

CHAPTER X

MOVEMENT OVERSEAS



THE movement of the division overseas began with the departure of a detachment called the Advance Party. This detachment consisted of the following officers:

Major General John F. O'Ryan, Division Commander.
Captain H. Francis Jaeckel, Jr., Aide de Camp.
First Lieutenant Charles P. Franchot, Aide de Camp.
Second Lieutenant Joseph D. Eddy, Aide de Camp.
Lieutenant Colonel Henry S. Sternberger, Division Quartermaster.
Lieutenant Colonel Walter C. Montgomery, Division Surgeon.

Major Joseph J. Daly, Division Ordnance Officer.
Captain William H. Curtiss, Assistant Operations Officer.
Major Walter L. Bell, 102d Ammunition Train.
Captain George F. Terry, 105th Infantry.
First Lieutenant Leaman S. Broughton, 106th Infantry.
First Lieutenant Clarence H. Higginson, 105th Field Artillery.
Second Lieutenant James S. Wadsworth, Billeting Officer.
Second Lieutenant John Wells, Billeting Officer.
Second Lieutenant Georges R. Vlober, Billeting Officer.

This party left Camp Wadsworth April 29th and on May 1st sailed from Hoboken, New Jersey, aboard U. S. S. *Great Northern*. Upon the departure of the Division Commander from Camp Wadsworth, Brigadier General Robert E. L. Michie, 53d Infantry Brigade, was temporarily assigned to command the division. The Advance Party arrived at Brest May 10th. The trip was uneventful, except for regular drills for the prompt abandonment of ship, and for one or two submarine scares. The *Great Northern* was a triple-screw, oil-burning turbine ship, and relied upon its speed for safety. It was, therefore, unaccompanied by any escort until it arrived near the coast of France, when three destroyers were met. These accompanied the transport into the harbor of Brest.

On April 28th the Headquarters, Supply and Machine Gun Companies of the 107th Infantry entrained at Camp Wadsworth for Newport News, Virginia. The following day, April 29th, the 1st and 2d Battalions of the 107th Infantry left Spartanburg, followed on April 30th by the Headquarters, 54th Infantry Brigade, the 3d Battalion of the 107th Infantry and the Headquarters and Company A of the 106th Machine Gun Battalion. In similar manner Companies B, C and D of the 106th Machine Gun Battalion, the Headquarters, Sanitary Detachment, Supply and Machine Gun Companies of the 108th Infantry and the first section of the 105th Infantry entrained at Camp Wadsworth May 1st. On May 2d Companies A, B, C, D, E and F of the 108th Infantry and the second section of the 105th Infantry left camp for the port of embarkation. On May 3d Companies G, H, I, K, L and M of the 108th Infantry and the third section of the 105th Infantry departed from Spartanburg. On May 4th Division Headquarters, less the

Advance Party, the 104th Machine Gun Battalion, the 102d Trains and Military Police, the 53d Infantry Brigade Headquarters, the 105th Machine Gun Battalion and the remainder of the 105th Infantry left Camp Wadsworth. All these units arrived at Newport News, Virginia, the day following their departure.

On May 6th the 106th Infantry entrained at Camp Wadsworth for Hoboken, New Jersey, embarking immediately aboard the U. S. S. *President Lincoln*, which sailed on May 10th.

On the same day the 102d Engineers (less Companies A and C) entrained at Camp Humphreys, Virginia, while Companies A and C and the Engineer Train, together with the 102d Field Signal Battalion, entrained at Camp Wadsworth. All arrived at Newport News the next day.

The embarkation movement of the division, other than that of the Advance Party and the 106th Infantry, already referred to, began with part of the 107th Infantry, which sailed from Newport News, Va., on the U. S. S. *Susquehanna* on May 9th. The following day the remainder of the 107th Infantry, together with the 54th Infantry Brigade Headquarters, the 106th Machine Gun Battalion and part of the 103th Infantry, sailed on the U. S. S. *Antigone*. The same day the 1st Battalion and part of the 2d Battalion of the 108th Infantry sailed on H. M. S. *Kurtz*.

Division Headquarters, the 53d Infantry Brigade Headquarters, and the 104th and 105th Machine Gun Battalions sailed on May 17th on the U. S. S. *Calamares*, while Company B of the 102d Military Police on the same day embarked on the U. S. S. *Madawaska*. On the same day the U. S. S. *Pocahontas*, transporting the 102d Engineers, and Engineer Train, the Headquarters, 102d Trains and Military Police, Company A, 102d Military Police, and the 102d Field Signal Battalion sailed, while the remainder of the 108th Infantry and the entire 105th Infantry embarked on the U. S. S. *President Grant*. All these units left from Newport News.

Mention has not yet been made of the 52d Field Artillery Brigade. Colonel George Albert Wingate of the 105th Field Artillery had been promoted to the grade of Brigadier General and assigned to command this brigade upon the relief of Brigadier General Charles L. Phillips, who had been sent for special duty to the Pacific Coast. General Phillips had carried the brigade through the earlier phases of its training, including extensive target practice at Glassy Rock, so that upon the return of Colonel Wingate as a graduate of the Field Officers' Course at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, and his promotion to the grade of Brigadier General, he had taken over the more advanced training of the brigade.

The Field Artillery Brigade and Trains were the last elements of the division to leave Camp Wadsworth. The Field Artillery Brigade departed from Spartanburg on May 18th. Upon their arrival at Newport News two days later, they went into camp and remained there for a considerable period of time before their overseas movement. This was due to the fact that pursuant to the Abbeville Agreement, which will be referred to in detail later, our government was to rush the infantry of the divisions to the British area and send the artillery and trains later. This arrange-

ment was made because the British had ample forces of artillery, and shipping space given up for the transport of our own artillery would have lessened to that extent the carrying capacity for the needed infantry.

Finally, however, the 52d Field Artillery Brigade under General Wingate sailed from Newport News. This movement commenced on June 6th. The brigade debarked at St. Nazaire, June 18th to 27th and July 12th, and went to Camp de Souge, near Bordeaux, for training. There a number of their officers were utilized as instructors at the school. The training of the brigade had been so satisfactory that their stay at Camp de Souge was not long. The brigade, however, never rejoined the 27th Division during the period of active operations. It was not until after the armistice that the division again saw its own artillery. During the period of operations it served with the 33d and 79th Divisions. An account of its activities with these divisions will be found in a separate chapter.

The ocean voyage, which varied in its duration from seven or eight days to fourteen days, dependent upon the speed of the particular ship and whether or not she was one of a convoy, came as a pleasant change from the arduous life at Camp Wadsworth. All officers afterward reported that the spirits of the men at all times were high. There seemed to exist among them no misgivings concerning the dangers of the voyage, nor of the ultimate outcome of the mission of the American army, or of the part they were to play in it. For the first time in many months the men were free to rest. Their duties aboard ship were light, consisting of physical exercises, careful policing of quarters, guard duty, observing for submarines, administration and kitchen police.

On most ships, more than a hundred soldiers were kept constantly on duty observing for submarines, each post having an assigned sector for observation. These posts were connected up by telephone to a central station. In this work of observation, the zeal of most of the soldiers was most commendable. If a tin can bobbed on the crest of a wave, the officer at the central station would receive a stream of reports of an approaching submarine. Gun crews fore and aft would prepare for action. The troops would be roused from their diversions to secure points of vantage from which to watch the coming battle, soon however, to return to their normal occupations when the true cause of the alarm was understood. After a few incidents of this character aboard each ship, it became more difficult to stimulate the interest of the men in these alarms concerning enemy submarines. Some transports, however, were subjected to actual submarine attacks. No transport carrying 27th Division troops was torpedoed, however. On May 29th the Division Headquarters convoy, consisting of the *Calamares*, *Madawaska*, *Pocahontas*, *President Grant*, and several other smaller ships, was attacked at 5:20 P. M. by an enemy submarine. The guns of the transports as well as those of the U. S. Cruiser *Huntington* went into action and the destroyers circled about and dropped depth bombs. The submarine was reported sunk. On May 30th, the same convoy, minus the *President Grant*, which had left the convoy for the port of Brest, was attacked by enemy submarines and was under

forced draft for one half hour. In the action forty shots were fired, while the destroyers dropped depth bombs and a British airplane dropped bombs from the air. Two submarines were reported sunk during this encounter.

Aboard each ship the men who usually furnished entertainment in the companies and battalions helped to while away the time. After dusk no lights were allowed aboard ship except in the chart room and engine room. Aboard some of the transports moving pictures were permitted to be shown in the salon, the windows of which were carefully covered.

Aboard ship there was some change in the character of food served, and on the whole the change was welcome, largely because it was a change. The supply of fresh water was usually available only during stated hours. Men who shaved at other than the prescribed time were compelled to use salt water. Many men discovered for the first time the difficulties involved in salt water shaving.

Aboard the larger ships an effort was made to publish a paper. Most ships had printing presses and arrangements were made for the publication of wireless news and ship's gossip. One of these papers was "The Sea Serpent," published aboard the *Calamaries*, which was called "A Mid-Atlantic Issue of the Gas Attack and Rio Grande Rattler," this being the official division paper. At the head of this sheet the weather forecast was announced as, "Dry—Until we Reach France." An announcement concerning uniform of troops appeared, "Uniform—Life Belts Day and Night." A copy of this paper appears on the next page and is a sample of this effort. The number was made up largely of references to the personnel of the 53d Brigade Headquarters and the 104th and 105th Machine Gun Battalions.

Another paper published aboard one of the transports was known as the "Mid Ocean Comin' Thru." Still another published aboard the *President Lincoln* was known as the "Rail Splitter."

The 106th Infantry, which had sailed from Hoboken, arrived at Brest May 23d. Debarkation was completed May 25th, the regiment making shelter tent camp at Fort Boguen, Brest. The regiment left Brest on May 28th and arrived at Noyelles sur Mer May 30-31st. Regimental Headquarters, Headquarters and Supply Companies to Coulouvillers, 1st Battalion to Le Festel and Hanchy; 2d Battalion to Oneux and Neuville; 3d Battalion to Millancourt; Machine Gun Company to St. Firmin.

The Headquarters of the 107th Infantry debarked at Brest on May 24th and proceeded to rest camp. The following day the 54th Brigade Headquarters, the remainder of the 107th Infantry and the 106th Machine Gun Battalion debarked at Brest and moved to Pontanezan Barracks outside that city.

Division Headquarters and other troops in the convoy which sailed from Newport News May 17th arrived at St. Nazaire May 31st. The same day the 105th Infantry and part of the 108th Infantry aboard the *President Grant*, which had left the above-mentioned convoy the day previous, debarked at Brest. The stay of all troops at these ports of debarkation was very short.

EXTRA

**Attacked In Mid-Ocean--Eighteen U-Boats Sent to the Bottom After
Nine Hour Running Fight. Four Hundred Shots Fired.
American Navy Wins Great Naval Battle.**

As Seen Through the "EEs" of An Un-Yellow Journalist.

As predicted by *The Sea-Serpent*, the entire fleet of super-U-boats was hurled, yesterday, at the New York Division as it threaded its way in hundreds of transports across the Atlantic. Torpedo after torpedo struck its mark, but in every instance one of our brave lads was standing ready to thrust his body in the jagged hole and save the ship. Not an American life was lost, whereas it has been conservatively estimated that upward of one thousand four hundred and six Huns were sent to the bottom.

The attack was made at 4:04 sharp. For the first time in history the Germans played fairly, as it was announced by *The Sea Serpent* that the convoy would enter the danger zone at 4 o'clock. That there were spies on board the transports cannot be denied. The Signal for the U-Boats to attack was given surreptitiously from the stern of the S. S. —, where twenty-six men, in the pay of the Imperial German Empire secretly gathered and sang "Die Wacht Am Rhine." Immediately periscopes leaped to the surface. Periscopes to right of 'em, periscopes to left of 'em, etc etc.

And it may be added in all seriousness, that during the exciting matinee of Sunday, every man on ship-board walked calmly to his post and stood there silently. The courage shown was of the quality which is to be expected of the finest division of the United States Army.

OVER HERE TO OVER THERE

'Twas a May day, the fourth to be exact, The Sun was shining in full splendor. Intermingled with the happy song of birds in that verdant South Carolina foliage was heard the subdued sounds of heavily loaded trucks as they passed to and fro. Silently, but with eager faces, the Headquarters of this Division and its attached units wended their way to the Camp Wadsworth siding of the Southern Railroad. The day had arrived. We had started "Over Here" for "Over There." Joyfully the men filed aboard the day-coaches. Cheerfully they accepted the inconveniences of a monotonous trip to Newport News. On arrival at Camp Stuart any impending gloom was scattered at the sight of comfortable barracks, munificently fitted with iron cots, showers and convenient messes. Then came several days in which General Rumor held sway in the camp, but on May ---, at 4 P. M. we really boarded our transports. The following morning anchor was weighed and we were "off." It is well that the censor will not permit us to go into details of our trip for we would write at interminable length. However, the boxing bouts, the physical exercise, the library books and the never-ending things of interest at sea, have kept all of us busy and cheerful. Messrs. Coates and Torry of the Y. M. C. A. have

During the short period of time between the debarkation of troops at Brest and St. Nazaire and their departure by train for the training area there was some opportunity, although not much, for some of the officers and men to see something of these interesting towns of Brittany. As the transports entered the harbors, all were pleased and interested with the novelty of the scenes that presented themselves as the ships drew close to the shore. The Breton fishermen, justly noted for their experience and skill as mariners, were to be seen in numbers, in sailing vessels, launches and large rowboats. Most of these craft in their shapes and trimmings seemed odd to our men. The sails of most of the sailboats were stained red or blue or some other color which added to the picturesqueness of the harbor, particularly in the eyes of men accustomed to seeing sails of white. At St. Nazaire the numerous islands, the sparkling sandy beaches and the snowy white lighthouses and stone cottages, created a vivid picture of neatness and comfort. It was hard to believe that this was a port of war. At Brest one received different impressions, for Brest harbored a naval station of France, and the entrance to the bay was crowned by rocky and forbidding looking hills upon which were numerous gun emplacements and coast defense fortifications. As the ships drew close to the quays, the men could plainly hear the sound which they later came to know so well, namely, the resounding knock of the wooden shoes of the townspeople of the waterfront as they moved about on the stone sidewalks and pavement. Soon they could also hear the high-pitched penetrating voices of French people as they looked up from the docks and shouted comments of welcome and enthusiasm to the troops.

The behavior of the troops of the 27th Division must have been rather a surprise to the people of Brest and St. Nazaire who up to that time had found it impossible, in their attempts to welcome incoming American troops, to equal in fervor and intensity the demonstration given by the troops themselves in celebration of their own arrival. In 1917, when the writer went to France as an observer, he with several other general officers took passage on a convoy of transports which landed troops at St. Nazaire. There were five ships in the convoy and for some hours after arrival the troops continued a most violently enthusiastic demonstration in celebration of their coming. This took the form of cheers, blowing of bugles and the playing of bands. As the ships were then docked along the waterfront street of the town, with the buildings spread out below their decks, the noise must have been tiresome to those sad-hearted people to whom the arrival of troops at their port was no new experience. Nevertheless, with that understanding and politeness for which the French are justly credited, they responded with cheers of encouragement and appreciation until they wearied of their efforts to outdo or even equal the volume and persistency of the American effort. At this time a note was made that by the time the 27th Division arrived at the French ports the natives would have been surfeited with demonstrations of this character and that the 27th Division should and would enter and debark without according themselves any demonstration of welcome. In the preparations for em-

barkation this aspect of the arrival in France was explained to officers and men, and orders were given that the arrival and debarkation would be characterized by disciplined quietness. These orders were faithfully executed by the personnel of all units at both Brest and St. Nazaire. As the ships bearing the troops of the 27th Division moved into their berths or anchorage places, designated bands played appropriate airs for a few minutes and the men who lined the rails waved their arms in salutation. That was all.

At Brest there overlooks the harbor a well preserved medieval castle and fortification, part of the foundations of which originally supported a stone fort erected by the Celts in the early part of the Christian era. A number of the officers and men had opportunity to go through this interesting relic of an earlier age of warfare. They entered its numerous chambers, passages, dungeons and assembly rooms. Some whose administrative duties kept them in Brest for a period of several weeks had opportunity to visit historic points on the coast of Brittany near Brest, such as Le Conquest, an ancient and quaint Brittany fishing village set in a framework of rocky cliffs against which the green rollers of the Atlantic dashed themselves into spray. Overlooking the entire harbor of Brest as well as the city itself is the Chateau of Kerstears, the mistress of which is the Countess de Rodellec du Porzic. The mother of Countess de Rodellec was an American. Her father, a noted French soldier, came to America and as a result of his service in the army of the United States during the Civil War became Major General de Trobriand, with whose record and military achievements most readers of military history are familiar. General de Trobriand may therefore be considered as much an American as a Frenchman, and accordingly the Countess de Rodellec may be considered more an American than a French woman, although she lived much of her life in France. She and her granddaughter, Mlle. Marie Antoinette de Maleissye, did their utmost to welcome in true American fashion the troops arriving at Brest. The Countess extended an invitation to all officers and enlisted men to visit Kerstears at any and all times, and always it seemed, there were some who had the time and the opportunity to find themselves the recipients of cordial hospitality at the hands of the Countess and her granddaughter.

Two soldiers, learning of the welcome accorded Americans, but not knowing that the Countess could speak English, walked out to Kerstears. Seeing the Countess in the garden, one of the men addressed her in soldier French, saying, "Bon jour, Madame" (pronounced in soldier French, "Bonn Jaour"). The Countess immediately responded politely in French, whereupon the more highly developed linguist of the two soldiers said, "Nous sommes ici helpé France. No parle very good Francais, mai scrappe tres bein. C'est compris?" Much to the surprise of the men the Countess replied, "Yes, I understand, but, my boy, why do you speak French to me when I am really an American?" Whereupon the Countess, to cover their confusion, and remembering the American Army motto, "When do we eat?" invited them inside to receive the hospitality of her house.

Before the departure of the troops from Brest the band of the 108th Infantry and perhaps forty or fifty officers of the division called and paid their respects to the Countess de Rodellec and expressed their appreciation of her hospitality and courtesy to the division. The band, under Band-leader Carl Oltz, gave a very fine concert on the grounds of the chateau.

Until May 27th no information had been received by the Division Commander as to where the division would be sent. The officers and soldiers rather assumed that it would be ordered to join the American army then in real process of training in the so-called American Sector. There was also a feeling that perhaps the division might be sent to serve with the French army. It had not occurred to many officers or men that their service abroad would be with the British army. It came therefore rather as a surprise, when the division on May 27th, was ordered to entrain for the British area north of the Somme, which indicated quite clearly that the division was to be assigned for service with the British army.

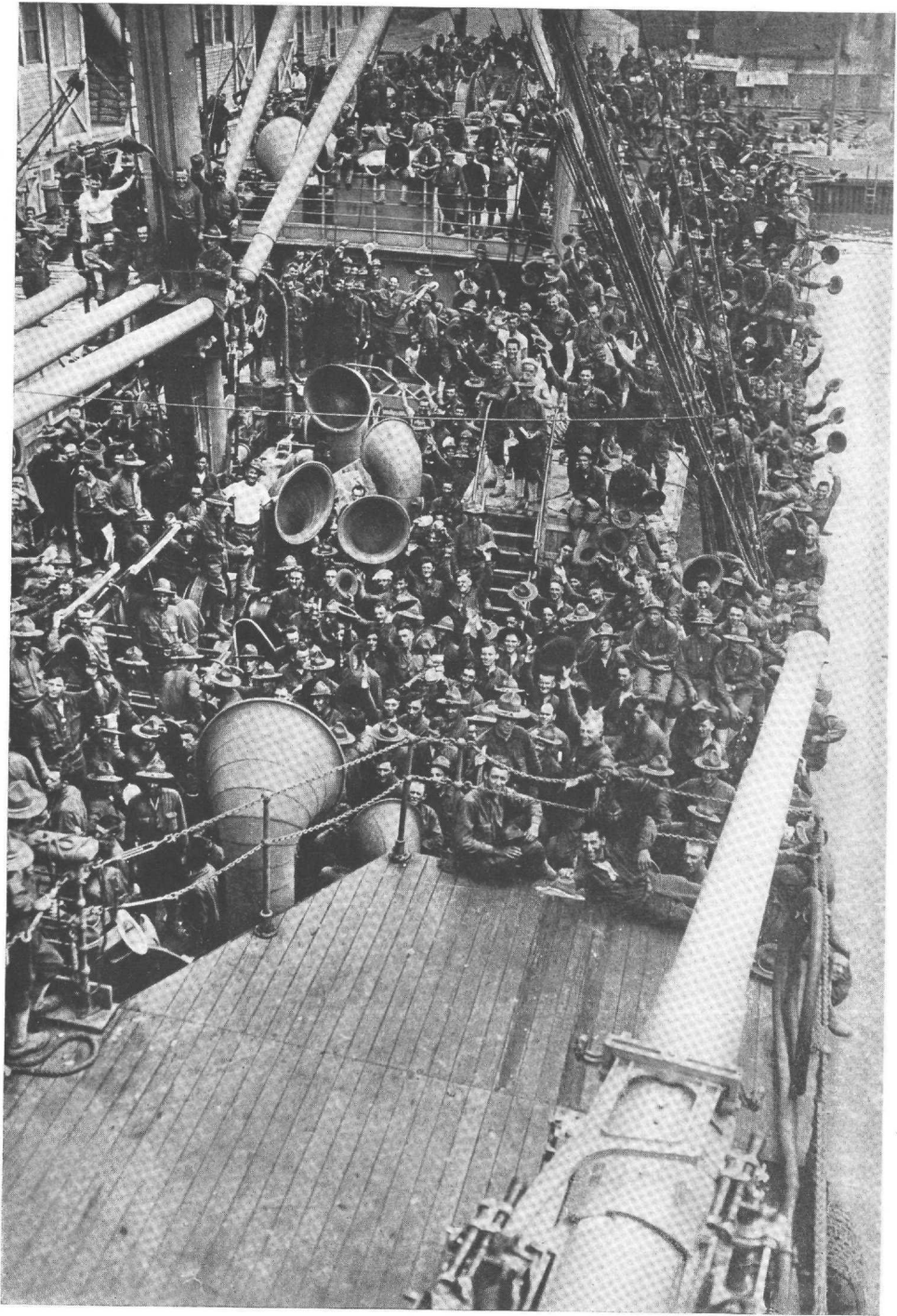
The import of this information cannot be appreciated without some reference to the personnel of the 27th Division. During peace time, about two-thirds of the strength of the division are stationed in and about the city of New York. The remainder are scattered over the state from Malone on the Canadian border to Buffalo on Lake Erie, through the Mohawk Valley and the southern tier of counties, and the Hudson Valley. It is difficult to estimate accurately, but perhaps 50 per cent of the division's personnel on either the father's or mother's side, or both, were of Irish descent. In similar manner, an almost equal percentage laid claim to German ancestry. An almost equal percentage could make claim to English, or more generally speaking, to British ancestry. A substantial percentage could make claim to the blood of other nationalities. The total of these percentages, which greatly exceeds 100 per cent., may seem an anomaly, but is explained by the well-known fact that in America, and more particularly in a cosmopolitan city like New York, most of the people with several generations of American citizenship back of them can lay claim to descent from a number of nationalities. At any rate the point is that the personnel of the division, by inheritance and tradition, and it may be added also, as a result of the teachings of the school histories, were critical in their mental attitude toward Great Britain and her policies. Almost without exception officers and men during their boyhood days had played with soldier toys, and always the toy troops that were knocked down and defeated were British redcoats. Most boys had read "Camp Fires of the Revolution." All in a general way were familiar with the surrender of the British army to the Americans at Saratoga, with the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown and with the great victory of Andrew Jackson at New Orleans. All knew something of the history of the British claim to the right of searching American ships, of the American naval victories of Lake Erie and Lake Champlain and of the naval duels between the *Chesapeake* and the *Shannon*, the *Constitution* and the *Guerriere* and the *Bon Homme Richard* and the *Serapis*. Let

the reader reflect upon these influences and combine with them the fact that our men took it for granted that we were to fight with our own army or with the French, and some notion may be gained of the surprise and of the possibilities growing out of that surprise, when it was learned that we were to be sent, not to help the people of Lafayette and Rochambeau, but the army of Lord Howe, Burgoyne and Tarleton.

Above all else the 27th Division possessed a very high standard of discipline, a discipline furthermore that was based not only upon training and formality, but also upon intelligence and loyalty. At the time of our assignment to the British, it was appreciated that environment does affect accomplishment, and it was determined to seek advantages from the situation rather than to consider that obstacles to the smooth running of the machine had been encountered. Accordingly it was made known to the men that without a doubt our division had been selected for cooperation with the British by reason, not only of its military excellence, but because of the well-known intelligence of its personnel and their ability as New Yorkers to get along with strangers under any circumstances. All were instructed and made to understand that for the purposes of winning the war no soldier could be loyal to America without being loyal to America's partners in the great enterprise, and that all considerations must give way to the accomplishment of the common purpose. It was suggested that if the British, more particularly the English, would appear to them to be cold and undemonstrative, that the Americans must by their greater capacity to mix well, make up for the British shortcomings. It may be mentioned here that the officers and men of the division measured up to the situation in handsome manner, and not only were there no unpleasant incidents in their relations with British troops, but there gradually developed feelings of regard for their soldierly virtues and particularly for the determined and uncomplaining manner in which for four long years they had borne the dreadful hardships and losses of war.

Further reference will be made at appropriate points in the story of the division's history to the personnel of the division and to their relations with the British, but perhaps this is an appropriate place to make some reference to that large percentage of the division who were of German descent.

For three years prior to America's entry into the war, our people had read extensively of the German aims in bringing on the war, and of the German methods of conducting military operations. They had read all sides, the charges and countercharges, recriminations, explanations and denials. Slowly they had come to believe that the German government, with deliberate calculation, had determined upon a course of world conquest, and that the Kaiser was not only a party to this conspiracy against the peace of the world, but was in reality a leader in a movement that would gratify his personal ambition to have occur in his lifetime a war in which as War Lord he might play a leading role and go down in history as a great conqueror. But reaction in America was quickened



*Troops of 27th Division aboard transport at Newport News, Va.
105th Field Artillery aboard the Mercury*

when the situation was clarified and American thought resulted in conviction that democracy throughout the world was seriously threatened. This reaction unsettled the equanimity of many. It seemed to render some unduly critical of the views of others. Individuals became victims of excessive alarm and were given to unreasonable suspicions. Some there were who gauged American patriotism by the willingness of individuals to abhor everything that was German in music, art, literature, customs and nomenclature. With others the test seemed to be the frequency with which insults were directed towards those Americans who were of German origin. Some of the activities of such people during the early part of our participation in the war now seem grotesque and even humorous, but at a time when the emotions of people were highly stimulated they were disturbing and harmful. When the war broke out in 1914, and for some time thereafter, there was lacking a general appreciation of what was involved in the war, in a moral sense. There had been many wars in Europe. This was another, and one that had been long threatened. It would determine whether Germany on the one hand or France and Great Britain on the other possessed the more efficient army. It would determine also whether the French would get back Alsace and Lorraine. For the military, it would determine many interesting things in relation to the relative efficiency of various conceptions of tactics and the relative worth of types of armament and equipment. Quite naturally Americans of immediate German ancestry were well-wishers of the German side. Obviously, those whose sentiments by reason of inheritance and tradition were largely British, hoped to see early victory for the Anglo-French side. It was only after the late Colonel Roosevelt and other public men had again and again called attention to the real and vital issues involved in the war that people began to consider what was at stake and to study the opposing claims and explanations. As the insincerity of the German explanations concerning Germany's responsibility for the war came to be recognized, and as the ruthlessness of its manner of conducting war came to be understood, a very substantial percentage of those who had been friendly to the German side changed their views, and their earlier sympathies in no way affected their subsequent convictions unless possibly to strengthen them. Among these were to be found large numbers of men and women of German blood. There were, however, many others of German blood who perhaps would also have transferred their sympathies and espoused the Allied cause had they not been affronted by the manners and conversation of the class who professed to believe that everything German or "tainted" with German was anathema. Such phrases as, "The German is a Hun; he always was and always will be. It is in the blood," and many others, were bound to give affront to and delay or balk growing convictions that righteousness was on the side of the Allies.

It is interesting to reflect here how readily masses of people can be changed in their settled views when they are subjected to violent influences which electrify their emotions and create or highly stimulate prejudices. Before 1914, the words German or German-American visual-

ized respect for the law, family life, industry and appreciation of good music and literature. The part played by the Germans and German-Americans of '61 to '65 in the saving of the Union was not only acknowledged but was the subject of frequent eulogy. A few short months after the commencement of the World War, this established and acknowledged record was completely forgotten by thousands of otherwise kindly disposed and fair-minded Americans. What is remarkable about the situation as it existed in 1917 and 1918 is that so few German-Americans were disloyal to the country and the cause. Not only were the vast majority of suspicious persons investigated or interned shown to be innocent of any disloyalty, but the contribution to the American military record made by those of German blood should be most gratifying to them. As a matter of fact, if all those with German blood had been released from the American army, the record of that army would have been very different from what it actually was. In battle none were more intelligent and dependable than this class, and in our own division the roster of the dead who gave up their lives at the extreme front fighting the German menace tells the story most convincingly. The roster of the divisional dead will be found in the Appendix.

The first departure from Brest for the British area was that of the Division Commander and the Advance Party on May 27th, when this detachment left Brest by rail with orders to proceed to Rouen where further orders would be given. Some troops of the 54th Infantry Brigade entrained the preceding day in the vicinity of St. Nazaire. The 107th Infantry had already left St. Nazaire and had detrained at Noyelles sur Mer the day the Division Commander's party left Brest. The trip by rail from Brest to the Rue Area, which was the destination of the division, occupied two days and two nights by reason of the fact that rail lines further east had either been taken by the Germans or were interrupted by exposure to hostile fire as a result of the German advance made in March and April when the Fifth British Army was driven back. This congested rail traffic.

The Rue Area is shown on an accompanying map and included a stretch of territory immediately north of the Somme River extending to the sea.

On the diagram map will be found indicated the several subdivisions of the area to which regimental units of the division were assigned for purposes of billeting and training. The trip by rail to the Rue Area was the first introduction of our men to the French railway rolling stock, every box car of which was lettered with the reassuring information that it had a capacity for "40 hommes—8 cheveaux." Later this phrase, with modifications, became a part of the language known as soldier French. With every rumor of change of station during the service in France came the anxious inquiry of one soldier to another, "do we bus it or hoof it?" and often the answer was, "Neither, we homme it and cheveaux it." Another humorous incident characteristic of the American doughboy occurred one day, when a certain company of the 106th Infantry were as-

signed a number of French box cars. A young lad, tired after a ten kilometer hike, saw the sign "40 hommes—8 cheveaux." Looking at his new resting place, he exclaimed somewhat excitedly, "By golly, 40 homes and no place to sleep." It might be explained here that when troops were transported by motor truck or lorry, as the truck is called in the British army, the movement was referred to as a bus movement. Hoofing it, of course, meant marching, while the homme and cheveaux movement meant transportation by rail. As the troop trains moved from the ports of debarkation northward through Rouen, it could truly be said by the men, "We don't know where we're going, but we're on our way."

The first introduction to war was the sound of hostile airplanes heard at night when the troop trains reached the vicinity of Rouen. Further on and near Abbeville several of the commands had their first experience with the night bombing raids of the enemy. When the trains were halted, and halts were frequent, they would hear the ominous humming of planes, but at that stage of their experience did not know whether they were hostile or friendly planes. At times, however, the doubt would be removed when the night air was punctured by long, searching shafts of light from the ground, shifting hither and thither in the effort to locate the aerial enemy. As soon as any beam of light touched the enemy plane the latter became immediately visible, seeming in the reflected rays to be a thing of silver. When this happened there was instantaneous action from the ground, for every "archie," as the anti-aircraft cannon were called in the British army, was turned loose with shrapnel and bullet at the fast-moving target. Very seldom were the searchlight beams able to keep on the target for more than a fraction of a minute, for the hostile aviator dived or turned so rapidly that his aerial gymnastics, combined with his high speed, enabled him to keep in the dark most of the time. Frequently, while the men were watching this new and exciting spectacle they would see a sudden and tremendous flash of brilliant light on the ground, followed by a great explosion and a rocking of the earth. This happened when the hostile plane dropped a heavy bomb. Frequently, when the hostile aviator was in doubt as to whether he was over his target, he would drop a parachute supporting a powerful calcium light, which was ignited automatically after falling a given distance. This light, as it floated toward the earth, illuminated the surface of the ground so that the aviator could recognize objects that might be characteristic of the locality, thus being enabled to drop his bombs with accuracy. Later, as the troop trains moved north from Abbeville, they could, when the wind was in their direction, hear the continued grumbling of the guns at the front. In this fashion and with the nights punctuated by such occurrences, the units of the division moved from the ports of debarkation to the Rue Area.

The 107th Infantry having detrained at Noyelles sur Mer, marched to the staging camp at Nouvion, and the following day to the area indicated as that of the 107th infantry on the diagram map. The exact loca-

tion of units is indicated in the war diary of May 28th, published in the Appendix.

On May 29th the Division Commander and Advance Party arrived at the picturesque town of St. Riquier and were promptly billeted in residences of the town, the Division Headquarters occupying an entire building near the public square. On the same day the 108th Infantry, less Company D, and the 106th Machine Gun Battalion, detrained at Noyelles and proceeded to Nouvion Staging Camp. The regimental headquarters opened at Canchy.

On May 30th the 106th Machine Gun Battalion moved to Rue, units of the 108th Infantry moved to the places enumerated in the war diary of that date, while the 106th Infantry was detraining at Noyelles and moving to the villages to be occupied by its units. On the same day, which it will be noted was Memorial Day, the 102d Engineers and the Engineer Train arrived at St. Nazaire.

For many years that portion of the division stationed in the city of



*Brigadier General Robert E. L. Michie,
commanding 53d Infantry Brigade*

New York had paraded on Memorial Day in honor of the dead of the Civil and Spanish-American Wars. And so it seemed strange to the officers and men to pass Memorial Day without rendering this honor, so much so that a number of parades in commemoration of the dead were arranged. In the little town of Rue such units of the 107th Infantry as were billeted there, or in reasonable proximity, paraded in the town and were reviewed by the Division Commander, the mayor of the city, and Colonel Willard C. Fisk, the Regimental Commander. This detachment of troops made a fine appearance as they swung down the main street of the town behind the regimental band. The townspeople all turned out to scrutinize these newly arrived soldiers from America, and it was interesting to hear their comments and to observe their enthusiastic appreciation when the detachment of this regiment marched by with their well known

precision and smart appearance. Everywhere the French people commented upon the size and obvious physical fitness of the men.

On June 3d the remainder of Division Headquarters, Headquarters Troop and Detachment, the 53d Infantry Brigade Headquarters, 105th

Machine Gun Battalion, 102d Trains Headquarters and Military Police, 102d Engineers and Engineer Train, and the 102d Field Signal Battalion, as well as Company D, 108th Infantry, all entrained near their ports of debarkation for Noyelles, while part of the 108th arrived at that place. These troops detrained at Noyelle on June 5th, while the 105th Infantry entrained at Brest. By the 10th of June the real movement of the division to the Rue Area had been completed.

On June 4th Brigadier General Robert E. L. Michie, who commanded the 53d Infantry Brigade, died suddenly while en route by train to the Rue Area. He was buried with military honors at St. Sevier Cemetery, Rouen. General Michie was the first officer of the division to die after the arrival in France. He was an officer of long service in the Regular Cavalry, respected by the officers and men of his brigade and others throughout the division who knew him.

On June 4th Lieutenant Colonel Stanley H. Ford, General Staff, and Major Edward Olmsted, Assistant Chief of Staff of the division, who had just completed the second course of the Army General Staff College at Langres, reported for assignment as Chief of Staff and G-1 respectively.

This period may be considered as having terminated the movement of the division from the ports of embarkation in America to the area in France where it was to begin its service with the British army.

