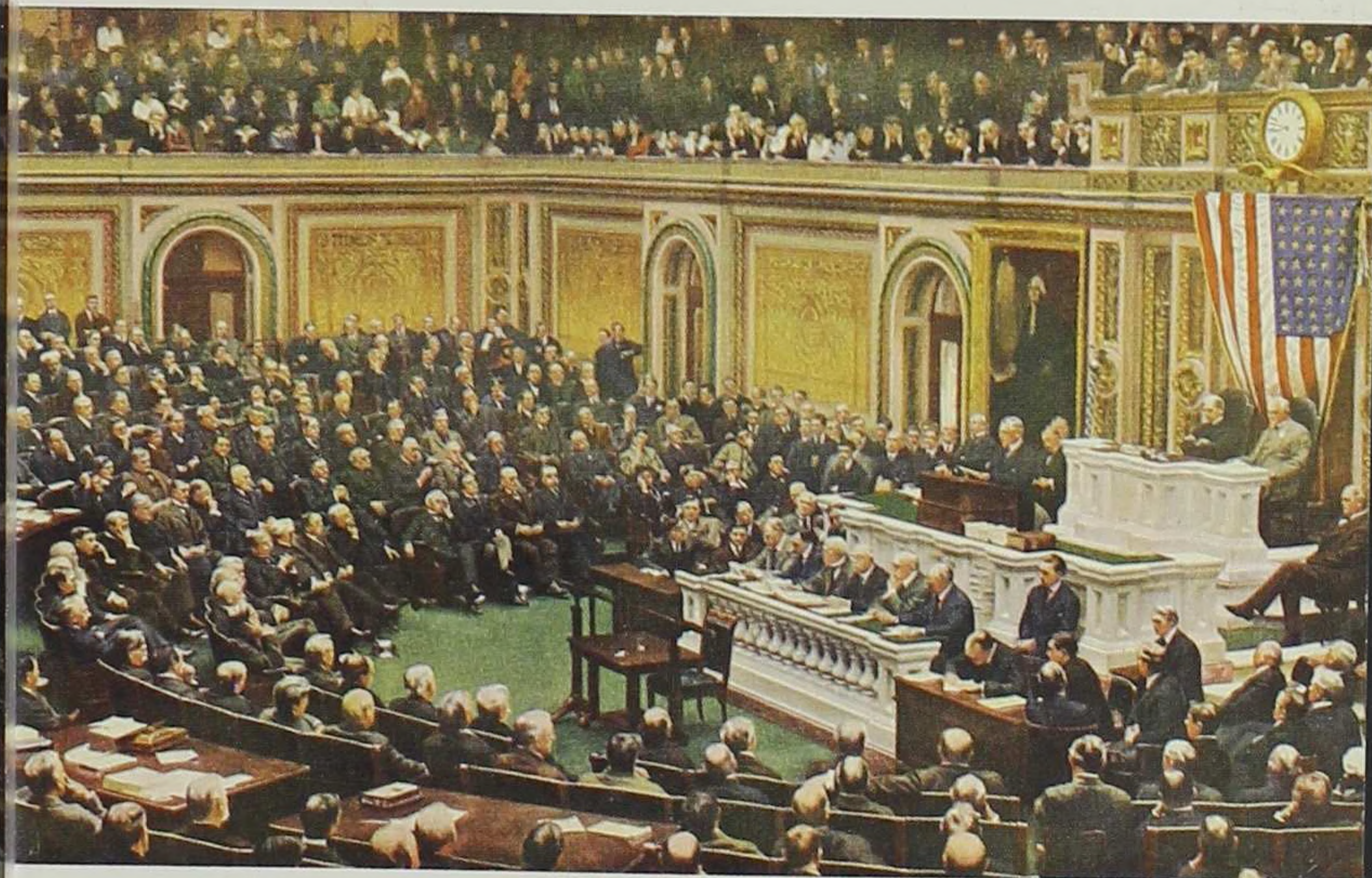


# *The* PALIMPSEST



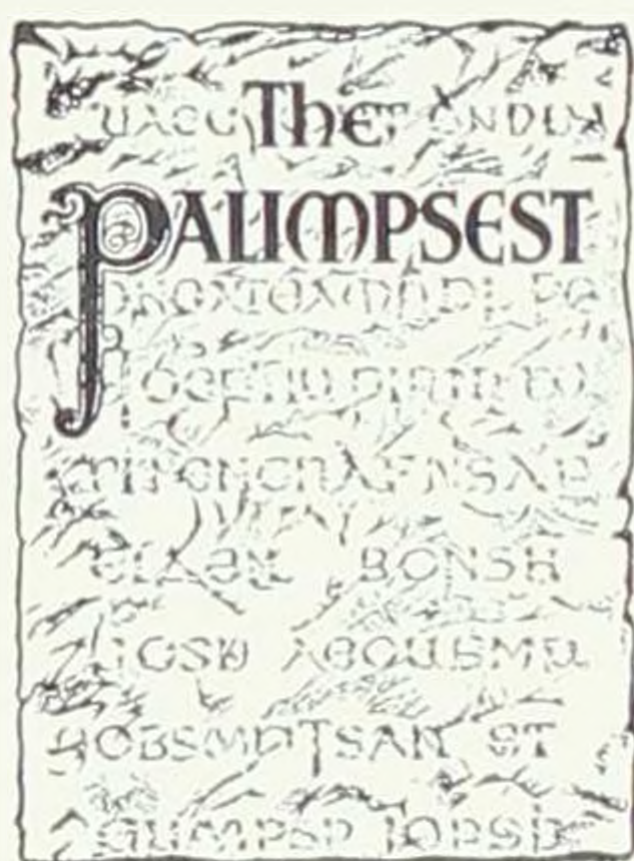
PRESIDENT WILSON DELIVERS WAR MESSAGE TO CONGRESS

The Story of the 168th Infantry  
Published Monthly by  
The State Historical Society of Iowa  
Iowa City, Iowa

APRIL, 1967

50th ANNIVERSARY WORLD WAR I — FIFTY CENTS  
SPECIAL EDITION





## *The Meaning of Palimpsest*

In early times a palimpsest was a parchment or other material from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete; and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the original writings by deciphering the dim fragments of letters partly erased and partly covered by subsequent texts.

The history of Iowa may be likened to a palimpsest which holds the record of successive generations. To decipher these records of the past, reconstruct them, and tell the stories which they contain is the task of those who write history.

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## *Illustrations*

All illustrations appeared in Taber's *The Story of the 168th Infantry*, published by the State Historical Society of Iowa in 1925. The front and back covers, and the center-spread insert in color, are from various issues of the *Ladies Home Journal*.

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THE PALIMPSEST is published monthly by the State Historical Society of Iowa in Iowa City, William J. Petersen, Editor. It is printed in Iowa City and distributed free to Society members, depositories, and exchanges. This is the April, 1967, issue and is Number 4 of Volume 48. Second class postage paid at Iowa City, Iowa.

PRICE — Included in Membership. Regular issues, 25¢; Special—50¢

MEMBERSHIP — By application. Annual Dues \$3.00

ADDRESS — The State Historical Society, Iowa City, Iowa 52240



# THE PALIMPSEST

EDITED BY WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

VOL. XLVIII

ISSUED IN APRIL 1967

No. 4

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## A Year to Remember — 1917

Fifty years have passed since the momentous hour when President Woodrow Wilson delivered his War Message to Congress in April of 1917. This was followed immediately by Congress declaring War, plunging the Nation into one of the bloodiest conflicts in American history. Up to this time Iowans, like other Americans, had remained either neutral or had sided with one or the other of the belligerents. The tendency of Iowans to lean toward neutrality might be demonstrated by the fact that citizens of this normally Republican State had been lulled by the reassuring slogan "He Kept Us Out of War" and voted with the Nation to re-elect Wilson in 1916.

The writer can remember, as a newsboy for the *Dubuque Telegraph-Herald* between 1912 and 1917, the large headlines, in both red and black ink, that almost daily emblazoned the front page of his papers — from Sarajevo through the sinking of the *Lusitania* to the dramatic moment when the United States declared war on Germany and her Allies.

Thereafter, as a high school student, he can recall his experiences as a Four Minute Speaker, the "Meatless" and "Wheatless" days, the Thrift Stamps, Liber-



ty Bond campaigns, and all the activities associated with American efforts to win the war.

Too young to enter the armed forces, either as a volunteer or a draftee, he graduated from Dubuque high school in 1920, entered the University of Dubuque a year later, and after graduation in 1926, began graduate work at the University of Iowa. It was while engaged in his graduate studies that he first learned of the State Historical Society's work on World War I. He was impressed with the long list of valuable historical publications that had appeared over the years and marveled at the scholarly histories produced in the first decade following World War I. As early as 1918, for example, the Society had begun a diminutive magazine entitled IOWA AND WAR, which appeared in 24 consecutive monthly numbers. The following eight numbers dealt expressly with World War I:

No.	Title	Date
15	<i>The First Three Liberty Loans in Iowa.</i>	September, 1918.
16	<i>Social Work at Camp Dodge.</i>	October, 1918.
17	<i>Organized Speaking in Iowa During the War.</i>	November, 1918.
18	<i>The State Historical Society of Iowa in War Times.</i>	December, 1918.
19	<i>The History of Iowa's Part in the World War.</i>	January, 1919.
20	<i>A Tentative Outline for a County War History.</i>	February, 1919.
21	<i>A Tentative Outline for a State War History.</i>	March, 1919.
23	<i>The Writing of War History in Iowa.</i>	May, 1919.



On an even more impressive scale were the following beautifully bound books published by the Society in a series entitled — IOWA CHRONICLES OF THE WORLD WAR.

Fullbrook, Earl S., *The Red Cross in Iowa*. 2 vols. (1922)

Hansen, Marcus Lee, *Welfare Campaigns in Iowa*. (1920)

Hansen, Marcus Lee, *Welfare Work in Iowa*. (1921)

Pollock, Ivan L., *The Food Administration in Iowa*. 2 vols. (1923)

Whitney, Nathaniel R., *The Sale of War Bonds in Iowa*. (1923)

The seven volumes comprising this set were distributed to members of the Society and to over 100 Iowa college and tax-supported libraries. When World War II broke out this Series served as a valuable guide to those faced with similar responsibilities on the Home Front after Pearl Harbor. Indeed, the Whitney volume was virtually exhausted as copies were sent out to directors of fund raising campaigns during World War II.

The Society took another step toward recording the history of World War I when it published a volume by Jacob A. Swisher entitled *The American Legion in Iowa*. Issued in 1929, a decade after the launching of the American Legion in St. Louis, the State Historical Society blazed a trail for similar Historical Societies to follow. Not only did Iowa win fame through the election of Hanford MacNider as National Commander of the American Legion, but those who have headed up the Iowa Legion itself — Mathew A. Tinley, Hanford MacNider, Daniel F.



Steck, C. B. Robbins, and Bert J. Halligan — to mention the first five State Commanders, have been outstanding citizens of the Hawkeye State. Over six hundred Legion Posts were established in Iowa following World War I and while some communities proved too small to maintain a Legion Post, there are still some 600 posts in Iowa with a membership of 90,454 on March 15, 1967.

Without doubt the most impressive publication issued by the Society on World War I was John H. Taber's 2-volume work — *The Story of the 168th Infantry*. These two volumes, which were based on the immediate records and experiences of the Iowa members of the Rainbow Division, were issued by the Society in 1925 and won widespread acclaim. Since the edition was relatively small, it has long been out of print but frequently in demand. To meet this demand in part it has been determined to reprint portions of the book in a special issue of *The Palimpsest* to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the entry of the United States into World War I.

The experiences of the 168th Infantry serve as a mirror of the deeds and exploits of those equally heroic Iowans who achieved fame in World War II but who unfortunately were not as consecrated in their efforts to record history as were the officers and men of the 168th Infantry. It is only when pictures, letters, diaries, and reminiscences are preserved and made available to the State Historical Society that an accurate history of men in war can be recorded.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN



## THE THIRD IOWA ANSWERS THE CALL

LIKE a giant devilfish stretching out its tentacles to ensnare the whole of the civilized world, the terrific conflict that had been raging in Europe for three long years was drawing inexorably closer to America.

The successive tragedies of Belgium — Louvain and Cavell — the *Lusitania*, and Reims had been viewed on this side of the water with horror, and there were many who felt from the first that the place of the United States was at the side of the Allied nations. But the time was not yet come. However, the continued acts of barbarism on the part of the Germans and their disregard and unveiled contempt for the rights of neutrals were gradually molding public sentiment into fair unanimity, and there finally came a day when Americans could once more hold their heads high. That day Woodrow Wilson went before Congress and asked it to declare that a state of war existed between the United States and the German Empire.

So, on the 7th of April, 1917, the wheels of a powerful war machine that was steadily to gain in momentum were set in motion. The entire nation was united behind its President, and no State was more ready to throw the weight of its wealth and resources into the balance than Iowa. Its National Guard was immediately placed on war footing, and recruiting stations were opened all over the State to bring it up to full strength. Among the organizations thus called into service was the Third Iowa Infantry.



As an entity this regiment had existed only since 1892 when, in the reorganization of the State Guard, eight companies of the Fifth Iowa Infantry were combined with four of the old Third to form the present unit. But many of the individual companies had existed long before this time. Company L, locally known as the Dodge Light Guards, had the distinction of being the oldest military organization in Iowa, having been formed in Council Bluffs in 1855 by General Grenville M. Dodge with the primary motive of protecting the community against attacks by the Sioux Indians. It later served with distinction all through the Civil War.

Called into service by President McKinley on the 26th of April, 1898, the regiment served until the 2nd of November, 1899, as the 51st Iowa Volunteers, seeing in the meantime much active service against the Philippine Insurrectos. Upon its reorganization it became known as the 55th Iowa Infantry, which remained its official designation until July, 1915, when it resumed that of the Third Iowa Infantry.

In the summer of 1916, when war with Mexico seemed imminent, the Third Iowa Infantry was called into Federal service and sent with other units of the National Guard to the Border, where it remained on duty until February, 1917. The men had scarcely been mustered out when they were drawn back into the service.

The first few months were occupied with recruiting and training new men. Then on the 15th of July, upon the call of the President, the regiment was assembled at its home stations, and by the 5th of August it had again been mustered into Federal service.

Its personnel was, of course, composed wholly of volunteers, and enough of the parent organization was



still serving with it to keep alive its spirit and to carry on its traditions. For of that band that had set out so confidently for the Philippines in June, 1898, there remained a small but loyal representation. The erstwhile lieutenant of Company H was now its commanding officer; his lieutenant colonel, the three battalion commanders, the chief of the Medical Detachment, five company officers, and a number of enlisted men, all had been members of that original expeditionary force.

Early in August the War Department announced the organization of a purely National Guard division which was to include the Third Iowa as one of its four infantry regiments. But not as the Third Iowa, for from now on it was to be known as the 168th U. S. Infantry.

Now that the disposition of the regiment was settled, Colonel Ernest R. Bennett directed the outlying units to assemble at Des Moines. So, on the 17th of August, the command was united at the State Fair Grounds. Machinery Hall, where the local companies had been quartered, was needed for exhibits for the fair which was to open in ten days; so it was necessary to look for a new camp site. Space was offered at Camp Dodge, a few miles to the northwest, where a huge cantonment for the draft army was under construction. But sentiment outweighed all other considerations — it was from the Fair Grounds that the regiment had left in 1898, and from the Fair Grounds it should leave in 1917.

Accordingly, arrangements were made to pitch camp on the hill east of the exhibition grounds, on land belonging to the State Game Farm. It was almost with pleasure that the men faced the discomforts of an unprepared location rather than the accommodations of a cantonment, as a concession to regimental tradition.



As far as natural beauty was concerned, the situation could not have been improved. On a high hill reached by a winding roadway up through the Fair Grounds Grove, it extended from the edge of the wood into a little valley to the east — on either side great reaches of fertile fields merging into the distant horizon, and to the west the active capital city of the Commonwealth of Iowa.

The company strength, originally set at 100, was later increased to 150 men per line company; and now at the last moment, upon the recommendation of our experts in France, it was decided to further increase it to 250. Had this recommendation been approved a month earlier, it would have been an easy matter to fill up the ranks by enlistment, for there were many eager applicants clamoring for admission at the time recruiting was suspended. There was no time for that now, however, and the difficulty was solved by transferring a sufficient number from the First and Second Iowa Infantry Regiments to bring up the total enlisted strength of the 168th to 3605 men. This necessitated the transfer of 813 from the First Iowa, and 840 from the Second. All grades were included, each company furnishing its proportionate share to the corresponding letter company. By this transfer every section of the State, and practically every town, was represented in the regiment.

On the 20th the new members, in groups of from one to 250, began to arrive at camp. Some had traveled a long distance, carrying heavy packs. They came straggling in at all hours of the day and night, and the already overworked company officers had to be on constant duty. There was a woeful lack of equipment, not only in uniforms and ordnance, but in tents as well; and to house them all, a line of pup tents was set up below the pyramidals.



Much work had to be done, and at breakneck speed, for the order transporting the regiment to the eastern coast was expected at any moment. The records of the transfers had to be brought forward, and numberless requisitions had to be filled; those who had been overlooked before were now inoculated against typhoid, paratyphoid, diphtheria, smallpox, and for every other disease for which a serum had been discovered; and further physical examinations were given. On the other hand, little attention was paid to training. On one side of the camp was the State Game Farm, cut up into pens for game and ponds for fish breeding. To the west were the exposition grounds, and to the north and east, woods; so there was no opportunity for drill, even of a preliminary nature. The officers were so occupied with administrative duties that they scarcely found time for the few lectures and hikes scheduled.

The tented city within the State Fair Grounds proved by far the greatest attraction of the 1917 exposition. At the call of a bugle from the hilltop, thousands forgot all else but the soldiers. As yet the general attitude of enthusiasm was undamped by casualty lists. Not many pictured these very much alive, altogether cheerful youngsters on the battle field, wounded and dying.

The 168th made its first and final appearance as a whole before its own people at a review on the 29th of August. Although they had been gathered only recently from the four corners of the State, and had never had an opportunity to drill together, the soldiers marched like veterans around the half-mile track in a column of platoons. An enormous crowd, one of the greatest ever gathered in Iowa, thundered out cheer after cheer. There could be no doubt that the State was proud of the 168th.



The Colonel, who had left his place at the head of the column to join the Governor in the reviewing stand, was justifiably proud of his command.

It was not until the first trains backed into the terminal at the Fair Grounds that the members of the 168th learned what leaving home was to mean to them. War, until then, had seemed such a remote and nebulous possibility that few had ever thought of themselves as actually in it. But now they realized, as did their friends and families, that every move was a step nearer to the uncertainty of the battle line. The fear that this might be the final parting, that this might be the last embrace, made more bitter the ordeal of farewell. It was amid smiles forced through tears, and stifled sobs from breaking hearts, that the crowded trains moved slowly out and disappeared in the distance. By noon of September 10th the camp on the hill was deserted.

Before they were well across the State of Iowa, the men of the 168th had settled down to make the best of a three days' tiresome trip, and they found much to occupy their attention. These lads, many of whom had never set foot beyond the limits of their own State, were on their way to tread the very battle fields of Caesar and of Attila, of Louis XIV, Napoleon, and von Moltke, and in their turn they, too, were to help make history. This was the beginning of a strange adventure, indeed, for those who had known only the placid life of the peaceful prairie — a stranger adventure than even the most imaginative mind among them could have foreseen.

Great crowds met the seven sections as they halted for short periods at Chicago, Fort Wayne, Buffalo, Elmira, and Scranton; and many a man of the regiment has reason to remember the generosity and good will of the



people that welcomed them en route. Finally, after an all-night wait on a siding near Jamaica, Long Island, the first three sections moved out in the early morning of the 13th of September to Garden City, and there disgorged themselves of their human freight. It was but a short hike to Camp Albert A. Mills.



## CAMP MILLS

HERE on the flat, uninteresting Hempstead Plain, midway between Garden City and Hempstead, a new organization, destined to be one of the outstanding units of the A. E. F., was assembling. The 42nd Division, organized in early August, was composed of especially selected units of the National Guard chosen from twenty-six States and the District of Columbia. Every section of the country, with the exception of New England, contributed to it. States so widely separated as Oregon and Georgia, New York and California, sent their sons to form this most truly national of all our divisions. Covering in its representation a span as far flung as the arc of the rainbow, and with a complexion as varied, it was happily named the Rainbow Division. Colonel Douglas MacArthur, the then Chief of Staff, is credited with this inspiration at the very time of the Division's organization. The aptness of the appellation was quickly recognized by the public, and so the 42nd became the first of the American divisions to be known by a distinctive name. The colors of the rainbow were never more indissolubly blended than the units of this organization, for of this sectional *mélange* was born the finest *esprit de corps* that ever led troops to victory.

When the 168th got settled in camp, and had time to look about, it found itself between the 167th Infantry from Alabama, with which it was brigaded, and the 151st Machine Gun Battalion from Georgia; while to the west



lay the camp of the Ohio regiment, the 166th Infantry. Friendships soon sprang up among all of these organizations, but none equalled the attachment which grew up between the 167th and 168th. The foundation for this friendship was laid the very first night.

Fate had divisioned together two regiments, the 165th, formerly the 69th New York, and the 167th, once the Fourth Alabama, which had opposed each other in some of the most bitter struggles of the Civil War. The outcome of those encounters is somewhat in doubt, but all good members of the 168th will declare, although their forebears fought on the opposite side, that the successful contestant was from the South. Enough to say that the fight did not end with the Peace of Appomattox: the feelings born of that struggle still rankled, despite the passage of time.

Fate had not only placed these two regiments in the same division, but had placed them side by side when they came together for the first time in more than fifty years. The Iowans learned soon after their arrival that there had already been a clash, and that Alabama was out for gore. The Southerners that night, the rumor said, were going to "clean up" Iowa. They had battled New York, and Iowa was next.

The prairie boys, however, were not to be caught napping; plans were made, unknown to the officers, and nightfall heard among the men of the 168th whisperings that promised ill. At seven o'clock, two groups in menacing attitude faced each other on the road dividing their camps. A group from the other side crossed over. Hostilities seemed unavoidable. Suddenly out of the milling crowd came in the soft drawl of the South:

"What do you-all mean, fightin'? Iowa's our friend."



It was the voice of a peacemaker, and it extinguished forever the spark that might have exploded the charge of sectional antagonism and permanently disrupted a potential friendship of lasting qualities. For instead of battling, the two forces joined arms and wandered away.

Never was there a friendship of closer unity; never an association of more pleasant memory. For throughout the war the two regiments fought together, always side by side, always with the thought of the other as much in mind as the thought of themselves and of their cause. No hungry Iowan was ever refused at an Alabama kitchen, even in the days of slimmest ration; and never did a lad from the Southland find any but friends around the Iowa camp. The Iowa latchstring will be out for Alabama as long as the 168th is remembered in its home State.

That night, too, saw the end of ill feeling between the 165th and the 167th. In joining the two in a common mission, Fate had provided for the eradication of memories of a past fratricidal conflict. From now on the elements of the Rainbow were to work as one.

Mess shacks had already been built when the regiment came into camp, and by noon the tentage which they had brought with them was in place. Enough new canvas was issued to house the entire regiment in pyramidals, but only by crowding ten or twelve in each. That completed, the men were free for the rest of the day, which was spent chiefly in gazing in rapt awe at the airplanes circling and dipping gracefully in the sky above them. Many of them had never before seen an airplane, and to these it was a fascinating sight.

The next day the 168th received its first leavening of alien blood. About sixty graduates of the first Officers'



Training Camp were assigned to fill up the shortage in the commissioned personnel. Up to this time three harassed men in each company had been doing the work of six. New York, Texas, and the New England States furnished the majority of the newcomers. They were for the most part young, eager, college-bred men, excellently grounded in theory and familiar with the later developments of their branch of modern warfare, but lacking in the practical experience of handling troops. Volunteers, too, they soon absorbed the spirit of the National Guard, in spite of their training under Regular Army instructors.

The stay at Camp Mills was concerned chiefly with the hard work preparatory to crossing the ocean; equipping, packing, and discarding; and not least of all, whipping the troops into shape. Work was now commenced in earnest. A drill field about a mile from camp was set aside for the 168th, and there hour after hour in the broiling sun or drenching rain they toiled, fitting themselves for service overseas.

A great deal of time was devoted to the new bayonet drill, for the men were told that the Germans disliked cold steel and that the bayonet was the most effective weapon of the infantryman. This manual, which did not arouse the pleasantest of expectations, was calculated not only to make the individual adept in the use of the bayonet but also to fire him with blood lust. To produce a good fighter, it is necessary first to awaken in him his primitive instincts. And the youngsters from the Middle West were far from blood-thirsty. Every jab punctured a mentally-pictured Kaiser; every thrust saw the finish of one of his subjects. If the knife became too deeply imbedded in the body, it could be withdrawn by planting the feet on his trunk and pulling, or by shooting him



through point-blank; if he attempted to resist the withdrawal of a bayonet implanted in his loins, there were means to force him to loose his hold. It was an ugly business, but necessary, and one that gave the men some sort of idea of what they had to face.

Hardened into first-class physical form by vigorous exercise and firmly encased in the iron bands of discipline through the constant repetition of close order drill, the men of the Rainbow, by the time they left Camp Mills, were well prepared to meet the foe.

The 168th was poorly equipped when it left Iowa, and as it was the last unit to reach the concentration camp, it had to rush to catch up with the others. While the line companies were sweating out on the drill fields, the Supply Company was working at full speed to procure and distribute supplies and equipment. Finally each man was issued a woolen uniform and the short trench coat that replaced the longer garment with its hampering skirts. This work was not entirely completed until the night before embarkation; and it was because of the order requiring every division to be fully equipped before it could sail that the Rainbow was held back while the 26th, or Yankee Division, was permitted to have the distinction of being the first National Guard and the second American division to arrive in France. But after all, the Rainbow was the first complete division to cross the seas. When it was finally settled in its training area with its organization intact, the First Division, which had preceded it by four months, and the 26th, by a few weeks, were still lacking some of their auxiliary units.

On Sunday, the 23rd of September, the Division was reviewed by the Secretary of War, Newton D. Baker. It was the first time that a division under the new war



regulations — companies of 250, battalions of 1000, and regiments of 3700 — was ever seen in the United States. An immense throng from New York and all parts of Long Island came to witness the spectacle, and to cheer as line after line of sturdy khaki figures, lean, bronzed, and erect, marched past.

This was followed a few days later by a review of the 84th Brigade, composed of the 167th and 168th Infantry Regiments and the 151st Machine Gun Battalion, in honor of the United States Senators from Iowa, Albert B. Cummins and William S. Kenyon, and the Governor, William L. Harding.

But there were variations to the steady grind of training. Passes were liberally issued for the purpose of visiting New York, less than an hour distant; and at some time or other practically every member of the regiment had an opportunity to walk up Broadway, see the bright lights, the skyscrapers, Grant's Tomb, the fleet in the river, and anything else that appealed to him.

The residents of the towns in the vicinity of Camp Mills did their best to make the men feel that although they were far from home they were still surrounded by friends. The tradition of Eastern reserve and selfishness was banished by the outpouring of welcome and hospitality that met the soldiers on every hand.

On the 23rd of September, Lieutenant Colonel Tinley slipped quietly away; his absence was soon noted; and when it was learned that he had sailed to prepare the way for the regiment, rumors began to fly about as thick as leaves before an autumn wind. But from then until the last of the first week in October, there was nothing to indicate that the steady routine of drill, parade, hiking, and lectures would ever be interrupted.

Then on the 8th came the order to have all freight ready for shipping in two days; the afternoons from



then on were to be given over to the marking and packing of baggage and equipment. The name of the transport and the time of departure were closely guarded, and all that was known was that our boat was to be No. 7 in the convoy, for all freight and baggage was marked with the figure 7 in a circle. Some time previous the trunks of the enlisted men had been disposed of and barrack bags substituted, and the baggage of the officers had been pared down to a minimum. On the 16th everything but the kitchens and officers' baggage was sent to the dock, and it was known that the day was not far off. And at the last hour the regiment was informed of the generous provision the government had made for the issue of life insurance for all soldiers. The officers and company clerks stayed up half the night writing applications for the men and adjusting the allowances for their families under the recently issued regulations.

On the 17th it was officially announced that the outfit would leave the next day. It was with mixed feelings that the news was received. Now that the time had come, Camp Mills didn't seem a half bad place, and it was after all the last link with home. But one couldn't very well get into the fight without crossing the ocean. It was a busy day; the last bit of baggage had to be packed, the camp thoroughly policed, and the last letter written home.

At six o'clock on the morning of the 18th the clear call of a bugle in the crisp October air stirred the camp to life and sent some thousands of men bustling to and fro. Tents were furled, men lined up and inspected, and all was in readiness. At ten o'clock the regiment moved out, marched to the Clinton Avenue Station, and entrained for the short ride to Long Island City. There it was transferred to ferries which pushed their weighted bulks



down the East River under the graceful arch of Brooklyn Bridge, around the southern point of Manhattan Island, and headed up the North River to the Hoboken piers of the Hamburg-American Line.

The *President Grant*, a boat of 18,000 gross tons, formerly in the German merchant marine, was moored at the dock, waiting for her first cargo of American soldiers. In a few hours she had swallowed into her dark interior the entire regiment. At half past nine that evening in a cold drizzle the vessel slowly backed from her berth, righted herself with the aid of a few puffing tugs, and like a phantom ship, dark, silent, with every port-hole tightly closed, glided down the river. The few officers on deck watched the hazy outline of the towering city gradually merge into the night, gazed intently until Liberty, her lighted torch raised as if in benediction, was lost to view, and then without speaking went below. The next morning a tossing, boundless sea encompassed the *Grant*.



The voyage on the *Grant* proved a nightmare. Unable to keep up with the troop convoy, the *Grant* was forced to turn back when 880 miles out of New York. Meanwhile, the filth and stench under which the men had lived below deck led to a smallpox epidemic. The *Grant* was described by one Iowa Medical Officer as the "most unsanitary boat of ancient or modern times." After a brief sojourn at Camp Mills, the 168th again prepared to board ship and set out overseas on the *Aurania* and *Celtic*, [The Editor].



## ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

LONG before daylight the troops were called and served sandwiches and coffee. The First Battalion, Headquarters Company, and Supply Company slipped out of camp unnoticed before four o'clock, and the Third followed soon after. Just before leaving, the order to furl tents had been given. Many of the stoves were still red-hot, and the inevitable happened. As the troops marched out in the darkness their way was lighted by a succession of burning tents. This display was the cause for a lengthy investigation some months later in France; but as there seemed at the time to be a general ignorance of the matter, the investigating officer, who had traveled all the way from Chaumont to Jeanménil, was forced to drop the matter. In all cases where responsibility and accountability for government property was in question, a convenient memory was the easiest and most economical solution.

Again the regiment entrained for Long Island City, transferring there to ferries and sailing around the tip of Manhattan. But this time it made for the Chelsea docks on the New York side of the river, the first detachment debarking at the Cunard piers where they boarded the *R. M. S. Aurania*, and the Third Battalion making for Pier 60 and the *R. M. S. Celtic* of the White Star Line. In the middle of the afternoon both boats left their docks, sailed down the river past Liberty again, and anchored



in the lower bay. After dark they headed out into the ocean.

These vessels were far superior to the *Grant* in every respect. The men were not packed in like sardines, they were allowed the freedom of the decks, and they had all the fresh air they wanted. But soldiers have to kick at something; so on this trip they kicked at the food, which really wasn't very appetizing and not prepared in the manner in which they would have had it. But one could not expect everything; compared with the previous experience, we were traveling de luxe.

About noon on the second day out land was sighted, and the ships soon pulled into the mine-protected harbor of Halifax, Nova Scotia. Past the giant camouflaged *Olympic*, which was loading Canadian troops, they moved on up into the inner harbor, Bedford Basin. Here they were to wait until the convoy of which they were to be a part assembled. As it was very cold, no one was permitted ashore, so the chief diversion was exercising briskly on the deck and wishing to land.

At midday on Sunday, the 18th of November — a clear, beautiful day — the convoy, consisting of the *Celtic*, *Cedric*, *Aurania*, several freighters, and a British armored cruiser, moved slowly down the Basin and out of the harbor in single file, the *Celtic* last. On the north shore an American flag flying from a cabin on the water's edge caught the eye, and as we steamed past, quite close, it seemed, a young woman climbed to the roof and signaled by semaphore, "Good Luck; God Bless you" — the last message we had from any of our countrymen. Some three thousand pairs of hands waved back in appreciation and farewell.

Still gliding slowly out, the convoy neared two British



men-of-war whose crews were dressed up along the rail, and who gave three mighty cheers for the American Army as the outgoing vessels came abreast. Then a band on one of them broke out into *The Star Spangled Banner*. Every one in the convoy stiffened to attention, and thrills chased each other up and down the back as they moved silently past. Some even admitted to a bulge in the throat. Farther out, as the convoy began to gather speed, the band changed its tune, and the faint strains of *Over There* sounded out across the water. It was a wonderful, inspiring send-off that left us all with a warm spot in our hearts for the English. It made us feel as if we were something more than just allies joined together to fight a common enemy — that we were brothers after all. For an hour or so all stayed on deck, straining to catch the last glimpse of America and wondering if we should ever see it again.

For ten days the convoy headed eastward. Every afternoon there was a period of physical drill on the deck, and aside from an occasional "Abandon Ship" drill and the details for submarine lookout, the men had much of the time to themselves. The Band, which was with the Headquarters Company on the *Aurania*, gave daily concerts — a pleasure that was denied the men on the outward-bound voyage of the *Grant*.

On the 22nd the convoy ran into a gale which caused the boats to roll and pitch so that during physical drill the men were unable to keep their footing and tumbled all over the deck. No one got very sick, and the majority enjoyed the experience. Viewed from the *Celtic*, the *Aurania* seemed to bob up and down like a cork, but her own passengers were too busy holding on to support to give much time to the oscillations and gyrations of the rest.



The danger zone was reached on the 25th, and from then on neither lights nor music were permitted, and all were forbidden to undress at night or to lose sight of their life-preservers, which became as omnipresent as one's shadow. At this time the undersea boats were unusually active in northern waters, and the submarine guard was doubled. There was little desire to be *spurlos versenkt*, and therefore a vigilant watch was maintained. The next day, because the escort had failed to appear, the convoy changed its course and headed almost due north, and it was reported the following afternoon that we were not far from Iceland. It was drizzling and the sea was running high, and when at four o'clock the escort had not yet arrived, the fleet separated, the transports going ahead full speed and leaving the slower boats behind to take their chances with the submarines.

All night long the ships raced toward port. There was such a heavy fog the next morning that it was difficult to make out the other vessels, and that lessened the chances of attack. Toward noon the fog lifted, and shortly after lunch a loud cheer announced the arrival of the belated convoy of four swift, lean destroyers — three English and one American. Within an hour land was sighted.

There was considerable excitement coming through the mine barrage into the narrow northern entrance to the Irish Sea. What appeared to be a periscope bobbed up between the *Celtic* and the *Aurania*, which were running abreast not more than five hundred yards apart. The *Aurania* immediately opened fire, and for the moment those in the *Celtic* felt more in danger of her shells than of a torpedo. But on the whole the soldiers displayed more interest in the submarine than fear of it, for instead of rushing to their life-boat positions they gathered at



the rail to see what was going to happen. One youth expressed his unconcern with "Let 'em sink the ship. It ain't mine." Whatever the supposed U-boat really was, it disappeared instantly. The convoy, in the meantime having been warned of the presence of submarines in the Irish Sea, instead of making for Liverpool, put on all steam for Belfast, the nearest harbor, where we dropped anchor at seven o'clock that evening.

It was in this Ulster harbor that the *Celtic* and *Aurania* lay until the 30th, and it was aboard English boats in Irish waters that the men from Iowa spent the great American feast day of Thanksgiving in the year 1917. In the morning a freighter from our convoy limped into port, mast and funnel gone, stern low in the water, but withal a victor in an unequal battle with a submarine. That gave the men something to be thankful for. The spirit of the day, however, was somewhat dampened by the quality of the alleged banquet that was set before the soldiers. According to the men of the Third Battalion, sea gull was the chief article on the menu; while on the *Aurania* the soldiers vehemently protested against the fare of spoiled meat and rabbit, and in mob formation marched upon the mess hall demanding something fit to eat. In no time a well-formed mutiny against the English officers and crew was raging away in the lower decks. The American officers, who at the time were at their own dinner, rushed to the scene of the disorder and quieted their men, after insisting that they be given a palatable meal.

The two ships left Belfast harbor about one o'clock on the afternoon of the 30th in a mist and a choppy sea, which by night became as smooth as a mirror. And then a brilliant moon made matters more interesting. There



were wild rumors of floating mines and of submarines at large, and the dash across the Channel was made at full speed — a roaring trip.

It was a great relief to see the blinking lights of the Mersey heave into view, and to cross the bar and mine barrage just about midnight. We anchored in the river about two o'clock of the morning of December 1st.

There had been an outbreak of scarlet fever on the *Celtic* a few days previous, and while we were in mid-channel, racing for the safety of Liverpool, Private Earl Coons of Company K died. When the sanitary inspectors boarded the boat early in the morning, they were dubious about permitting the battalion to land, and the prospect of a long period of quarantine on shipboard stared us in the face. However, the inspectors relented, agreeing to send all the affected men to hospitals in the city. And it was here that Private Coons, the first man of the 168th to die in Europe, was buried with all military honors.



The Iowans making up the 168th arrived in England on December 1. Nine days later they were ferried across the channel to Le Havre, where they entrained on cold, unheated coaches and were carried up the Seine Valley through Rouen, Mantes and Versailles. Then, instead of turning into Paris, the trains headed almost due south, discharging the 168th Infantry at Rimaucourt, a little French village 23 kilometers north of Chaumont, the seat of American General Headquarters. Here they remained, drilling daily in bitter cold weather in preparation for the time when they would engage in actual combat up front. [The Editor].



## LIFE IN THE TRENCHES

MEN who thought they had roughed it found new items to add to their list of discomforts after making the acquaintance of the trenches. It was no more pleasant to wade through and stand in half frozen mud than it had been, back in Rimaucourt, to hike and drill on snow-covered ground in dilapidated light-weight shoes. A windy billet might be preferable to an air-tight dugout that dripped water onto the wretched bunks and thence to the flooded floor. It was not cheering to stand on post through the long watches of the night, rendered more miserable by the necessity of wearing shoes and clothing continuously wet, gas masks, and side arms. There were no rubber boots, no changes of shoes or socks, and the trenches were in many places knee-deep in mud and water. Long exposure to these conditions confirmed the belief that Hell is not a place of fire and brimstone, but of mud and water.

Each platoon maintained in its G. C. five or six posts, each held by four men, with two on duty at a time through the night. Each post boasted of a small shelter dug into the bank and covered with corrugated iron or strips of canvas and dirt, where its members slept and kept the equipment not in use. The rest of the garrison served as gas guards, runners, and reserves in case of attack, and slept in the dugouts to which all could repair during bombardment. In the daytime two or three guards served for the entire G. C.



The daily routine commenced with stand-to, beginning an hour before dawn and lasting until broad daylight. As this ominous hour approached, sergeants went about the posts waking up the men. The murky dugouts and shelters then disgorged their sleepy-eyed occupants, who slowly found their way to the alert stations where they waited in groups of four to find out whether or not the Boche had chosen that particular morning to attack.

Upon dismissal from stand-to, all thoughts turned to food. The mess detail never seemed speedy enough to suit the voracious appetites of the front line. After a seemingly interminable wait, someone would spy the perspiring detail winding up the communication trench, and at the magic word "Chow" all else was subordinated to the business of producing mess kits and fighting for an advantageous position at the point of distribution. Rare was the occasion when the innocent detail was not accused of everything from drinking up the coffee and "mooching" the sugar, to jettisoning the slum to ease the load.

The food was carried from the company kitchens in Badonviller to the line in large containers constructed on the principle of fireless cookers, called by the French *marmites*. With a stout pole passed through the handles, it took two men to negotiate one of them. Once in a while they managed to keep the meal lukewarm until it reached the consumer. Bread was brought up, uncut, in burlap sacks; butter in pails; and other articles in whatever receptacle was handiest. The menu was simple and invariable, the quality first-rate, and the quantity sufficient. It consisted of slum, that haphazard mélange of meat, vegetables, and whatnot; coffee with sugar and condensed milk; white bread, good butter, boiled rice,



molasses or jam; and once in a while, pudding of some sort.

Twice a day the details made the pilgrimage to the front line; often they were shelled, and at all times they had to contend with the slippery duckboards. If a shell happened to light too close, it was quite possible that the post for which that particular meal was destined might have to do without its coffee, and then there would be a barrage of malediction to face. For more reasons than one the mess detail was an unenvied and unsought-for job.

The supply of water was naturally limited, as it, too, had to be carried by hand from the rear; an infinitesimal amount had to serve the purposes of both drinking and ablution. By rare economy one learned to quench his thirst, bathe, shave, and still have a surplus on an amount that ordinarily would not suffice for a bird.

As soon as the meal was over, the details for the never-ending toil of repairing the damage caused by shell fire and the elements gathered up their picks, shovels, and pumps and set to work. There was work for every one, and a certain number of hours every day were devoted to the upkeep and improvement of the trenches. Between times all equipment was inspected and cleaned: Chau-chats were dismounted and oiled; rifles worked over until the barrels shone like sunlight; grenades inspected for faulty caps and rust. There were daily inspections, too, of feet, gas masks, and ammunition by sergeants and the officer on the post. The rest of the day was spent catching up on sleep; reading, if there were papers available; writing letters, if one could scrape up the materials; airing the feet; and attempting to dry the shoes and socks. The men were not long in the trenches



before the great majority realized that they "had 'em". No one was immune; even the most fastidious were victims, and the business of shirt reading soon became one of the most popular and steadily pursued pastimes. Aside from these duties and diversions, there was little to do but keep out of sight and dodge the shells.

There was no time or occasion in the trenches for the observance of the formalities of military life behind the line: implicit and strict obedience to orders was all that was necessary. The officer in command of the post lived the same life, sharing the same food, the same bed, the same emotions, and the same dangers as his men. This intimate association brought out the true feeling of comradeship between subordinate and superior, and developed, instead of familiarity, an increased respect one for the other.

With the coming of night, life in each G. C. took on a sudden activity. Approaching dusk was the signal for evening stand-to, and again every man went to his emergency post, remaining there, ready for anything that might arise from the deepening shadow, until the danger of attack was past. Guards on post were now doubled, the men having four hours on and four off throughout the night; and the wire gates at the extremities of the posts were shut to prevent the ingress of intruders. Each was provided with a bell or some other device to warn the sentry in case they were touched.

The method of challenging in the dark, when it was impossible to distinguish friend from foe, was somewhat unorthodox. But if one were wise, he stopped short at a sudden low hiss, and gave the password; if it were the sergeant or the officer making one of the frequent rounds



during the night, it was enough to make himself known by name, so long as it were quickly done.

As soon as it was dark enough to escape detection from the enemy lines, the nightly wiring parties, protected by covering details, climbed out over the parapet and set to work. Combat and reconnoitering patrols, faces blacked, and armed to the teeth, filed out through the chicanes in the wire, and disappeared into the mysterious night.

At the entrance to the P. C. a guard is stationed to sound the alarm in the case of gas, and to prevent the entry of unauthorized persons. Below in the gloomy depths, faintly illuminated by a flickering candle, the officer is busy making out his reports, while the heavy breathing of the sleeping relief beats a steady cadence in the ear. From time to time a dark form descends to make a report or to deliver a message; sometimes it is a white, frightened face to warn of danger lurking beyond the wire, or it may be the leader of the hourly liaison patrol that keeps in touch with the adjoining posts, to say that all is well.

For the sentries on post the nights seemed ages long, and they were marked by inevitable seares and false alarms. A German patrol within a radius of five hundred yards never had occasion to feel neglected, and gas alarms averaged at least one a night for the first few weeks.

If the gas guard saw a green rocket rise from some distant point on the line where the danger was purely local, he did not take time to find out whether or not there were any poisonous vapors in his vicinity, but loosed upon the night air the blood-curdling screeches of his Klaxon. In no time at all green rockets would be



streaming up into the darkness, while off in the diminishing distance echoed the successively repeated warnings of the horn. The shouts of "Gas! Gas!" brought a thousand men to their feet, fingers fumbling for their respirators. Sudden terror, then doubt, then disgust at finding that there was no gas — this was the common sequence of sensations until the men picked up and could imitate that air of superior disdain with which a French soldier could exclaim "*pas de gaz*". As a matter of safety it was, of course, far better to suffer the discomfort of a thousand false alarms than to run the risk of being caught unprepared by one real attack. Although at first the cry was "Wolf — wolf", there finally came a night when the wolf appeared and sank his fangs deep in the body of the regiment.

Between the G. C.'s there were stretches of unprotected trench, 300 yards or more in length, which could be only occasionally patrolled, and there was always the possibility of Boche patrols working in behind our lines. The officers and men were learning lessons which experience alone could teach. A sentry on post at first spent most of his watch fighting down his fear, and as the night wore on the tension began to tell, his eyes and ears to play him false. Gazing out into a blackness so intense that it seemed to have physical body, he created for himself a thousand imaginary dangers — posts seemed suddenly to transform themselves into crouching Germans waiting to rush upon him and chop him into mincemeat. At times even the horizon seemed to buckle and bend, and then he would let fly a grenade or a burst from his Chauchat.

There is nothing so contagious as rifle fire at dark, unless it be gas alarms, and in a second a miniature



battle would be precipitated against harmless shadows. Then the Boches would wake up with gleaming flares and a healthy response from their vigilant machine guns. A prowling cat could tighten the nerves of an entire platoon a whole night through; and although the men affected in the light of day an amused attitude toward the fears of the night, a creaking limb was a stern reality until it was proved a creaking limb. It was only after many hours of suspense, suspicion, and sudden unnecessary fear that the sounds of the night were divided into the natural and the unnatural — that the suspected German signal was found to be the call of an innocent bird, that the sound of the enemy preparing to rush was only the sighing of the wind, and that the vague and wandering figures of the middle distance were but stumps or the posts that supported protecting bands of wire.

Patrolling by night commenced within the first twenty-four hours in the trenches, when a detail consisting of one officer, two non-coms, and three men from each company then in the line accompanied the regular patrols of the French. From then on, a patrol from the line or support companies went stumbling out through the wire every night on a mission which sounded most important on the order, but in reality was little more than a reconnaissance of our own wire. The real object was to gradually accustom the men to finding their way through the maze of wire, brush, and abandoned trenches without losing their sense of direction or their presence of mind. These first patrols could be followed throughout the greater part of their course by their low-muttered curses, and telltale betrayals of snapping twigs and scraping wire; but by degrees they picked up the tricks of the art, first from the French and then from their own experience,





MAJOR LLOYD D. ROSS  
LT. COL. GUY S. BREWER

MAJOR GLENN C. HAYNES  
COLONEL MATHEW A. TINLEY





LT. COL. CLAUDE M. STANLEY



CHAPLAIN WINFRED E. ROBB

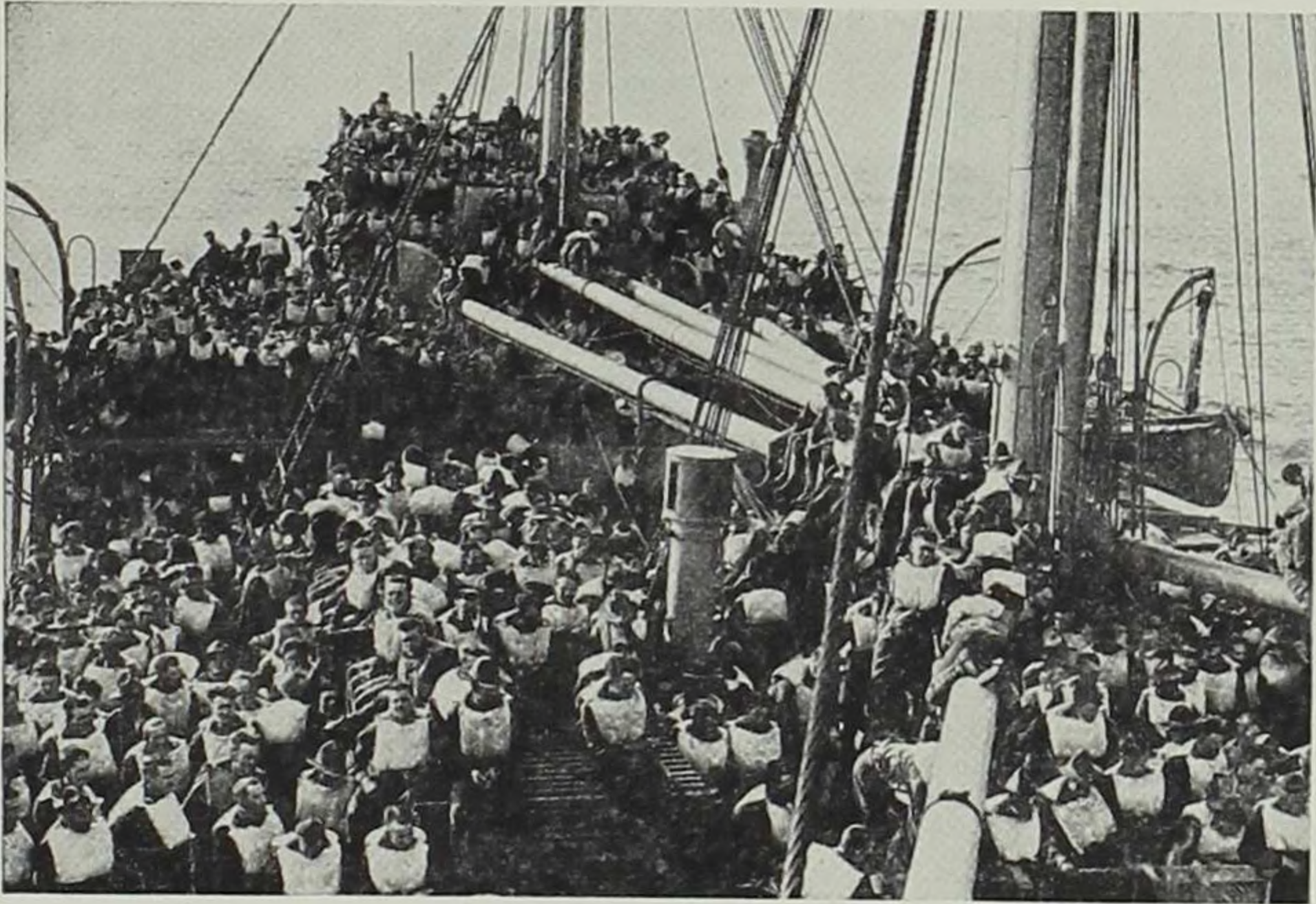


MISS ELIZABETH POTTS, MISS  
CHRISTINE JOHNSTON. Y Work-  
ers with the 168th

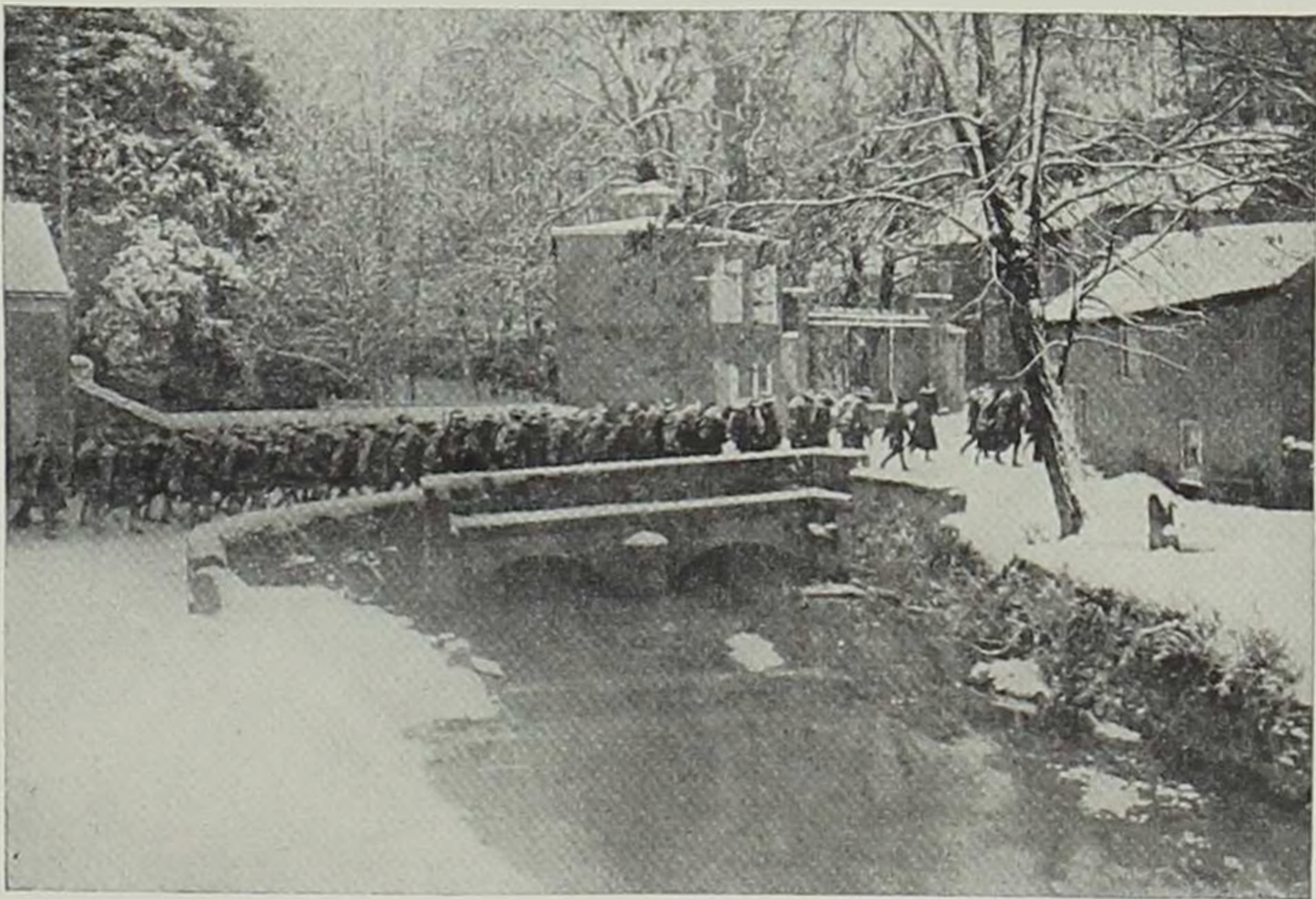


MRS. EDITH W. KNOWLES, First  
Woman Y Worker Assigned to  
the 168th





Abandon Ship Drill on the Grant



Rainbow Troops Marching through Rimaucourt, December, 1917



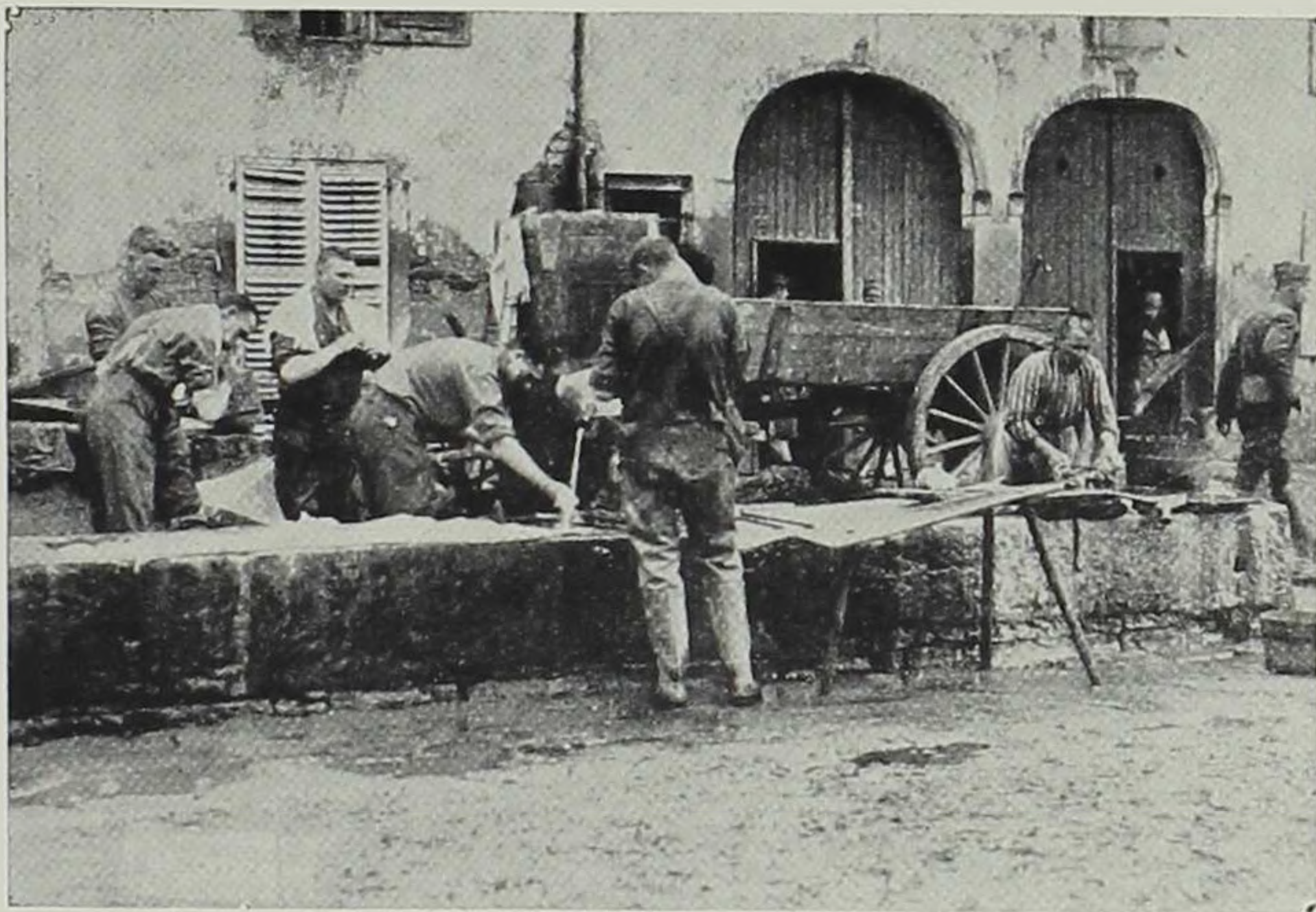


The 168th Arrives in Rolampont February 1, 1918



Neufmaisons — always over-crowded, somewhat dirty, undeniably friendly, with its shifting population, crooked streets, primitive homes; but where roofs fended off the rains, and tiny stores now and then offered for sale nuts, oranges, and eggs.





Modern Improvements Were Plentiful in Neufmaisons



Men of Company M Resting in Neufmaisons After Raid of March 9th



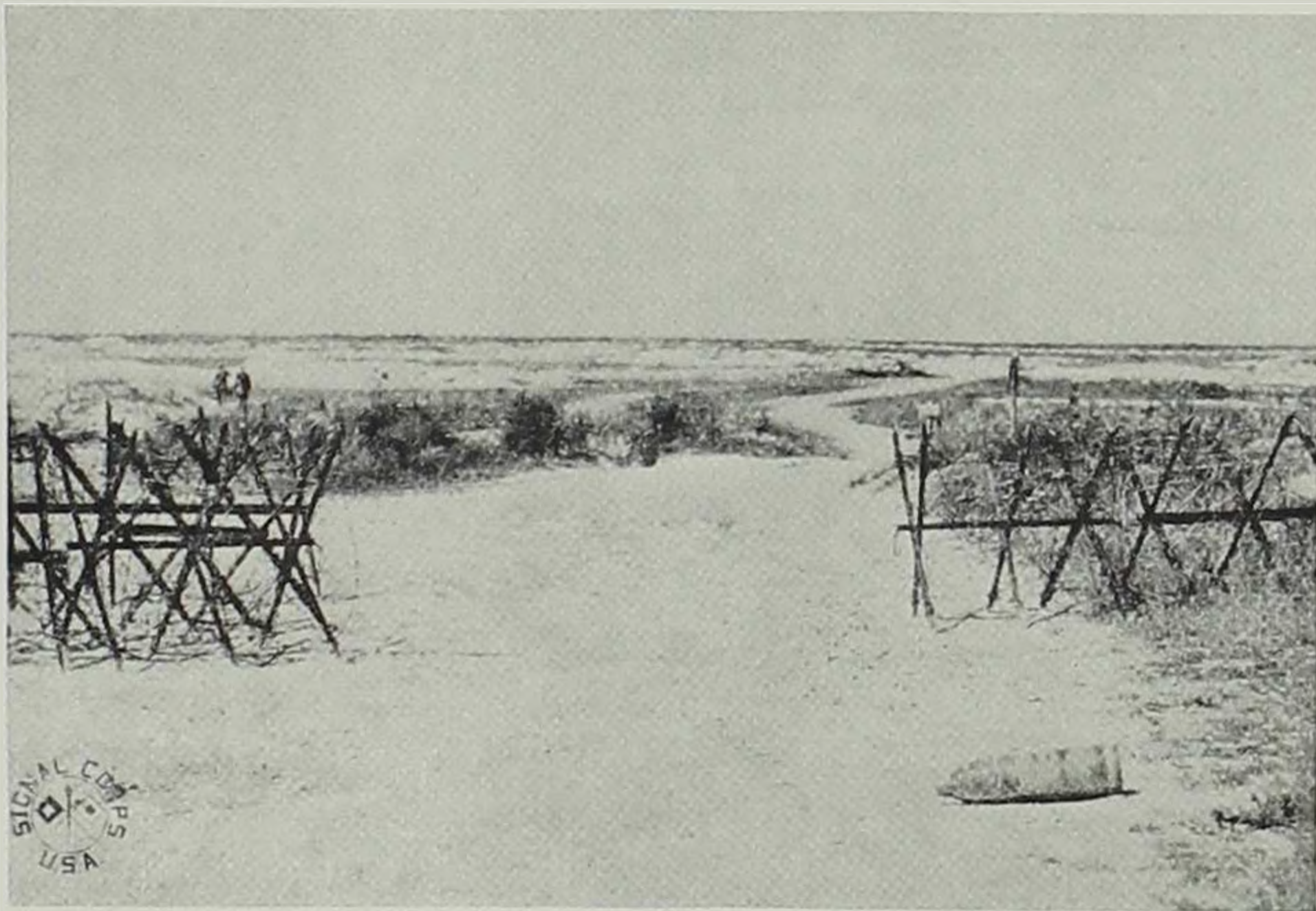


Advanced Post in Front of G. C. 9, March 15, 1918

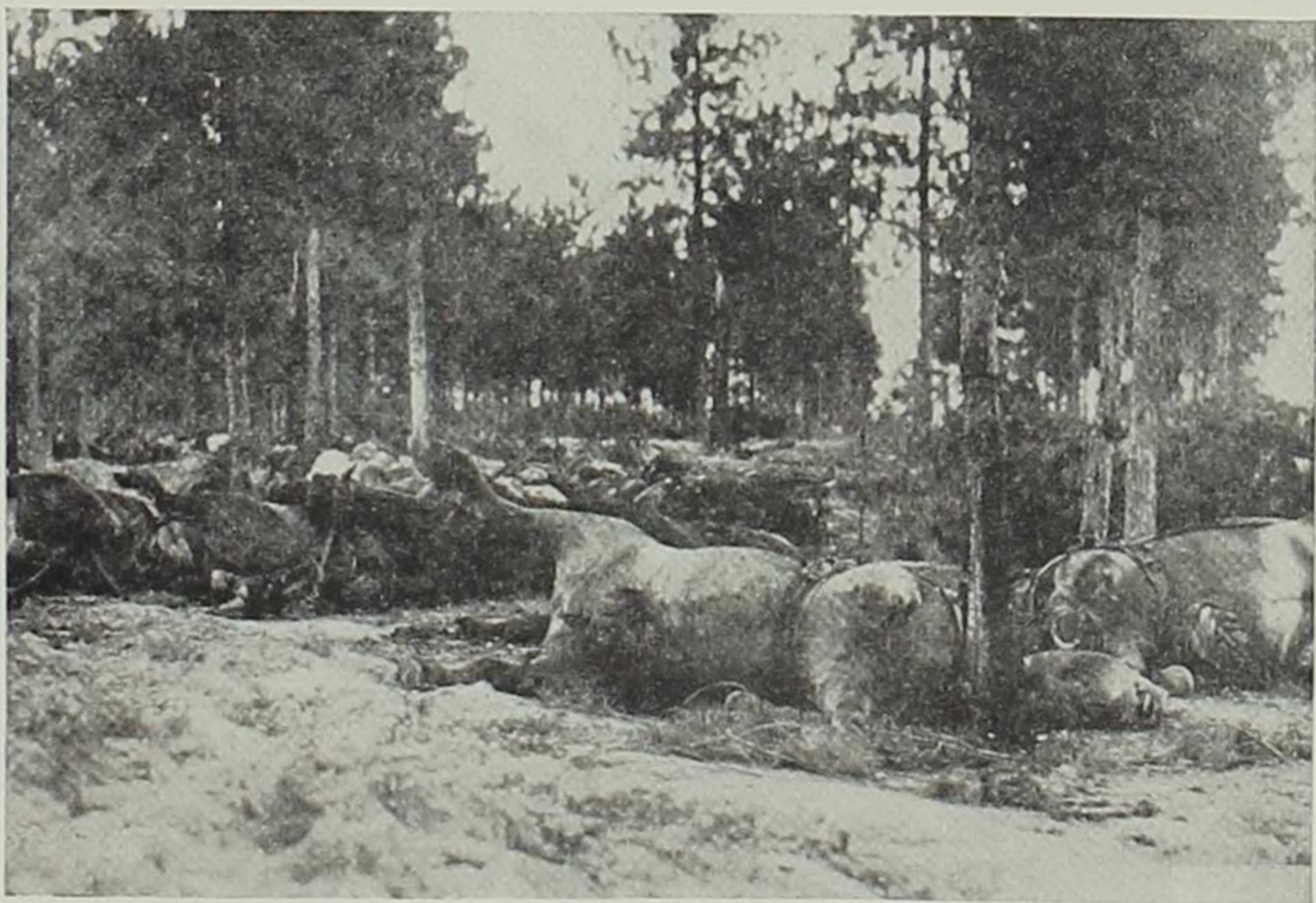


Reserve Position at Village Negre, April 29, 1918





Typical Champagne Country



Slaughter of Horses by German Bombardment in the Sector  
of the 168th, July 15, 1918



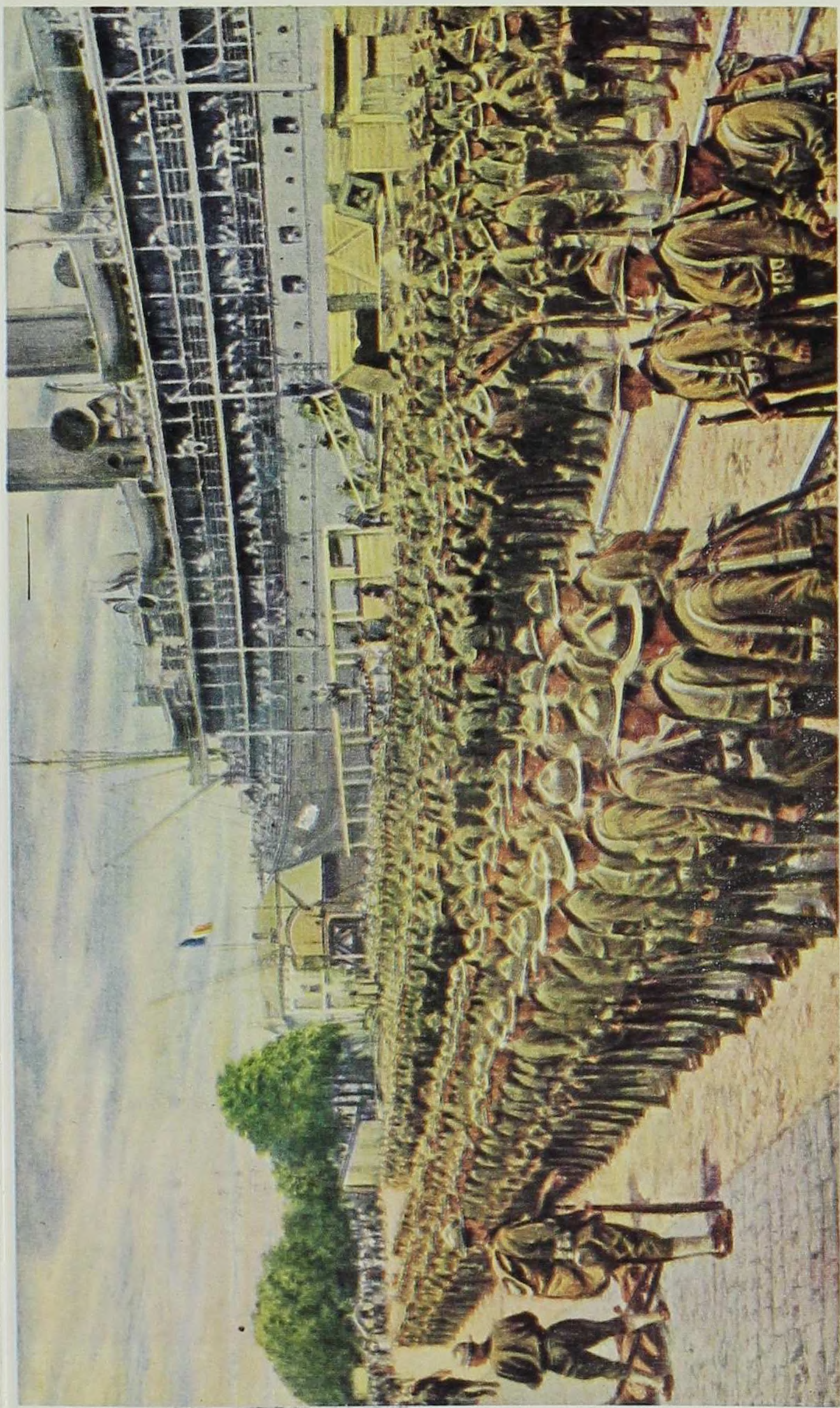


Boche Plane Brought Down Near Camp De La Noblette July 19, 1918



German Dead on the Battle Field of the Ourcq After the Rainbow Passed Over





The first American troops land in France





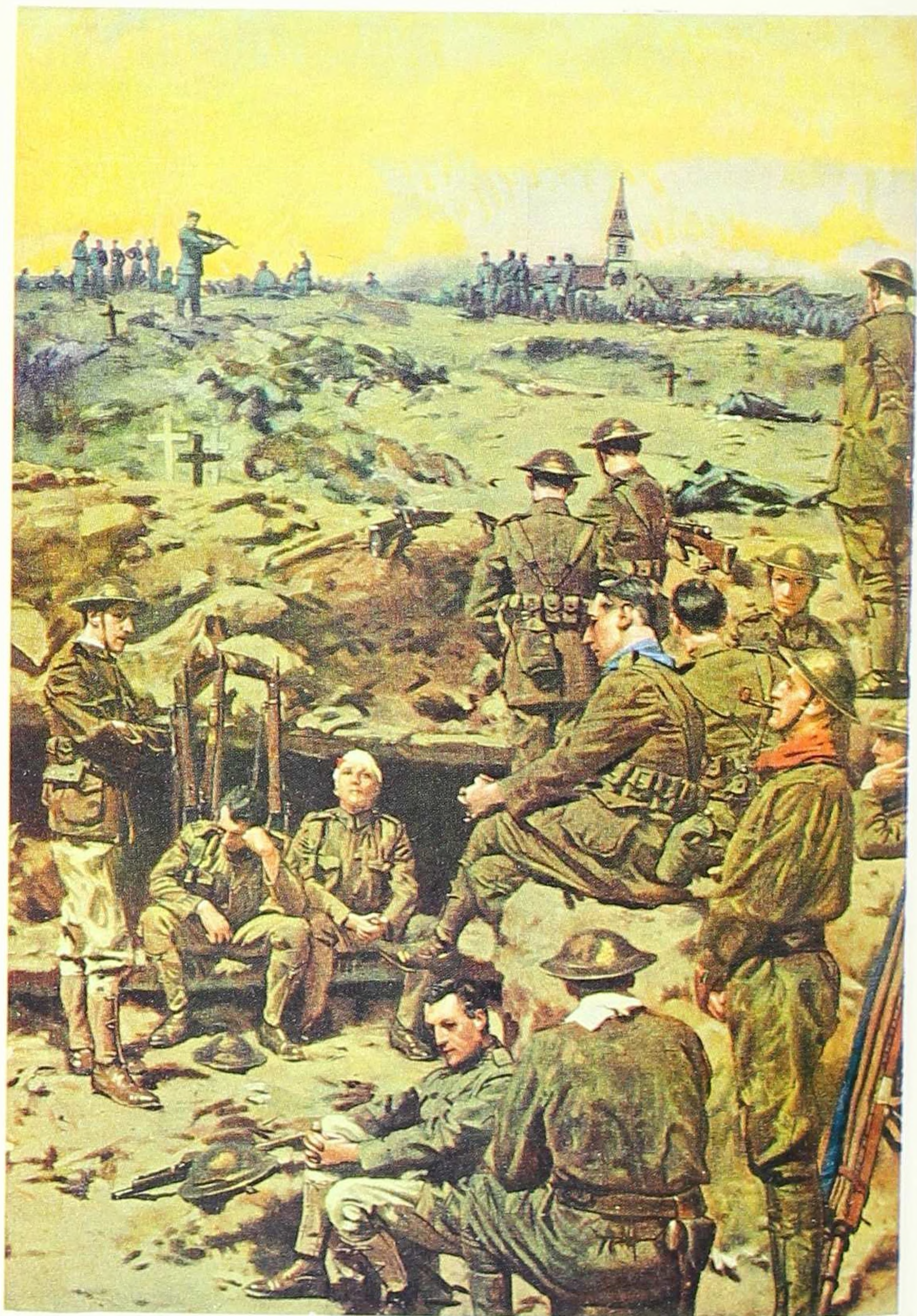
Khaki clad Americans lead French home for Christmas





Old and young of St. Mihiel greet American liberators





After the battle — the power of music weaves magic spell





Victory won — peace on earth good will toward men





German plenipotentiaries receive armistice terms from Marshal Foch





After the armistice doughboys were first to cross the Moselle into Germany





Back home to God's country — reunion with loved ones



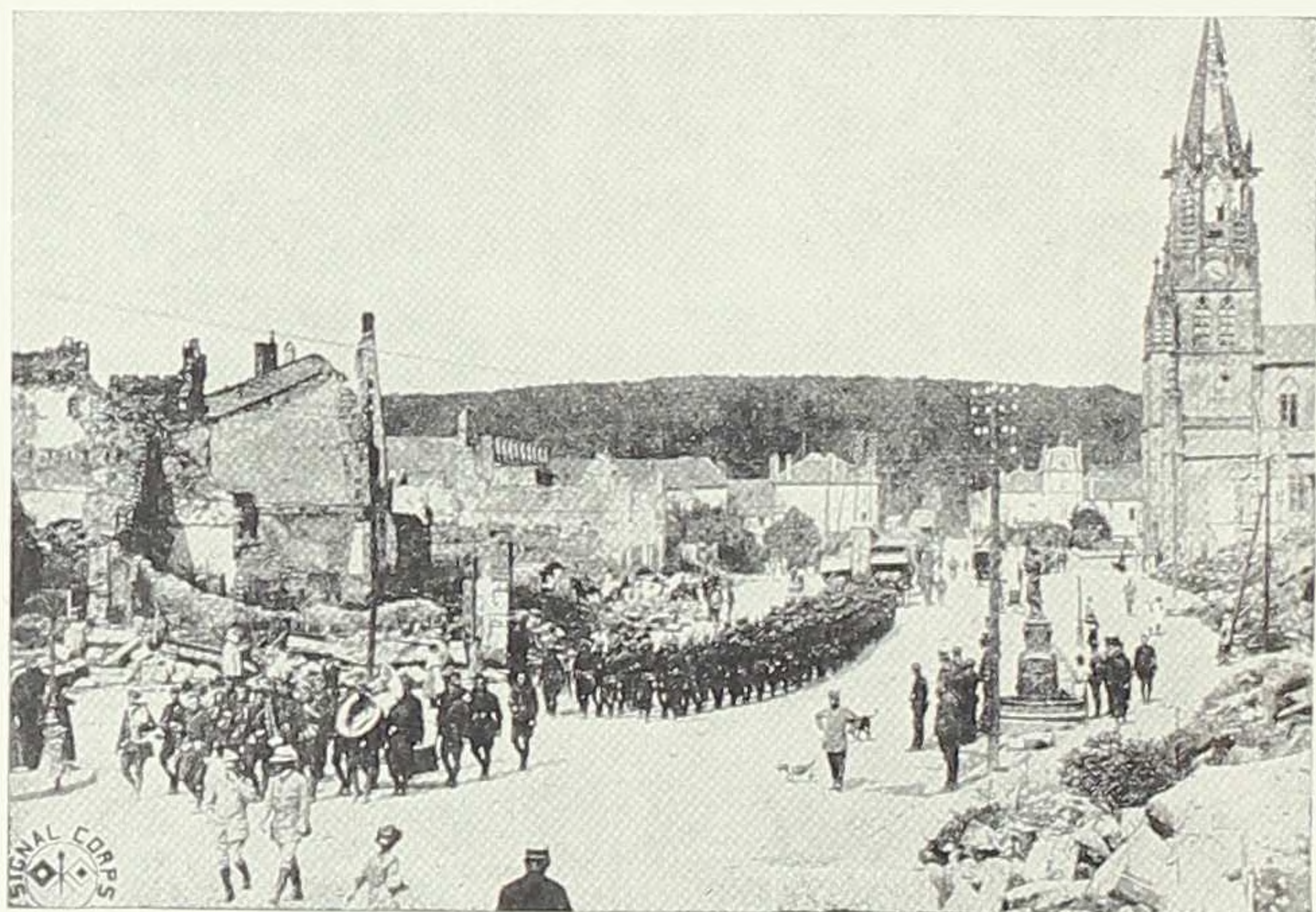


Men of E Company Waiting to go Over the Top on the Evening of  
September 16, 1918



First Aid Treatment for Wounded Officer. Prisoners Waiting to Carry  
Him Back to Dressing Station. Near Pannes



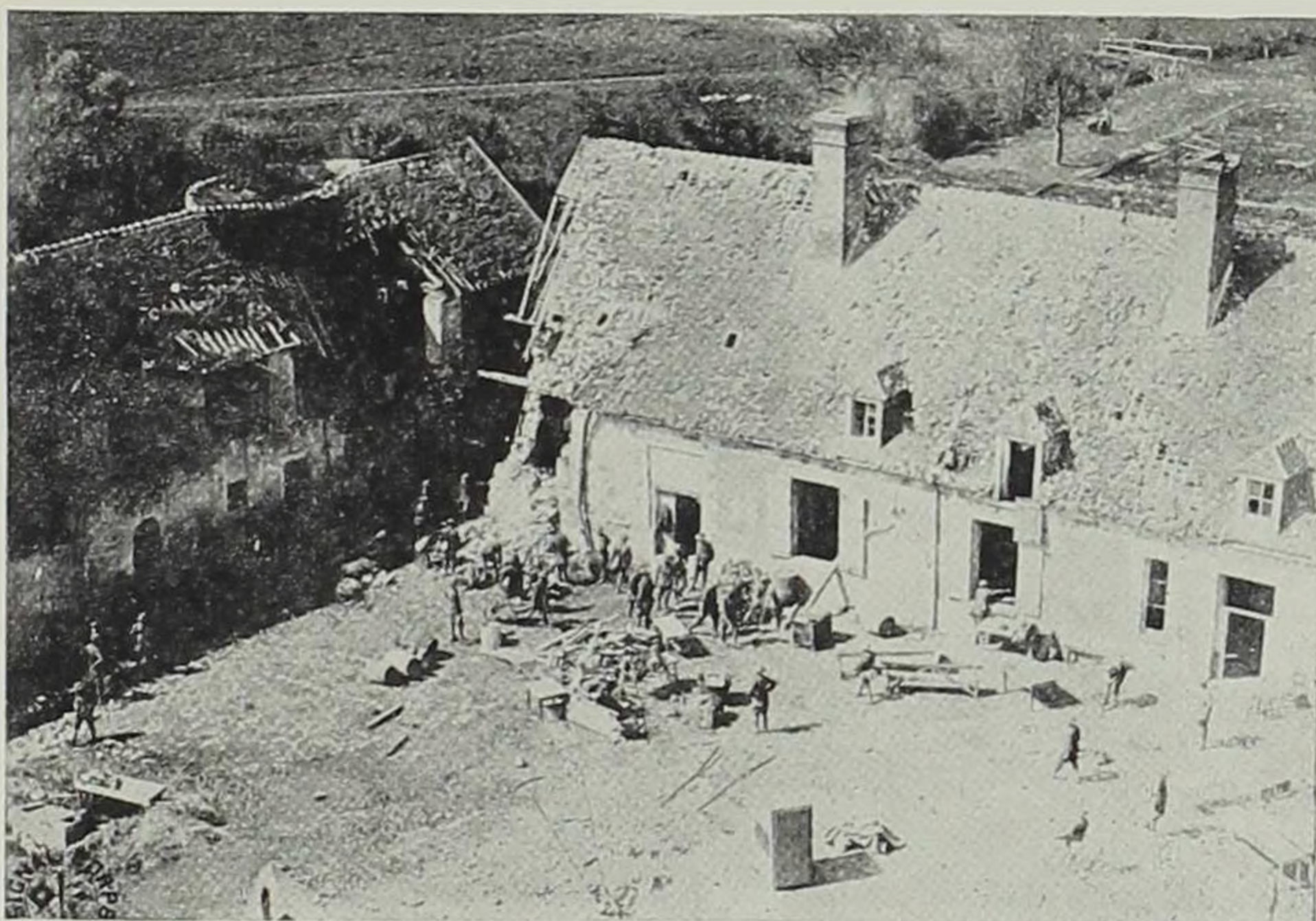


The Funeral Procession of Captain Fleur and Others Killed in the  
Gas Attack of May 27th — Baccarat



French Children Decorating Rainbow Graves in Military Cemetery  
at Baccarat, Memorial Day, 1918





The Chateau De Nesles Captured by the 168th

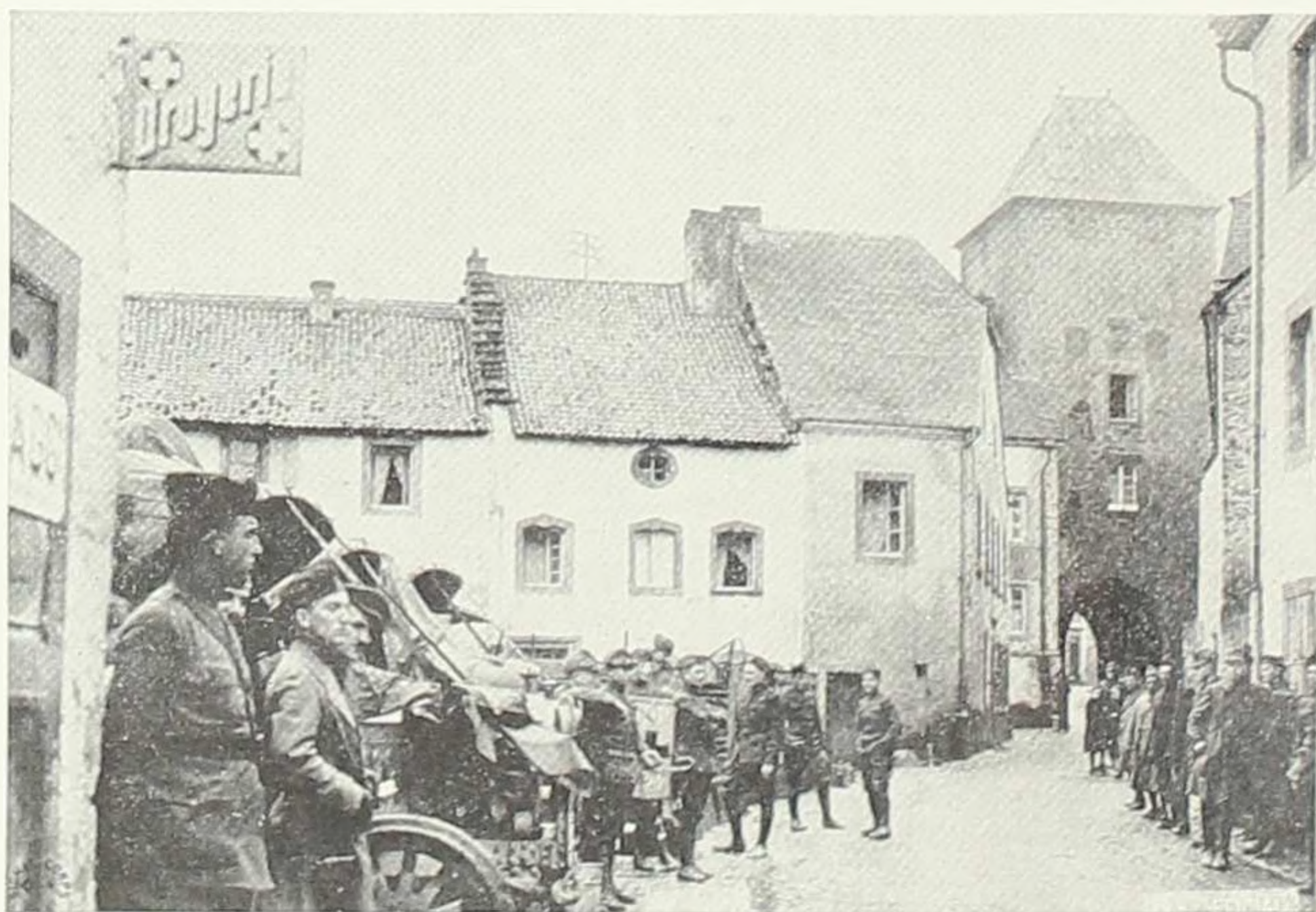


Pannes After Its Capture by the 168th on the 13th of September, 1918



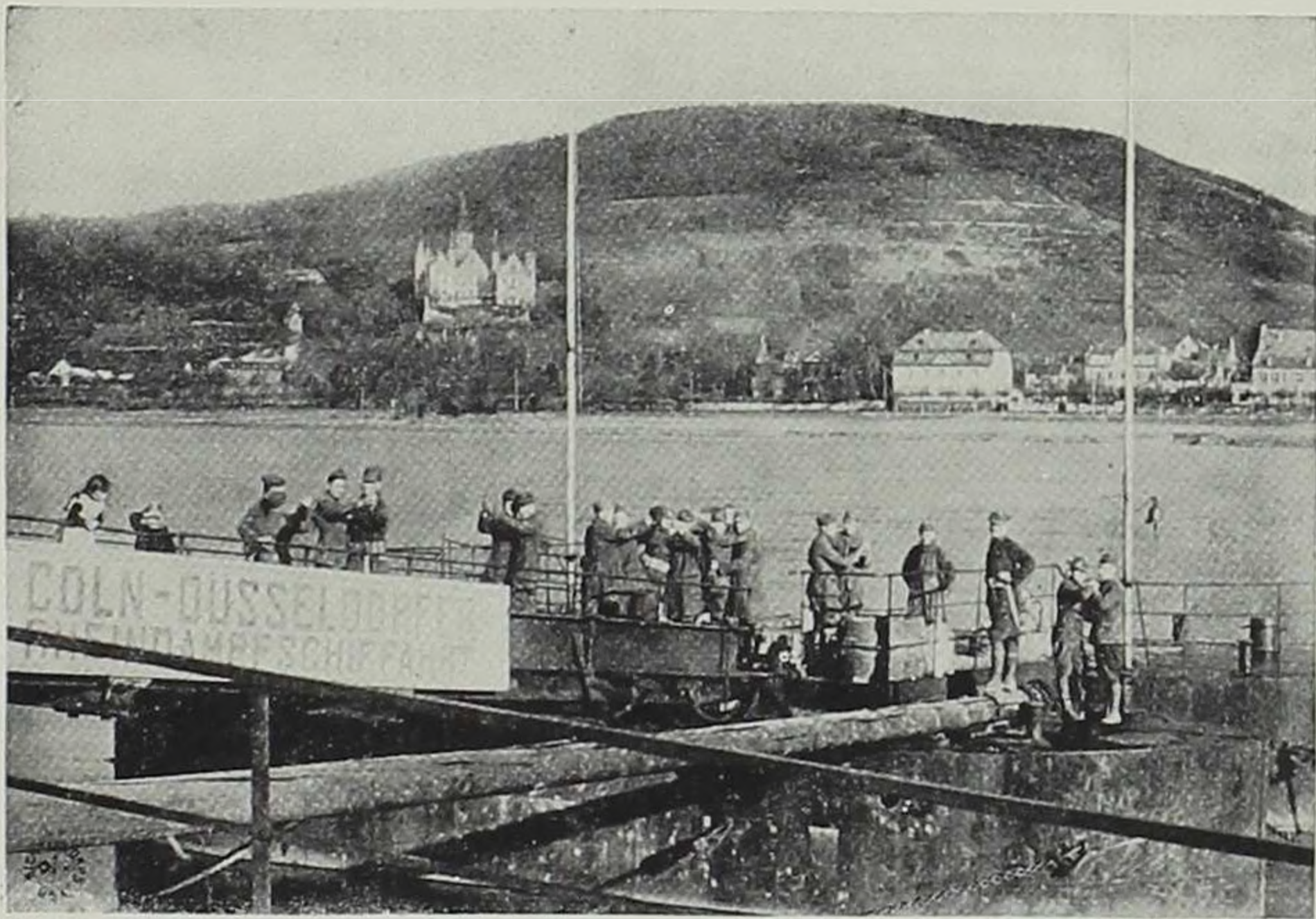


Typical of Triumphal Arches Erected in Honor of the American Troops  
Marching Through Belgium and Luxembourg



Street in Dudeldorf, Germany, December 5, 1918. Captain Bunch of the  
Sanitary Detachment and Lieutenant Chapman of Regimental Headquarters  
Standing at Attention at the Left.



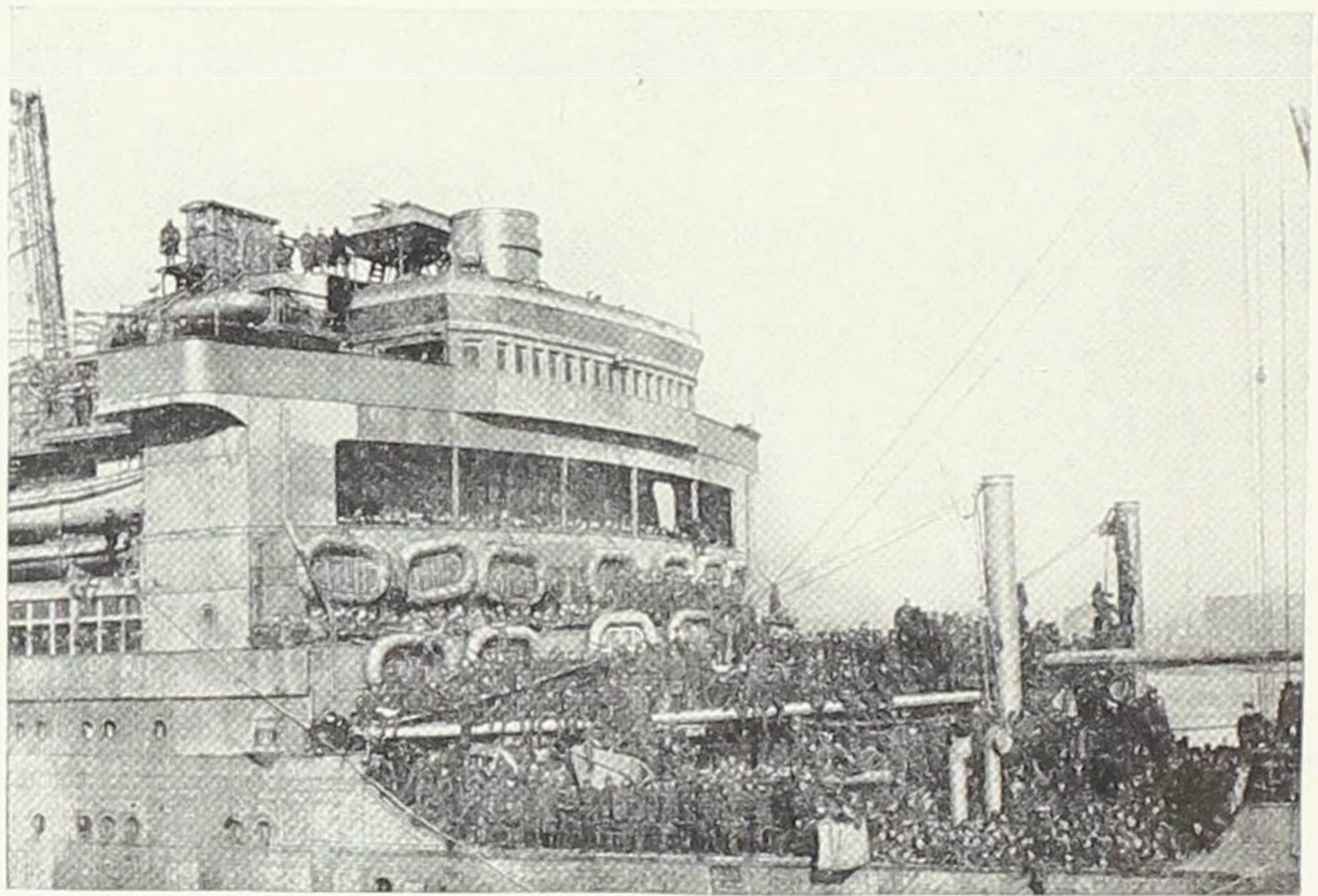


Men of the 168th Amusing Themselves at the Niederbreisig Landing.  
Across the River the Schloss Arenfels



The Watch on the Rhine. 168th Troops Patrolling  
the Water Front at Rheineck



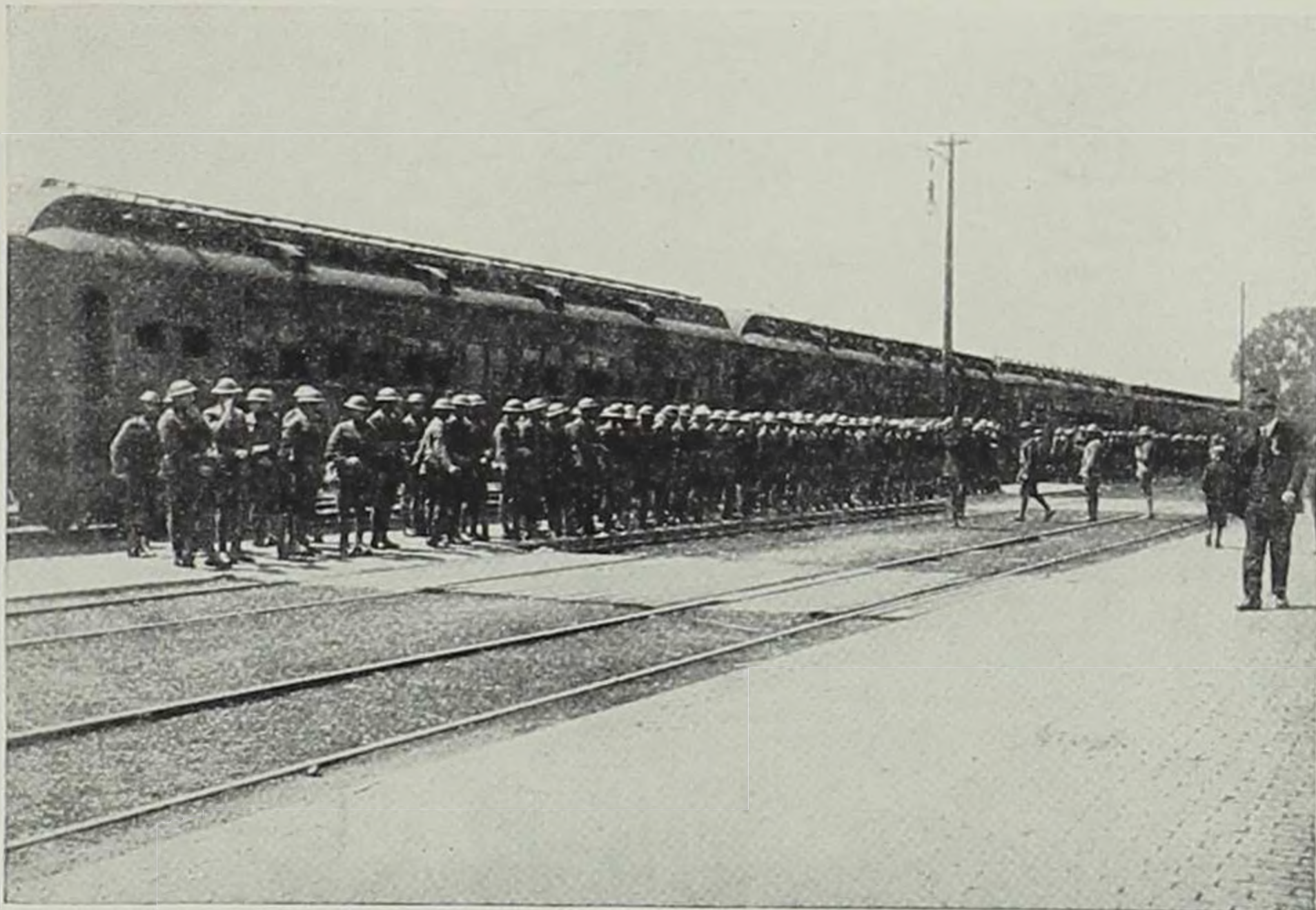


The Leviathan Docking at Hoboken



The Band of the 168th on the Leviathan



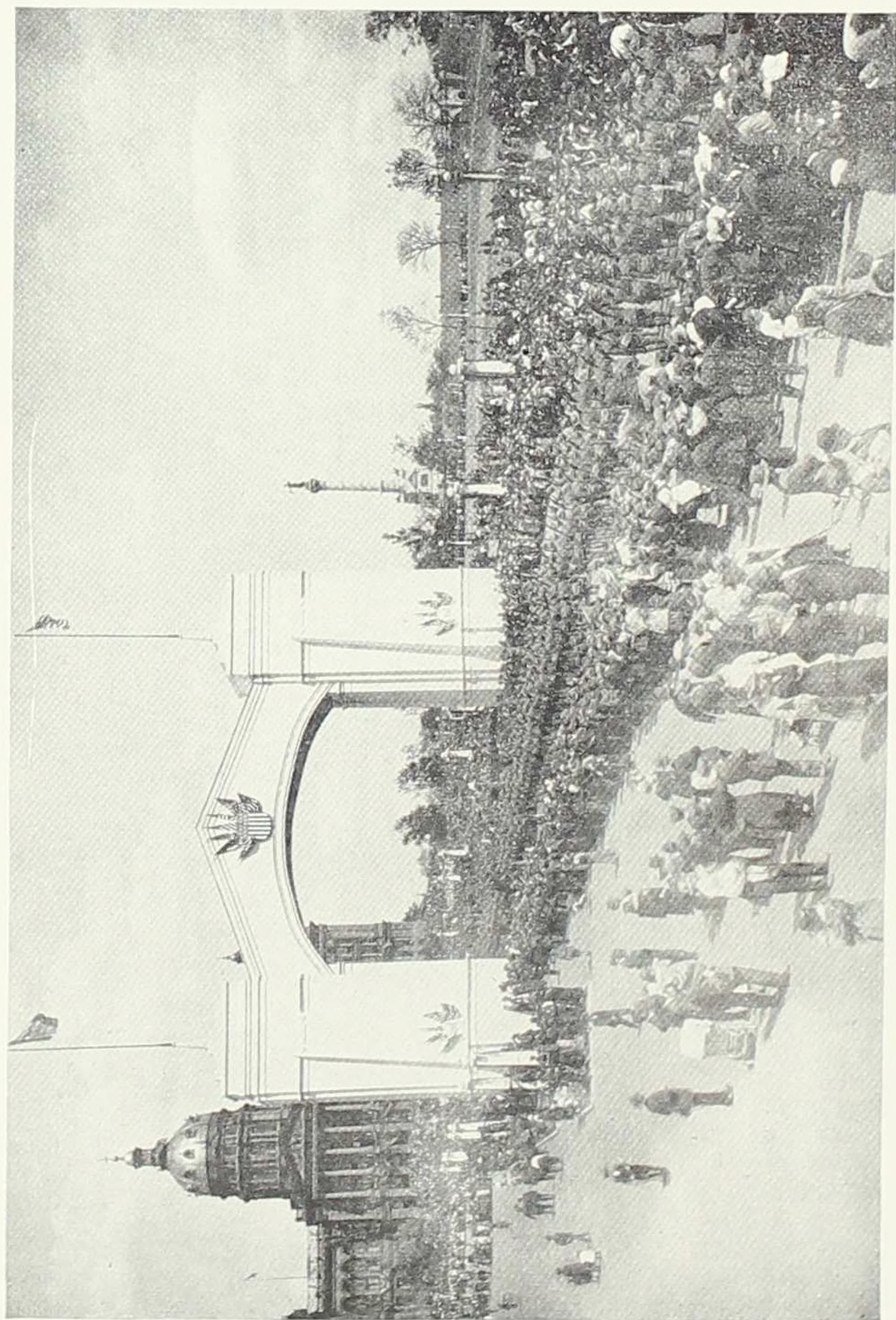


Section of Train Carrying the 168th Back to Iowa Arrives at Keokuk



Third Battalion Parading at Davenport





The Final Parade at Des Moines



until they were ready to venture beyond their own territory and, eventually, into the very mouth of the lion — the German trenches.

While the First Battalion was experiencing the initial thrills of contact with the enemy, the others were back in the suburbs of Baccarat, awaiting their turn; the Second Battalion still in billets at Deneuvre, and the Third, minus K Company, which, however, rejoined it on the last day of February, at Badménil.

On Washington's birthday, red-lettered by a general issue of turkey, these two battalions were reviewed in a drenching rain at Baccarat by the higher French and American officers of the area. But aside from that, there was no ceremony to detract from the last important preparations for service at the front. On the evening of the 28th of February the Second Battalion moved up to Neufmaisons in anticipation of their relief of the First Battalion.

On the night of March 2nd the ration cart brought in as passengers de luxe Lieutenant Charles Smith, Sergeant Gurnow, and Corporals Clements and Porter, who, with twenty-nine men of the Supply and Headquarters Companies, had been sent on October 1, 1917, on special detail to Newport News to accompany the animals of the Division to France and to valet for the mules.

Their story had a thrill in it, even when told in the trenches. On the 26th of January they sailed aboard an ex-German boat, the *Hercules*, with a cargo of approximately two thousand animals. On the second day out the steering gear collapsed and they were abandoned by the rest of the convoy to make it alone as best they could. Nine days later they were hit by a terrific storm, during which the wireless apparatus was put out of commission,



the life-boats washed away or smashed to splinters, and one propeller broken off and lost. Then the water tanks burst, flooding Hatch No. 4, and one hundred and fifteen animals were drowned; the battering of the waves sprang a leak; then a fire broke out mysteriously in Hatch No. 1; and to cap the climax the crew mutinied. But the soldiers, most of whom had never before even seen the sea, took matters into their own hands. An "alert" was ordered, the mutiny crushed, and the ship kept afloat by ceaseless pumping.

In all, two hundred and forty-five animals were killed. These unfortunate creatures, many of them mangled and torn to pieces, had to be cut in parts in order to be thrown overboard. For four solid days and nights, without a wink of sleep, the doughboys worked to keep the helplessly floundering ship afloat, disposed of all the carcasses, and maintained a vigilant watch for the renewal of any disorder among the crew. Small wonder that they had no time to think about submarines. The ship limped into Queenstown after seventeen of the most diverting days any one of them could recollect; and after temporary repairs, it proceeded to St. Nazaire where it dropped anchor on the 15th. When the surviving animals were unloaded, not one of them was found fit for service.

The detail from the 168th reported at once to their organizations, and were assigned to duty in the trenches. From manning pumps in a leaking hold to manning pumps in a leaky dugout wasn't such a far cry, especially when a few shells hit close enough to rock the dugout and complete the illusion.

While Sergeant Holden, who had just reported back for duty, was waiting for instructions at the Pink Château an excited Frenchman ran up and gave him to



understand that something was very much the matter. It had to do with "*Mulets*". *Mulets* meant nothing to the sergeant, but he followed the gesticulating *poilu* to a shelter where a squad of active Machine Gun Company mules had been billeted within kicking radius of several thousand boxed grenades with detonators attached. At the moment a number of the mules were making an obvious effort to get transferred to the Self Inflicted Wounds ward of the veterinary hospital. Four boxes had already been demolished, and some two hundred grenades, which had been carefully packed in sawdust to avoid shock and jar, had been kicked promiscuously about the floor. Sergeant Holden, in his ignorance of the vagaries of the grenade, did not appreciate his danger as he separated mules from grenades, and only afterward learned why the Frenchman kept his distance during the operation.

Before the 1st of March the German forces opposite had discovered that there were American troops in the Chamois sector, and immediately there was a marked change in their activities. The daily shower of shells increased noticeably, and their patrols grew more numerous and bolder. During a heavy bombardment on the 2nd of March, Private Charles Gerdon of D Company had the distinction of being the first man in the regiment wounded and, as a consequence, the first to be decorated. The injury was slight — not nearly so annoying as the results of the injection of anti-tetanus serum — and he insisted on returning to his post as soon as it was dressed. He considered the subsequent bestowal of the Croix de Guerre more of a reward for the treatment than for the actual wound.

It was evident that our lines were being closely



observed. If a working party showed a head above the parapet, a half dozen 77's were at once directed at the spot. A sniper concealed in a clump of evergreens in front of G. C. 12 became obnoxiously active, and at night sounds of activity floated from the direction of the Boche lines. During the 3rd there was heavy shelling on both sides, with an especially violent bombardment of our front at four in the afternoon. The enemy was trying out the nerves of the Iowans — attempting to weaken the morale of the green Yankees who had come to ruffle up their quiet sector.

To the left of the C. R. Chamois was the C. R. Neuviller held by a French battalion, and beyond that the sub-sector Ancerviller occupied by French and Americans, represented by a battalion of the 167th Infantry which was likewise making its *début* in the trenches. On the night of March 3-4 the enemy attempted to raid this sector, but instead of taking prisoners left two of their own behind them.

Warning of this raid had come to us through the admirable French Intelligence Service, but as the exact point of attack was undetermined, the word was passed along the entire front line. This meant an all-night alert for the Chamois front, and the entire garrison was forced to remain at its combat posts until daylight.

The companies in the line were to have been relieved on the 4th, but in the face of the threatened enemy activity it was decided to make no change until the situation cleared. Beginning at ten in the morning of the 4th, the Boche kept up an intermittent artillery fire on parts of our front. At one in the afternoon, Colonel Tinley received word from the French that they had intercepted a German telephone message giving infor-



mation of an intended bombardment of the line. Runners were immediately sent to the front to warn our men there, and everybody was under cover when the strafing commenced. From three to half past three there was a violent bombardment of the right of the sector, and for fifteen minutes, beginning at 3:50, the Boche unlatched everything he had in the way of artillery, distributed generally over the whole front. At intervals from then until after dark there were sporadic outbursts of varying intensity.

During the early part of the night disquieting sounds issued from certain points in front of our lines, and requests for artillery fire upon the suspected area were sent back to Headquarters. Shortly after midnight the presence of a patrol, or patrols, in rear of our positions was detected.

By this time the men, fatigued from the prolonged alert of the previous night, with nerves on edge from the continued shelling, and apprehensive at the indications of enemy aggression, had reached the point where it would have been a relief to have anything happen — anything to clear the air and end the suspense. Something was going to happen. Every man felt sure of that, and dreaded it — yet at the same time was impatient for the storm to break.      ★ ★ ★

It would be impossible to follow the 168th through the many rugged days of trench warfare that followed their arrival in the Chamois sector. The Germans, learning of the presence of American troops in the trenches, began a violent bombardment of the 168th Infantry's position on March 5 but the Iowans held fast. In his official French report, Colonel G. Allie testified to the energetic resistance of the 168th: "Therefore it can be certified that the valor of these troops is highly reliable." This was the first test of the National Guard on the Western Front. The Iowa volunteers, who made up these units, had not been found wanting. [The Editor].



## Heroes on Many Fronts

The story of the Rainbow Division, of which the 168th Infantry formed an integral part, is boldly written in the annals of American military history. Having successfully beaten off a fierce German attack on March 5, the 168th had launched its own offensive on the German positions on March 9. While these were largely probing attacks they were nevertheless dangerous. The "splendid bravery" of the 168th quickly won the warm praise of the French General Staff.

Their gallantry in action won a much-deserved rest for the 168th in the Rambervillers area in Lorraine. Spring had come almost overnight and the bleak winter days would soon be over. Suddenly word arrived of the disastrous defeat of the British in Picardy. The Allied world trembled at the prospects of impending disaster. Once more it was up to the French and the Americans. For the battle-scarred 168th it meant a return to the trenches for a period lasting (with but few respites) until the Armistice was signed.

A vivid and decidedly unpleasant experience was the endurance march from the Rambervillers area back to the Baccarat sector — made harder because it meant returning to all the misery and strain they had left just a short time before. The 168th spent some harrowing days, both in and out of the trenches. Despite mud and cold, and the constant warning of imminent gas



attacks (until one finally came), the Iowans left Lorraine with mixed emotions. According to John H. Taber, historian of the 168th:

They will tell you in Lorraine, especially in Baccarat, that there is no American division like the *Quarante-deuxième*. They felt it was their own, and followed its progress and its triumphs as faithfully as did our own people far off in Iowa. Rimau-court, Ormancey, Neufmaisons, Pexonne, St. Amand . . . all claimed us.

But a far more dangerous situation now faced the 168th.

The Commander-in-Chief of the A. E. F. stated in his report that the 77th Division had been sent to the line to release veteran troops. Veterans after four months! — with hardly a taste of what was to follow. One bloody day on the Ourcq was to see as many fall as had fallen before in a hundred. But they had passed the test and were graduates of a bitter school. They knew the shrill of an enemy shell, and could tell from its whistle the calibre and its approximate destination; could distinguish at one whiff the composition of a poisonous gas; from the hum of a motor, what type of plane. They feared danger, as they were human, but had learned to conquer their fear. They knew death in its worst form; yet in view of the horrors they were to meet and experience within the month, they were but novices.

The "veterans" of four months were soon building trenches and dugouts in the Champagne "where more men had fallen for every kilometer of front than at any other place on the Western Front." As the zero hour approached, the Iowans found themselves well-entrenched to meet the enemy and buoyed up by General Henri Gouraud's stirring "Order of the Day to the



French and American soldiers of the Fourth Army."

We may be attacked at any moment. You all know that a defensive battle was never engaged under more favorable conditions. We are awake and on our guard. We are powerfully reënforced with infantry and artillery.

You will fight on a terrain which you have transformed by your labor and perseverance in to a redoubtable fortress — an invincible fortress if all its entrances are well guarded.

The bombardment will be terrible; you will face it without weakness; the assault will be fierce in clouds of smoke, dust, and gas; but your position and your armament are formidable. In your breasts beat the brave and strong hearts of free men.

None shall glance to the rear; none shall yield a step. Each shall have but one thought; to kill, to kill many, until they shall have had enough.

Therefore, your General says to you: "You will break this assault, and it will be a happy day."

This Battle of the Champagne, in which the 168th fought brilliantly, has been frequently called the turning point of World War I. Victory might have proved so for the Germans had they won. But victory was denied them. Instead, a crushing defeat, the "severest defeat" that either France or Germany had suffered on the Western Front in three years. As Taber relates:

First, according to Ludendorff, the Allied bombardment, which had caught them so entirely by surprise, created more destruction among the soldiers massed for the assault than in any other engagement of the war. Two divisions were so badly cut up by our furious barrage that they had to be replaced before the jump-off. Then Hindenburg himself admits that Gouraud's masterly strategy had been too much for him, and that his most effective artillery preparation had been practically without result — a futile pounding of empty trenches.



One artillery incident is graphically recounted by Taber:

In front of L Company, out in the open, a battery of Frenchmen fed their guns and sang *La Madelon*. "*Pour le repos*" — crash! — "*le plaisir*" — slam! — "*du militaire*" — Bang! It was unbelievable. Men singing under the threat of death! It was unreal, fantastic. Perhaps they sensed the fact that their country was saved. But the Germans spotted them, and in the midst of a phrase, a whirring shell wiped them all, gun and crew, from the face of the earth.

Equally dramatic is the scene described by Chaplain Winfred E. Robb as he helped to bind wounds, cheer the suffering, and comfort the dying. His attention had been urgently called to a young soldier who had just been brought in.

I went over and knelt down by his side. A shell had blown his foot away at the ankle. A slug had torn through the left leg above the knee, and he had wrapped a wire about it, twisting in a stick to stop the flow of blood. His left arm was shattered and hanging loosely at his side. He lay there so still and white, with never a cry coming from his lips.

"How are you coming, old chap?" I said. Between his clenched teeth he answered, "All right, I guess. I guess I'll make it." [The look in the chaplain's face told him that there was no hope.]

"Am I going to die, Chaplain?" he questioned.

"Yes, my lad, you've not long." Then I asked him if there was anything I could do for him.

"Yes," he said, "Will you write my mother all about it?" I said I would, and he seemed content. He requested me to pay a few francs to a comrade of his, and then I asked, "Isn't there anything else, lad, that you want to say for yourself before you go?"



"I guess not," he returned, "but have you a cigarette?"

I gave him one and lighted it, and he lay there smoking, drawing the smoke into the lungs, and blowing it out through his nose. He seemed to take great comfort in it. He looked up at me, blew out a puff, and smiled so coolly up into my face. I turned away to hide my tears, and busied myself with some others. After a few moments, I came back. The cigarette was still burning between his fingers, but he was lying there, his pale, boyish face so set, cold in death. Without a cry of pain, without a sob of fear, his life had flickered out.

The list of battles in which members of the 168th participated contain some of the bloodiest and most decisive engagements of World War I. They had received their baptism under fire in Lorraine. They had fought courageously in even more sanguinary battles in the Champagne, on the Marne, and at La Croix Rouge Farm, where death-dealing machine guns had decimated their ranks. Their advance along the Ourcq, the capture of Hill 212 and Sergy, left the 168th with losses fixed by Colonel Tinley at 69 per cent — 9 officers and 226 enlisted men killed and 38 officers and 1,266 men wounded. When finally relieved after ten days of bombardment, an eye-witness described the exhausted 168th as "silent old men, who ten days before were youths with songs on their lips."

But much fighting still lay before them — St. Mihiel, the St. Benoit Sector, the Argonne, the conquest of Hill 288, the struggle and capture of Chatillon. These were followed by the stirring advance on Sedan. By November the collapse of the German Army was imminent. On November 11 Chaplain Robb announced from the steps of the shell-torn church in



Briquenay that an Armistice had been signed. According to Taber:

It really was beyond comprehension, this glorious news — too much to grasp all at once. No more whizz-bangs, no more bombs, no more mangled, bleeding bodies, no more exposure to terrifying shell fire in the rain and cold and mud! It would be difficult to adjust the mind to the new state of things.

Now the Band, silent for weeks, and out of practice — for at the front where silence was something more than golden, there wasn't much opportunity for practice — got out its instruments and blared forth *Over There*. "We won't come back till it's over, over there" didn't seem like an empty boast any longer. The long fight had been won, and now we would see our homes once more. Never had *The Star Spangled Banner* sounded so thrilling, never was it more loudly cheered.

The story of the gallant officers and men of the 168th, whose valor equalled that of the knights of old, is an epic that will be long remembered by all freedom loving Iowans.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN



## THE WATCH ON THE RHINE

THE 168th now settled down for an extended and not too strenuous period of "watchful waiting". It found itself in the heart of a country saturated in legend and tradition, with more than its share of natural beauty. The inviting roads and paths led one quickly into the Rhenish hills, forest-clad and abounding in game, with here and there an ancient manor or medieval ruin peeping from above the tree tops.

Niederbreisig is a prosperous modern town with comfortable, some even luxurious, billets. From here one gets a fine view up the river where the rocky banks come close together. In the distance mount the ruins of Burg Hammerstein, the walls of which offered a shelter to Henry IV when he was fleeing from his own son who was desirous of obtaining the paternal crown. A little below Brohl, two kilometers to the south, on a hill overgrown with bush, towers the Schloss Rheineck, the home of the former Imperial Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg. Across the river and to the right of Niederbreisig is the town of Hönningen, crowned by the battlemented castle Arenfels; and farther down the Rhine, opposite the station of the New York and Ohio regiments, loom the fabled Siebengebirge.

Following up the Brohltal, which takes its name from the splashing mountain stream that rises in the Eifel and tumbles down the valley into the Rhine, you come either by a smooth, hard-surfaced road that duplicates the



meanderings of the stream, past an occasional shady inn, a *Badeanstalt* (the district abounds in fine mineral springs), an ancient country house or two; or by the tiny *Brohltalbahn*, a puffing, narrow gauge affair whose four daily trains follow an equally picturesque route to Burgbrohl, the station of the Second Battalion and the Supply Company. The main industry of this village is a large tile works and pottery, conspicuously labeled at the time to indicate that it was owned by neutral Luxemburgers and not by Germans. But whatever the nationality of its owners, it possessed bathing facilities that were more than appreciated by the Americans.

Five kilometers farther up the valley lies Niederzissen, somewhat larger, brighter, and cleaner. Niederzissen lacked public baths — in fact the only tub in the place was at the convent, where officers, after proper introduction and preparation, were allowed to bathe.

Oberzissen, like Oberbreisig, had little to offer in the way of attraction. There was much mud, many children, and primitive houses. A few kilometers away the ruins of an ancient *Raubritter* castle, the Burg Olbrück, sprout from a dominating hilltop. From the rim of its tower, which with several of the rooms had been restored by the Kaiser, one gets a magnificent view off into the blue haze of the Eifel Mountains, and in the other direction the ramparts of the Rhine. The base is cluttered with piles of masonry weathered by centuries, and the top of the mountain is honeycombed with underground passages and dungeons where unfortunate victims languished "when knights were bold". There is an inn in the village of Hain, at the foot of the mountain, that offers the sight-seer a book in which to write his impressions of the visit. Lieutenant Pugsley, whose impressions of the



war-torn areas of France were still fresh, inscribed therein: "Very nice ruins, but old. For more modern ruins, see northern France and Belgium".

There was much lovely country to roam and many interesting things to see if one cared about walking. The Benedictine Abbey of Laach, situated on the banks of the famous Laacher See, a water-filled, volcanic bowl bordered by waving forest, was within easy reach. Founded in 1093 by Count Palatine Henry, it was once one of the wealthiest and most celebrated abbeys of Germany, and its church, completed in 1156, is a noble example of Romanesque art.

After about a week's stay in Oberbreisig, the Machine Gun Company moved to Rheineck on the river, occupying the village and the *schloss* above it. To reach the latter there is a steep hill to climb, but one is rewarded at the summit with a superb view of the Rhine valley. The present structure, close to the ruins of the original castle, was built in 1812, but had been sufficiently modernized to provide a comfortable billet for its American guests. Cots were set up in its many apartments, even in the ballroom, which in its time, no doubt, had reflected the gold lace and trappings of the highest nobility of the country. While all the men of the regiment did not draw steam-heated castles, they at least enjoyed the supreme comfort of a bed—the first many had slept in since leaving their homes in the United States—and they were sheltered from the elements, for it often rained or snowed; and while there was no sub-zero weather, the wind could blow with bitter sharpness off the Rhine on a cold day, just as the moon could rise with exceptional beauty from behind the hills on the right bank on a clear night. There were snug cafés where they could while



away pleasant hours in the evening over glasses of beer, Rhein wine, or the potent *schnapps*, to which vin rouge and champagne had surrendered.

The relations with the civilians from the first were friendly — there is no denying it. They seemed to anticipate the wants of the soldiers and treated them with the utmost cordiality. Although the order forbidding fraternization with the Germans was still in force, there were evasions, and as the days lengthened into weeks clandestine fraternization was inevitable, and not too-obvious infractions were winked at. The people in this section declaimed at length how happy they were to have Americans, whom they did not *really* consider their enemies, with them, instead of English or French troops — or Belgians, for there were inklings of considerable disturbance at Aix-la-Chapelle, where the Belgians had partly relieved their long pent up feelings by smashing a few windows. The Spartacist uprising, which was causing concern in other parts of the country, did not affect the occupied territory, and again the Rhinelanders were glad to have the stabilizing effect of our presence to spare them the horrors of a civil war.

Now the regiment had to reconcile itself to the irksome, colorless round of garrison duty — close order drill, guard duty, school, range practice, inspections, parades — relieved by athletics, games, and maneuvers. Drill was commenced the day after arrival, and a regular training schedule, providing for five hours' work daily, was adopted a week later; but as time went by this was moderated. Tactical problems and maneuvers carried the regiment all over the surrounding countryside in the rain and cold and snow, but the troops had been doing the real thing too long to get excited over theoretical



captures, taking imaginary strong points from an imaginary enemy. But at that, time dragged heavy on the hands and soon the old song, "I want to go home", became the chant of the army "without occupation". It was not that they didn't realize that they were living the life of Reilly, and that they had never had a more comfortable existence in the army, but the war was over and the call of home was strong.

The Y. M. C. A. established recreation rooms in each of the villages, with enlisted men in charge; and soon the K. of C. opened quarters for the benefit of all. Chaplain Robb ran the canteen in Niederbreisig and superintended the entertainment of the regiment. With the aid of a German machine and German reels he was able to put on a movie show every afternoon and evening.

After a few weeks the 168th was fortunate enough to have two women, Miss Elizabeth Potts and Miss Christine Johnston, assigned it as Y workers. Their headquarters were in Niederbreisig, where they proceeded in spite of the handicaps to transform an old bowling alley into an attractive hall with a home-like atmosphere. They set up a victrola, organized dances, and served free every day doughnuts and approximately seventy-five gallons of hot chocolate. It is needless to say that the Y was jammed most of the time. Owing to the scarcity of American women, and the prohibition against the German *mädchen*, the dances held Tuesdays and Fridays were stag affairs, but the men seemed to have a first-rate time just the same. On these occasions the two women were nearly torn limb from limb by the men fighting for a chance to dance with them. Once in a great while it was possible to get hold of ten or twelve Y workers from other towns for a regular dance. Twice a week Miss Potts and Miss



Johnston journeyed up to Burgbrohl and Niederzissen to serve chocolate, make candy, and, before they could escape, to dance with the men. Indeed these two are entitled to service stripes for dancing alone, not to mention wound stripes for being hauled about over rough floors and tramped upon by innumerable pairs of hobnails. The service they performed was invaluable, and when they came home with the regiment, having been with it all through this period, they had been adopted as full-fledged members of the 168th Infantry.

In order to further relieve the monotony of the life all manner of contests — football games, races, field meets — were encouraged, and with so much time on their hands practically every organization in the A. E. F. and the Army of Occupation organized its own show troupe. As these itinerant players went about from division to division, we had an almost continuous season of vaudeville, minstrel, and musical shows, with exclusively male casts. None furnished better entertainment than the 168th troupe, and none was more excruciatingly funny than the "awkward squad" of F Company which won fame far beyond the limits of our own Division. These performances, staged at the Y halls, were tremendously popular with the men, and there never was even standing room left when the curtain rose.

Finally leaves were actually granted. Everyone was given an opportunity to visit the leave centers in France — on the Riviera, in Savoie, and in the Pyrenees. And many found their way back for a visit in Lorraine and other places where they had made friends during halts of the regiment. Then there were additional leaves to Coblenz and Neuenahr — the latter the regional leave center. This was a popular spa, the source of the famous



Apollinaris spring, with an excellent casino, good hotels, and plenty of entertainment. The events of a field meet with the Second Canadian Division were divided between Neuenahr and Bonn, where the Canadians were stationed. Then there were boat trips up the Rhine as far as Bingen and down to Cologne, with meals and music, provided for those on good behavior. Some, however, took it upon themselves to explore further into territory out of bounds, and were set down on the evening report as A. W. O. L., an offense to be atoned for by the withdrawal of privileges, a goodly fine of marks, or perhaps a few days' incarceration in the brig.

In between times the men tramped the country, polished up on German, and learned to furnish much of their own amusement. There was much deer in the vicinity, and while it was protected by military order, numerous succulent venison steaks mysteriously found their way to the various messes. In many of the companies sergeants' messes were formed, and the non-coms of higher grade took particular pains to see that they fared well. The officers found off-time relaxation at the clubs formed in each station, where nightly meetings and entertainment were provided. But perhaps the most unique, and at the same time élite, of the organizations to which the period gave birth was the P. I. R., that secret society whose dark mysteries and occult rites were so fearful that its very name could scarcely be mentioned in the light of day.

While the rest of the regiment was enjoying a comparative rest, the work of the Supply Company went on with never a let-up, for troops still had to be fed and the animals and wagons kept in condition. The Signal Platoon of the Headquarters Company had already



connected up its system of telephones and set up the radio station in Niederbreisig, and with the other specialists of this company could now sit back and take life easy.

The Band was possibly the hardest worked unit at this time. It was called upon on every occasion to play — at formations, reveille and retreat, in concerts, and in parades and other ceremonies. Colonel Tinley called Sergeant Morgans to his quarters on the day that the latter became Band Leader and told him that he wanted him to produce the finest band in the Third Army. The results justified the opinion of the regiment that it was. At the time its personnel consisted of twenty-six members. Now additional musicians were requisitioned from the school at Gondrecourt until it was increased to fifty. Then a bugle corps of twenty-six was recruited from within the regiment, the pick of the company buglers being transferred to the Headquarters Company for this purpose, making a total of seventy-six in the band. Sergeant Benge was sent to Paris by Colonel Tinley with enough money from the regimental fund to purchase clairons and drums for the bugle corps, so now we had both men and instruments for a first-rate organization. Before it made its first appearance, Sergeant Morgans and Sergeant Benge worked their men night and day, driving and rehearsing them until they were ready to burst. Then one day in spick and span uniforms, in perfect alignment, with instruments shining and bugles flashing, the new Band marched down the main street of Niederbreisig, playing the stirring regimental march so splendidly that it brought every one within hearing distance to his feet with a thrill of pride. For three weeks it served as the official band at Army Headquarters in Coblenz, giving daily concerts and every other day playing on the Rhine excursion boats.



There were many changes and additions to the personnel of the regiment during this period. Many of our wounded had been returned from hospitals in France, although it was not an easy matter to get them back — much red tape had to be unwound to save them from casual organizations. Captain Christopher, upon his return, relieved Lieutenant Fraser of command of Company D, and Captain Bradley took over H Company from Lieutenant Harris. When Captain Haley and Captain Lainson came back, Captains Tucker and Bonham surrendered command of I and L Companies, the former to be attached to Regimental Headquarters, to compile, with Captain Witherell and Lieutenant Ball, the regimental history; and the latter to become Regimental Intelligence Officer.

After a year and more in Europe, none of the line companies retained their original commanders. Aside from those above mentioned, they were headed as follows: Headquarters Company, Captain Nead; Supply Company, Captain Johnson; Machine Gun Company, Captain Swift; A, Captain Wood; B, Captain Witherell; C, Captain Sefton; E, Captain Doolittle; F, Captain Thrasher; G, Captain Younkin; K, Captain Cotter; M, Captain Briggs.

On the 23rd of December a number of men who had previously been awarded the D. S. C., but who had not been formally decorated, received the medals from the hands of the Divisional Commander, a heavy rain detracting from the dignity of the ceremony. Major Casey, Captains Bunch, Haynes, and Witherell, Lieutenants Williams, Breslin, and Pruette, and Sergeant Binkley of I Company were honored at this time.

A few days later Lieutenant Bentz, who had been with



us since Rimaucourt, was ordered to rejoin his regiment in France. He had proved a valuable aid to the 168th, and as a result of his exploits above and beyond the call of duty had been recommended for a D. S. C. But like many other recommendations that had been made by the regiment, it never went through.

These fruitless efforts to gain recognition for the meritorious services of our men caused an immense amount of dissatisfaction within the organization. D. S. C.'s were being ladled out by the bushel to the Regular Army divisions, and only a few strays dribbled in to us. There is still preserved among the archives of the regiment the following endorsement on a list of recommendations for D. S. C. that had been returned disapproved by higher authority:

1st Ind.

Hq. 168th Infantry, American E. F., 26 March 1919. To C. O. Co. G. 168th Infantry.

1. Due to an unexpected shortage of bronze, copper, and pretty ribbon, caused by the exceptional demand to accommodate certain units of the American Army with decorations, the issue of medals to this organization has been reduced. In lieu of the D. S. C.'s herein recommended, the company commander is authorized to buy each of the men above mentioned a good five-cent cigar.

On Christmas Eve a party was given for the children of Niederbreisig in the town hall. The Christmas season is a time for forgetting national antipathies, and the youngsters of Niederbreisig had never borne arms against us. As at Rimaucourt a year before, there was an American tree, and dolls, toys, and candy; but somehow the fête lacked the happy spirit of the other occasion. The children were stolidly grateful, but less animated and enthusiastic than the *petits* of the Haute-Marne.



It snowed that night, and a heavy blanket covered the ground as the Band formed up before daylight to play their carols. One by one lights appeared at the windows, German and American, as the occupants gathered to listen to the strains of old familiar hymns floating out into the frosty air. There were programs of entertainment and real Christmas dinners at each of the stations of the regiment. Even without it the men would have been happy; for while the year just closing had opened in uncertainty, the new one approaching held the prospect of seeing home and family.

On the 21st of January Major Yates left the regiment to return to the States, and Major Brewer assumed command of his old organization from which he had been separated since the 12th of September. On the 7th of March the Third Battalion changed station with the First, which since our arrival in Germany had been enjoying the greater comforts and advantages of urban Niederbreisig. K Company took over the billets of A in Oberbreisig, while the other three remained in the larger town. Major Ross decided to have more room in Niederrissen, so he put only two companies in there, sending C Company to Oberzissen and D to Waldorf, a hamlet on the other side of the Bausenberg, the steep hill (in ages past an active volcano) that towers above Niederrissen on the north.

On the 9th of March an impromptu parade which aroused the excitement of the civilian population was staged in Niederbreisig. Led by the bugle corps and preceded by a large painted banner, a company of men in chance formation marched on Colonel Tinley's headquarters. The Germans thought it a Bolshevist uprising of some sort (banners meant mutiny or revolution to them) and ran along with the soldiers, fearfully yet



hopefully expecting a fracas. But the banner was most harmlessly inscribed, and the purpose of the paraders equally pacific. It proclaimed to the world at large, and to Niederbreisig in particular: "First over the top, and still going strong — Company M 168th Infantry". It was just a year since they initiated, with F Company, the first offensive of the regiment.

A week later Major Brewer was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, Captain Haynes to Major, and Lieutenant Lucas to Captain. Sometime previous Captain Bunch, chief of the Medical Detachment, had also received his majority.

On the 16th of March, General Pershing inspected and reviewed the entire Division on a plain near the river between Kripp and Remagen. It was not a pleasant occasion, for it was a cold, sunless day, and besides the men hated ceremonies of any sort. For two solid hours the Division stood shivering in the icy wind that was blowing off the river, drawn up in mass formation awaiting the Commander-in-Chief. Following the lengthy inspection General Pershing decorated a number of men, including Colonel Brewer, and then with the corees in the reviewing line behind him, the Division passed by in regimental columns. After a brief address the men returned to the trucks that had brought them as far as Sinzig and rode back to their stations.

To interrupt the otherwise indolent life, schools, not merely the regimental officers' and non-coms' schools, but corps and army schools were opened at Coblenz and Châtillon-sur-Seine, where unwilling students from combat divisions were instructed in things they already knew, because the higher authorities thought it good for them. Evidently the last detachment returning (in unheated box cars) from the long grind at Châtillon thought to



make up for their weeks of hard labor in one glorious celebration. It happened that their train was sidetracked for some time in the Nancy yards right next to a train load of champagne. Some adventurous volunteers decided to transfer part of the consignment (it proved to be of good vintage) to their own cars, and if there was not a general attempt to aid in juggling the heavy cases, there was whole-hearted coöperation in the consuming of the contents thereof. Not long after, an order arrived at Regimental Headquarters "for the assessment against the proper individuals, for the alleged loss of 2175 bottles of champagne". It cost the three 1st lieutenants, eleven 2nd lieutenants, and twenty non-coms of the 168th who shared in this party, sixty-five, fifty-seven, and fifteen francs each. Some of them felt that they had had their money's worth.

Early in March an officer and two non-coms from each company met at Colonel Tinley's quarters in Niederbreisig for the purpose of adopting a constitution and by-laws for the 168th Infantry Society; and a few days later, at another meeting held in Burgbrohl, the organization was perfected, with the Colonel chosen unanimously as its first President. This was followed, on the 28th of March, by the organization of the Rainbow Division Veterans at a convention in Neuenahr closely resembling, for enthusiasm and racket, an old time political convention. The old spirit that carried the Division through the war was to perpetuate it as a permanent organization. After much competition on the part of the various unit delegations, Alabama won out and Birmingham was chosen as the place for the first annual reunion. And Colonel Hough, the popular commander of the Ohio regiment, was elected to lead the association for the first year of its existence.



## HOMeward BOUND

EVER since the New Year there had been recurring rumors of the imminence of the departure of the regiment. First came the report that we would leave early in February. That hung on persistently until the time was passed and it was supplanted by another that set the last of March as the positive date; and then it was finally settled by those in the know that the 168th would not move an inch out of Germany until the treaty of peace was signed. At the rate the peace conference was then proceeding it might be for years and it might be forever. The men were daily growing more restive, but new rumors always brought new hope. Word that we were scheduled to sail from Rotterdam convinced many that we were on the point of leaving; but Antwerp was substituted for Rotterdam; and finally, after several weeks, it was announced that when we did sail we would sail from a French port, presumably Brest.

On the 17th of March the Rainbow Division left the Fourth Army Corps and entered the reserve of the Third Army as the first step toward embarkation. A week later all engineering and signal property, ammunition, stock, and rolling equipment, with the exception of kitchens, were turned in. The enlisted personnel was given a thorough physical examination and inoculated against typhoid fever. Already the long line of box cars that waited on the sidings farther down the river was being fitted up with bunks and stoves to make the long



trip from the Rhine to the Atlantic as comfortable as possible. Clerks were burning midnight oil preparing baggage and passenger lists. After so many false rumors and changes of plan, it was hard to realize that the time had actually come.

Spring has just got a real start and green tendrils were beginning to give promise of summer beauty when the first train loaded with troops of the 168th steamed out from Sinzig in the early morning of April 8th and headed up the river toward Coblenz. Soon after, the sections carrying the other units of the regiment were following the same route. It was a merry trip that lasted three days. The men were somewhat crowded, but what did they care — they were going home! Three times a day the trains halted to give them a chance to stretch their legs and to permit the mess details to make a flying trip to the kitchen cars, two of which were attached to each train. Bidding farewell to the Rhine at Coblenz, they ran over German tracks through Trèves and Luxemburg to Metz; then back into France at Conflans; past heroic Verdun, demolished St. Mihiel, Bar-le-Duc and Vitry-le-François of distant memory; through Sézanne, Versailles, Chartres, Le Mans, Laval, Rennes, and St. Briec, to Brest, where on the 11th they finally detrained and marched to Camp Pontanezen.

This embarkation center lay several kilometers out of Brest, between stone-fenced fields of rich Breton mud. Here the regiment was completely outfitted and given a final delousing. There was no opportunity for drill during the six days spent in the camp, but there were endless calls for details to work around it. The weather was most variable, a downpour about every other hour and a high wind most of the time; but between showers



the sky was startlingly clear and blue. The black storm clouds seemed to roll up from nowhere, and before one knew it, it would be raining again.

On the 13th Colonel Brewer, Captain Christopher, and Lieutenant Breslin were decorated with the cross of the Legion of Honor, and Sergeant James R. Clark of L Company, who that day was commissioned second lieutenant, and Sergeant Merl E. Clark of C Company received the Médaille Militaire, the highest award to enlisted men within the gift of the French Government. At the same time a letter was received from Premier Clemenceau expressing his personal gratitude for the services of the Rainbow Division and wishing it an affectionate farewell.

The next day, the 14th, Colonel Brewer was detached to assume charge of a boat load of nurses and casuals — the latter consisting chiefly of enlisted men and their war brides and many children. They had the misfortune to draw a German ship that had just been taken over by our government and which had not yet been conditioned for its first voyage in four and a half years, so they had a rather hectic trip.

It had been determined that the 168th should return on the *Leviathan*, which was then riding out in the harbor, but the continuing gales made it impossible to board her. On the 16th thirty more officers were detached to sail for Boston on the *Pretoria*, it having been discovered that there was insufficient room for all in the quarters assigned the regiment on the larger ship.

However, on the 17th the wind abated and the command hiked to Brest, loaded on lighters, and was ferried out to the *Leviathan*. In the eighteen months that elapsed since our experience on the *Grant*, the transport



service had acquired real efficiency in handling troops, and there was no fault to find either with the accommodations, the cuisine, or the regulations. Even if there had been, the men wouldn't have noticed it — they were so happy to be on the way home. Although all the troops had been loaded by the evening of the 17th, the sailing was held up by a delay in coaling. Then doughboy volunteers replaced the negro stevedores at that job and accomplished as much in six hours as the others had done in two days. At twenty minutes after five, preceded by the *Aquitania*, which had come in in the morning and anchored near us, the *Leviathan* pulled anchor and pointed her nose into the setting sun. France, which had greeted us in rain, was saying *au revoir* with a smiling sky. Gradually the coast line was swallowed up in the distance and the falling night, and the voyage home had really begun.

It was a great trip, the giant of the seas putting mile after mile behind her with scarcely an effort, it seemed, so steady was her movement in the calm waters. There was fair weather practically all the way across, and there was enough deck space, scientifically apportioned, for all to enjoy it, in spite of the fact that we were carrying 11,000 soldiers and between five and six hundred officers, which, with the navy personnel, brought the sailing list to well over 14,000 souls. With four bands aboard, there were concerts nearly every hour of the day, and in the evening there were moving pictures and other entertainment.

After leaving the Gulf Stream, it grew blustery and cold, and there were snow flurries on the 25th before breakfast. But land was not far away. At noon several destroyers met the ship and escorted it to Ambrose Light-



ship, off which we anchored until four o'clock. Then putting on steam, the *Leviathan* sailed in through the Narrows and proudly up New York Bay. What a cheer went up when the majestic outline of the city came into view and the graceful lines of Liberty stood out against the Jersey sky! A squadron of especially chartered ferry boats and tugs, decorated with flags and banners, whistles screeching in welcome, and jammed with cheering people from the different States represented by the units on board, puffed around the towering hulk of the transport like a brood of ducklings around a dignified mother bird. There was the Mayor's committee of welcome, a boat filled with Ohio cohorts, another from Indiana, one from Illinois, but most prominent of all to us was that one bearing the legend "Iowa Welcomes Her Boys Of The 168th".

The dock at Hoboken was crowded with several thousand more friends and relatives, many of whom had come long distances to get the first glimpse of their sons and husbands. But of all the organizations aboard, the 168th was the only one that did not disembark immediately; it was to be held on the *Leviathan* until the following morning.

There was wild happiness aboard the ship that evening, until word reached it that Major Bunch, who had seen more active service than any one in the regiment, had been killed in a motor accident a few hours before. He had obtained a pass to surprise his fiancée in a nearby town, and was on his way when the motor in which he was riding collided with another near Camp Merritt and he was crushed to death. It seemed too cruel, too unjust to be true, that Fate, which had spared him through all the dangers of battle, should snatch away his life now when



the war was over and he had so much to live for. This news took the edge off of our enthusiasm, for he was mourned by the entire regiment as an efficient officer, a courageous soldier, and a good friend.

Unloading at eight o'clock on the morning of the 26th, the 168th, after passing through a Y. M. C. A. line for breakfast, entrained for Camp Upton in the central part of Long Island, where the men were again deloused and by nightfall assigned to their quarters in barracks. There was an age-long wait in this Sahara-like waste. But the shortage in cars and the unprecedented jam of troops coming in and going out held them there for two weeks.

On the 3rd of May the regiment passed in final review before its commanding officer before being broken up into the various State detachments which its veterans represented. For only those living in Iowa were to go to Camp Dodge for discharge; and in the months of service it had received replacements from every State in the Union, with the exception of Nevada. Thirty-two hundred men and ninety-eight officers returned to this country with the 168th, but of that number only sixteen officers and less than thirteen hundred enlisted men had set out with it from Iowa in the fall of 1917 — even this represented a large proportion that had been wounded in battle — and the others had either been killed or too severely wounded to rejoin it.

In groups the detachments for the different sections of the country left camp, beginning with that very afternoon. On the 11th the Iowans entrained for the West. There is little to relate of that three days' journey, except a steadily mounting excitement as they sped toward the home State. As the three sections crossed the Mississippi and entered Iowa at Dubuque, Davenport,



and Keokuk, they were vociferously greeted by the townspeople, and by committees of prominent citizens from all over the State. There were parades and speeches and flowers and food, and then they reëntered the trains for a progress of triumph unequalled in the history of Iowa. Every town and hamlet along the three parallel routes was crowded with cheering mobs. Even at the cross-roads small crowds of country people gathered to shout their welcome as the trains shot by. Cedar Rapids, Marshalltown, Waterloo, Ottumwa, and Oskaloosa met them with enormous throngs and rousing receptions. Converging on Des Moines, the trains reached the Capital City during the night and early morning of the 14th of May. Despite the untimeliness of the arrival there were thousands on hand to greet them; but the men, still under military discipline, remained in the cars for the night. There was a big day ahead of them. There was to be a lunch at the Coliseum; then the parade followed by a banquet and dance; and at eleven o'clock they were to go to Camp Dodge where they would receive their discharges.

The crowds at the station increased with the brightening dawn. There was laughter and some tears as families were reunited after twenty-two months' separation, but every one was happy, inconceivably happy, to be home again.

Des Moines had declared a holiday, and with it as many people from the rest of the State as could crowd into it. The streets through which the parade was to pass were gay with flags and bunting, and leading up the hill to the State House, where the reviewing stand was placed, a court of honor, culminating in an arch of triumph, had been erected. The sky was blue, the air was clear — it was a perfect day.



More than eighteen hundred members and former members of the regiment lined up for the parade behind Colonel Tinley and his mounted staff. First came the Band in full strength, then the veterans of the entire campaign, equipped with rifles, helmets, and gas masks; behind them marched more than three hundred discharged or convalescent comrades who had been previously invalided home; and at the end, in automobiles, crippled and disabled members of the regiment from the hospitals at Camp Dodge and Fort Des Moines.

The concluding gesture of their military life was performed with the utmost seriousness on the part of the men. The gay youths who had gone away with smiles on their faces had not come back; in their stead were men who looked neither to the right nor the left. There was no display of emotion by those who had experienced emotion in concentrated portions. The spirit that kept up the unnecessary discipline to the end was the spirit of the Rainbow Division.

Through a solid mass of humanity that thundered out its applause and strewn the rough paving with a carpet of flowers, the regiment marched; and many saw at the side of the men marching in the flesh the dead comrades who had trod the same path with them two years before. The cheers, the smiles, the flowers, the tears, were for all.

When the reviewing stand was reached, Colonel Tinley left the column and took his place beside the high dignitaries of the State. The Band, playing an inspiring march, passed by; then line after line of straight, lithe figures, and in their midst the regimental colors proudly borne with their newly-won bands. So, as the last platoon executed "Eyes right" as a final salute to its beloved commander, the 168th Infantry marched on into history.



# INTERESTING FACTS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

## Cumulative arrivals in Europe of American military personnel for the A. E. F.:

By May 31, 1917 . . . . .	1,308
By June 30, 1917 . . . . .	16,220
By July 31, 1917 . . . . .	20,120
By Aug. 31, 1917 . . . . .	39,383
By Sept. 30, 1917 . . . . .	61,927
By Oct. 31, 1917 . . . . .	92,265
By Nov. 30, 1917 . . . . .	129,623
By Dec. 31, 1917 . . . . .	183,896
By Jan. 31, 1918 . . . . .	224,655
By Feb. 28, 1918 . . . . .	254,378
By Mar. 31, 1918 . . . . .	329,005
By Apr. 30, 1918 . . . . .	434,081
By May 31, 1918 . . . . .	667,119
By June 30, 1918 . . . . .	897,293
By July 31, 1918 . . . . .	1,210,703
By Aug. 31, 1918 . . . . .	1,473,190
By Sept. 30, 1918 . . . . .	1,783,955
By Oct. 30, 1918 . . . . .	1,986,618
By Nov. 11, 1918 . . . . .	2,057,675

## Actual combat strength of the A. E. F.:

Mar. 21, 1918 . . . . .	162,482
May 27, 1918 . . . . .	406,844
Aug. 10, 1918 . . . . .	822,358
Sept. 12, 1918 . . . . .	999,602
Oct. 12, 1918 . . . . .	1,078,190
Nov. 11, 1918 . . . . .	1,078,222

These figures include only combat troops and exclude the troops in the S. O. S., headquarters, schools, hospitals, liaison service and other special services.

## Combat strength of A. E. F. by branch of service at the time of the Armistice:

Infantry and M. G. Battalions . . . . .	646,000
Engineers . . . . .	81,600
Signal Corps . . . . .	21,300
Air Service . . . . .	34,800
Artillery . . . . .	278,500
Tank Corps . . . . .	10,200
Amm. Trains, Q. M., etc. . . . .	70,800
Medical Department . . . . . <sup>1</sup>	152,300
Cavalry . . . . .	6,000
Ordnance . . . . . <sup>1</sup>	22,900

<sup>1</sup>Including those on duty in the Services of Supply.

## Total strength of A. E. F. on Nov. 11:

Its total strength was 1,981,701, in which were included 32,385 marines.

## Percentage of total strength in various branches of the A. E. F., Nov. 1918:

	Officers; % of total	Enlisted Men; % of total
Infantry . . . . .	23.83	32.40
Engineers . . . . .	8.69	12.68
Field Artillery . . . . .	10.91	11.18
Casuals (all branches) . . . . .	3.39	10.81
Medical Dept. (Army) . . . . .	18.46	7.26
Quartermaster Corps . . . . .	6.33	7.16
Coast Artillery Corps . . . . .	4.00	3.78
Air Service . . . . .	7.30	3.11
Ammunition Trains . . . . .	1.47	2.48
Signal Corps . . . . .	1.63	1.83
Supply Trains . . . . .	1.02	1.61
Ordnance Department . . . . .	1.53	1.16
Marines . . . . .	0.75	0.96
Headquarters Troops . . . . .	0.21	0.78
Military Police . . . . .	0.49	0.67
Hdqrs. Detachments . . . . .	0.00	0.55
Tank Corps . . . . .	0.91	0.50
Cavalry . . . . .	0.25	0.29
Postal Express Service . . . . .	0.15	0.15
Medical Dept. (Navy) . . . . .	0.07	0.02
G.H.Q. and General Staff . . . . .	8.49	0.00

## Number of civilians employed by A. E. F.:

42,644 at the time of the Armistice.

## Greatest number of American soldiers in hospitals in Europe at any one time:

190,564 men on November 7, 1918.

## Provisions for hospitalization in A. E. F.:

On November 11, 1918, there were 192,844 normal beds, which could have been increased in an emergency to 276,547. There were 153 base hospitals, 66 camp hospitals, 12 convalescent camps, 21 hospital trains and 6,875 ambulances.

## First casualty of A. E. F.:

First Lieutenant Louis J. Genella, Medical Corps, suffered a shell wound on July 14, 1917, while serving with the British at the front southwest of Arras.





PRESIDENT WILSON JOINS PEACE CELEBRATION IN PARIS

