Private Walter Kidea, 9 Superior street.
Private Walter Kriddle, Kenwood avenue.
Private Rodney Marcell, Rochester.
Private William Moran, 260 Edinburgh street.
Corporal Edward Marcell, 54 Amherst street.

PRIVATE ALBERT J. HAAG.

Private Albert J. Haag, son of Henry B. Ayres of 1610 Bay street, is reported to have been killed in the drive in which Company H, 108th Infantry, took so gallant a part.

PRIVATE FRED B. AYERS.

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PRIVATE AUSTIN J. MULLAY.

Private Austin J. Mullay, son of Maurice B. Ayers of 1010 Bay street, was severely wounded in the German line without a halt, and has written to his parents from a Portsmouth hospital telling of the great battle. When Maurice last saw his brother he was driving Hun stretcher bearers back to a field hospital but a letter from a comrade says that Fred was later

PRIVATE MAURICE D. BENEDICT.

beef, a hunk of bread and a can of jam for each platoon. Five more minutes to go.

"Pretty soon the whistl blew and we were ready. Talk about a sight! Jerry was so scared that he sent up Vary lights so fast that you would have thought a Vary light dump had blown up. We were getting along nicely and I got over the third ridge. The aeroplanes had dropped a big smoke screen and we couldn't see a thing in the valley, but on top you could see the Fritzsche running for dear life. They never stopped to fight at all.

That was about 10:15 a.m. and a nice big whiz-bang came over quickly..."
and landed right back of me, killing three fellows and wounding me in the leg. I didn’t think I was wounded at first, for it didn’t hurt, but after I got

I looked at my leg and my legging was covered with blood. I fell into a shell hole, took out my knife, cut my legging off and

stayed there until Pria

dressed the wound. Then I tried to catch up with the company, but it was too far ahead so I found a nice deep shell hole and stayed there until Pria and they went 5,000 yards ahead of our boys. We have the trenches on the run so fast that in a few more months of good weather we shall be in Berlin.” Private Albert J. Haag of Company G, 188th Infantry, was killed in action on September 29, while fighting near Gouey, on the Hindenburg line, north of St. Quentin, according to a letter received by Mrs. J. M. Geoghegan from Corporal Bruce Matliss, himself wounded in the same drive and now recovering in a hospital at Portsmouth, England. Private Haag was 19 years old.

He was one of the first volunteers from Rochester, enlisting just after the United States entered the war. He was in camp at Spartanburg, S. C., sailing for overseas last April and has

made it too hot for me. Then I looked over the top and saw a tank coming, and I knew that the boys had got through the line all right.

“Back of me were the Australians, been in active service since that time. At the time of his enlistment he was employed by the Seneca Camera Company. He leaves his father, John Haag of Chicago, and aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Geoghegan, 228
Sergeant Howard L. Shepard, son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank E. Shepard of Fairport, died in a hospital in France of wounds received in action. He was 26 years of age. He leaves his parents, one brother, James F. Shepard, and two sisters, Mrs. Walter R. Brooks and Marion A. Shepard.

Ensign Joseph F. Conolly was the son of James Conolly, 61 Somerset street, who received word of the safe arrival overseas of their son. Ensign Joseph F. Conolly enlisted in the Naval Reserves at Newport, R.I., in May, 1917, later being transferred to the aviation branch of the service. After three months of technical training at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he was sent to Key West, Miami and Pensacola, where he received his commission, having qualified as pilot on H-16.

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Glorious Achievement
Of New York Soldiers,
Told By Englishman

Times Union, Feb. 16, 1918

Members of 108th Infantry Took Part in Fierce Fighting
Went Straight Into Formidable German Defenses—American Dead Had Faces
Turned Toward Enemy.

Killed in Action.
Private Raymond A. Hornswell, 264 Bardin street; Corporal Arthur T. Darby, Canadian forces; Private Charles C. Clarkson, 61 Elm street.

Died of Wounds.
Corporal Elton Shepard, Rochester; Private Oscar Nickel, 242 Brook street.

Wounded Severely.
Sergeant Frank W. Koene, 225 Pennsylvania avenue; Corporal Karl L. Kohl, 53 Carthage street; Richard Van Hoeven, Rochester.

Wounded.
Private Claire J. Conderman, Rochester; Corporal Raymond N. Stidie, 263 Baden street; Private Thomas Tennyson, 752 South avenue.

Gassed.

Died of Disease.
Private John Wisse, 18 Brighton street.

The highest praise is given to the bravery of the American soldiers at St. Quentin by an English officer, wearer of the Victoria Cross, who is quoted in a dispatch published in the London Times on October 11, a copy of which was sent to The Times-Union by Frederick C. Coit of this city, whose brother, Charles Coit, is in France as a Y. M. C. A. secretary.

"The American dead," says the colonel, "lay stretched with their faces to enemy. In not one case was there a man moving backward who was killed."

The dispatch says, further:
"It is not possible at this time to speak more than cursorily of the share of the Americans in the attack of September 29, when on their whole front of about 6,000 yards, United States troops broke through the defences of the Hindenburg line and the Canal (St. Quentin) Tunnel and on the farther right forced a crossing of the canal itself. It would have been a great achievement for the most experienced soldiers of the Allied armies. For inexperienced troops, as the Americans were, it was a truly extraordinary performance."

"The American troops were chiefly Carolinians and men of Tennessee and New Yorkers. All alike went straight into the German defenses, which were of a most formidable kind, and swept on to their objectives. The impetuousity of their advance made possible the great advance of the British Ninth Corps on their right. It was the Southerners who took the villages of Bellecourt and Nauroy, while the New Yorkers, reckless of the intense machine-gun fire on their left, swept on toward Goye and Mont St. Martin."

"That some of the latter went too fast and too far, you know Nest of the Germans, who skulked in the ramifications of the Tunnel and in various lairs and burrows, were left undestroyed, as the advanced streamed on, and these were reinforced by other enemy, who trickled southward through the barrage on the left. Probably if those Americans on the left of the attack had been less wholehearted fighters, and could have driven their impatience to get at and kill the enemy in front, they would have had fewer casualties, but the episode would have been less glorious."
Among the Rochester men in Co. G, 108th U. S. Infantry, that went over the top was Sergeant Richard V. Hoeven, a member of the Tower Class of the First Reformed Church's Bible School. The pastor of the church has just received a letter from him telling of his experience. He wrote: "Went over the top just after I received your letter. We had to leave our letters and diaries and other things that would give the enemy information as to who we are and where we came from. We went into the line last Friday (Sept. 27) a few miles north of Cambrai between Cambrai and St. Quentin."

"Well, Sunday morning at 6 we went over the top yelling like Indians and joking and laughing. We were under one of the heaviest barrages ever put on, and sure it was a peach.

"The tanks went ahead of us, and it was a sight worth seeing. As far as the eye could see, you saw only one wave of Yanks after another. All were about five to seven paces apart, and walking very slow. Their rifles were over their shoulders, and the bayonets were a shining. Our pockets were bulging out with hand grenades, shells were bursting on all sides, and if a man dropped it was against the rules for even his best chum to tie up his wounds because it would leave a gap in the lines.

"After we got closer to the Jerrys' line the rifles were carried so that we could use them easier and quicker. Just before we got there, we ran into dense clouds of smoke and gas. Just stopped the men long enough to put on their masks, and on they went.

"I had got my second wound by that time, and I figured out that I had enough for the present, so I heaved my bombs at a couple of Jerrys, took a few souvenirs off of them and started back.

"I had tied up my wounds myself. So I walked back about three miles and got an ambulance to take me the rest of the way.

"I am in England now (Worcester) enjoying sleep between real white sheets and in a regular bed. I miss all the good eats because I have to live on bread and milk. I wouldn't have to eat that if the bullet that went through my face tearing out teeth, etc., had gone a little higher. I should worry though I'll leave me with a dimple. The other wound is in my left arm, though not very bad.

"P.S.—We won that day, anyway, and are winning still! Jerry won't last long now!"

Private John Wise of 18 Brighton street died from pneumonia in France on October 11. He leaves his wife, Nettie Hendricks Wise; his father, three sisters and three brothers.
In a letter to his father John Franklin of 571 Meigs street, Private Franklin says he is doing his best to make a good soldier. He and his chum, Frank Stout were brought up together, went to the same school, enlisted at the same time and are still together at the front.

In a letter to Miss Jennie Pomroy and Missie Marie Laline of 118 Ridge-wway avenue, Private Franklin says the fighting is terrific and the guns and arms were singing “Darkestown Strutters Ball” while being taken off to the stretcher. Many of his companions were killed and wounded, but they took what came with a smile on their faces.
One Company of 108th Regiment Carried on With Australian Troops Sent Up To Relieve Them—At Dinner for Huns.

A copy of the "Stars and Stripes" issued in the front lines by the 108th Infantry and a letter sent home by one of the personnel of the company form the basis for the account which follows. The 108th, which occupies the sector of the front between St. Omer and Lens, is an American regiment serving in a company with the Australians.

"History scrapbooks collection Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County."

"Went Through Line Of Opposing Huns As "Shot From Hell""

Rochester Soldier Gives Graphic Description of Fierce Fighting Which Men From This City Took Part—Joseph A. Roth, Although Granted Deferred Classification, Enlisted—Was Killed in Action.

Killed in Action.

Lieutenant H. Oscar Sommer, Pittsford; Private Joseph A. Roth, 127 Saranac street; Private Daniel Yoho, Rochester; Private Louis Moenke, 328 Main street.

Died of Wounds.

Private John Gers, 73 Ontario street.

Died of Disease.

Sergeant Duncan Wallace McAnn, 61 Tacoma street; Private Albert M. Murphy, 225 Campbell street.

Wounded.

Sergeant Frank E. Roberts, Rochester; Corporal Edwin J. Appel, 69 Danforth street; Mechanic Kwell E. Dolan, 109 Plymouth avenue; Private Frank W. Springer, 833 Main street;

Private Edward Reis, 245 Brooks avenue; Private Frank W. Springer, 833 Main street.

Among the officers killed were two other Rochester men—Lieutenant H. Oscar Sommer, Pittsford, and Private Joseph A. Roth, 127 Saranac street.

Instructions from the Division had been that we were to relieve the Germans if they were ready to hand over when we came. But we found that the front line was not as far back as we expected it to be and that we would have to advance almost a mile to get to the Germans. We were, however, able to take them by surprise, and the German trench was captured by us in less than an hour.

The fighting was intense and the casualties were heavy. In the early stages of the engagement, the Americans were forced to retreat, but later in the day, when they had gained a foothold, they were able to hold their ground. The fighting was continued for several hours until the Germans finally gave way and abandoned their position.

The American troops were well prepared for the fighting, and their superior tactics and discipline enabled them to repel the German attacks and gain the upper hand. The Australians also played a significant role in the battle, and their determination and courage were instrumental in the victory.

The American soldiers were rewarded with a well-deserved victory and a sense of pride in their accomplishment. The battle was a significant turning point in the war, and it demonstrated the strength and resolve of the American troops.

After the battle, the American soldiers were praised for their bravery and skill. The news of their victory was shared with family and friends, who were proud of their loved ones and the sacrifices they were making.

The experience was a life-changing event for many of the soldiers, and it served as a reminder of the importance of patriotism and the sacrifices made by those who serve their country.

"Went through the strong fortifications of the Hindenburg line like a shot from Hell and gained all our objectives. Nothing could stop us," writes Private John A. Koehler, Jr., of Company G, 108th Infantry, in a letter written to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. John A. Koehler of 415 Gregory street.
CAPTURED HUN
MACHINE GUN
UNIT UNAIDED

Private Arthur Schneider of Rochester Recommended for Bravery—Secured Information Leading to Capture of Three Others.

When private Arthur Schneider of Company G, 108th Infantry returns to his home city he will wear the war medal presented to him for his bravery and enterprise in capturing, unaided, a German machine-gun unit of four men with their gun and supply of ammunition.

Second Lieutenant Fred G. Davis, to whom fell the command of the company in the advance at St. Quentin.

PRIVATE ARTHUR SCHNEIDER.
after Captain A. Smith had been struck down, First Lieutenant Welch killed, has recommended Private Schneider for decoration for his services in capturing the German machine gunners and obtaining from them information leading to the capture of three other machine-gun emplacements.

In a letter written to relatives here Private Schneider tells of his adventures as follows:

VIVID DESCRIPTION OF 48 HOURS OF FIGHTING GIVEN IN PARIS EDITION OF NEW YORK HERALD—HUN MET WITH DISASTER.

Details of the terrific fighting in which the 108th Infantry took part when the Yanks broke through the Hindenburg line are given in the Paris edition of the New York Herald of September 29. The fighting was so terrific that the entire 48 hours of fighting are given as follows:

(By arrangement with the London Daily Express)

With the British Armies.
Before Cambrai.

Sunday night.

(Delayed in transmission)

Between the Citadels of Cambrai and Saint Quentin, there fell upon the Hun today one of the greatest disasters which has yet suffered in the season of defeat. The last remaining fragment of the Hindenburg line was reached from the German western front.

At the end of a devastating, unceasing bombardment of 48 hours came a fearsome array of British infantry, machine gunners and a dash of men of the British Isles, Australia and America passed through the triple belts of trenchworks across the Scheld Canal into the fair country where lies Le Coteau.

They broke the surviving limb of the Belgian-German fortress in a single morning—six hours and a single stroke.

This is the outstanding feature of the advance, which has continued along the 29-mile front of the three British armies. The British armies, now marching northward to Cambrai, a third of the way to Douai.

Cambrai is like an island in a troubled sea, with the waves of khaki pressing around on the north and south and the west, as the waterways, on which the Hun staked everything, pushing him relentlessly and without rest into a region where he has few defenses, never giving him a moment’s respite to sort out his scattered infantry or to stand in battle.

The German armies, unaided, have come from bad to worse, and the details I heard today of frustrated counter-efforts and the hopeless condition of their rear, leave no doubt as to their serious condition.

THE 16TH HELTED SMASH—HINDENBURG LINE

CAME THROUGH RECENT DRIVE—WON WITHOUT INJURY

Corporal Paul Johnson of Company G, 106th Infantry, has written to his mother, Mrs. Sarah Holm of 129 Frost avenue, telling her that he took part in the recent drive and came through without wounds. He says:

“Well, we know what real war is. Now we went over the top and we lucked right with me all the time and I came out just as good as I went in. It was a wonderful sight to see when we started after the Huns and we got them started and I guess they are still going for us. We gave them two awful good thras and one that they will never forget.”
Details Of Big Drive In Which 108th Helped

"All Hell Broke Loose," Says Sergeant Miller—Many Rochester Men on the Casualty List, Killed, Wounded or Gassed—Local Boxer

By the breach of an incident, the day the Times-Union published an account of the death of Kenneth Carter, former assistant pastor of Central Presbyterian Church, a letter was received by Louis H. Houck of 423 Grand avenue, from Corporal Louis C. Houck, Headquarters Co. 108, U. S. A. E. F., describing the gallant manner in which his young son met his death on the battlefield. His description of the charge is quite thrilling. He and Carter were carrying a message to the front line when one was killed.

Writing under date of October 2, Corporal Houck describes the breaking through on a sector of the famous Hindenburg line, as follows:

"It was on a Sunday morning, just as dawn was breaking, and all through the trenches the boys were sitting here and there writing their last few words home. Others were standing with bayonets in their guns waiting for the time to come to go over the top. Suddenly the barrage starts and slowly over the top we go. We were all some distance in the rear, but one thing we always kept in mind was that if we did not get Jerry he would get us. With bayonets fixed we slowly advanced over the top, the barrage making way for us, machine guns drumming and shrapnel bursting. I tell you folks it was hell, I cannot tel you how many men we lost because it would be too hard. For four days and nights we were without any sleep because we had our stunt to do.

"We have no mercy for the Hun, and if fire his machine gun at us until we were on top of him and then he would throw up his hands and yell 'Kamerad'. It was bad, but the Yanks certainly had no mercy on them. The ground for miles around was strewn with dead and to step amongst the dead was a common thing. It was the first time we were in. We didn't stay in the trenches long because Jerry retreated so fast, but while we were there we saw trench rats as big as dogs. I came out with a million 'comites' in my shirt, but that, too, is common.

"During the course of the battle my work was to carry dispatches from battalion headquarters up to the company slowly advanced. Out of the 50 orderlies, five were killed and one was injured. I saw one of

Corporal Louis C. Houck's men killed and honestly think it was one of the most brutal sights I have ever witnessed.

"Kenneth Carter (a Rochester boy) was the orderly's name. He and I started with a message for the front line which had to get there at any cost. We had not gone far when Jerry began sending some whiz-bangs along the path we were walking. We fell to the ground at the sound of the first one as it was very close. The next instant he sent over another and instead of ducking Carter ran ahead about 100 yards in advance of me. He stumbled over some wire which immediately exploded a concealed mine right under him and he was literally blown to pieces, but all I could find was part of his coat. We buried him in a shell hole. Seeing so many dead lying around has made us a bit indifferent. Major Fred Coachman came out all right.

"We have been sent quite a ways back to reorganize but soon will be back in the fight."

Sixteen days later Corporal Houck wrote from Convalescent Hospital where he was recovering from a shrapnel wound in the ear which he suffered on October 14. He said 'Jerry got a little fresh and scratched my ear with a piece of shrapnel.'
The story of the performance of the Signal corps men under fire provides a peculiarly brilliant feature of the work of the American Expeditionary Forces in Europe. Headquarters company, 18th regiment, was for twelve years in the employ of this Signal corps company. A company, tells something about the work of his platoon in a recent battle, in a letter written October 11th and received by David L. Morris of the Telephone company. Blythe’s mother, Mrs. William Blythe, lives at 7 dungeon street, in New York, for the telephone company. He was a member of Company H, First Separate company, and served on the Mexican border.

Private Blythe’s story amply illustrates that Corporal W. Stewart, a man who worked on a special detail, has been killed. The battle played a part in the march as the company marched into an old convent. We sang a few hymns to the colonel, a talk to us of the hard time we had and how the high officers of the English and Australian armies had spoken of the good work, and we were ready to take on the objective at once to have gone and taken some other company’s objective. While the reports started to come in of the boys who had died at the hospital and it was here that I heard that Lieutenant Simes had died. That broke Company H up and every one who knew him.

**SAW SOLDIERS OF ROCHESTER FALL AT FRONT**

**Signal Corps Man Writes of Activities Under Fire.**

**Telephone Explode About Them.**

**Saw Soldiers of Rochester Fall at Front**

**Signal Corps Man Writes of Activities Under Fire.**

**Shells Explode About Them.**

**Telephone Man Tells Gallant Work of 108th and Describes How They Fought.**

**All day long it rained and made everything muddy and sloppy and we got wet to the skin. We sat around a big fire and cooked our dinner. We got our orders to be ready to move and here we got a lot of deep mud. At 10 or a little later we got our traveling rations for three days. Some of the boys sat around and did nothing while we were waiting. It was already dark when we got started.**

**Wet to the Skin.**

**All day long it rained and made everything muddy and sloppy and we got wet to the skin. We sat around a big fire and cooked our dinner. We got our orders to be ready to move and here we got a lot of deep mud. At 10 or a little later we got our traveling rations for three days. Some of the boys sat around and did nothing while we were waiting. It was already dark when we got started.**

**Where Many Others Fell.**

**In this same place several other officers were killed and lots of our boys were killed. This was bad but the worst was to come. We had to go on over to our necks in sloppy mud or else duck our heads for a shell that went over our heads. There was a big gun that was firing all the time.**

**A Voice in the Dawn.**

**A voice told us to single out and not to make any noise. We got out and we had to step over a big gun now and then and sometimes we had to run. We were right near the road and we were behind a long line of trenches and big guns and around, with piles of rations for Jerry. They are known as iron rations and he gets a lot of them.**

**Getting to the Front Line.**

**We got our orders on a Friday, so we went out with our packs on our back. Our first hike was not that long but our packs were a little heavy. We hiked about ten miles and on our way we went through some towns with not a house in sight. We were a long way from anything. We camped out in a big field where not a tree or bush was standing. Here was plenty of food and drink and water and we certainly had some.**

**Machine guns were tearing off clip after clip and the big guns roaring away. We were all in a state of excitement. We made our way to the men in the trenches and we were behind a long line of trenches and big guns and we were behind them.**

**Machine guns were tearing off clip after clip and the big guns roaring away. We were all in a state of excitement. We made our way to the men in the trenches and we were behind a long line of trenches and big guns and we were behind them.**

**Move Out and Rest.**

**In the afternoon we got orders to move out to rest and regroup. We came out at 5 p.m. Coming down the road we had three or four miles to go and we got out and had some hot chocolate and cigarettes and candy. It was good. We sang a few songs and we tried to get some sleep but we didn’t get any sleep. We got our belongings and we had left behind and went out to get cleaned up and take life easy. They had taken us out of the middle of the line and we had gone ahead.**

**Sunday afternoon they held a special service for the brave boys who were killed. The band played a funeral march as the company marched into an old convent. We sang a few hymns to the colonel, a talk to us of the hard time we had and how the high officers of the English and Australian armies had spoken of the good work, and we were ready to take on the objective at once to have gone and taken some other company’s objective. While the reports started to come in of the boys who had died at the hospital and it was here that I heard that Lieutenant Simes had died. That broke Company H up and every one who knew him.**

**Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County**

**Historic Scrapbooks Collection**

**Killed in Action**

- Fred M. Wallace, 40 Poplar street.
- Private Gordon C. Mayer, Rochester.
- Private Martin R. Laffin, Buffalo.
- Private Robert E. Mooney, 262 Plymouth avenue.
- Private Albert E. Smith, 707 Maple street.

Fred M. Wallace is reported to have been killed in action on October 18. He was a member of the class of 1919 of the University of Rochester and of Phi Delta Kappa fraternity and also a past member of the First Avenue Baptist Church. He leaves his wife, formerly Miss Florence Kincadd of 40 Poplar street; his parents, residents of Henrietta, four brothers and six sisters.

Mrs. Mayer Kamm of this city has received word from the War Department that her son, Gordon C. Mayer, was killed in action in France on October 1. Private Mayer enlisted in the morning corps, in August, being among the first Rochester men to volunteer for service. He was last heard from on September 4, but as he had returned to his company. Before enlistment he was employed by the Women's League of the School and a member of the church of the same name. The son was born in the late Mr. and survived by his mother and two sisters, Evelyn and Bertrice.

Private Martin R. Laffin of 240 Hessel avenue, Buffalo, formerly of Rochester, was killed in action on October 12, 1918. He was the youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. Martin J. Laffin and leaves his parents, his mother, a brother, Private John Laftin, at Camp Dix, and a sister, Mrs. E. Goller.

Private Carl A. Bishop of Company I, 108th Infantry, has been gassed and wounded in the arm. The arm was broken by a letter received by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Bishop of 201 Earl street.

Private Robert E. Mooney has received his service stripe which signifies six months' services at the front. After the second grading he could not see for five or six days and his lungs were affected. In an earlier letter he wrote:

**Lost for Two Days.**

We went over the top the other day and chased Jerry back a few miles. It was 6 o'clock in the morning when we went over and we were on the top of a hill. It was quiet, just like a Fourth of July celebration at night. The sky was breaking with streaks of gray and the men could be seen black against it and Jerry's lights. We fought all day and continued for the next two days. The only souvenir I have of it is a bullet-hole through my mess-kit put there by a sniper. I had always wondered what the sensation of going over the top would be like. Now I know. I was not nervous, but had a queer feeling that I cannot describe. How we came out I don't know, for a time I thought I was the only one left alive in the United States Army, but I put out after awhile that I was all right.

At one time I had to lay in a shell-hole all morning and part of the afternoon while the riflemen and machine guns swept the hill with a regular sheet of steel. While I was in the shell-hole I was nearly run over by two tanks. For two days and nights I had nothing to eat because I was lost and could not locate a ration party. I captured a few prisoners and took them in.

*It was some sight to see the Jerrys throw away their equipment and beat it up over a hill to the rear. Our wounded were a cheerful bunch. You would see them on the roads going to a dressing station. Germans chopping ours and ours helping Germans.*

**Lost in Action.**

Mrs. Handyside of St. Paul street, Irondequoit, has received word that her husband, Harry Handyside of Company H, 108th Infantry, was gassed in action on October 13 and is now in a base hospital in France.

**Leut. Sims Dropped With Smile on Face**

Private J. W. Blythe gives Vivid Description of Battle in Which Many Rochester Men Were Killed and Wounded.

A vivid description of the terrific battle in which Lieut. Frank J. Sims, of Pennsylvania Avenue, was killed is given in a letter from Private J. W. Blythe of Company H, 108th Infantry, written to D. M. Mooney, secretary of Central Telephone Company, at the New York Telephone Company's office, 95 North Flushing street. Blythe was formerly employed by the telephone company and lives at 3 Donlin street. He says:

*I suppose you have read and heard a lot about the terrible war we have just been through. It was a war that we have fought and don't know how we can fight it again. We just made it and don't know how many more we'll have to fight. I will tell you some things about it but don't know if it will get by the censor. We got our orders on*
"Now we were in No Man's Land and the shells began to come back to us. We had gone nearly a half mile when we noticed our wire getting thin on the telephone. We stopped and cut our line and got word back that we were in a gas attack. While we were taking cover Captain Smith came over—he had been shot in the leg—we got his lieutenant and he told me to take charge of the company. He was shot in the head.

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Valiant Action of Men of This City, When They Drove Huns From Hindenburg Line

Their Bravery in Capturing Sector That British Five Times Failed to Take Is Described by Captain A. M. Barager.

A picture of drive in which many Americans lost their lives.

Captain A. M. Barager, of Company A, 16th Michigan, a veteran of the recent drive of the Twenty-seventh Division on the Hindenburg Line and in a hospital in England, has written to Henry W. Morse, colonel of the Home Defense League, a letter vividly describing the battle in which his regiment was engaged. At the time that the latter was written, it is evident, Captain Barager had been informed of the death of his brother officer, Lieutenant Frank L. Simes, for, although he speaks of having that officer with him at the time of entering the battle, he makes no mention of his having been wounded.

The letter follows:

"I received your last letter early in August. Well remember the night. We were then under the shadow of Mount Kemmel, and my regiment was in the van of a sector of the support about 500 yards from Jerry's line. We could go in only at a safe distance, and on this particular night I had just got cut around the neck, and had come back to our dugout about 1 A.M. It was raining and snowing hard, and the candle light, somebody came forward and said, 'Hello, Skipper.' I was up and well, and he had come in, blinking the candle light, somebody came forward and said, 'Hello, Skipper.' I was up and well, and he had come in. I opened the door and said, 'Hello.'

"I then went down to the line and fought the mail, and among the lot was your letter; that's how I remember it.

"I wrote you a long letter in answer to Doullie, a month later, but before I could finish it we were suddenly ordered to the front again. So far as I can, without violating the censorship, I am going to tell you of the movements of the regiment since our arrival in France.

"Movement Toward Front."

"After landing at Brest we moved up through France to a city called St. Omer, and from there we marched from place to place for some time, until we reached a position that was to be our starting place for the battle. We were very close to the line at a place called Popering, about fifteen miles from Ypres and about five miles from the beach, and we went into the front line twice. Of course, things were quiet there--just an occasional raid and artillery shell now and then."

"It was our division that was holding Mount Kemmel at the time when the Germans withdrew. The British asked if they could take Mount Kemmel, but as a matter of fact the Twenty-seventh Division was the first to occupy the hill after the Boche withdrew. We went about three miles ahead of Mount Kemmel when we were relieved by theTwentynines."

"Shortly afterward we went farther south and had a rest of about three weeks. On the 25th of September we were suddenly ordered to the front again, about twenty-mile lines, and arrived close to the front on the 26th. On the 27th we marched eight miles, and by the next morning were stopped by the trench, about fifty yards from Jerry's line. We stayed there that night, the next day and the following night, under a heavy shell. We were in front of the famous Hindenburg line and had practically no shelter. We were in mud and water, and lost all of our dead animals--both men and boche.

"Unwilling to Bury Germans."

"In marching in on the night of the 28th in darkness and mud and rain I suddenly received the order to the right of the road, and I struck the ground I saw by the flash that I had landed on a dead boche. I passed the place several times the next day, and there were still bodies in about 100 yards. There were the bodies of several British and one American fellow with me. The next day (Chaplin Ward, of Markham, Ill.) and he had the body of the American removed and buried. Nobody seemed to care anything about it, except for it to get our line on the trench."

One lay near British headquarters where the limbers drove up with supplies, and they had driven over out of this place until he lay up in the mud. The drivers didn't do it to be inhuman; they just wouldn't move the body.

"Preparation for Drive."

"We had heavy artillery back of us, big and little. It had been moving for several nights. Dozens of heavy machine guns had been assigned to the infantry battalions. The one-pounders and the 77-millimeter guns had been assigned to their sector. There were to be five tanks in each battalion front, and a large number of airplanes to assist us. So you see that all infantry had to do was to walk along and tap any Hun on the head and say 'Halt.' We had the same jolly men of them. However, it didn't work out that way.

"Around 2 A.M. of the 28th the limbers brought us hot coffee and breakfast. Each man carried two days' rations and two canteens of water. And then we waited for the zero hour. The command was given, 'Zero hour.' About 5:45 A.M., and orderly came over and handed us a sealed order from British headquarters, which read:

"Destroy this immediately after reading. Zero hour will be at 5:30. Good-by and luck."

"Lieutenant Moses, Brigade Adjutant.

"It showed the order was that Lieutenant Simes and then buried it in the candle light. Then we waited. That was the moment. The shells were coming over out of our trench--it was still dark--and the four gypsies were ranged by the platoon serjeants. We had three platoons in it, two were in the line in front and two in the support lines, about fifty yards in the rear. Each man had two or three rounds."

"The command was given, 'Zero hour.' We then opened the order and read it. The order read:

"For the infantry, the line had started. on the night of the 28th."

"Regulation of Barrage."

"Still the khaki-uniformed line moved on. Our barrage started on Jerry's front and held there three miles, then moved forward 100 yards and held there. Every three minutes it was moved forward another 100 yards. Of course, our front lines must keep close to the tanks, so the troops kept close to the barrage. The infantry is usually fifty to seventy-five yards from the barrage. If the gypsies were not enough, we had a shrapnel played that didn't come to our right lines. You know, shrapnel goes off with the explosion.

"We moved forward another eight or nine minutes, when suddenly we realized that all the men were standing still, the artillery had answered the S. O. S. signal: shrapnel was exploding that didn't come to our line."

"At 5:45 A.M., Jerry's front was free."

"Thirty minutes were coming thick now, smoke screening. You could not see the smoke containing gas. In the smoke was the smoke containing gas."

"There was confusion, panic, and fear in any man's heart he did not know what was going on."

"A shell explodes. Three or four men fell; two do not rise; they lie motionless on the ground. The other two run, and the last one is left alone."

"The next five minutes were longer than the rest. The men had stopped and the smoke was shining and dawn was just beginning to show in the east. Except for the gypsies they were silent. There was absolute silence everywhere. There was not a breath of wind, in fact, the entire world was yours to possess. The cry of doom. And it indeed was doom for a good many brave men that morning."

"Coming of Zero Hour."

"The next five minutes were longer than the rest. The men had stopped and the smoke was shining and dawn was just beginning to show in the east. Except for the gypsies they were silent. There was absolute silence everywhere. There was not a breath of wind, in fact, the entire world was yours to possess. The cry of doom. And it indeed was doom for a good many brave men that morning."

"And the first bullet arrived. The first bullet arrived. The first bullet arrived. A"
Bravery of Americans.

"But the most wonderful thing of all was the absolute bravery, the gallantry of those men. No hesitation; no looking back, and, I honestly believe, no fear. They were soldiers, well-trained, well-disciplined, and Americans. They were ordered to go and they simply went without thought of self. A sergeant of my company was shot in the arm, he received first aid and refused to go to the rear. Inside of ten minutes he received a bad wound in the leg. As he lay on the stretcher awaiting the ambulance I passed by and spoke to him. He grinned and said: "I could fight with one arm, but couldn't walk with one leg.'"

"A few days previous I had nominated two sergeants for the officers' training camp and they would have gone the next day. One was killed and the other badly wounded."

"This sector we took has been attempted five times by British divisions, which failed each time. It was considered a bad place on the Hindenburg line. The troops were very highly congratulated by the brigade, division and corps commanders."

"I have been in an American hospital in England since the 14th, but expect to go back in a few days. Things look good here now, and I expect before you get this it will be over. So get that reception committee of yours ready."

**108th Infantry Is Cited**

**By Major-General O'Ryan**

"Valor of Officers and Men and Determination and Accomplishment of Battalion Will Furnish Regimenal History for All Time," Says Citation—Men Have Maintained Highest Standards of Discipline.

Chaplain John C. H. of the 108th Infantry has written to his brother, Hamilton Ward of Buffalo, denying rumors to the effect that the 108th was practically wiped out in the engagements of September 29 and October 14. The regiment saw extremely hard fighting at that time and the bravery of the men is praised in the following citation by Major General John F. O'Ryan:

"Now that we have inspected the captured defenses of the Hindenburg line, the magnitude of the task assigned this division in the attack of September 27-October 1 become even more apparent than it than appeared. In the main attack on September 29 the 108th Infantry held the right half of the divisional front of 4,800 yards. The attack was made against what was probably the most highly organized system of field defenses ever constructed. That the 108th Infantry, after practically all of the tanks had been put to action, should have broken through the maze of wire that existed, and in the face of machine guns firing from every trench and next, led one battalion in the main position, now seems an extraordinary feat. That this battalion, having gained the main position, should have captured prisoners equaling in number its own strength at the time, and for two days and nights have withstood bombing attacks and repeated counter-attacks supported by artillery, at the same time keeping its prisoners in subjection, is more extraordinary.

"The valor of officers and men of the 108th Infantry and the determination and accomplishment of the battalion referred to will furnish regimental history for all time. As one captured German officer said: "It can you break through the tunnel sector of the Hindenburg line it will be impossible to construct any defenses to stop you.'"

"Since that battle the division has been fighting and marching almost continuously. On 17th inst. the 108th Infantry was one of the two regiments of the division upon which the task was imposed of forcing the crossing of the Le Selle River. In anticipation of this attack the regiment was directed to react the enemy for the purpose of determining its strength, and securing identifications of the enemy units opposing us. This raid was brilliantly executed by Lieutenant Christ R. Fritz and a small detachment of your regiment, which resulted in the capture of over 29 prisoners. On the 17th inst. your regiment, with the 165th Infantry, overcame all of the difficult features of the ground and in the face of heavy machine gun and minenwerfer fire, supported by artillery, forced the crossing of the Le Selle River and successfully assaulted the heights on the other side.

"Following this operation, the regiment fought almost continuously during the advance of the division and played a prominent part in the capture of Renivert farm, the town of Arbo Guerro, the farms of Jone de Mer and Le Rue and the forcing of the enemy beyond the line of the Canal de la Sambre.

"The valor of officers and men has at all times been exceptional. In spite of the greatest hardships and the continued strain, they have maintained the highest standards of discipline and cheerful determination. The record made by the 108th Infantry during these operations would indeed be hard to equal.'"

**Bullets Graze Neck and Cheek, but Rochester Soldier in Great Drive Is Not Seriously Wounded**

Charles A. Amies wrote after taking part in a drive by the famous 108th Infantry that he believed God was watching over him, and he surely had good grounds for that comforting thought.

Read this, from a letter to his family, whose home is at No. 287 Allen street:

"Two bullets struck me and drew blood, but neither wound amounted to much and I didn’t even have to dress them. The first went through my steel helmet, cut a slight furrow across the back of my neck, struck my toothbrush, which I had in the pack on my back, and stopped. I found the bullet in my pack after the fight, and I am keeping it. The second bullet cut a little skin off my right cheek. I have nothing to worry about."

"I am sending you a shoulder strap that I ripped off the coat of a German who hadn’t been dead ten minutes. It is a keepsake of my first time over the top. Put this in the paper if you like, to let the people know that the regiment that represents Rochester is worthy of the world’s admiration."

"Amies described the excitements when waiting to go over the top and his experiences after the word to go forward was received. In this part of the letter he wrote:

"The hour set was 5:30 A. M. As it drew near my knees felt anything but firm and I was cold—with fright, or maybe it was something else. Fifty steps and the barrage opened. Guns of all kinds and sizes and machine guns broke loose, and you would have thought the world was coming to an end. The men went over the top and started toward the Germans, and the sight was worth half a man’s lifetime. The Germans sent up lights of all colors, lighted up the whole country, and our men advanced through the gas and smoke of burning shells, with no moving to right or left, no thought but forward and let the Germans know what it meant to get Uncle Sam’s boys riled up."

"After I once set my foot over the top my knees grew firm and I forgot the danger. I thought only of what I had to do, and I did it. We went through the Hindenburg line, capturing many prisoners, hundreds of machine guns and much material."
PRIVATE J. B. ROY.

Know how many there are in the whole place. There are 22 beds in the ward, all filled but three. We Americans are mixed in with the Tennesseans and Australians who are fine fellows. Since having come overseas we have been almost continually under fire. That is, from about July 1. My first experience in the front line trenches was in the early part of July. Our first lieutenant and two sergeants were detailed to the front line trenches for observation and study and I was sent with them as orderly. We were assigned to a company of the 20th U. S. Infantry, who were on the part of the line called 'Dickebush,' about half a mile between Ypres and Kemmel Hill. The line was in the form of a 'V' with the Germans' trenches on the high ground overlooking the rear of the British lines for miles back. Our destination was at, or in, the point of the 'V.' We had to reach it under cover of darkness while the Huns were playing machine gun fire at us from both sides and a shell would come over our heads and burst a few yards away. It was a good half-hour's hike through this to reach our destination. The glare lights being sent over 'No Man's Land' were illuminating us and the ground we had to cover. The British...
108th Infantry Commended
For Its Part In Smashing
Through Hindenburg Line

That the now famous 108th Regiment
not only took an important part
in smashing through the Hindenburg
Line but also aided in the raid to
determine the enemy's strength and
to identify units opposed to the
Allied forces, is attested in a
Commendation from Major-General
John F. O'Regan, Commanding
of the 27th Division, A. E. F. for

Sergent Chester M. Cullen, a Rochester
boy, took part in the raid mentioned.
He is a member of Company A, 108th
Infantry, and has sent home a copy of the
commendation of the regiment, which
follows: being dated October 22:

"Now that we have
saw places where Yanks
Broke Hindenburg Line

Elmer H. O'Hara of Syracuse Herald Tells of Tribute Paid
to American Troops by General Rawlinson—Rochester
Men in Twenty-seventh Division
Which Is Mentioned

According to Edward H. O'Hara,
publisher of the Syracuse Herald,
whose brother was the 108th
Infantry officer referred to, the
raid was a part of the extended
tour of Great Britain and
France, including a number of
famous battles of the war.

"The attack was
unprecedented in its
bravery and its
success, and the
valor of the 108th
Infantry was
unequaled."

The 108th
Infantry was
the only unit
assigned this
division in its
attack on
September 27.

The division
had been
struck by
an enemy
division
in the
Hindenburg
Line.

The
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108th
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Hindenburg
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Heroes Of The 27th Division
Are Arriving In New York

ROCHESTER BOY
AMONG LIST OF
MAIMED; EYEGONE

Two Hundred Fifty Wounded
Came Over on Empress of Britain — Lieut.-Col.
Tuck of 108th Infantry
Leaves for This Country.

Lieutenant-Colonel John B. Tuck, second in command of the 108th Infantry, sailed from a French port yesterday for home, still suffering slightly from the effects of the poison gas that caught him on October 1, but on the road to complete recovery.

No definite information whatever can be secured regarding the time of arrival of other officers and men of the 108th Infantry. No ward has been received from Major Cusick, who has been gassed, although the seriousness of his disability seems to have been greatly exaggerated, but he is not expected with the invalided troops now arriving at New York.

Two hundred fifty boys from the 27th Division landed in New York on the British transport Empress of Britain, all of them seriously wounded, but all of them none the less cheerful. Among them was one Rochester man, Private Allen Valentine, who lost an eye. A photographer "caught" him and two of his companions, similarly injured; but as they stepped from the boat, the photograph shows that all of the boys are bearing up cheerfully and bravely as they did under the fire of the enemy.

There was but one man of the 27th Division aboard the ship that had not taken part in or had seen the operations of the division before Cambrai and was not able to tell of the hardships it was called on to endure. From July until late October, when the battle-scarred remnant of the Empire Division was ordered to rest billets, the fury of German attacks was directed at these men from New York. It was this New York division which co-operated with the French and British armies in driving the Germans back mile after mile and had them still retreating when the armistice was signed. The slope of Mont Kemmel will always be a monument to the 108th Infantry, which are its best.

Like all heroes, the 27th wounded who returned on the British transport sealed their lips when it came to telling of their own exploits.

That the Twenty-seventh Division may shortly be relieved from further A. E. F. service by Gen. John J. Pershing is the word brought home by Maj. M. C. Harrington, who, before he was invalided back, was assistant chief quartermaster of the American forces in France. Maj. Harrington said when he arrived on the Empress of Britain that General O'Ryan told him that he believed the boys of the Twenty-seventh would be back home within 36 days after the terms of the armistice had been carried out.

As many of the terms of the armistice have already been carried out and the Allied troops have occupied practically all the territory specified in the armistice, it would not be surprising if the Twenty-seventh Division began the homeward journey within the next few weeks, according to the major.

Major Harrington was enthusiastic in his praise of General O'Ryan, his division and the entire American Army overseas. "Better fighters never have been known," he said. "They do not know how to retreat. You couldn't get them to go back under any circumstances."

Heavy Casualties In 27th Division
May Have Been Result Of Clever Gas Defense Developed By The Germans

Did the German defense against the tanks of the Allies in the last few weeks of the war cause the heavy losses in the 108th Regiment, of which three companies were from this city?

Every letter from Rochester men who took part in the great drive against the Hindenburg line speaks of the failure of the 27th Division to have any help from the tanks. The tanks that had been so effective in breaking through strong German defenses in other sectors were put out of business when the 37th Division, fighting with the British between Cambrai and St. Quentin, began their famous drive.

New light has been thrown on the failure of the tanks by the disclosure that the Germans developed a scheme of calling the tanks by using a gas bomb. When the tanks advanced and reached a depression in the ground, the Germans would drop in front of them a harmless appearing bomb which would emit great quantities of carbon di-oxide gas. The tanks, not suspecting any trouble, would push on into this gas. Then they would stop suddenly. Their motors would die. The carbon di-oxide gas had simply choked their carburetors and made it impossible for them to deliver the cylinders a gas that would explode. Then when the big tanks thus were stopped, the Germans would have a fixed target and by using a high explosive shell would blow them all to pieces.

After a time the Allies developed a defense against the carbon di-oxide gas and either by putting a mask on the carbureters or by supplying pure air to the carbureters in some other way, were able to keep their motors going. But during the time that the 27th Division was fighting its costly battles, the tanks of the Allies were useless. Thus the clever defense against the tanks cost the New Yorkers many casualties.
Great Feat of Twenty-seventh Division of September Declared To Rival That of Marines at Chateau-Thierry—Big Tribute to Major-General John F. O'Ryan—Marshal Haig Marvels at Discipline.

An officer of the former National Guard of New York State, writing for a Syracuse newspaper, pays big tribute to Major General John F. O'Ryan, the commander and organizer of the now famous 27th Division, of which former Rochester National Guardsmen are a part. O'Ryan was the only National Guard officer to be commissioned a major-general and retain his command in the great American army.

Because of the fact that his division was brigaded with the British and under the command of the British General Rawlinson, but little has been said of General O'Ryan's achievements in the field. His troops were never a part of the American army in battle, but little by little in fragments, as it were, the story of the 27th's wonderful work is coming, I think.

Now the New York division is being referred to as the "savior of the Channel ports." And the message, "They stopped the Germans before Calais," spoke volumes. It indicates that the 27th performed one of the most heroic feats of the war, perhaps it has won a name that will endure like that of the Marines at Chateau-Thierry. They are known as "O'Ryan's Rough Necks," a sobriquet born on the battlefield, and the bulldog tenacity they displayed in winning where others had failed is a credit to their training under a brilliant commander.

O'Ryan is credited with having one of the most versatile divisions in the American army, and great levies were made upon it by the War Department for men especially skilled. These levies took thousands from the division and compelled a new recruiting campaign to bring the division up again to full strength so that it might press the enemy.

Perfection of Discipline.

When the 27th landed in France the perfection of discipline amazed the Allied commanders. None was more amazed than Field Marshal Haig. He visited General O'Ryan's headquarters one day and the 27th was trotted out for review.

The men marched with such precision that Marshal Haig paid them what he thought the finest compliment. He told O'Ryan that they marched like seasoned British soldiers. While he was speaking an aeroplane descended over the head of the marching men. According to some of the observers, it passed within 25 feet of the helmets of the marchers in one battalion but not one man looked up. No finer test could have been arranged and Haig could restrain his enthusiasm no longer, declaring it was almost inconceivable that these men, who only a few months before were civilians, could have become such splendidly disciplined soldiers. It is the proud boast of the men of this same regiment that they furnished more officers in the war period than West Point, in spite of intensive class work and short terms.

Because of the long delay in sending the 27th across the water, fear had been expressed that the division would go stale. However, O'Ryan utilized all of the time in perfecting his organization, which must now be rated the equal of any that fought for Uncle Sam.

Gen. O'Ryan counted his service as a soldier as the greatest privilege of his life. He wanted his men to feel the same way.

After he returned from Europe, having been under fire with the 27th British Division, he showed his intensely human side in a friendly talk with a group of officers.

Fascination Overcame Him.

"The first time I went out to the front line I did not feel any fear," he began. "Don't think this is bragging. Let me finish my story. Ever since I had become interested in the military as an officer I had been studying tactics and the problems of supply. Before me I saw all these problems being worked out on a grand scale. I had studied text books. I had dealt with maps and plans. Now was dealing with trenches and human beings. I was fascinated, and the fascination overcame every other emotion.

"The second time I was under fire I saw a man shot down right before me within a few feet. I saw a man's head blown off, and—well, gentlemen I will leave it to you to consider how I felt."

At the dedication of the Spartanburg Club for Enlisted Men on a Sunday in March a band concert was being held. Without announcement the general hurried to the platform from which he was to make the principal address.

Instantly every man was on his feet. There was no call. "The General!" It was the automatic response to his insistence upon the courtesy of the military. There was something so spontaneous about it, something so complimentary, that United States Senator Calder, who also was scheduled to speak, turned to an officer and said:

"Gen. O'Ryan will either be made or broken by this war. He will emerge a great figure or a great failure. He can do nothing by half measures."