Oscar Burton Thomas & The Great War

{The First World War}
1917-1919

Prepared
February, 2008
by Carl Thomas

The Dirty Linen Press
Powell, Tennessee
Proprietors:

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6823 Hunters Trail
Knoxville, Tennessee 37921

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Many thanks to family members and on-line friends who are interested in family history. They have been of great help in the preparation of these materials, as well as other parts of the Thomas Memoirs still in progress.

There may well be errors in the following materials, in spite of efforts to get everything right. The errors are mine. If anyone should discover errors, please let me know so that they can be corrected before subsequent printings.

THE GREAT WAR, WORLD WAR I, AND OSCAR BURTON THOMAS' EXPERIENCES

INTRODUCTION

The Great War, World War I, was a major factor in the life of O. B. Thomas. He was seriously wounded on July 26, 1918 during intense fighting in the area near Chateau Thierry in France. Because of that World War I involvement, an effort has been made to include brief historical information about that period of his life - a period that led to the deaths of a generation of young men and countless numbers of non-combatants on both sides, and that has influenced world history ever since.

The Great War, in a narrow technical sense, began in August, 1914 with the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife in Sarejevo, Bosnia. Bosnia was a state recently annexed by the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which was ruled by the elderly Emperor Franz Joseph. Franz Ferdinand was the Emperor's nephew, and the heir apparent to the Austro-Hungarian throne.

The assassin was a young Serbian student, a member of a politically active organization in Bosnia. Nearby Serbia viewed the annexation of Bosnia as a threat The assassination was viewed by Austria-Hungary as an attack by terrorists, supported by the Serbian state, which triggered a rapid sequence of events that soon became The Great War, World War I.

Sarejevo, and the region known as Yugoslavia during the mid-twentieth century, again became the locale for intensive fighting during the 1990s.

The United States, however, did not become directly involved until it declared war on April 6, 1917, two and one-half years later.

One sometimes reads or hears that The Great War was fought "to make the world safe for democracy." But that concept was irrelevant at the onset of the war. The expression was introduced two and one-half years later, when on April 2, 1917 President Woodrow Wilson asked the U.S. Congress to approve a declaration of war against Germany. In that address to the Congress, President Wilson said "The world must be made safe for democracy."

Of incidental interest: Winston Churchill was British First Lord of the Admiralty {like our Secretary of the Navy} at that time. Adolph Hitler was an ordinary foot soldier in the Austrian army at the same time.

Royal Family Quarrels

To some extent the events leading up to The Great War might be viewed as a family quarrel amongst royal cousins and other relatives. At that time the royal families still had a degree of political power in the affairs of their countries. Most of that royal family power vanished as a result of The Great War.

Queen Victoria of England had married Albert, a German prince. In 1914 King George of England, Czar Nicholas of Russia, and Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany were cousins. All were grandsons of Victoria. Czarina Alexandra of Russia was Victoria's grand-daughter. Some of the relations involved intermediate marriages with other royal families, such as those of Denmark and Greece. Following WW II, Lord Mountbatten became the last British Viceroy of India. The name Mountbatten originally was the German name Battenberg. It was Anglicized decades earlier to minimize anti-German sentiments in England.

THE U.S. EXPEDITION AGAINST PANCHO VILLA IN MEXICO

During the early part of The Great War, the attention of the United States was directed more toward Mexico. Things came to a head very early in Woodrow Wilson's first term, when William Jennings Bryan was his Secretary of State. Bryan is remembered primarily for his role in the "Scopes Monkey Trial" in Dayton, Tennessee, in July, 1925. The opposing attorney was Clarence Darrow.

In the early 1900s, the United States had a pattern of intervention in various Latin American and Caribbean countries. In April, 1914 the United States landed a military force and occupied Veracruz, Mexico on the Gulf of Mexico. That led to the collapse of the government of President Huerta of Mexico.

The "government" of Mexico split into factions with three primary leaders: Zapata, Carranza, and Pancho Villa, a kind of "bandit chieftan." The general situation in Mexico steadily deteriorated. In January, 1916 Villa's forces murdered seventeen American mining engineers in Mexico. In March, 1916 Villa's forces raided the town of Columbus, New Mexico, killing sixteen residents.

There was a great public outcry in the U.S. In April, 1916 Wilson ordered a force of 6,000 troops into Mexico to hunt down Pancho Villa. The force was commanded by General John J. [Black Jack] Pershing. George Patton, a young army officer, was on his staff.

Villa was not caught by this US force. By February, 1917 it was becoming increasingly probable that the United States would enter The Great War in Europe, so President Wilson withdrew Pershing's army force from Mexico. The United States on April 6, 1917 declared war on Germany and its allies. Many soldiers who had enlisted to go fight Pancho Villa were thus drawn into The Great War in Europe.

The declaration of war by the U.S. was triggered by the escalation by Germany of unrestricted submarine warfare in the Atlantic.

Some of those forces included the Fourth Alabama National Guard Infantry which had gone to the Mexican border in late October, 1916. It returned to Montgomery, Alabama on March 22, 1917. The declaration of war against Germany and its allies was only two weeks away, so the hoped for demobilization was cancelled. Instead, recruiting began for the purpose of building up the unit's strength.

On August 5, 1917 the Fourth Alabama National Guard Infantry was incorporated into the United States Army. On August 14, 1917 it was redesignated as the 167th United States Infantry, and was made a part of the 42nd Army Division. The 42nd Division became known as the Rainbow Division because it was made up of units from so many of the states. Colonel Douglas MacArthur was a senior officer in the command structure of the Rainbow Division.

THE GREAT WAR & OSCAR BURTON THOMAS: 1917-1919

Oscar Burton Thomas enlisted in the Fourth Alabama Infantry on June 6, 1917. This was after the unit had returned from the Mexican border, and after the United States had declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917. He had not enlisted earlier "to fight Pancho Villa," as many others had done. Instead, he had enlisted as a consequence of the United States involvement in The Great War in Europe. The Fourth Alabama National Guard Infantry was incorporated into the regular U.S. Army as the 167th United States Infantry about six weeks later.

He was promoted to Corporal on August 20, 1917. The unit arrived at Mineola, Long Island, New York on September 1, 1917 for further training. Then it moved to Nova Scotia, Canada and sailed for Europe on November 6, 1917, on the British Transport Andania.

He was in heavy fighting along the Defensive Sector, at the Battle of Champagne-Marne, at the Battle of Aisne-Marne, and at Chateau Thierry ... generally referred to as the Second Battle of the Marne.

All this intense fighting was in a short time in mid-1918. It was a maximum effort to repulse Germany's "last gasp" attempt to win the war. The German effort was repulsed during these intense battles. It signaled the end of Germany's hopes to win the war. Although Germany had "lost" the war by the summer of 1918, fighting did contine until November, 1918.

He was seriously wounded during intense fighting in the area around Chateau Thierry in France on July 26, 1918. He was struck in the jaw by a German machine gun bullet. Following extensive medical treatment in France, he returned to the United States on November 25, 1918 aboard the U.S. Transport Orizaba.

He was at the Army Hospital in Cape May, New Jersey for further medical treatment and recovery until early 1919. He was Honorably Discharged from the U.S. Army on February 5, 1919, at Camp Sheridan, Alabama. He received $60 in severance pay from the Army.

The following pages are copied from his "Remembrance Book" of the Fourth Alabama Infantry. The original pages are about 20% larger than the copies contained here.

The unit has a long history which dates back to 1846 when the First Alabama Volunteers marched 900 men through Texas and Mexico to the village of Jalapa near Mexico City. The unit returned to Alabama and in 1861 was reorganized as the "Fourth Alabama." When the Civil War began, the "Fourth Alabama" marched to Lynchburg, Virginia where it received orders to proceed to Harper's Ferry.

During the Civil War the "Fourth Alabama" participated in 38 skirmishes and 17 major campaigns. The major battle in which this unit participated was the Battle of Manassas. At Appomatox, approximately 300 officers and enlisted men surrendered their arms.

The Fourth Alabama was mustered and reorganized in 1875 and served as the state militia until 1911. On July 15, 1911 the Fourth Alabama became a National Guard unit. Capt. Mortimer H. Jordan, although a physician in Birmingham also was an infantry officer in the Fourth Alabama at the beginning of the First World War.

On June 28, 1916 the unit was called into Federal service and soon afterwards was sent to the Mexican border, because of problems related to Pancho Villa. The unit returned to Camp Sheridan near Montgomery, Alabama on March 16, 1917.

On August 14, 1917 the unit was taken into the regular army and was designated as the 167th United States Infantry. It was asssigned to the 42nd "Rainbow Division" which was activated at Camp Mills, Mineola, Long Island, New York. In November, 1917, the 167th crossed the Atlantic. The unit was sent to the front lines in northeastern France, initially in "defensive sectors." During the late spring and early summer of 1918 it participated in the largest engagement of World War I, the "Second Battle of the Marne," which was a final and desperate effort by Germany to break through to Paris and win the war. This "Second Battle" was in reality a large number of battles - each of which was significant.

After serving in the Army of Occupation, the 167th was returned to Camp Sheridan near Montgomery, Alabama, where it was mustered out on May 19, 1919. In July, 1923 the regiment was assigned to the 31st Dixie Division.

The following pages document some of Oscar Burton Thomas' involvement with the Fourth Alabama Infantry.

BACKGROUND OF THE GREAT WAR IN EUROPE, AND U.S. INVOLVEMENT BEGINNING IN 1917.

It often is said that The Great War was caused by the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarejevo, Bosnia in August, 1914. But, this was simply the immediate "trigger" for actions that had a very long historical background in Europe.

The circumstances which finally precipitated The Great War, beginning in the autumn of 1914, had roots going back a century or more.

The Europe of the early 1900s politically was still very much in the 19th century. Kings and Emperors still had far more personal power than is the case today. There was a long history of wars, alliances, territorial disputes, and jockeying for land, power, and prestige.

Germany

At the turn of the century, Germany was still a very young nation. It was formed in 1871, immediately following the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, by the consolidation of 26 Germanic states, kingdoms, duchies, free cities, etc. The force behind the consolidation was Otto von Bismarck who became known as the "Iron Chancellor" of Prussia, and then of the new Germany. Bismarck was an authoritarian and powerful ruler, whose power base was the military.

The first King of Prussia was William I. His grandson, William II {Kaiser Wilhelm} was the German head of state at the time of The Great War. Kaiser Wilhelm was a grandson of Queen Victoria of England and the cousin of both King George of England and Czar Nicholas of Russia.

The Franco-Prussian War

The Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71 was a precursor to the formation of the German nation. There were territorial disputes, such as in the regions of Alsace and Lorraine. France at the time was ruled by the Emperor Napoleon III.

The Franco-Prussian War was won by the emerging German nation, and that planted the seeds of continuing animosity between the two countries, leaving France thirsting for revenge and for recovery of its lost territories.

During this short war Germany lost 28,000 soldiers killed, and France lost 136,000 killed.

France: Great Britain: Russia Alliances

During the quarter century preceding The Great War, these three countries had entered into various "mutual security" and "mutual defense" alliances. The alliance between France and Russia created fears in the new Germany of a "war on two fronts." Part of Russia's interest arose from its cultural and historical ties with the Slavic states in the Balkans and the emerging threat to Serbia arising from the Austro-Hungarian annexation of Bosnia in 1908.

Great Britain was a less enthusiastic partner in the alliance, since at the time it was having major problems in Ireland. Great Britain's involvement was linked to preserving the neutrality of Belgium, and violation of that neutrality by Germany was the final step of drawing Great Britain into the war.

ILLUSTRATED REVIEW

Fourth Alabama Infantry, United States Army

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA

1917

EMBRACING

An historical Sketch of the movements and operations of the Regiment since organization.
Roster of its present Officers, Field, Staff and Line, Headquarters Company,
Supply Company, Companies A., B., C., D., E., F., G., H., I., K.,
L., M., Machine Gun Company and Attached Sanitary Unit
With Illustrations

WWI-057 From O. B. Thomas' "Remembrance Book" of the Fourth Alabama Infantry. The book was prepared some time in 1917 before the unit moved to Long Island, New York for further training. This book was somewhat like a school year book. We have the original, and have copied selected pages into this memoir.

You can finish out this record as far as you can learn it.
will write and let you know all I can about it. O.B.T.

PERSONAL RECORD

Name Oscar B. Thomas

Date of Enlistment June 6 1917

Reached Mobilization Camp,
Montgomery, Ala., June 12 1917

Assigned to Co. K 4th Ala Inf.

Transfered to 167th U. S. Infantry,
RAINBOW DIVISION, August 15, 1917

Date of Commissions or Warrants Aug 20-1917

Rank Corporal

Date of Departure from Camp Sheridan Aug 28-1917

Arrived Mineola, Long Island Sept 1st 1917

Sailed for France Nov 6 1917

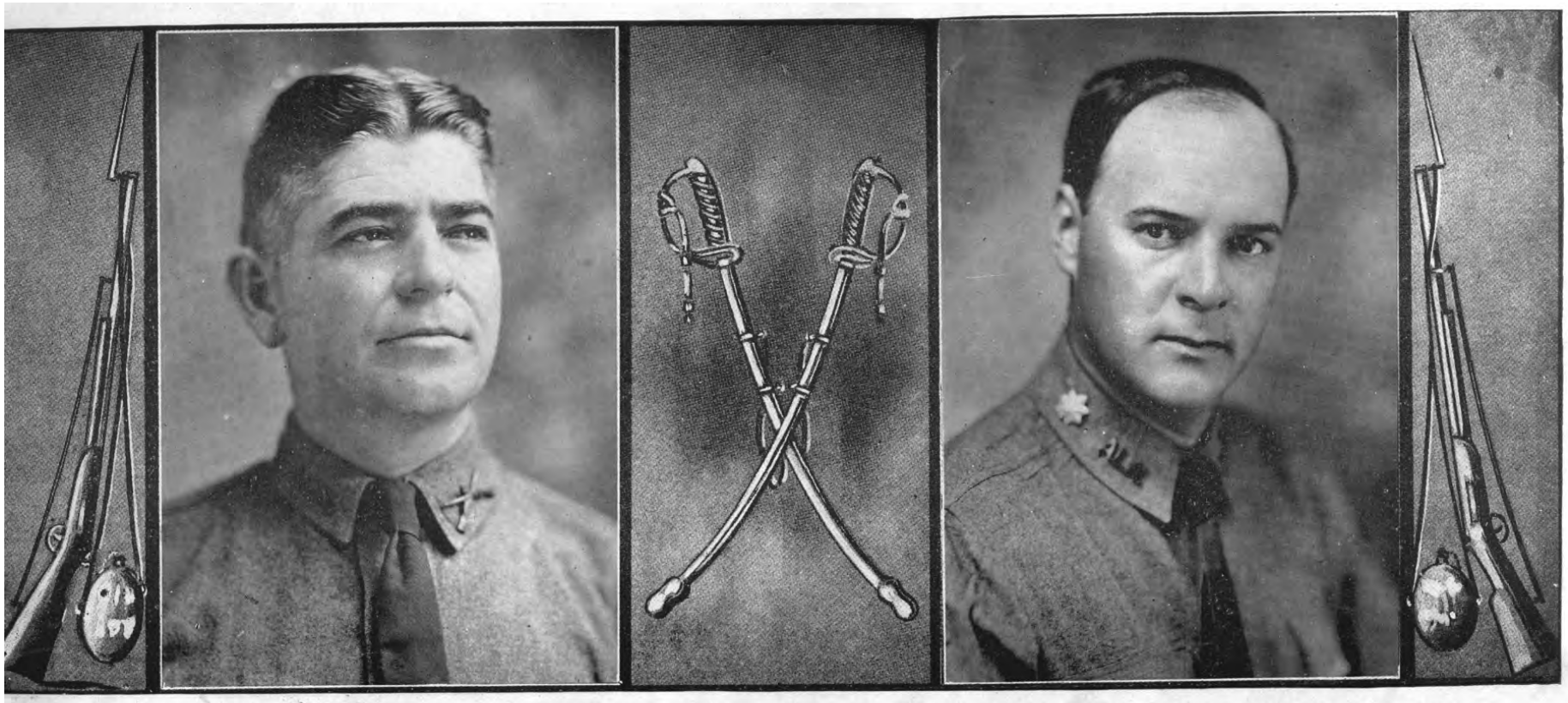
On U. S. Transport Andania

Returned to U. S. A. Nov 25 1918

On U. S. Transport Orizaba

Honorably Discharged Feb 5 1919

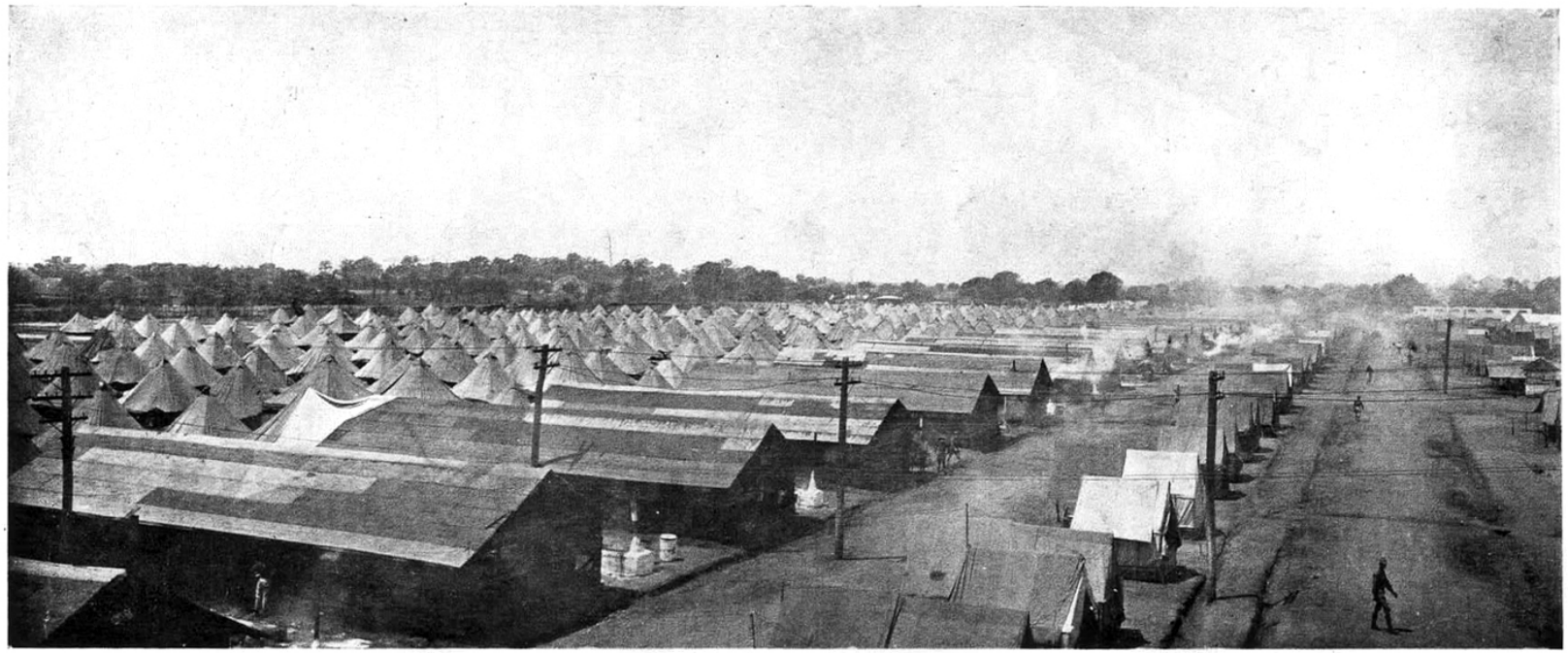
WWI-056 This "Personal Record" appears as one of the pages in O. B. Thomas' "Remembrance Book" about the Fourth Alabama Infantry. Notice the handwritten note across the top. It appears that most of this book was assembled in mid-1917, and that most of the above information was entered before he left for France in November, 1917. The last four entries with names of the two transport ships and the dates in 1918 and 1919 were probably added after he returned to the US. --- An interesting item from the family oral history. As children we heard the story that he had enlisted in the army to go and fight Pancho Villa along the Mexican border and down into Mexico. A large number of young men did that, but I personally doubt the story. The US declared war on Germany April 6, 1917 and he enlisted on June 6, 1917, only about two months later. It appears that he enlisted specifically because war with Germany had been declared.... Note that he moved up to Corporal pretty fast, in just a little more than two months. Perhaps it was a sign of maturity, as he was 25 years old at the time.



Colonel William P. Screws, Fourth Alabama Infantry

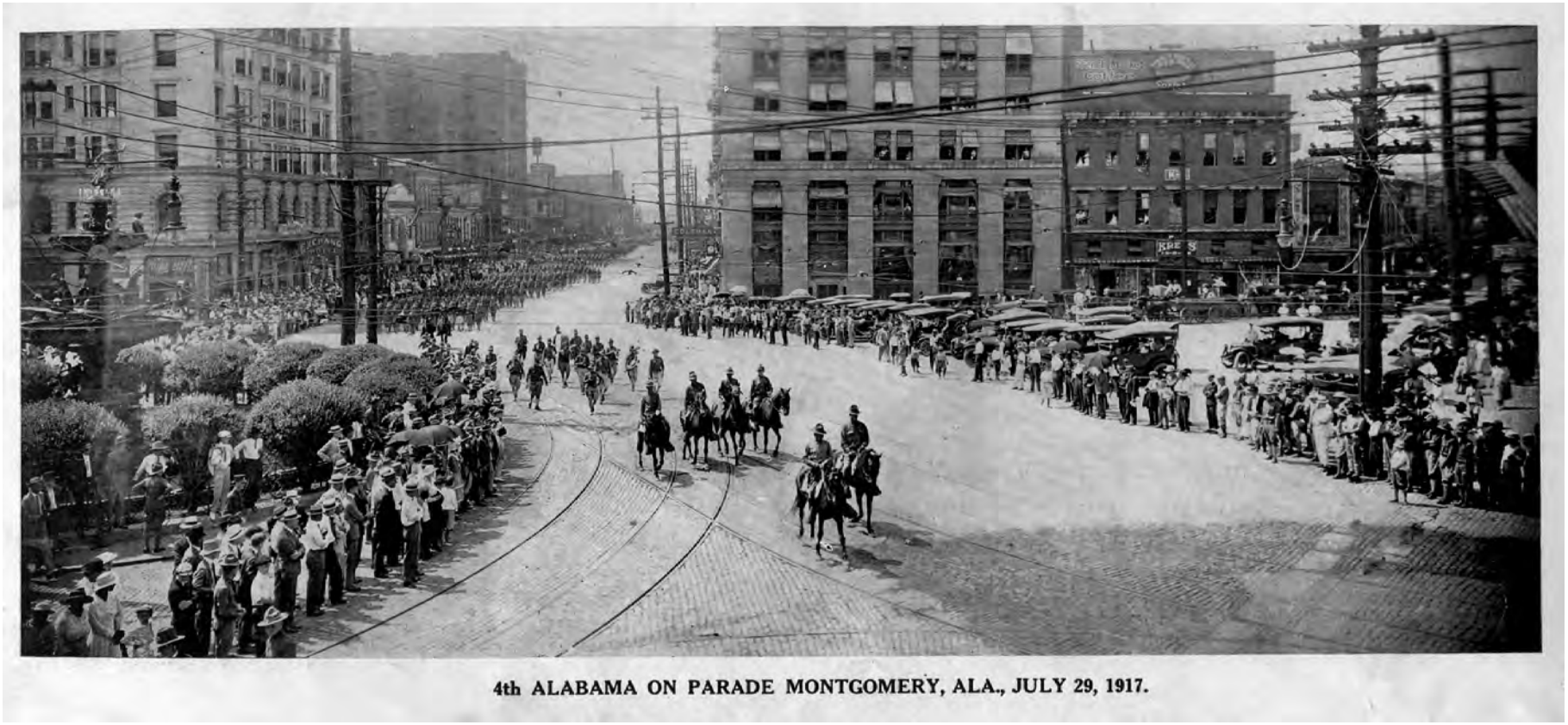
Lieutenant-Colonel Walter E. Bare, Fourth Alabama Infantry

WWI-058 The senior officers of the Fourth Alabama Infantry, summer, 1917



CAMP SHERIDAN, MONTGOMERY, ALA.

Home of the Fourth Alabama Infantry during the involvement with Pancho Villa in Mexico, and later when mobilized for the war in France. Oscar Burton Thomas returned to Camp Sheridan for discharge from the U.S. Army after he was released from the U.S. Army Hospital in Cape May, New Jersey in early 1919.



4th ALABAMA ON PARADE MONTGOMERY, ALA., JULY 29, 1917.

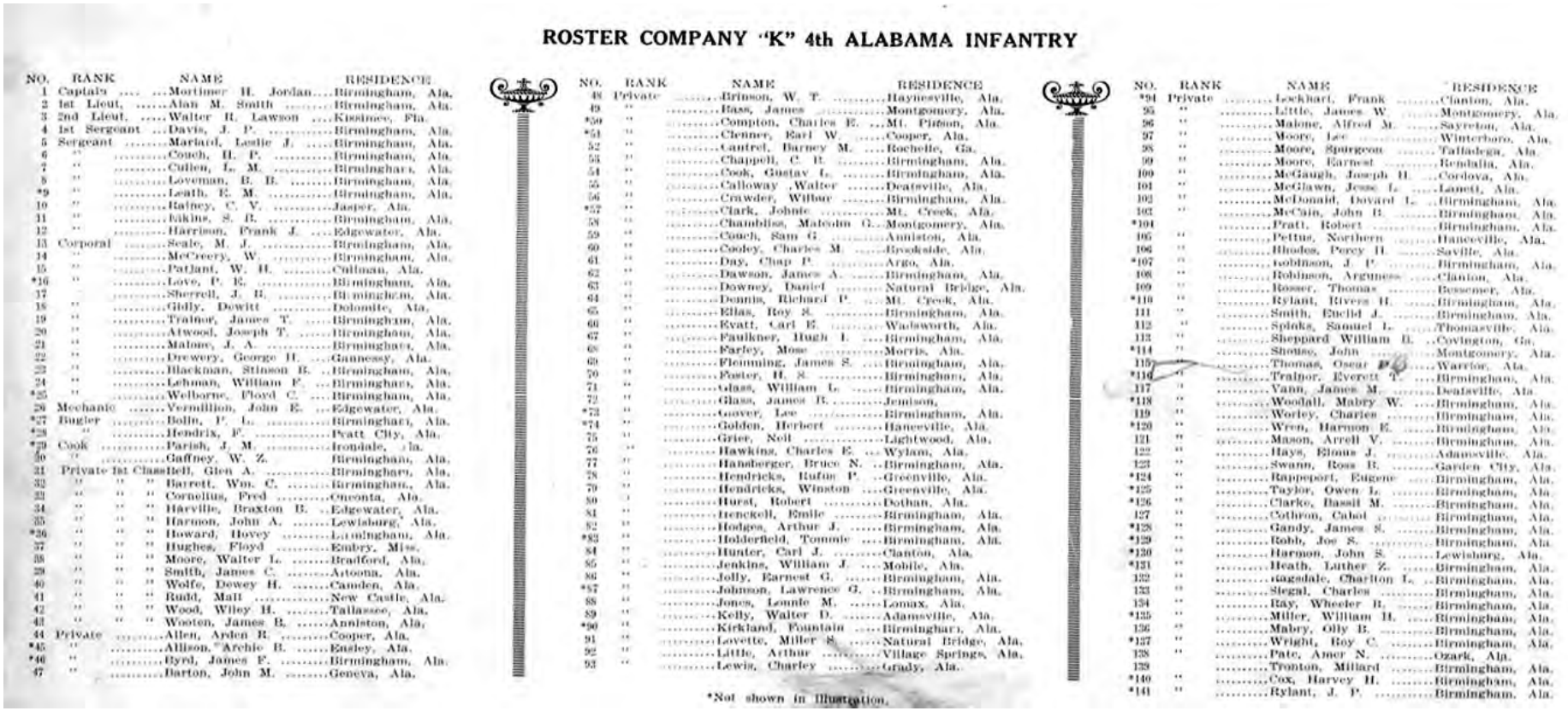
WWI-060 The Fourth Alabama Infantry left Montgomery on August 28, 1917 for further training at Mineola, Long Island, New York. It then went to Nova Scotia, Canada and from there by ship to Europe.

WWI-061

Capt. Mortimer H. Jordan

Oscar Burton Thomas

WWI-061 Company K of the Fourth Alabama National Guard Infantry, while finishing training at Camp Sheridan near Montgomery, Alabama. The photo is from the summer of 1917 before moving to Long Island, New York for further training. O.B. Thomas was in Company K, and is No. 115 in the center of the third row up, and also in the enlarged cutout. Company K was commanded by Capt. Mortimer Jordan, who was killed in France. His photo is in the circular highlight in the upper right corner. Mortimer Jordan High School, north of Birmingham up toward Warrior, was named in his honor. Martha {Skinner} Thomas, Sara Skinner and other members of the Reese and the Skinner families attended Mortimer Jordan High School. The Jordan family was an old one in Birmingham, and the old family home on Highland Avenue in Birmingham is now an historical site.



ROSTER COMPANY "K" 4th ALABAMA INFANTRY

NO.	RANK	NAME	RESIDENCE
1	Captain	Mortimer H. Jordan	Birmingham, Ala.
2	1st Lieut.	Alan M. Smith	Birmingham, Ala.
3	2nd Lieut.	Walter R. Lawson	Kissimee, Fla.
4	1st Sergeant	Davis, J. P.	Birmingham, Ala.
5	Sergeant	Marlard, Leslie J.	Birmingham, Ala.
6	"	Couch, H. P.	Birmingham, Ala.
7	"	Cullen, L. M.	Birmingham, Ala.
8	"	Loveman, B. B.	Birmingham, Ala.
*9	"	Leath, E. M.	Birmingham, Ala.
10	"	Rainey, C. V.	Jasper, Ala.
11	"	Elkins, S. B.	Birmingham, Ala.
12	"	Harrison, Frank J.	Edgewater, Ala.
13	Corporal	Seale, M. J.	Birmingham, Ala.
14	"	McCreery, W.	Birmingham, Ala.
15	"	Patjant, W. H.	Cullman, Ala.
*16	"	Love, P. E.	Birmingham, Ala.
17	"	Sherrell, J. B.	Birmingham, Ala.
18	"	Gidly, Dewitt	Dolomite, Ala.
19	"	Trainor, James T.	Birmingham, Ala.
20	"	Atwood, Joseph T.	Birmingham, Ala.
21	"	Malone, J. A.	Birmingham, Ala.
22	"	Drewery, George H.	Gannessy, Ala.
23	"	Blackman, Stinson B.	Birmingham, Ala.
24	"	Lehman, William F.	Birmingham, Ala.
*25	"	Welborne, Floyd C.	Birmingham, Ala.
26	Mechanic	Vermillion, John E.	Edgewater, Ala.
*27	Bugler	Bolin, P. L.	Birmingham, Ala.
*28	"	Hendrix, F.	Pratt City, Ala.
*29	Cook	Parish, J. M.	Irondale, Ala.
30	"	Gaffney, W. Z.	Birmingham, Ala.
31	Private 1st Class	Bell, Glen A.	Birmingham, Ala.
32	" "	Barrett, Wm. C.	Birmingham, Ala.
33	" "	Cornelius, Fred	Oneonta, Ala.
34	" "	Harville, Braxton B.	Edgewater, Ala.
35	" "	Harmon, John A.	Lewisburg, Ala.
*36	" "	Howard, Hovey	Birmingham, Ala.
37	" "	Hughes, Floyd	Embry, Miss.
38	" "	Moore, Walter L.	Bradford, Ala.
39	" "	Smith, James C.	Altoona, Ala.
40	" "	Wolfe, Dewey H.	Camden, Ala.
41	" "	Rudd, Mall	New Castle, Ala.
42	" "	Wood, Wiley H.	Tallassee, Ala.
43	" "	Wooten, James B.	Anniston, Ala.
44	Private	Allen, Arden R.	Cooper, Ala.
*45	"	Allison, Archie B.	Ensley, Ala.
*46	"	Byrd, James F.	Birmingham, Ala.
47	"	Barton, John M.	Geneva, Ala.
48	Private	Brinson, W. T.	Haynesville, Ala.
49	"	Bass, James	Montgomery, Ala.
*50	"	Compton, Charles E.	Mt. Pinson, Ala.
*51	"	Clenner, Earl W.	Cooper, Ala.
52	"	Cantrel, Barney M.	Rochelle, Ga.
53	"	Chappell, C. B.	Birmingham, Ala.
54	"	Cook, Gustav L.	Birmingham, Ala.
55	"	Calloway, Walter	Deatsville, Ala.
56	"	Crawder, Wilbur	Birmingham, Ala.
*57	"	Clark, Johnie	Mt. Creek, Ala.
58	"	Chambliss, Malcolm G.	Montgomery, Ala.
59	"	Couch, Sam G.	Anniston, Ala.
60	"	Cooley, Charles M.	Brookside, Ala.
61	"	Day, Chap P.	Argo, Ala.
62	"	Dawson, James A.	Birmingham, Ala.
63	"	Downey, Daniel	Natural Bridge, Ala.
64	"	Dennis, Richard P.	Mt. Creek, Ala.
65	"	Ellas, Roy S.	Birmingham, Ala.
66	"	Evatt, Carl E.	Wadsworth, Ala.
67	"	Faulkner, Hugh L.	Birmingham, Ala.
68	"	Farley, Mose	Morris, Ala.
69	"	Flemming, James S.	Birmingham, Ala.
70	"	Foster, H. S.	Birmingham, Ala.
71	"	Glass, William L.	Birmingham, Ala.
72	"	Glass, James B.	Jemison,
*73	"	Gower, Lee	Birmingham, Ala.
*74	"	Golden, Herbert	Hanceville, Ala.
75	"	Grier, Neil	Lightwood, Ala.
76	"	Hawkins, Charles E.	Wylam, Ala.
77	"	Hansberger, Bruce N.	Birmingham, Ala.
78	"	Hendricks, Rufus P.	Greenville, Ala.
79	"	Hendricks, Winston	Greenville, Ala.
80	"	Hurst, Robert	Dothan, Ala.
81	"	Henckell, Emile	Birmingham, Ala.
82	"	Hodges, Arthur J.	Birmingham, Ala.
*83	"	Holderfield, Tommie	Birmingham, Ala.
84	"	Hunter, Carl J.	Clanton, Ala.
85	"	Jenkins, William J.	Mobile, Ala.
86	"	Jolly, Earnest G.	Birmingham, Ala.
*87	"	Johnson, Lawrence G.	Birmingham, Ala.
88	"	Jones, Lonnie M.	Lomax, Ala.
89	"	Kelly, Walter D.	Adamsville, Ala.
*90	"	Kirkland, Fountain	Birmingham, Ala.
91	"	Lovette, Miller S.	Natural Bridge, Ala.
92	"	Little, Arthur	Village Springs, Ala.
93	"	Lewis, Charley	Grady, Ala.
*94	Private	Lockhart, Frank	Clanton, Ala.
95	"	Little, James W.	Montgomery, Ala.
96	"	Malone, Alfred M.	Sayreton, Ala.
97	"	Moore, Lee	Winterboro, Ala.
98	"	Moore, Spurgeon	Talladega, Ala.
99	"	Moore, Earnest	Rendalia, Ala.
100	"	McGaugh, Joseph H.	Cordova, Ala.
101	"	McGlawn, Jesse L.	Lanett, Ala.
102	"	McDonald, Dovard L.	Birmingham, Ala.
103	"	McCain, John B.	Birmingham, Ala.
*104	"	Pratt, Robert	Birmingham, Ala.
105	"	Pettus, Northern	Hanceville, Ala.
106	"	Rhodes, Percy H.	Saville, Ala.
*107	"	Robinson, J. P.	Birmingham, Ala.
108	"	Robinson, Argruess	Clanton, Ala.
109	"	Rosser, Thomas	Bessemer, Ala.
*110	"	Rylant, Rivers H.	Birmingham, Ala.
111	"	Smith, Euclid J.	Birmingham, Ala.
112	"	Spinks, Samuel L.	Thomasville, Ala.
113	"	Sheppard William B.	Covington, Ga.
*114	"	Shouse, John	Montgomery, Ala.
115	"	Thomas, Oscar P.	Warrior, Ala.
*116	"	Trainor, Everett T.	Birmingham, Ala.
117	"	Vann, James M.	Deatsville, Ala.
*118	"	Woodall, Mabry W.	Birmingham, Ala.
119	"	Worley, Charles	Birmingham, Ala.
*120	"	Wren, Harmon E.	Birmingham, Ala.
121	"	Mason, Arrell V.	Birmingham, Ala.
122	"	Hays, Elmus J.	Adamsville, Ala.
123	"	Swann, Ross B.	Garden City, Ala.
*124	"	Rappeport, Eugene	Birmingham, Ala.
*125	"	Taylor, Owen L.	Birmingham, Ala.
*126	"	Clarke, Bassil M.	Birmingham, Ala.
127	"	Cothron, Cabot	Birmingham, Ala.
*128	"	Gandy, James S.	Birmingham, Ala.
*129	"	Robb, Joe S.	Birmingham, Ala.
*130	"	Harmon, John S.	Lewisburg, Ala.
*131	"	Heath, Luther Z.	Birmingham, Ala.
132	"	Hagedale, Charlton L.	Birmingham, Ala.
133	"	Siegal, Charles	Birmingham, Ala.
134	"	Ray, Wheeler B.	Birmingham, Ala.
*135	"	Miller, William H.	Birmingham, Ala.
136	"	Mabry, Olly B.	Birmingham, Ala.
*137	"	Wright, Roy C.	Birmingham, Ala.
138	"	Pate, Amer N.	Ozark, Ala.
139	"	Tronton, Millard	Birmingham, Ala.
*140	"	Cox, Harvey H.	Birmingham, Ala.
*141	"	Rylant, J. P.	Birmingham, Ala.

*Not shown in Illustration.

The roster of Company K, Fourth Alabama Infantry, before leaving Camp Sheridan near Montgomery, Alabama. These are the 141 people in the preceding photograph. The makeup and the size of Company K almost certainly changed as it moved through training, was absorbed into the regular army, went overseas, and became involved in the actual fighting in France.

WWI-092

NO.	RANK	NAME	RESIDENCE
1	Captain	Mortimer H. Jordan	Birmingham, Ala.
2	1st Lieut.	Alan M. Smith	Birmingham, Ala.
3	2nd Lieut.	Walter R. Lawson	Kissimee, Fla.
4	1st Sergeant	Davis, J. P.	Birmingham, Ala.
5	Sergeant	Mariard, Leslie J.	Birmingham, Ala.
6	"	Couch, H. P.	Birmingham, Ala.
7	"	Cullen, L. M.	Birmingham, Ala.
8	"	Loveman, B. B.	Birmingham, Ala.
*9	"	Leath, E. M.	Birmingham, Ala.
10	"	Rainey, C. V.	Jasper, Ala.
11	"	Elkins, S. B.	Birmingham, Ala.
12	"	Harrison, Frank J.	Edgewater, Ala.
13	Corporal	Seale, M. J.	Birmingham, Ala.
14	"	McCreery, W.	Birmingham, Ala.
15	"	Patjant, W. H.	Cullman, Ala.
*16	"	Love, P. E.	Birmingham, Ala.
17		Sherrell, J. B.	Birmingham, Ala.
18	"	Gidly, Dewitt	Dolomite, Ala.
19	"	Trainor, James T.	Birmingham, Ala.
20	"	Atwood, Joseph T.	Birmingham, Ala.
21	"	Malone, J. A.	Birmingham, Ala.
22	"	Drewery, George H.	Gannessy, Ala.
23	"	Blackman, Stinson B.	Birmingham, Ala.
24	"	Lehman, William F.	Birmingham, Ala.
*25	"	Welborne, Floyd C.	Birmingham, Ala.
26	Mechanic	Vermillion, John E.	Edgewater, Ala.
*27	Bugler	Bolin, P. L.	Birmingham, Ala.
*28	"	Hendrix, F.	Pratt City, Ala.
*29	Cook	Parish, J. M.	Irondale, Ala.
30	"	Gaffney, W. Z.	Birmingham, Ala.
31	Private 1st Class	Bell, Glen A.	Birmingham, Ala.
32	" " "	Barrett, Wm. C.	Birmingham, Ala.
33	" " "	Cornelius, Fred	Oneonta, Ala.
34	" " "	Harville, Braxton B.	Edgewater, Ala.
35	" " "	Harmon, John A.	Lewisburg, Ala.
*36	" " "	Howard, Hovey	Birmingham, Ala.
37	" " "	Hughes, Floyd	Embry, Miss.
38	" " "	Moore, Walter L.	Bradford, Ala.
39	" " "	Smith, James C.	Altoona, Ala.
40	" " "	Wolfe, Dewey H.	Camden, Ala.
41	" " "	Rudd, Malt	New Castle, Ala.
42	" " "	Wood, Wiley H.	Tallassee, Ala.
43	" " "	Wooten, James B.	Anniston, Ala.
44	Private	Allen, Arden R.	Cooper, Ala.
*45	"	Allison, Archie B.	Ensley, Ala.
*46	"	Byrd, James F.	Birmingham, Ala.
47	"	Barton, John M.	Geneva, Ala.

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ROSTER COMPANY "K" 4th ALABAMA INFANTRY

NO.	RANK	NAME	RESIDENCE
48	Private	Brinson, W. T.	Haynesville, Ala.
49	"	Bass, James	Montgomery, Ala.
*50	"	Compton, Charles E.	Mt. Pinson, Ala.
*51	"	Clenner, Earl W.	Cooper, Ala.
52	"	Cantrel, Barney M.	Rochelle, Ga.
53	"	Chappell, C. B.	Birmingham, Ala.
54	"	Cook, Gustav L.	Birmingham, Ala.
55	"	Calloway ,Walter	Deatsville, Ala.
56	"	Crawder, Wilbur	Birmingham, Ala.
*57	"	Clark, Johnie	Mt. Creek, Ala.
58	"	Chambliss, Malcolm G.	Montgomery, Ala.
59	"	Couch, Sam G.	Anniston, Ala.
60	"	Cooley, Charles M.	Brookside, Ala.
61	"	Day, Chap P.	Argo, Ala.
62	"	Dawson, James A.	Birmingham, Ala.
63	"	Downey, Daniel	Natural Bridge, Ala.
64	"	Dennis, Richard P.	Mt. Creek, Ala.
65	"	Elias, Roy S.	Birmingham, Ala.
66	"	Evatt, Carl E.	Wadsworth, Ala.
67	"	Faulkner, Hugh I.	Birmingham, Ala.
68	"	Farley, Mose	Morris, Ala.
69	"	Fleimming, James S.	Birmingham, Ala.
70	"	Foster, H. S.	Birmingham, Ala.
71	"	Glass, William L.	Birmingham, Ala.
72	"	Glass, James B.	Jemison,
*73	"	Glover, Lee	Birmingham, Ala.
*74	"	Golden, Herbert	Hanceville, Ala.
75	"	Grier, Neil	Lightwood, Ala.
76	"	Hawkins, Charles E.	Wylam, Ala.
77	"	Hansberger, Bruce N.	Birmingham, Ala.
78	"	Hendricks, Rufus P.	Greenville, Ala.
79	"	Hendricks, Winston	Greenville, Ala.
80	"	Hurst, Robert	Dothan, Ala.
81	"	Henckell, Emile	Birmingham, Ala.
82	"	Hodges, Arthur J.	Birmingham, Ala.
*83	"	Holderfield, Tommie	Birmingham, Ala.
84	"	Hunter, Carl J.	Clanton, Ala.
85	"	Jenkins, William J.	Mobile, Ala.
86	"	Jolly, Earnest G.	Birmingham, Ala.
*87	"	Johnson, Lawrence G.	Birmingham, Ala.
88	"	Jones, Lonnie M.	Lomax, Ala.
89	"	Kelly, Walter D.	Adamsville, Ala.
*90	"	Kirkland, Fountain	Birmingham, Ala.
91	"	Lovette, Miller S.	Natural Bridge, Ala.
92	"	Little, Arthur	Village Springs, Ala.
93	"	Lewis, Charley	Grady, Ala.

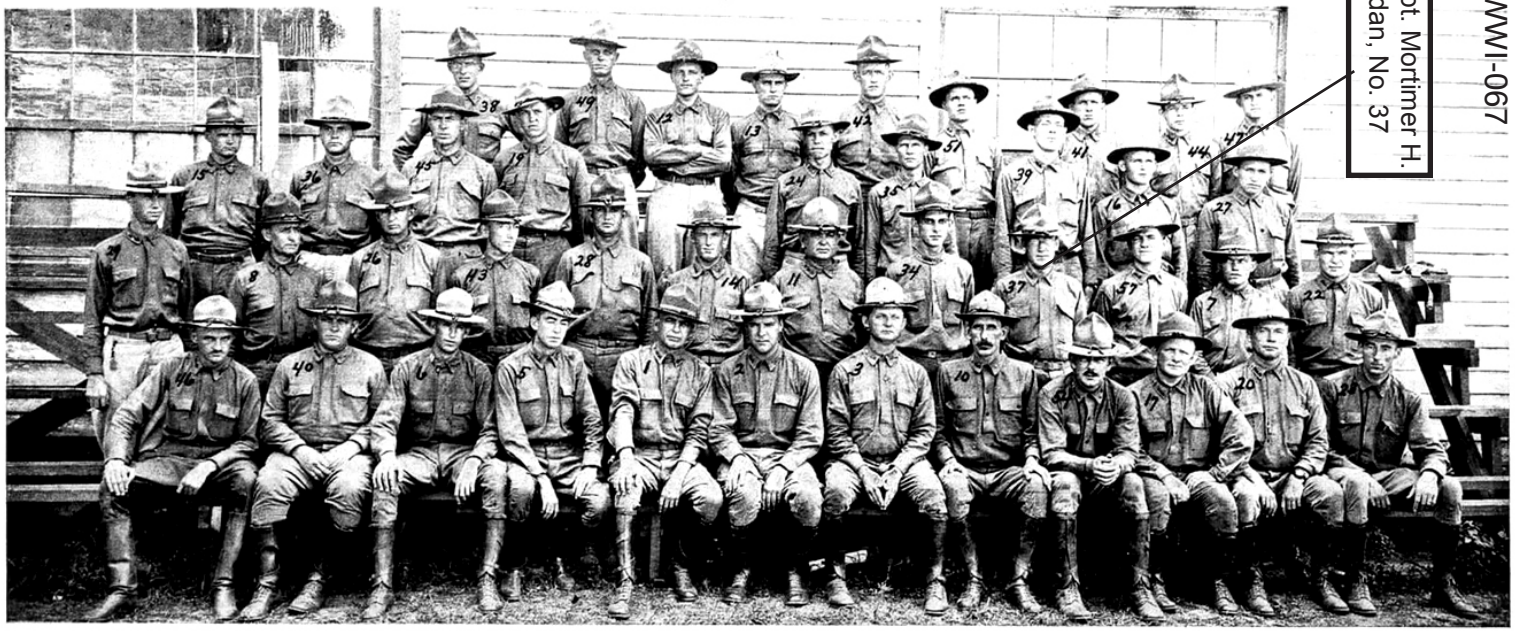
*Not shown in illustration.

Center section of the name list shown on the preceding page.

NO.	RANK	NAME	RESIDENCE
*94	Private	Lockhart, Frank	Clanton, Ala.
95	"	Little, James W.	Montgomery, Ala.
96	"	Malone, Alfred M.	Sayreton, Ala.
97	"	Moore, Lee	Winterboro, Ala.
98	"	Moore, Spurgeon	Talladega, Ala.
99	"	Moore, Earnest	Rendalia, Ala.
100	"	McGaugh, Joseph H.	Cordova, Ala.
101	"	McGlawn, Jesse L.	Lanett, Ala.
102	"	McDonald, Dovard L.	Birmingham, Ala.
103	"	McCain, John B.	Birmingham, Ala.
*104		Pratt, Robert	Birmingham, Ala.
105	"	Pettus, Northern	Hanceville, Ala.
106	"	Rhodes, Percy H.	Saville, Ala.
*107	"	Robinson, J. P.	Birmingham, Ala.
108	"	Robinson, Arguness	Clanton, Ala.
109	"	Rosser, Thomas	Bessemer, Ala.
*110	"	Rylant, Rivers H.	Birmingham, Ala.
111	"	Smith, Euclid J.	Birmingham, Ala.
112	"	Spinks, Samuel L.	Thomasville, Ala.
113	"	Sheppard William B.	Covington, Ga.
*114	"	Shouse, John	Montgomery, Ala.
115	"	Thomas, Oscar D.	Warrior, Ala.
*116	"	Trainor, Everett T.	Birmingham, Ala.
117	"	Vann, James M.	Deatsville, Ala.
*118	"	Woodall, Mabry W.	Birmingham, Ala.
119	"	Worley, Charles	Birmingham, Ala.
*120	"	Wren, Harmon E.	Birmingham, Ala.
121	"	Mason, Arrell V.	Birmingham, Ala.
122	"	Hays, Elmus J.	Adamsville, Ala.
123	"	Swann, Ross B.	Garden City, Ala.
*124	"	Rappeport, Eugene	Birmingham, Ala.
*125	"	Taylor, Owen L.	Birmingham, Ala.
*126	"	Clarke, Bassil M.	Birmingham, Ala.
127	"	Cothron, Cabot	Birmingham, Ala.
*128	"	Gandy, James S.	Birmingham, Ala.
*129	"	Robb, Joe S.	Birmingham, Ala.
*130	"	Harmon, John S.	Lewisburg, Ala.
*131	"	Heath, Luther Z.	Birmingham, Ala.
132	"	Hagsdale, Charlton L.	Birmingham, Ala.
133	"	Siegal, Charles	Birmingham, Ala.
134	"	Ray, Wheeler B.	Birmingham, Ala.
*135	"	Miller, William H.	Birmingham, Ala.
136	"	Mabry, Olly B.	Birmingham, Ala.
*137	"	Wright, Roy C.	Birmingham, Ala.
138	"	Pate, Amer N.	Ozark, Ala.
139		Tronton, Millard	Birmingham, Ala.
*140	"	Cox, Harvey H.	Birmingham, Ala.
*141	"	Rylant, J. P.	Birmingham, Ala.

Right section of the name list shown on the preceding page.

WWI-067



OFFICERS—FOURTH ALABAMA INFANTRY

Captain Mortimer H. Jordan was the commanding officer of Company K, Fourth Alabama National Guard. He is No. 37 in the photograph: second row, fourth person counting in from the left, and wearing glasses. He was killed in France. The Mortimer Jordan High Schoo is named for him.

The Mortimer Jordan family is an old one in Birmingham history. The old family home on Highland Avenue is now an historical site. His father [or grandfather ... has to be checked] was Dr. Mortimer H. Jordan, a prominent local physician. Dr. Jordan was a leader in fighting the Birmingham cholera epidemic of 1873, and was a founder of the Birmingham public health system. He is buried in the old Oak Hill Cemetery on the northern edge of downtown Birmingham.

When Dr. Jordan made his report in 1873 to the U.S. House of Representatives in Washington on the cholera epidemic he closed his repoprt with a tribute to the heroic and self-sacrificing conduct of the "women of the town" who received neither pay nor thanks for nursing the sick and closing the eyes of the dead. Louise Wooster [Birmingham's famous madam, 1842-1913] had turned her own handsomely furnished bedroom into a sick room. In her "Autobiography of a Magdalen" she expressed her gratitude that she had been allowed to help.

Legend holds that she is the model for Belle Watling in Margaret Mitchell's "Gone With the Wind." Louise Wooster also is buried in the Oak Hill Cemetery.

ROSTER OFFICERS—FOURTH ALABAMA INFANTRY

1 Colonel ----------William P. Screws
2 Lieutenant Colonel --Walter E. Bare
3 Major, 1st Battalion--John W. Carroll
*4 Major, 2nd Battalion-Hartley A. Moon
5 Major, 3rd Battalion-Dallas B. Smith
6 Captain Adjutant ----Robert Joerg, Jr.
7 1st Lt. Bat. Adjutant-1st Bat. Joseph M. Dickerson
8 1st Lt. Bat. Adjutant-2nd Bat. Herbert B. May
9 1st Lt. Bat. Adjutant-3rd Bat. William I. Cole
10 1st Lt. Chaplain ------Emmett P. Smith

FIRST BATTALION

Company "A"

11 Captain ----------Fletcher E. Haley
12 1st Lieut. ----------Edgar A. Collins
13 2nd Lieut. ----------Robert W. Smith

Company "B"

14 Captain ----------Bryan Whitehurst
15 1st Lieut. ----------George A. Glenn
16 2nd Lieut. ----------Robert Espy

Company "C"

17 Captain ----------Gardner Greene
*18 1st Lieut. ----------Hoyt A. Brown
19 2nd Lieut. ----------Stephen W. Harris

Company "D"

20 Captain ----------Lacey Edmundson
*21 1st Lieut. ----------Bruce Q. Nabers
22 2nd Lieut. ----------Ernest E. Bell

SECOND BATTALION

Company "E"

23 Captain ----------Everette Jackson
24 1st Lieut ----------Raymond R. Brown
2nd Lieut (Vacant) --

Company "F"

*25 Captain ----------Frederick L. Wyatt
26 1st Lieut. ----------Loui Greet
27 2nd Lieut. ----------James A. Webb

Company "G"

28 Captain ----------Oscar C. Speight
29 1st Lieut. ----------Abner Flowers
*30 2nd Lieut. ----------Peyton V. Deese

Company "H"

*31 Captain ----------Herman W. Thompson
*32 1st Lieut. ----------Thomas F. Joerg
*33 2nd Lieut. ----------George B. Mourning

THIRD BATTALION

Company "I"

34 Captain ----------Robert A. Dobbins
35 1st lieut. ----------John A. Powell
36 2nd Lieut. ----------Henry L. Griggs

Company "K"

37 Captain ----------Mortimer H. Jordan
38 1st Lieut. ----------Alan Smith
39 2nd Lieut. ----------Walter R. Lawson

*Not shown in illustration.

Company "L"

40 Captain ----------Joe P. Esslinger
41 1st Lieut. ----------Joseph A. Davis
42 2nd Lieut. ----------Thomas H. Fallaw

Company "M"

43 Captain ----------Ravee Norris
44 1st Lieut. ----------Otho W. Humphries
45 2nd Lieut. ----------James W. Driver

MACHINE GUN CO.

46 Captain ----------Newman Smith
47 1st Lieut. ----------Julien M. Strassburger
*48 2nd Lieut. ----------Harry Porter
49 2nd Lieut. ----------Oscar Crenshaw

SUPPLY COMPANY.

*50 Captain ----------John M. Smith
51 2nd Lieut. ----------George F. Spann

HEADQUARTERS CO.

Captain ----------Robert Joerg, Jr. (Adjt.)

ATTACHED MEDICAL CORPS.

*53 Major ----------John W. Watts, Surgeon
54 Captain ----------William W. Long, Asst. Sur.
*55 Captain ----------William M. Peters, Asst Sur
*56 Captain ----------Robert A. Burns, Asst. Surg.

ATTACHED DENTAL CORPS.

57 1st Lieut. ----------Malcolm G. Dabney

HISTORICAL SKETCH FOURTH ALABAMA INFANTRY

BUILT from the ground up since May, 1911, the Fourth Infantry National Guard of Alabama, now designated as the 167th U. S. Infantry, has only the foundation and groundwork of a history. The rest is yet to be created. Some of the companies and many of its officers and enlisted men had previous military experience; but, as a whole, the Fourth Alabama Infantry must be regarded as a new organization, with a clear page upon which to inscribe a future record.

Except that the regiment had attended the annual encampments, the companies and battalions, scattered over a wide area in northern and central Alabama, had seldom been brought together before the call issued by President Woodrow Wilson, June 18, 1916, for service on the Mexican border. Eight days after the proclamation of the President, the regiment was mobilized at Vandiver Park, Montgomery, with few of the organizations above peace strength, three officers and sixty-five enlisted men to each company.

So rapid was the work of recruiting and training, when the Alabama brigade entrained for the border, October 22, 1916, the Fourth Alabama Infantry companies were well above the minimum requirements of that time, machine gun company, sanitary company, headquarters company and band had been created, equipped and trained, and the regiment was in all essentials complete, despite the fact that many of the original members had been discharged because of dependent relatives, expiration of term of enlistment and for other reasons.

On October 28 the regiment reached its border headquarters at Nogales, Arizona, though two of the companies later were sent to Lochiel, Arizona, for guard duty. Then came the hike to Tucson and return, 124½ miles. The regiment left Camp Stephen Little, Nogales, Arizona, on November 21, hiked 18½ miles in heavy marching order the first day, arrived at Tucson November 24, and on the following day the command was reviewed by the brigade and regimental commanders. On November 26 the regiment left Tucson and returned by the same route, reaching camp Stephen Little November 29, after participating in a war problem with the Second Alabama Infantry on the last leg of the march.

In the Spring of 1917, when quiet had been restored in Northern Mexico and along the border, the Alabama Brigade was ordered to return to Alabama for demobilization and the Fourth Infantry left Nogales on March 16, arriving at Mobilization Camp, Montgomery, March 22. The muster out had been ordered and the men had begun preparation for their return to their homes.

War with the Imperial German government loomed dark on the horizon. Quickly following the declaration by President Woodrow Wilson that a state of war existed, the order of demobilization was suspended. The men that had returned to their homes were ordered back to their regiment. Congress declared war and the regiment remained in Federal service.

From April 7 to June 7 many of the companies of the Fourth Infantry were employed in guarding railroad property and other

public utilities throughout Alabama. When relieved from this duty the companies on guard hiked back to Montgomery from their respective stations. After the return from guard duty, the Fourth Alabama Infantry was ordered to recruit to full war strength, 150 men to the company, and went into training at Vandiver Park for foreign service. On August 5, 1917, the troops were drafted into the service of the United States.

By order of the war department published August 14 ,1917, the Fourth Infantry, National Guard of Alabama, was designated as the 167th United States Infantry and was made a part of the 42nd Division, the composite national guard division, known as the "Rainbow Division," for earliest service in foreign fields. The same order required that the companies be increased in size from 150 to 250 enlisted men and from three to five officers each, making the total strength of the regiment 95 officers and 3605 enlisted men. This was accomplished by drawing selected men from the First Alabama Infantry, the Second Alabama Infantry and the First Alabama Cavalry.

Colonel William P. Screws, in command of the Fourth Infantry, became a second lieutenant in the 3d Alabama Infantry in 1898, during the Spanish-American war, and later became a first lieutenant in the 29th U. S. Infantry. After several years of service in the Philippines and elsewhere he was mustered out of the service in 1901 and later was appointed as a second lieutenant in the regular army, assigned to the 19th Infantry. In a short time he was promoted to first lieutenant and later became captain. He became inspector-instructor in Alabama at about the time the Fourth Infantry was organized and was the senior mustering officer for Alabama troops when the regiment was mustered into the Federal service, shortly after which he was elected lieutenant-colonel of the regiment, the place he held until shortly after the return of the troops from the border, when he was elected colonel of the regiment.

Lieutenant Colonel Walter E. Bare enlisted in the Alabama National Guard as a private in 1902 and has served continuously through all grades to that of lieutenant colonel.

Majors Hartley A. Moon, Dallas B. Smith and John W. Carroll are military men who obtained their commissions by earning them; in fact, the commanding officers of all organizations in the regiment are picked men, specially qualified for the work before them.

The organization, discipline and personnel of the regiment led to its selection as a unit of the Rainbow Division. The rest Alabama leaves, with all confidence, to the future.

Foreword:

This volume is dedicated to the Officers and Men of the Fourth Alabama Infantry, United States Army. The object of the compiler has been to furnish a pictorial and historical record of the Regiment which will be valuable not only for refrence, but also as a memento of the organization. To that end no expense has been spared in the effort to present a work of credit to the subject with which it deals. ¶ Thanking Colonel William P. Screws, the Regimental Commander, Lieutentant Colonel Walter E. Bare, Majors Hartley A. Moon, Dallas B. Smith, John W. Carroll, Captain Robert Joerg, Jr., Regimental Adjutant, Regimental Sergeant-Major William B. Mitchell, and all organization Commanders and First Sergeants of the Regiment, without whose assistance the publication would have been impossible.

Guy F. Jennings

The handwritten entry in the original copy of this book refers to his older brother, William Andrew Thomas.

From. Oscar B Thomas
To
William. A Thomas
with best wishes for the
future.

37

A final "humorous" page from the 1917 Remembrance Book of the Fourth Alabama Infantry.

Germany: Austria-Hungary: Italy Alliances

In the years preceding The Great War these countries formed alliances, somewhat similar to those between France, Great Britain, and Russia. Following the assassination of Grand Duke Franz Ferdinand in Sarejevo in 1914, Germany assured Austria-Hungary of its full support for whatever action Austria-Hungary might undertake. That freed Austria-Hungary to attack Serbia.

Although Italy was a part of the alliance, it later entered the war on the side of France, Great Britain, and their other allies. A cynical comment of the time was that "Italy was waiting so that it could come in on the side of the victors."

Italy

Italy, like Germany, was a relatively new nation at the beginning of the twentieth century. During the middle years of the 1800s there had been a somewhat slow and difficult consolidation of many states and regions. Some of these had been owned and ruled by the Vatican, and were called the Papal States.

During the 1800s, Italy or parts of Italy had been dominated by other countries - Austria, France, and Spain. Also the period of consolidation involved internal fighting. During this time, Giuseppe Garibaldi emerged as a national hero by leading much of the revolutionary effort. Garibaldi had participated in revolutionary fighting in South America and had spent some time in the U.S. before returning to Italy. During the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71 he led a small Franco-Italian force to victory in one battle.

Italy having been dominated by foreign powers in the past was sensitive to its new national situation, and resented actions that it perceived as threats. Italy strongly resented the Austro-Hungarian annexation of Bosnia in 1908, which it perceived as a threat to its sphere of influence in the Adriatic Sea.

Like most other countries of the time, it made treaties with other countries for the purpose of protecting itself.

Russia

For many years Russia had been an absolute monarchy, ruled by the Czars. Russia had long felt ethnic, cultural, and linguistic ties with the Slavic elements in the Balkans. This was a powerful factor for drawing Russia into The Great War conflict when Austria-Hungary threatened Serbia after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand.

Russia had established alliances with France, which gave the new German state a sense of being squeezed between two powers.

Russia entered The Great War against Germany. Since the Russian efforts were badly organized their military situation steadily deteriorated. This opened the gate to the Soviet Revolution, the overthrow of the monarchy, and the establishment of the Communist Soviet Union after the end of The Great War.

There was widespread unrest and opposition to the Russian government before the war. The political basis for the future Communist state already had growing support around Europe. That political basis went back as far as 1867 when Karl Marx published "Das Kapital." Marx wrote "Das Kapital" while living in London, England.

OTTOMAN EMPIRE - TURKEY

The Ottoman Empire [Turkey] had controlled much of the Balkan region of Europe for almost 500 years. During this period of history it was ruled by a series of Sultans. At its peak the Ottoman Empire reached as far as Vienna and covered much of what is now Syria, Iraq, and Iran. By the late 1800s, the Ottoman Empire had shrunk leaving only a toe-hold on the European side of the Bosporus and the Dardanelles, plus the northern portion of what is now Iraq.

As the Ottoman Empire shrunk it left behind ethnic Turks who had lived in the Balkans for generations - mixed in with other ethnic and cultural groups in Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Montenegro, and other regions of the Balkans.

Turkey fought a short war with Greece in 1896, a part of continuing friction between the two countries. That friction continues today, for example, in the unresolved problems over the division of Cyprus.

In 1908 a revolution in Turkey brought a political group called the “Young Turks” into power. Austria-Hungary feared that a resurgent Turkey would again lay claim to regions in the Balkans adjacent to Austria-Hungary. This was a major factor in the annexation of Bosnia later in 1908, which set the stage for the assassination six years later of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarejevo.

Although there were existing tensions between Turkey and Austria-Hungary, Turkey’s potential role was ambiguous when The Great War broke out. Turkey was in a situation somewhat similar to that of Italy.

In mid-August, 1914 two large German navy ships made their way to the port of Constantinople, in spite of the presence of British naval forces in the area. This made a strong impression on the Turkish government. That, plus the enticement to move south in the Arabian peninsula, to take control of the British terminus of the Persian oil line near Basra, and the further enticement of the Suez Canal led Turkey to join the war on the German side.

During the war British forces moved up through the Arabian peninsula, and one army force eventually reached Baghdad.. “Lawrence of Arabia” was the most famous name to arise during that phase of The Great War.

The Balkan Wars of 1912-1913

The First Balkan War broke out in early October, 1912 when Montenegro declared war on Turkey. Later in October Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece joined the war against Turkey.

The Second Balkan War arose in late June, 1913. Bulgaria, without warning, attacked Serbian and Greek positions. Serbia and Greece quickly counter-attacked. Roumania and Turkey then entered the war against Bulgaria, which was quickly defeated.

Mixed alliances had changed in this short time. These two wars involved the typical and long standing grievances and antagonisms amongst the many small Balkan states, and especially those having seaport access to the Mediterranean.

GREAT BRITAIN

Great Britain was party to the alliance involving France and Russia, and a large factor in its participation was concern for the neutrality of Belgium. Control of the seacoast in that area was a great concern for the security and maneuverability of the Royal Navy.

Great Britain also had serious concerns about the rapid growth of the German navy. Germany was intent on asserting its naval strength worldwide, and Great Britain {the "ruler of the seas"} was concerned about that threat. The Royal Navy's dominance was crucial to the support and defense of Britain's worldwide colonial empire.

THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

The major European nations were at the peak of their colonial powers, in Africa, the Middle East, India, and Asia.. There was intense competition amongs them for colonial supremacy. Middle eastern oil already was an economic, political, and military consideration.

This led to peripheral conflicts during The Great War. One of the more famous of these conflicts was in the area now known as Saudi Arabia, and involved a British officer who became famous as "Lawrence of Arabia."

The Suez Canal, which provided a short-cut for commercial shipping and for naval ships between the Mediterranean and the east coast of Africa, was a significant factor in the Middle East. It had been constructed in 1859-69 under the supervision of a French engineer, Ferdinand de Lesseps. {A failed attempt to construct a Panama Canal under de Lesseps' supervision was undertaken in 1881.}

By 1875 Great Britain had acquired control of the Suez Canal Company, and that led to British domination in Egypt until after World War II, when the control reverted to Egypt. British control of that major shipping route was a major factor in the expansion of The Great War to the Middle East.

AUGUST 1914 .. By this time, the countries of continental Europe, Russia, Great Britain, and the Middle East had been involved for well over a half century in antagonisms, jockeying for territory and power, and attempts to bolster their images as world powers. It was a nest of volcanoes, on the edge of eruption. Almost any "significant incident" could cause the entire network to erupt. The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarejevo served as that "significant incident," but another might have done as well - - or as badly.

THE UNITED STATES AND THE "WAR TO MAKE THE WORLD SAFE FOR DEMOCRACY"

At the outbreak of The Great War in late 1914, the United States was involved with Mexico, and then with the problem of Pancho Villa The United States withdrew from the search for Pancho Villa as the probability of involvement in The Great War steadily increased.

By 1915, Germany was agressively pushing U-Boat {submarine} warfare, and increasingly the shipping of "neutral" nations was attacked. In May, 1915 the Cunard liner, Lusitania, was sunk with the loss of almost 1,200 lives - many of them Americans. Increasingly this type of warfare inflamed U.S. attitudes against Germany.

During 1916, President Woodrow Wilson twice sent emissaries to Europe in an attempt to negotiate an end to The Great War. All of these efforts failed.

The United States declared war on Germany and its allies in April, 1917. This was done in response to German escalation of unlimited submarine warfare in the Atlantic. An American Expeditionary Force, under the command of General John J. {Black Jack} Pershing did not arrrivve in Europe until late 1917.

Those initial American soldiers had only limited military training. Initially the American forces were held in reserve, and in "defensive sectors" of the battlefield. The American forces became far more directly and actively involved in early 1918, and this continued until the end of the war in November, 1918.

THE EUROPEAN BATTLEFIELDS

Peripheral parts of the war were fought in the eastern Mediterranean, in North Africa, and in the northern parts of Italy. There was quite heavy fighting between Germany and Russia in the eastern front.

The heaviest fighting and the greatest casualties were, however, in a relatively small part of northeastern France and in much of Belgium. This area was fought over almost constantly from the start of the war in late 1914 until its end in late 1918. Battles, with thousands of soldiers killed on both sides, quite often moved no more than a few miles in either direction.

Basically the war was bogged down for about four years into a deadly and costly form of "trench warfare."

Maps appearing a bit later in this material show the general area of the war in 1918. In early 1918, Germany decided on a final and massive attempt to break the deadlock of trench warfare. Germany mounted a ferocious campaign toward Paris. The area of deepest penetration was near Chateau Thierry on the River Marne. It was close enough to Paris that German artillery, using a hugh railway-mounted gun called "Big Bertha" was able to lob a few shells into the Paris suburbs. This caused great consternation.

It was obvious that the war had reached a crucial stage, and fears increased that the British-French-American allies were at serious risk of losing.

American troops had begun to arrive in France in late 1917. Oscar Burton Thomas had sailed on Nov. 6, 1917 from Halifax, Nova Scotia for Europe. By the end of 1917 the American force in France still was relatively small. It had not yet been directly involved in much fighting. The troops were untrained and untested, and there were command-structure disputes with the French.

By late March, 1918 the situation for the French-British-American side was desperate. American forces were brought into heavy and direct involvement in late May and were fully involved by early June.

Much of the American involvement was around the German bulge toward Paris ... lying between the Marne and the Aisne Rivers, and between Compeigne {Champagne} and Chateau Thierry.

Initially, Oscar Burton Thomas, along with most of the American troops, had been deployed into "defensive sectors." During this short but intense battle period, he was involved in three battles: Champagne-Marne, Aisne-Marne, and Chateau Thierry. He was seriously wounded on July 26, 1918 at the Battle of Chateau Thierry. He was evacuated to the rear for medical treatment and later returned to the United States in November, 1918.

The U.S. Marine Corps became famous for its involvement in the Battle of Belleau Wood, only a few miles northwest of Chateau Thierry. The 42nd Rainbow Division continued to particicpate until November in these battles along the Aisne-Marne salient, including those at Meuse-Argonne and at St. Mihiel just south of Verdun.

This series of intense battles in mid to late 1918 turned the tide and sealed the defeat of Germany and its allies. Fighting continued, however, through most of the remainder of 1918. Germany ceded defeat and the Armistice which ended The Great War was signed in November, 1918. It was followed by the 1919 Versailles Peace Treaty.

One of the main results of the Versailles Peace Treaty was to ensure continued animosities within Germany, the subsequent rise of Adolph Hitler and the Third Reich, and eventually the Second World War in Europe. Another by-product of the Versailles Peace Treaty was that of artificially dividing up the Middle East in a way that guaranteed future enmities ... enmities that we are still dealing with in the early part of the twenty-first century.

The fifty-one months of The Great War were a bloody disaster for the participants. The United States during its short involvement had almost 326,000 casualties, including almost 116,000 deaths. The losses for the other countries have never been accurately totaled, but probably surpass 12,000,000 dead. The estimates include:

Russia: 1,700,000 dead & nearly 5,000,000 wounded ... with more losses to come via famine and the civil war
Austria-Hungary: 1,200,000 dead & 3,600,000 wounded .... leading to the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian empire
Germany: 1,800,000 dead & 4,200,000 wounded
France: 1,300,000 dead or missing
Great Britain: 950,000 dead & 2,300,000 wounded
Italy: 460,000 dead ... even with only a token involvement in the war

The losses in dead and wounded for other nations such as Turkey and the smaller Balkan countries can only be estimated, but they were quite large. Civilian casualties in the areas of fighting have never been counted accurately.

In Europe and Russia and the Middle East an entire generation of young people was decimated. But the Second World War was only twenty years away in the future. That was barely sufficient for another generation to grow up to replace those killed in the First World War.

T-033 O. B. Thomas, Company K, 167th Infantry {the old Fourth Alabama Infantry}, Rainbow Division, U.S. Army, 1917. This photo as well as the one below appear to be studio photos, and may have been made while he was in training at Mineola on Long Island, New York before transport to Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada and then on to Europe.

T-033crop at right. Comparison of the two photos on this page makes it clear that the photo at the right is cropped from the photo above.

The cropping was done at the original photo studio, as both printed photos are found in the collection of old family photos.

The cropping was not done by computer while preparing this memoir.

T-226 O. B. Thomas in the U.S. Army. We believe that this photo was made while in basic training on Long Island, New York. That would be before moving on to Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada for movement to Europe in NOvember, 1917. Photos made in 1918 and after he returned to the U.S. from France show a much more solemn person, and in one case show the bandaged jaw where he was wounded by machine gun fire in the Battle of Chateau Thiery in France. Many of those later photos were made during medical recovery at the location of the U.S. Army Hospital in Cape May, New Jersey.

T-030 above, and T-030crop at left. Cropping was done by computer. O.B. Thomas is seated on the cot at the left, with tent mates or friends standing. This almost certainly was while in training on Long Island, New York before moving on to Europe. This, and the photos on the two preceding pages, are the only ones we have from his early time in the Army before going to Europe.

He enlisted in the U.S. Army on June 6, 1917, about two months after the U.S. declared war on Germany. He arrived at the mobilization Camp Sheridan near Montgomery, Alabama on June 12, 1917. He was promoted to corporal on August 20, 1917. That was a fairly quick promotion, perhaps because of his age and maturity at the time.

He left Camp Sheridan in Alabama on August 28, 1917 and arrived at Mineola, Long Island, New York on September 1, 1917 for further infantry training. After about two months of training his group then moved to Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada from where they sailed for Europe on November 6, 1917. Information about the transport ship and other things of interest is found in subsequent pages.

He participated in two major battles in France and was seriously wounded in the second of these. His initial medical recovery was in France, until he was physically able to ship back to the U.S.

He left France on November 25, 1918 {shortly after the armistice of November 11} to return to the U.S. His remaining medical treatment and recovery was at the U.S. Army Hospital at Cape May, New Jersey. After recovery there, he returned to Camp Sheridan, Alabama where he was honorably discharged on February 5, 1919.

The next section contains more detailed information, history, maps, etc. about military actions of 1918 in which he was aan active participant and eventually was wounded on July 26, 1918.

WWI-076

WWI-077 The British ship Andania in dry dock next to the British Light Cruiser HMS Ajax

The Andania (I) Cunard, made her maiden voyage in July 1913, HMS Ajax was laid down on 22 February 1911 and launched on 21 March 1911, and completed on 31 October 1913 at the Scotts Yard. The Ajax was sold for disposal in November 1926 and broken up next year.

Andania I (1913-18)

These statistics are derived from NRP Bonsor, North Atlantic Seaway, 5 vols, David & Charles, 1975-80.
Gross Tonnage - 13,405 tons
Dimensions - 158.58 x 19.50m (520.3 x 64ft)
Number of funnels - 2
Number of masts - 2
Construction - Steel
Propulsion - Twin-screw
Engines - Quadruple-expansion, eight
Service speed - 15 knots
Builder - Scott's Shipbuilding & Engineering Co Ltd, Greenock
Launch date - 22 March 1913
Passenger accommodation:
2nd class: 520, 3rd class: 1,540

After Cunard had inaugurated the Canadian service in 1911 the company decided that it needed its own purpose-built ships for the route. Subsequently three vessels were ordered from Scotts Shipbuilding & Engineering Company, these became the Andania, Alaunia and the Aurania. The Andania was the first of the three ships to launched, on 22 March 1913. The three ships were almost identical, catering only for second and third class passengers. The old-style third class dormitories were replaced by four- or six-berth cabins.

On 14 July 1913 she left Liverpool on her maiden voyage calling at Southampton, Quebec and Montreal. Guests on board included representatives from the Canadian Government. The ships second voyage sailed from London. The approach channels to the Thames were dredged for this occasion. In August 1914 the Andania was requisitioned as a troopship and made several trips carrying Canadian troops.

For a few weeks in 1915 the Andania was used to accommodate German POW's in the Thames. Later that year it was used to support the Gallipoli campaign and was involved in transporting troops for the Sulva landings. In 1916 it returned to help transport more Canadian troops. Later that year and, during 1917, the Andania was used on the Liverpool to New York route. On 13 August, 1917 the Andania was docked at pier 54 in Hoboken, New Jersey. She embarked the 6th Provisional Regiment, CAC which consisted of 108 officers and 1,745 enlisted men and at 3 P.M. sailed past the Statue of Liberty on her way to the War Zone. The 6th Provisional Regiment would be changed to form two seperate artillery regiments while in France. They were the 51st and 57th Artillery, C.A.C.

At noon on the November 6, 1917 Andania departed for Europe with 59 officers and 1,635 enlisted men of the 167th Infantry and 22 Casual officers. She sailed with the Ascania who sailed eairlier at 9:45 am that same morning.

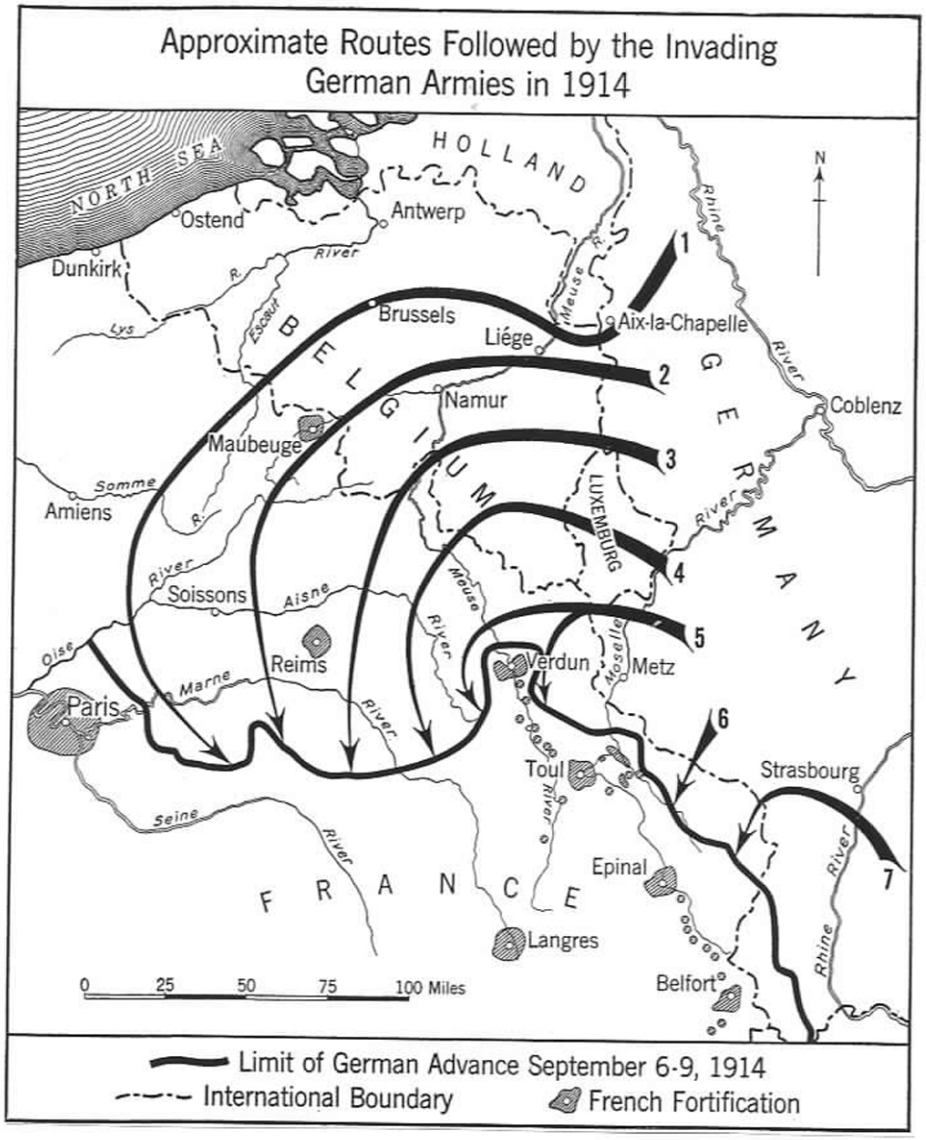
On 26 January 1918 the Andania left Liverpool for New York. The route the ship was taking was around the Northern coast of Ireland. There were only 40 passengers on board, along with a crew of around 200. On the morning of the 28th the ship was hit by a torpedo from German submarine U-46. This occurred near Rathlin Light. The ship immediately took a list to starboard and began to sink. Most of those on board were saved but seven lives were lost.

This photo was identified by James Pottinger from Bridge of Don in Aberdeen, Scotland. According to James this photo was taken from the yard offices clock tower at the Scotts outfitting basin in the Scotts of Greenock Yards. Leaving his home in Shetland at fifteen James Pottinger served his marine engineering apprenticeship with Scotts' of Greenock 1952-57, in engine shops and outfitting on merchant cargo and tankers, submarines and frigates, then to sail as Engineer Officer in the Merchant Navy,he now lives in Bridge of Don in Aberdeen Scotland. He has for many years now been researching history of the yard and ships built there.

A Thumbnail Sketch

This is a very brief history of the US. Involvement in The Great War, i.e. the First World War. It's focus is on the involvement of Oscar Burton Thomas. An Appendix to this memoir provides significantly more details.

WWI-Map-001



The bulk of The Great War [World War I] between Germany, Italy, Russia, France, Great Britain, the United States and their various allies took place over a period of more than four years in a small area of Belgium and northeastern France, as shown in the map above. There were, of course, other areas of significant conflict: i.e. the Balkans, northern Italy, Austria, Turkey, the Middle East, and the eastern front with Russia.

When hostilities broke out in the late summer of 1914, German forces drove rapidly into France as shown above. By early September the German forces had advanced past the Marne River along a meandering line running roughly eastward from Paris. At the point of their closest advance toward Paris, the Frenc mobilized the taxi fleet of Paris to bring reinforcements to the front lines.

But by that time, the German forward movement stalled. Although the German forces were driven back toward the northeast, the war more or less bogged down into static trench warfare - or major battles with hugh casualties but very little movement.

As time wore on, it began to appear that the winner would be that side that was able to sustain the most casualties and thus win a war of attrition. Troops on both sides sometimes rebelled at the bloody slaughter with nothing to show for it. Later during the war there was a mutiny amongst parts of the French Army. The Russian Army had similar problems that eventually contributed to its withdrawal from the war.

The United States entered the war early in 1917. American forces began to move into the area of hostilities by late 1917. The Rainbow Division was one of the first American military groups to arrive in France. During a large part of its participation in the war, Colonel Douglas MacArthur was its deputy commander. In November, 1918 MacArthur became the division commander, a few weeks before the war ended on November 11, 1918.

The American forces, however, had little training and almost no combat experience at the time they arrived in France. Hence they were initially placed in “Defensive Sectors”, while the French and the British forces continued to carry the brunt of the major fighting.

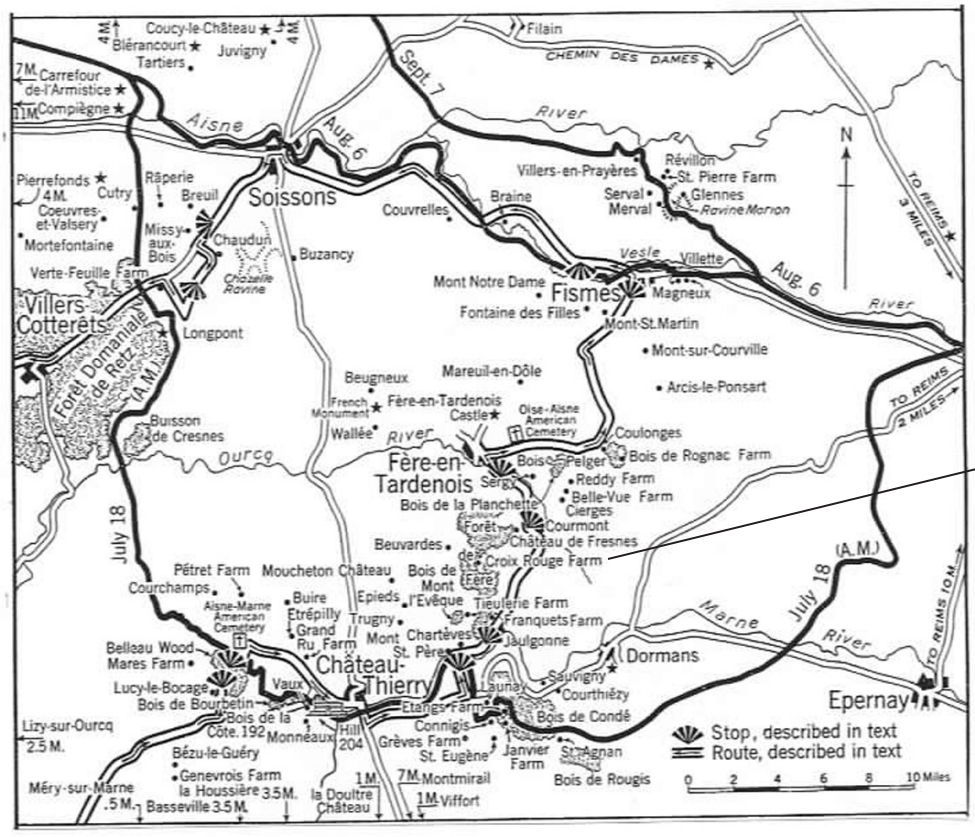
•••••

By early 1918, the situation was desperate for both sides in the war. The German government decided to make one last major effort to win by breaking through the front lines and driving to Paris. That last major effort by the German army {also using troops that had been released from the Eastern Front after the capitulation of Russia} resulted in a large “bulge” toward Paris - - in an area lying between Soissons and Reims and between the Aisne River and the Marne River. Those cities are shown in the next page map.

The point of furtherest German advance was generally in the vicinity of Chateau Thierry on the Marne River. The famous Marine Corps Battle of Belleau Wood was only a few miles to the west. It appeared the the Germany army might break through to Paris and that Germany might eventually win the war.

That dangerous “bulge” is shown in more detail in the following map.

WWI-Map-003



Croix Rouge Farm, i.e. the Red Cross Farm .... this is where Oscar Thomas was wounded in heavy fighting.

Until this time, during the first few months of 1918, the American forces had been used in “defensive sectors and in further intensive training. Those “defensive sectors” did have a lot of fighting, although their locations generally were static.

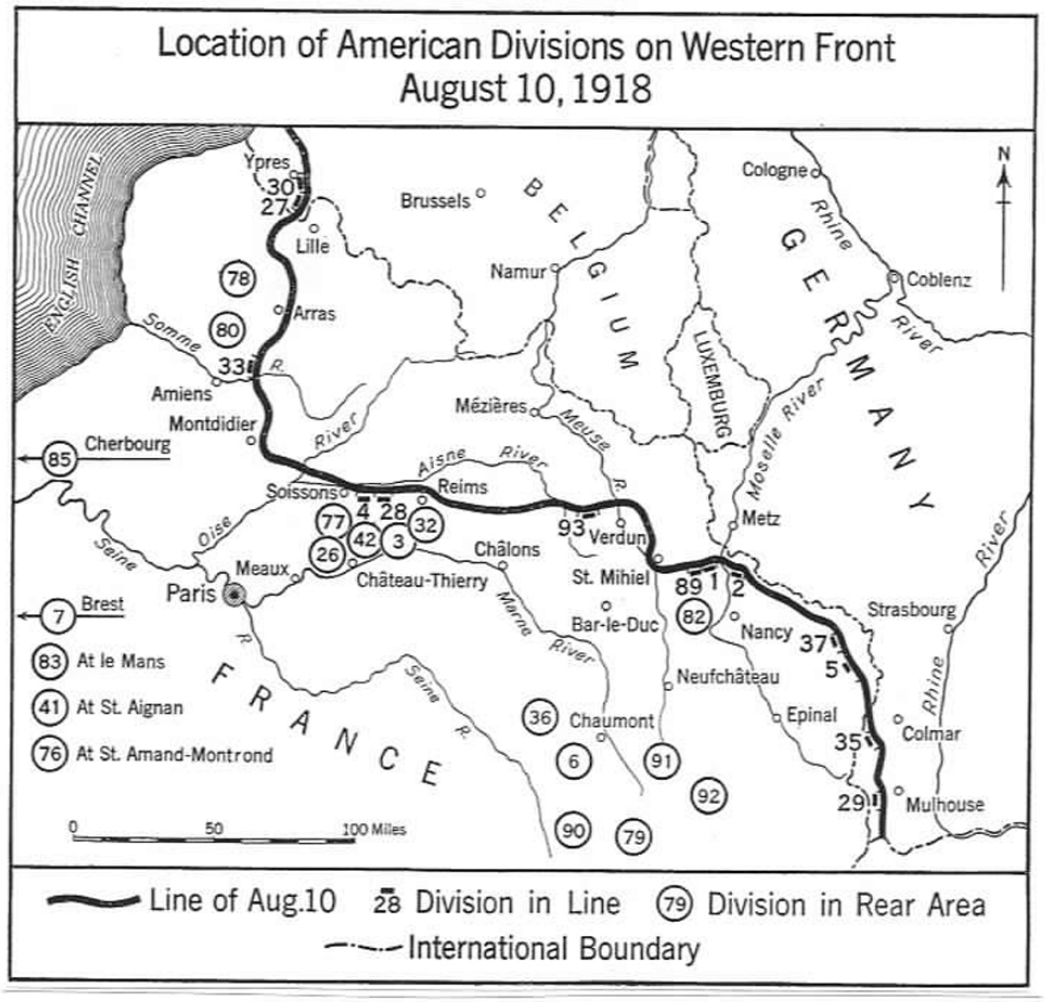
But toward the end of May, 1918 as the Germans began their final attempt to win the war, the American forces were brought into full combat, in concert with the British and the French. One of the many units was the 42nd Rainbow Division - - which had been one of the first units to arrive in France. Oscar Burton Thomas was in Company K, 167th Infantry of the Rainbow Division. The company commander was Captain Mortimer Jordan of Birmingham, Alabama. Capt. Jordan died from wounds recived in early August, 1918.

Units of the Rainbow Division initially were used in the Chapaigne-Marne area, to the east of Reims - - a very old cathedral city in France. But by early July the German breakthrough in the area of the “bulge” shown in preceding map was becoming very dangerous.

Around mid-July the Rainbow Division was pulled out of the Champagne-Marne sector and moved to the Aisne-Marne sector, i.e. the “bulge.” The Germans were stopped along the Marne River in the area of Chateau Thierry and Belleau Wood. After than, the Allied forces began to drive the German Army back.

O. B. Thomas was very seriouslly wounded, shot in the lower jaw, on July 26, 1918 in the vicinity of the Battle of the Red Cross {Croix Rouge} Farm. Captain Jordan was fatally wounded in early August as the Allied forces continued their advance.

WWI-Map-002



O. B. Thomas was evacuated to a medical facility away from the front lines. By early August the Allied forces had advance to approximately the Aisne River.

Fighting continued into the autumn of 1918. The preceding map shows the front lines as of August 10, 1918. Chateau Thierry is just to the left of the center of the map where there is a concentration of US Army Division numbers.

The German armies were forced to continue withdrawal, but slowly and with continuing heavy casualties on both sides.

By November, 1918 the German armies had been driven back to approximately the Belgian and German frontiers with France.

At that point the German government was forced to recognize that it had lost the war. An armistice was signed on November 11, 1918. A peace treaty was negotiated at Versailles, France during early 1919.

During those months of the autumn of 1918, O.B. Thomas had been recovering from his wound at a medical facility away from the front lines in France. His jaw had been shattered by the bullet and had to be wired together while the bones healed.

He was very reluctant to talk about any of the heavy fighting that he was involved in, but he sometimes would tell a few things. He sometimes told about having to carry a small hand-held wire cutter fastened to his belt by a light chain. That was for cutting the wires holding his jaws together in case he should become ill and nauseated - and to thus avoid strangulation.

It took several months for him to recover sufficiently so that he could return to the U.S. by sea in November, 1918. There was an additional period of recuperation at a military hospital at Cape May, New Jersey before he returned to Camp Sheridan near Montgomery, Alabama for discharge from the army.

The preceding three maps and related notes are taken from American Armies and Battlefields in Europe, published by the Center for Military HIstory, United States Army, 1938, and reprinted in 1992.

During more than four years of fighting in a small geographical area, nothing much was accomplished except the deaths of millions of soldiers and non-combatants on both sides, and the injury of millions more.

The 42nd Rainbow Division lost 2,810 killed and 11,873 wounded in action or injured in connection with military operations. The 167th Infantry {the old Fourth Alabama National Guard Infantry} suffered 616 casualties.

These numbers illustrate the heavy losses suffered by all of the combatants, on both the Allied and the German sides of the war.

HON. DIS. 29 PAGE 552

WWI-35

ENLISTMENT RECORD.

Name: Oscar B. Thomas. Grade: Corp.

Enlisted, ~~or Inducted~~, June 12, 1917, at Montgomery, Ala.

Serving in First. enlistment period at date of discharge.

Prior service: * None.

I certify that I have this date issued to the Bearer of this Certificate one Silver Victory Button

Birmingham, Ala., U.S.A.

Recruiting Officer.

Noncommissioned officer: Corporal Date AUG 9 1919

Marksmanship, gunner qualification or rating: † No Record.

Horsemanship: Not Mounted.

Battles, engagements, skirmishes, expeditions: Battle of Champagne July 15 1918
Chateau Thiery July 26 18

Knowledge of any vocation: Conducting - Street Car Railway

Wounds received in service: Machine Gun Bullet in Jaw. July 26-1918.

Physical condition when discharged: Good.

FORWARDED Oct 1920

U. S. Army Recruiting Station, Birmingham, Ala., approved:

H Billey Capt Inf

Typhoid prophylaxis completed No Record.

Paratyphoid prophylaxis completed No Record

Married or single: Single.

Character: Excellent

for VICTORY MEDAL with
CHAMPAGNE-MARNE
AISNE-MARNE.
DEFENSIVE SECTOR

Remarks: ~~Pvt. 6-12-17 or Mar. 12 Jan. 2 1918 2 Lieut. Inf.~~
Left U.S. Port for O. Seas Port. 11-6-17. ARR 2nd Base 11-19-17. Left Foreign Port for U.S. 11-14-18. ARRIVED U.S. 11-25-18. Hon. D. H. O. Lieut. Commanded Co. 24/12 on 45/14.
Entitled to Travel Pay to Montgomery, Alabama

Signature of soldier: Oscar B Thomas

Camp Sheridan, Ala. FEB 5 1919

Paid in full to 5th

M. MORRELL, Capt. Q. M. C.

By J M Harkness
2nd Lt. Q. M. C.

B. R. James
1st Lieut Inf.

Commanding Det.

* Give company and regiment or corps or department, with inclusive dates of service in each enlistment.
† Give date of qualification or rating and number, date, and source of order announcing same.

3—3164

WWI-100 Enlistment record for Oscar Burton Thomas. Note that this shows him as Corporal in the enlistment record dated June 12, 1917, as if he enlisted at that grade. Other records show that he was promoted to Corporal a few months later. NOTE: This page and the following page are the opposite sides of the same document.

WWI-36

HON. DIS. 29 PAGE 551

Honorable Discharge from The United States Army

THE STATE of ALABAMA, Jefferson County
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE WITHIN INSTRUMENT WAS FILED IN MY OFFICE FOR RECORD
NOV 5 1945
AT ____ O'CLOCK 29 M. AND DULY RECORDED IN VOL. ____ PAGE 551
OF ____ PAGE ____
R. Bruce McHarg
Judge of Probate

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to Certify, That* Oscar B Thomas

† Gen. Hospital # 11, Cape May N. J.

THE UNITED STATES ARMY, as a TESTIMONIAL OF HONEST AND FAITHFUL SERVICE, is hereby HONORABLY DISCHARGED from the military service of the UNITED STATES by reason of ‡ Hon. Dis. Par. Cir. 106 H.Q. A.U.S. 12/3/18.

Said Oscar B. Thomas was born in Kansas, in the State of Alabama. When enlisted he was 25 + mo. years of age and by occupation a Conductor. He had Brown eyes, Black hair, Medium complexion, and was 5 feet 10 inches in height.

Given under my hand at Camp Sheridan, Ala. this 5 day of Feb, one thousand nine hundred and nineteen

Washington, D. C., MAR 10 1919
Paid $60. under Act of Congress approved February 24th, 1919
C. E. Gray,
Major, Q. M. Corps.

Joseph E. Wilkerson,
Major Field Artillery,
Commanding.

Form No. 525, A. G. O. Oct. 9-18.
3—2164

*Insert name, Christian name first; e. g., "John Doe."
†Insert Army serial number, grade, company and regiment or arm or corps or department; e. g., "1,620,302"; "Corporal, Company A, 1st Infantry"; "Sergeant, Quartermaster Corps"; "Sergeant, First Class, Medical Department."
‡If discharged prior to expiration of service, give number, date, and source of order or full description of authority therefor.

WWI-099 Honorable Discharge for Oscar B. Thomas. NOTE: This page and the preceding page are the opposite sides of the same document.

The Purple Heart
and Oscar Burton [O.B.] Thomas

The Purple Heart - then called the Badge of Military Merit - originated during the Revolutionary War. Three soldiers from Washington's army received the award. After the Revolutionary War, no more Americans soldiers received the Badge of Military Merit.

Although a number of private efforts were made to have the medal reinstituted, it wasn't until January 7, 1931 that General Douglas MacArthur reopened the case. His object was to have a new medal issued on the bicentennial of George Washington's birth.

"A wound which necessitates treatment by a medical officer and which is received in action with an enemy, may in the judgment of the commander authorized to make the award be construed as resulting from a singularly meritorious act of essential service."

At that time the Navy Department did not authorize the issue of the Purple Heart, but Franklin D. Roosevelt amended that. By Executive Order on December 3, 1942, the award was extended to the Navy, Marine Corps, and the Coast Guard beginning December 6, 1941.

President Harry S. Truman retroactively extended eligibility to the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard to April 5, 1917, to cover World War I.

Oscar Burton Thomas was awarded the Purple Heart retroactively for wounds received in battle on July 26, 1918 during the First World War. His name is engraved on the

T-969

The Purple Heart - Then and Now

Attached to the piece of dark blue cloth is a purple heart of silk, bound with braid and edged with lace. The cloth is believed to be part of the uniform or the tunic of a soldier of the Continental Army.

There is no name, rank or regimental insignia on the piece of cloth. The Purple Heart is displayed in Washington, DC, at the Society of the Cincinnati's Anderson House Museum and another at Washington's Headquarters State Historic Site in Newburgh, New York. The Purple Heart itself is what signified a hero of the Revolutionary War.

The Purple Heart was awarded to three soldiers - Sgts. Elijah Churchill, William Brown, and Daniel Bissell Jr. On May 3, 1783, Churchill and Brown received the Purple Heart, then called the Badge of Military Merit, from Gen. George Washington, its designer and creator. Bissell received his on June 10, 1783. These three are the only known recipients of the award during the Revolutionary War.

On August 7, 1782, at his Newburgh, New York headquarters, Washington devised two badges of distinction to be worn by enlisted men and noncommissioned officers. The first was a chevron to be worn on the left sleeve of the coat. It signified loyal military service. Three years of service with "bravery, fidelity and good conduct" were the criteria for earning this badge; two chevrons meant six years of service.

The second, named the Badge of Military Merit, was the "figure of a heart in purple cloth or silk edged with narrow lace or binding." This badge was for "any singularly meritorious action" and permitted the wearer to pass guards and sentinels without challenge. The honoree's name and regiment were inscribed in a Book of Merit.

After the Revolutionary War, no more Americans soldiers received the Badge of Military Merit. It was not until October 10, 1927, that Army Chief of Staff, General Charles P. Summerall, directed a draft bill to be sent to Congress "to revive the Badge of Military Merit."

The Army withdrew the bill on January 3, 1928, but the Office of the Adjutant General filed all correspondence for possible future use.

Although a number of private efforts were made to have the medal reinstituted, it wasn't until January 7, 1931 that Summerall's successor General Douglas MacArthur, confidentially reopened the case. His object was to have a new medal issued on the bicentennial of George Washington's birth.

Miss Elizabeth Will, in the Office of the Quartermaster General, created the design from guide-lines provided her. The only difference in her design is that a sprig appeared where the profile of Washington is on the present Purple Heart.

John R. Sinnick of the Philadelphia Mint made the plaster model in May 1931. The War Department announced the new award on February 22, 1932.

After the award was reinstated, recipients of a Meritorious Service Citation Certificate during World War I, along with other eligible soldiers, could exchange their award for the Purple Heart.

At the same time, revisions to Army regulations defined the conditions of the award.

The Purple Heart - Then and Now {continued}

"A wound which necessitates treatment by a medical officer and which is received in action with an enemy, may in the judgment of the commander authorized to make the award be construed as resulting from a singularly meritorious act of essential service." At that time the Navy Department did not authorize the issue of the Purple Heart, but Franklin D. Roosevelt amended that. By Executive Order on December 3, 1942, the award was extended to the Navy, Marine Corps, and the Coast Guard beginning December 6, 1941.

President Harry S. Truman retroactively extended eligibility to the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard to April 5, 1917, to cover World War I.

President John F. Kennedy extended eligibility on April 25, 1962, to "any civilian national of the United States who, while serving under competent authority in any capacity with an armed force..., has been, or may hereafter be, wounded."

The Victory Medal

The photograph below is of the actual medal awarded to Oscar Burton Thomas. The ribbon at this date has become quite frayed. Notes about the history of the Victory Medal, and the specific bars on this one, continue on the next page.

T-973

The Victory Medal

WWI-40

The World War I Victory Medal was awarded for honorable service on active duty at any time between April 6, 1917 and November 11, 1918. Battle clasps were awarded for each of the major operations for those individuals actually present. O. B. Thomas' Victory Medal carries bars for the following three major battles of the First World War in which he was actively involved.

Champagne-Marne: 18 Jul - 6 Aug 1918
Aisne-Marne: 18 Jul - 6 Aug 1918
Defensive Sector

The actual Medal shown on the preceding page probably dates from early 1919, and so is almost one hundred years old. The ribbon shows some deterioration from age.

The three pictures below provide a clearer image of this medal {without bars}, both front and back.

T-970

T-971

WORLD WAR I VICTORY MEDAL

T-972

Oscar Burton Thomas was seriously wounded in late July, 1918 during the Second Battle of the Marne River. More specifically the locale was the Battle of Chateau Thierry, the location at which the last desperate drive of the German Army toward Paris was stopped. This is quite near the location of the Battle of Belleau Wood which has become famous in the history of the U.S. Marines.

After being wounded, O.B. Thomas was hospitalized for a time in France. When able to travel aboard ship he returned to the United States on board the USS Orizaba in November, 1918. The Armistice ending the war also was signed in November, 1918.

At the end of this main memoir section I have included an extensive photo appendix and other notes about the circumstances of his involvement in The Great War, i.e. The First World War. Also I have prepred a separate four volume set of materials about the Rainbow Division {the U.S. Army 47th Division}. There is far too much material about the Rainbow Division for it to have been included in this photo memoir.

USS Orizaba (ID # 1536, later AP-24), 1918-1919 and 1941-1945. Also served as U.S. Army Transport Orizaba

S.S. Orizaba, a 7652 gross ton (11,293 tons displacement) passenger liner, was built at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, for the New York and Cuba Mail Steamship Company. She was requisitioned by the Navy when nearing completion in April 1918 and, in late May, was placed in commission as USS Orizaba (ID # 1536). During the remaining months of World War I the ship made six trips across the Atlantic, carrying over 15,000 American service personnel to France. Following the November 1918 Armistice, Orizaba briefly assisted in repatriating former prisoners of war. Early in 1919 she made the first of nine voyages transporting U.S. veterans home from the former combat zone. In early September 1919, after the completion of this important task, Orizaba was decommissioned and transferred to the U.S. Army. She was later returned to her owners and commenced commercial activity.

Early in 1941 Orizaba was purchased by the War Department and rejoined the U.S. Army Transportation Service. She made one voyage as USAT Orizaba, and was then turned over to the Navy, which placed her in commission as USS Orizaba (AP-24) in mid-June 1941. She served actively in the Atlantic area during the next two-and-a-half years, making voyages to, among other places, South Africa, Brazil, Iceland, England, North Africa, and the Caribbean area. Late in 1943 the veteran steamship passed through the Panama Canal to begin operations in the War's other great theater. From then until the Spring of 1945 Orizaba carried out vital transportation missions throughout the vast Pacific Ocean. Decommissioned in April 1945, she was overhauled for transfer abroad under the Lend-Lease program. Recommissioned in mid-July of that year as the Brazilian Navy's Duque de Caxias, she performed transport and training roles until 1960.

The two photos and the following historical information about the USS Orizaba were found on the internet from:

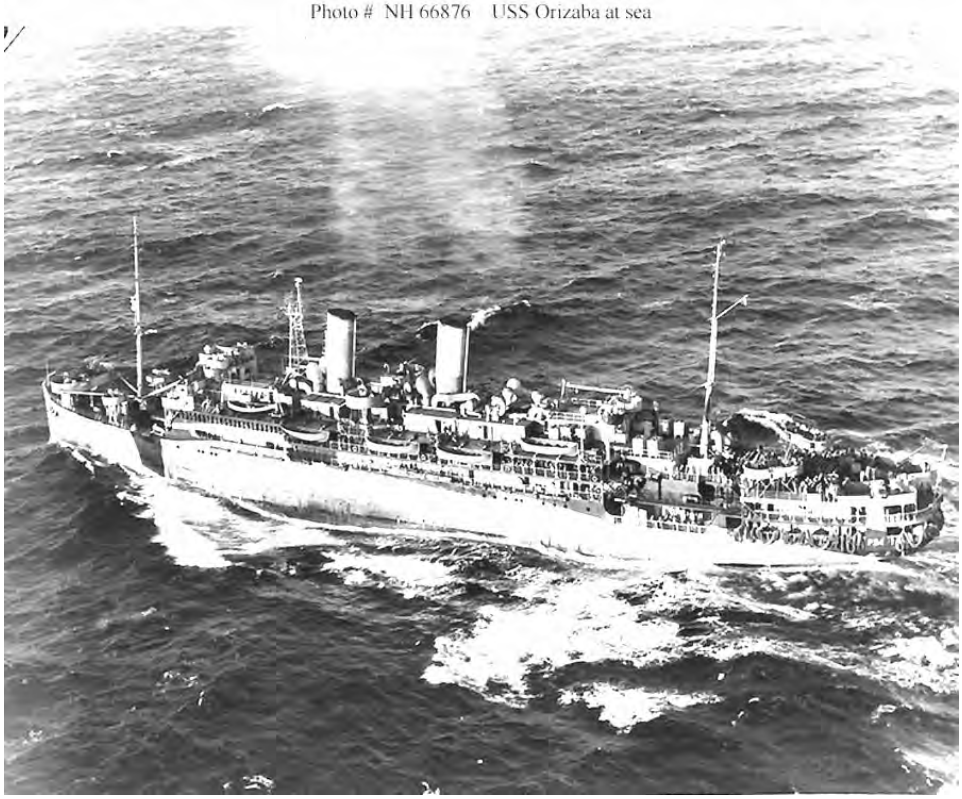
DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY -- NAVAL HISTORICAL CENTER
805 KIDDER BREESE SE -- WASHINGTON NAVY YARD
WASHINGTON DC 20374-5060

Online Library of Selected Images:
-- U.S. NAVY SHIPS --

USS Transport Ship ORIZABA. O. B. Thomas returned to the US on November 25, 1918 on this ship. More notes about the ship are on the preceding page.

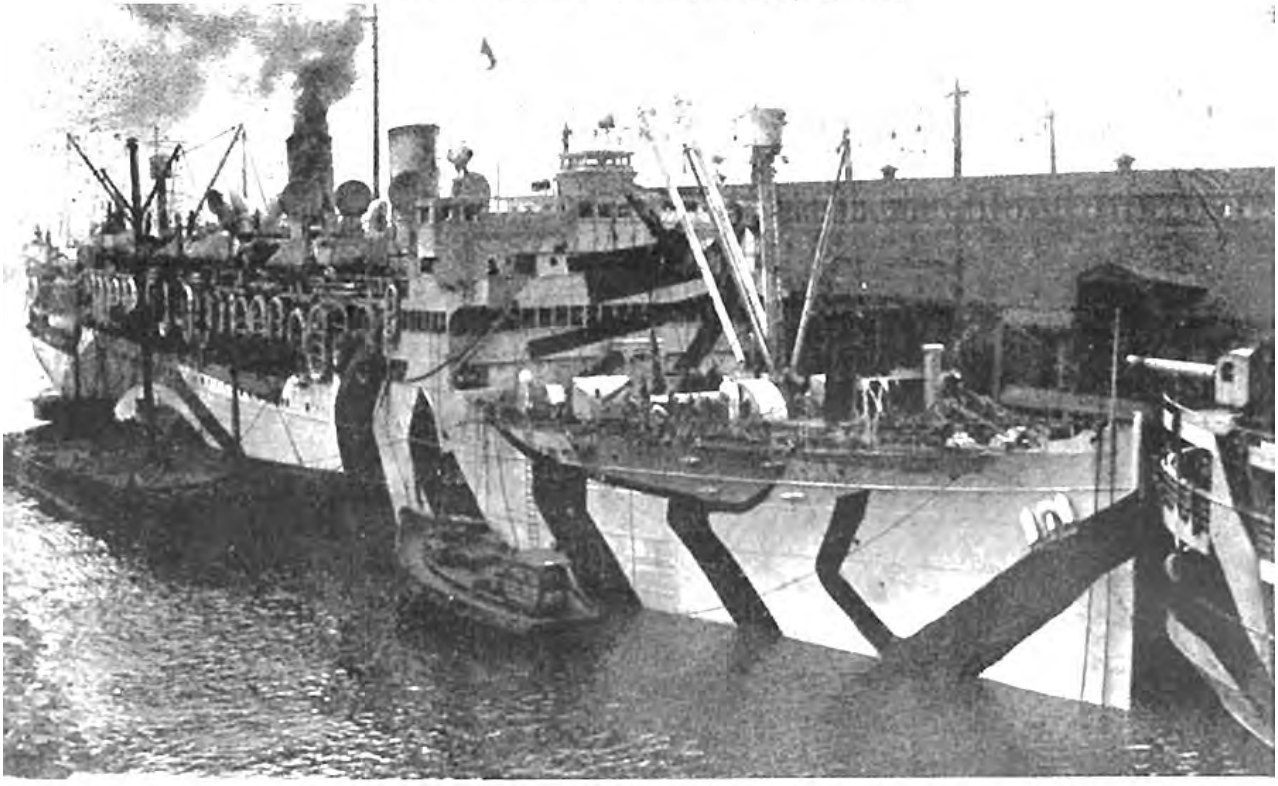
WWI-074
at right

Photo # NH 66876 USS Orizaba at sea



WWI-075
below

Photo # NH 76047 USS Orizaba in port, 1918



U. S. S. ORIZABA (U. S. F.S.

T-031

Oscar Burton Thomas {standing} and an unknown soldier friend. Vichy, France .. some time in the autumn of 1918. O.B. was severely wounded on July 26, 1918. He was in a hospital for an unknown time, and then was in mobile recovery. I presume that the hospital and recovery facility was near Vichy.

One can see the bandage still on his chin where he was wounded by gunfire.

He left to return to the US in November, 1918. Upon arriving in the U.S. he then spent time at a military hospital at Cape May, New Jersey before returning to Camp Sheridan near Montgomery, Alabama for discharge from the army.

The following pictures are from that time at Cape May, New Jersey.

NOTE: Vichy was the location of the Frency collarobationist government during the German occupation in the Second World War.

T-031.crop

T-034

At Cape May, New Jersey. Soldiers with two visiting ladies from a nearby community. Their elegant very wide brim hats are especially interesting. Since O. B. arrived back in the US around early December, it's obviouis that this was wintry weather.

T-035

T-170

T-037

More general scenes from the Army Hospital area at Cape May, New Jersey. After living in New Jersey for six years 1957-1963, we have a clear recollection of the cold and raw wintry days, especially along the shoreline.

T-040

T-036

T-188

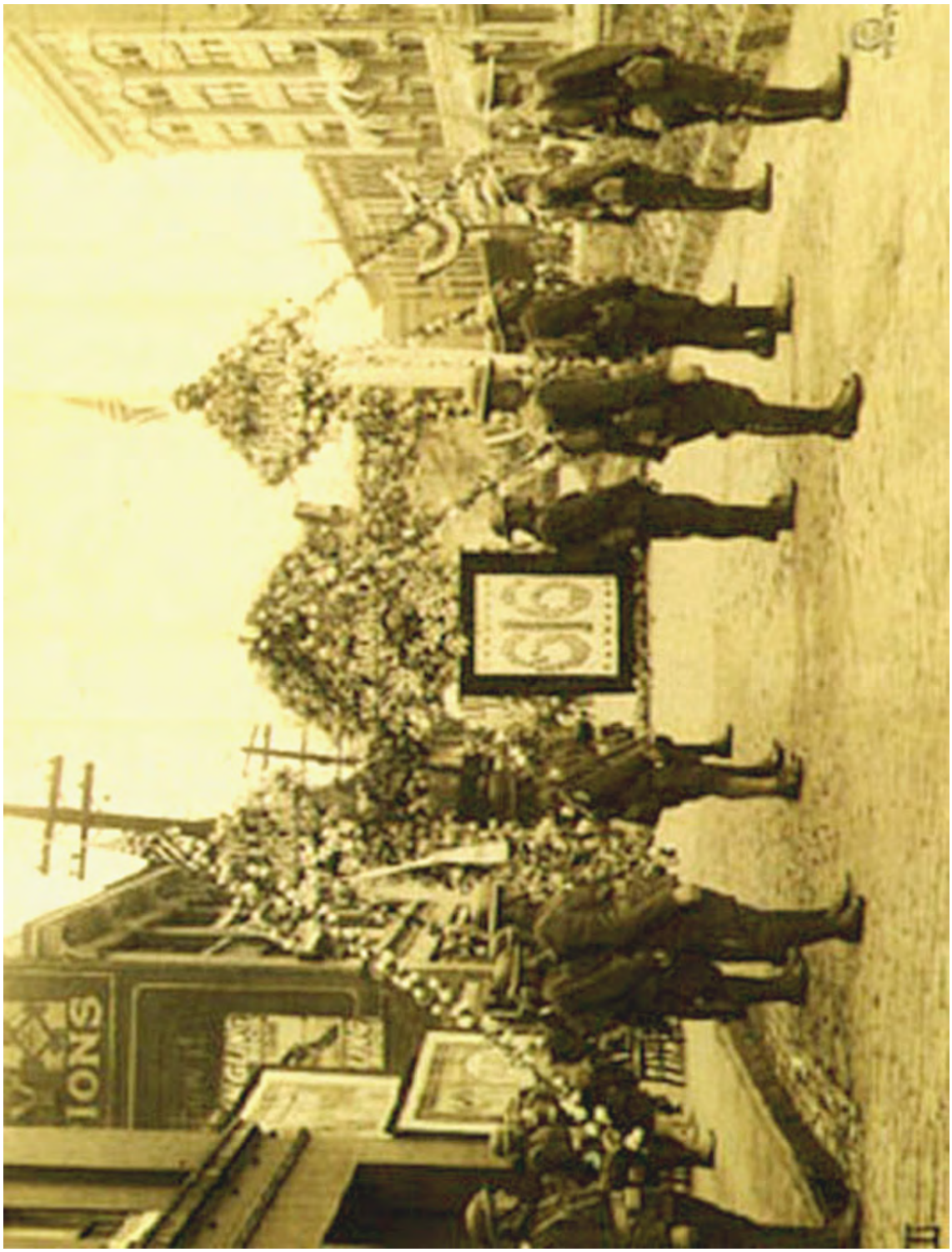
T-173

T-020

T-167

More general scenes and people from the Hospital at Cape May, New Jersey. The hospital shows in the background of T-167. At one time it had been an elegant resort hotel. During the 1957-63 time when Carl and Martha lived in New Jersey, we visited the location with Susie Mae, O.B.'s widow. By then the hotel was an abandoned building.

T-029r



Preparations for a return victory parade by the 167th Infantry of the Rainbow Division in Montgomery, Alabama. This was the former Fourth Alabama National Guard Infantry. The sign “616” indicates the number of casualties sustained by this group during the fighting in France. O. B. Thomas had already returned to the U.S. and been honorably discharged before this return victory parade in Montgomery.

WWI-135 A Victory Arch erected in Montgomery, Alabama to celebrate the return of the 167th Infantry of the 42nd Rainbow Division. This was the old Fourth Alabama Infantry.

SUPPLEMENTAL PHOTOS

Beginning here there are a few pages of photos and notes that were added after the preceding 48 pages were completed. It would have been a major editorial task to insert them into the earlier text, renumber pages and reprint those already completed and printed.

WWI-105

During the early part of The Great War the German army broke through in a drive toward Paris and the situation seemed ominous for France. More information can be obtained from maps elsewhere in this memoir.

The French government mobilized the entire taxi fleet of Paris to carry additional French troops to the front lines and stop the German drive. This effort became a famous part of French history of The Great War.

The red taxi shown above was from that fleet. It is now on display in a military museum in Paris, France.

WWI-028

Ernest Hemingway was a Red Cross ambulance driver during The Great War. He later became a highly successful American novelist.

WWI-50

WWI-086

General John Joseph {Black Jack} Pershing, Sept. 13, 1860 - - - July 15, 1948. Pershing commanded the military expedition into Mexico to pursue Pancho Villa. After that he became the commander of all American Army forces in France during The Great War.

WWI-078

Winston Churchill with top hat at left: November 30, 1874 - January 24, 1965. He was First Lord of the Admiralty for a time during The Great War .. a position similar to our Secretary of the Navy.

Earlier he had been in military combat in what is now Pakistan, The Sudan, and in the Boer War in South Africa.

He was involved in planning the disastrous military attack on the southern flank of Turkey at Gallipoli, and was forced to resign as First Lord of the Admiralty.

He is remembered primarily as the pugnacious Prime Minister of Great Britain during the Second World War. He liked to sign correspondence as “Former Naval Person.”

In 1953 he won the Nobel Prize in Literature for his historical writings.

WWI-087

Czar Nicholas and Czarina Alexandria of Russia with two of their children at left. The Czarina was a granddaughter of Queen Victoria of England.

A later picture is shown below. Their son, seated in front below, was a hemopheliac, which can cause serious bleeding. His mother, in desparation for a cure, brought a “mad” Russian monk, Rasputin, into the royal palace where he acquired great influence. Rasputin was murdered by unnamed people who resented or feared his influence on the royal family.

Because of repressive policies, there was great unrest in Russia even before it became involved in The Great War. That war brought about the final collapse of the government and the emergence of a communistic system in Russia.

The entire royal family as shown below was murdered by revolutionaries July 17, 1918. For many decades there was a legend in Europe that one of the daughters, Grand Duchess Anastasia Nikolaevna, had escaped and was living incognito somewhere in Europe.

WWI-084

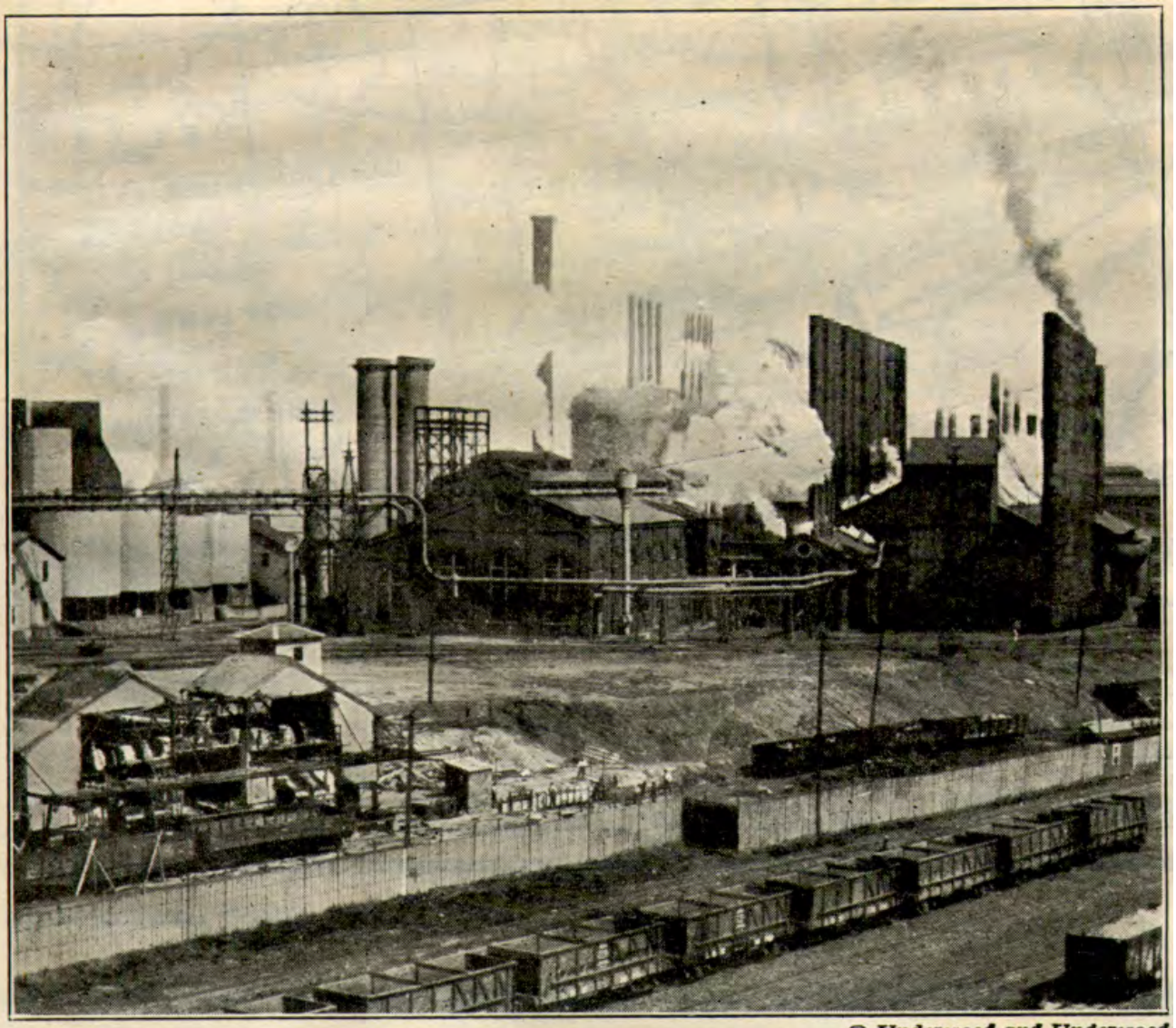


FIG. 23. — One view of the steel works at Ensley, just outside of Birmingham, Alabama, where now munitions of war are made.

Birmingham, Alabama was founded as an industrial city because of the availability of coal, iron ore and limestone in abundance and in close proximity to each other. These are the three fundamental supplies for a basic iron and steel industry. Birmingham was a major supplier of iron and steel during both The Great War {The First World War} and the Second World War.

Appendix 1

Oscar Burton Thomas

More Maps & History For His Involvement In The Great War

A MAP HISTORY OF
OSCAR BURTON THOMAS'
INVOLVEMENT IN THE GREAT WAR
1917-1918

Previous sections of this memoir narrate how O. B. Thomas enlisted in the Fourth Alabama Infantry in mid 1917. That became the 167th Infantry of the 42nd Rainbow Division.

After training in Alabama and in New York, he sailed for England in late 1917. Soon afterward he, along with others of the Rainbow Division, moved over to France.

The American forces did not have the intensive kind of training and battle experience that the British and the French armies had. Thus the British and the French wanted the American forces to be used in small groups as replacements under their commands.

General Pershing refused this approach and insisted in maintaining the U.S. forces as integral units.

The following series of maps provide a visual narrative of O. B. Thomas' involvement until he was wounded in the Aisne-Marne {Chateau Thierry} Battle in late July, 1918

I can't reall that he ever even mentioned any of the intense, often hand to hand, fighting that he experienced .. first in the Champagne-Marne Battle and then in the Aisne-Marne Battle. From widespread reading in the preparation of this memoir I now can understand that the fighting and the loss of life must have been beyond description.

He often told of some experiences in the training and then in the Defensive Sectors during their early months in France.

••• He disliked the Red Cross and said that they "sold" things to the ordinary soldiers, but would socialize only with the officers.

••• He relished a story about how his platoon hijacked a wagon load of Red Cross goodies and then gave them away to the other troops.

••• On the front lines in the Defensive Sectors he said that the US and German trenches often were so close that they sould shout insults at each other, and throw rocks. He did not mention that in those areas the troops also threw hand grenades at each other's trenches.

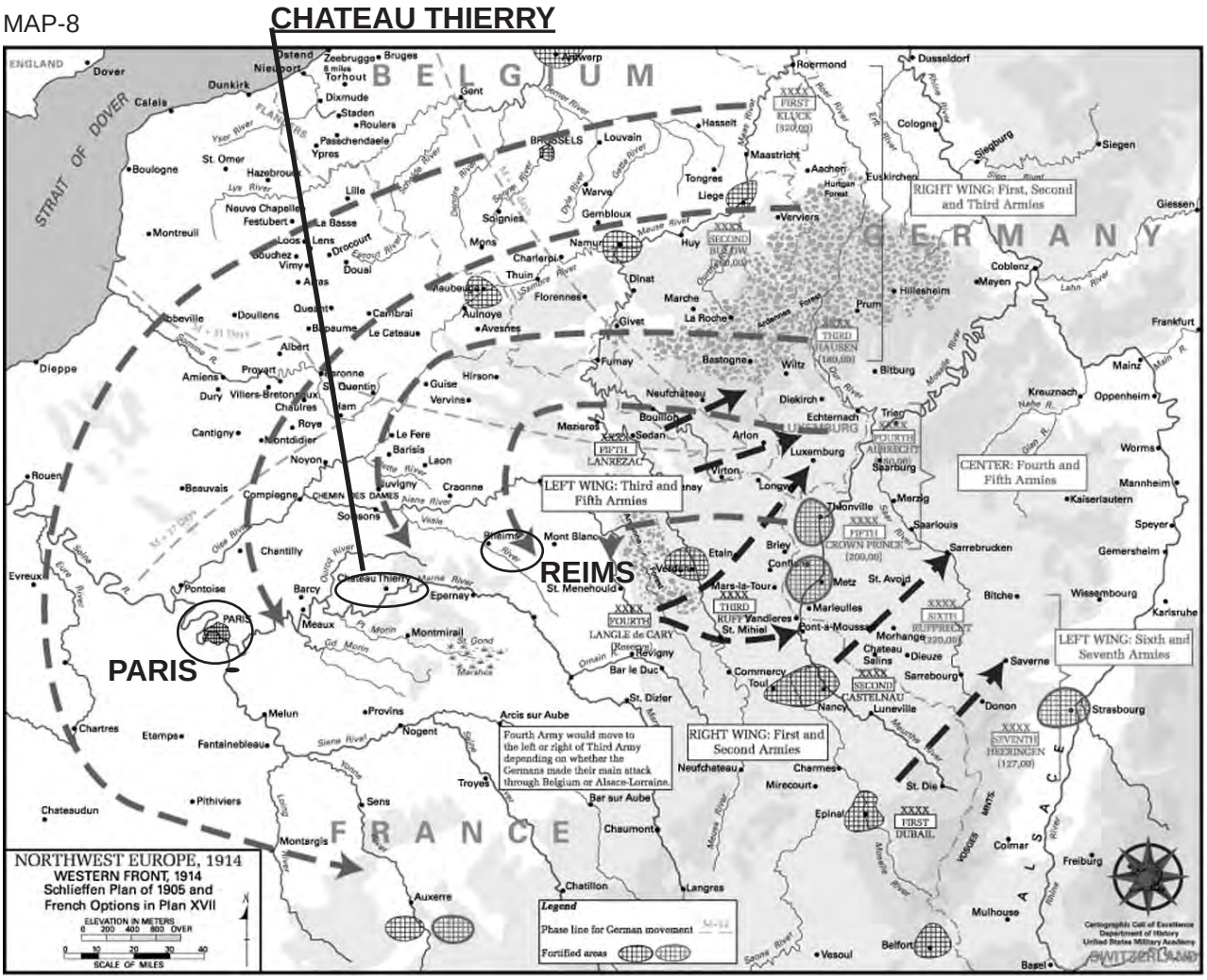
••• He told about how he and others would scout in "no man's land" between the trenches, crawling on their stomachs thru the mud. They would carry wire cutters to cut through the barbed wire. It was necessary to put a rag around the wire and the wire cutter so that the "snip" sound would not be heard by the Germans.

••• Living and sleeping in the trenches ... often in water up to their knees ... was an awful life. The trenches must have stunk because of having latrines in small niches off the main trenches. Soldiers often were afflicted with "trench foot", a kind of fungal decay arising from the conditions.

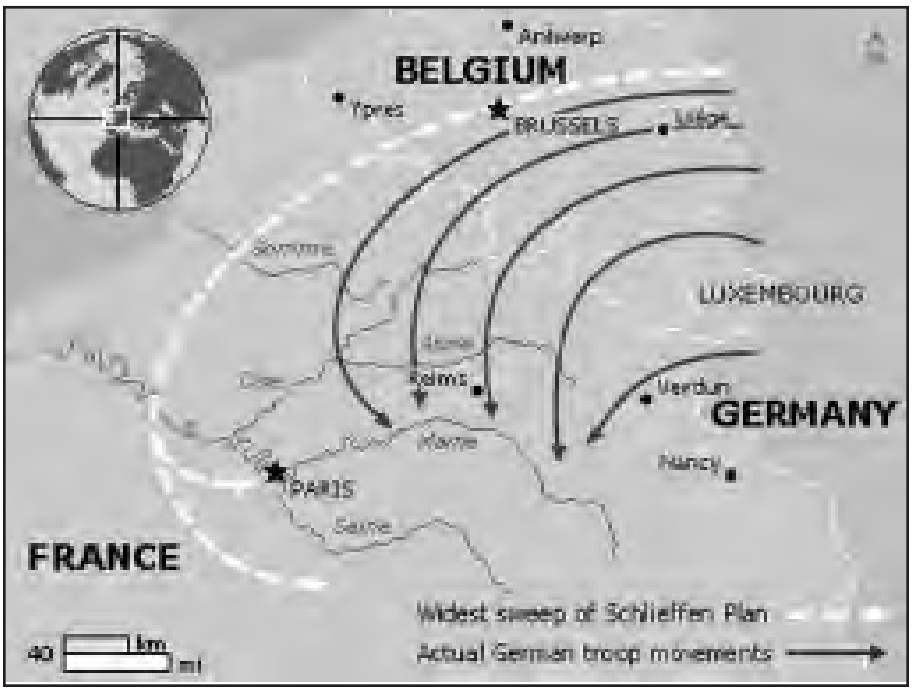
After he was wounded by a gunshot in the jaw, he was taken to a medical facility some where in the rear. He did tell how it was necessary to wire his upper and lower jaws together until the shattered bones healed. During that time he had to always carry a small wire cutter, fastened to his waist by a light chain. That was so he could cut away the wires in his jaw if he should become nauseated or choked on food or liquid.

A photo, made in a studio at Vichy, France, is in the preceding section. It shows his lower jaw still bandaged. The date is unknown, but shortly afterwards he returned to the U.S. for further medical treatment.

MAP-8



MAP-9



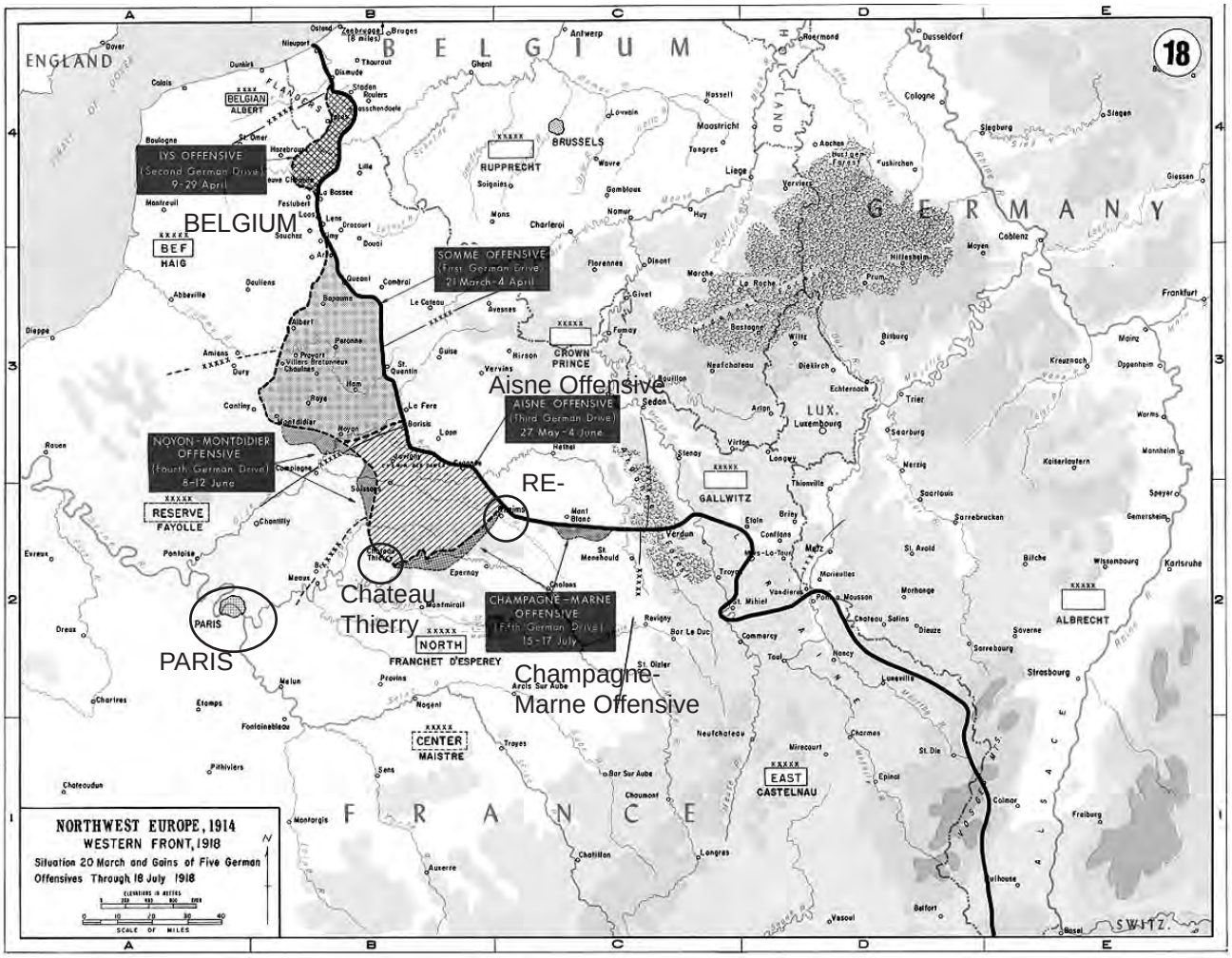
Northwest Europe, 1914. The arrows above and at the left indicate the general idea of the German Schlieffen Plan of 1905 for the invasion of France. It involved a sweep through Belgium, then south to the Marne and the Seine Rivers to envelop Paris. The most westward part of that plan never materialized.

Belgium was again victim of a simliar military maneuver in the Second World War.

Reims, an old cathedral city northeast of Parisin was near the center of hostilities. in both wars. Verdun and Ypres, th-elocations of two major battles in The Great War are shown on these maps.

NORTHWEST EUROPE 1914

MAP-4



The war in Europe was concentrated primarily in the shaded bulges shown in the map above. Most of it was in the area of the German flanking movement through Belgium, as shown generally in the Schlieffen Plan on the preceding page. This was an area roughly 150 miles wide and 50 miles or so deep .... with other activities to the side, such as the Champagne-Marne Offensive to the east of Reims. Within this very small area the armies of Germany, France, England, and later the United States managed to inflict an incredible slaughter on each other.

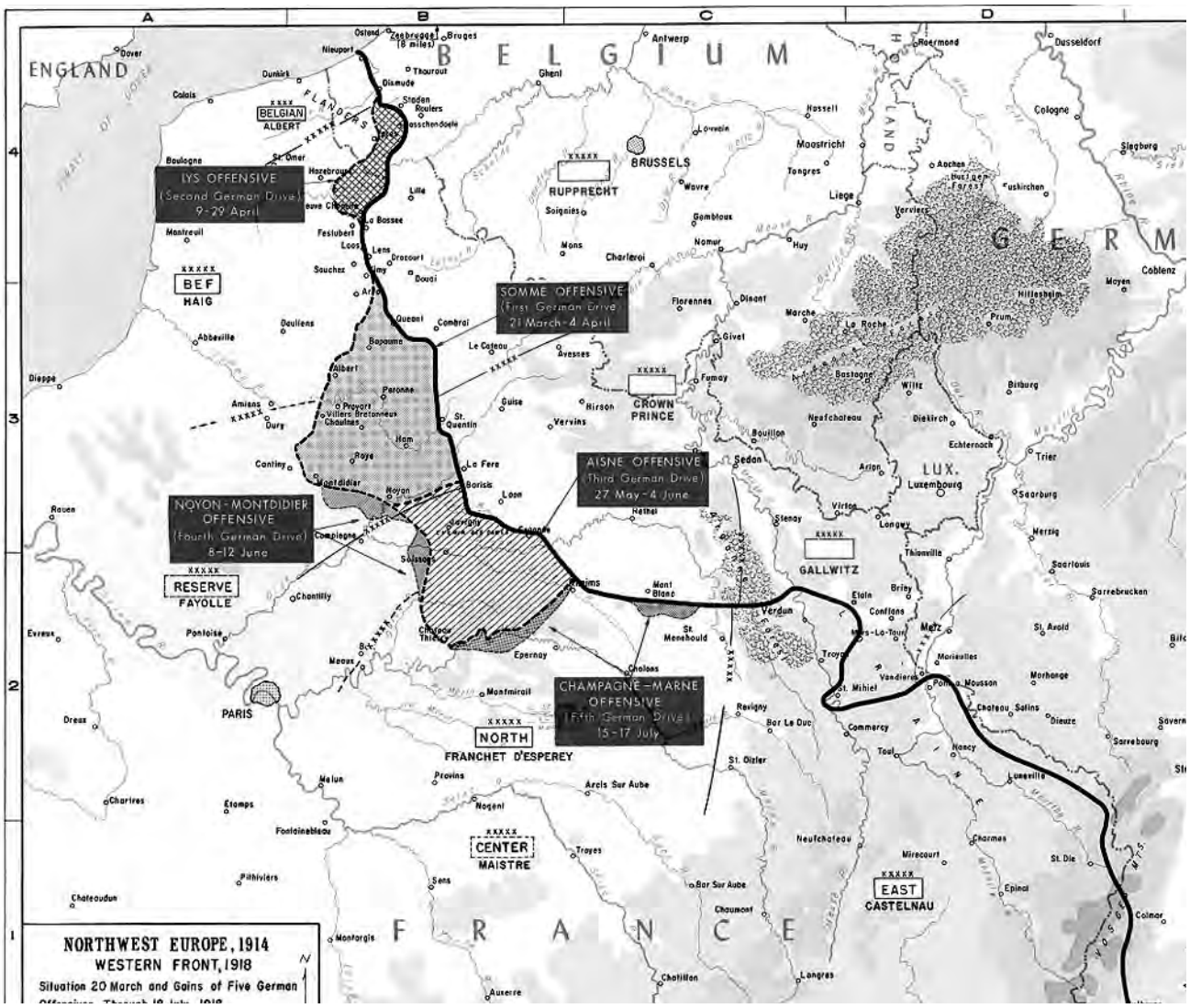
There were other areas of conflict: i.e. the Middle East in the area of what now is Iraq and Saudi Arabia, in east Africa, along the frontier with Italy, and for the Germans an eastern front with Russia.

That led to the collapse of the Russian government so that in 1918 the German Army was able to shift a large number of troops to the same general area shown above in a final and desperate effort to break through to Paris.

In between 1914 and 1918 the war stagnated into trench warfare - - with very little movement more than a few miles one way or another - - but still with immense slaughter in a number of pitched battles.

BATTLE OF VERDUN

MAP-4



The Battle of Verdun was in 1916. The location is about 20 miles east of Reims and can be placed in relation to the total front line by reference to the preceding maps.

Verdun was one of many famous pitched battles during which there were enormoous losses on both sides, but litttle physical movement ... often no more than a mile or so in either direction.

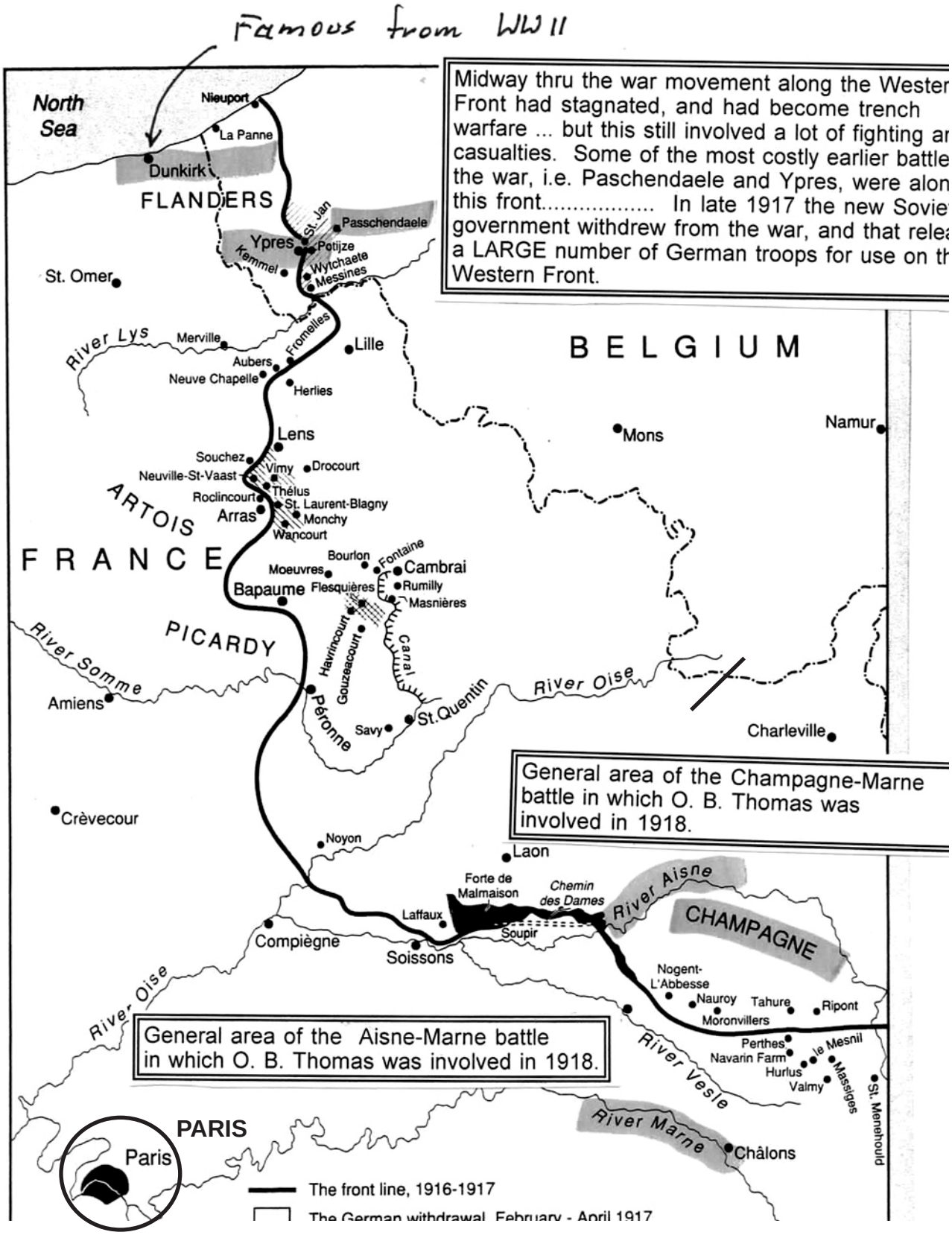
More details about those fruitless battles can be found in a separate four-volume set I have prepared about the 42nd Rainbow Division during The Great War.

Notes and maps here are much briefer, since they are oriented toward the involvement of Oscar Burton Thomas in The Great War.

WESTERN FRONT 1916-1917 {West side of Germany}

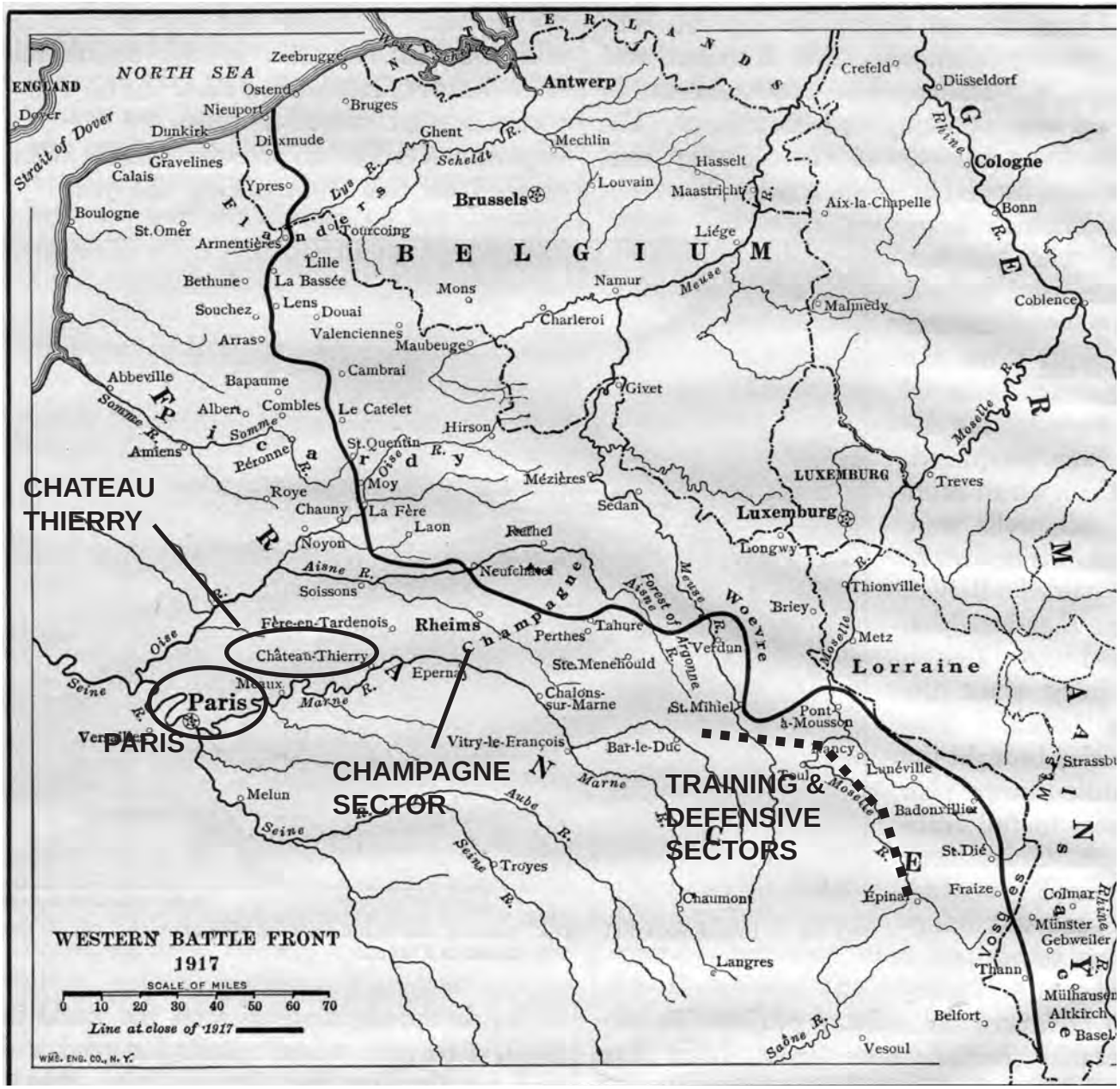
The US Army began arriving in France toward the end of 1917. The war was still more or less bogged down into static trench warfare.

MAP-16



WESTERN BATTLE FRONT at close of 1917. WAR MAPS-6

This was about the time that the U.S. Army forces began to arrive in France.

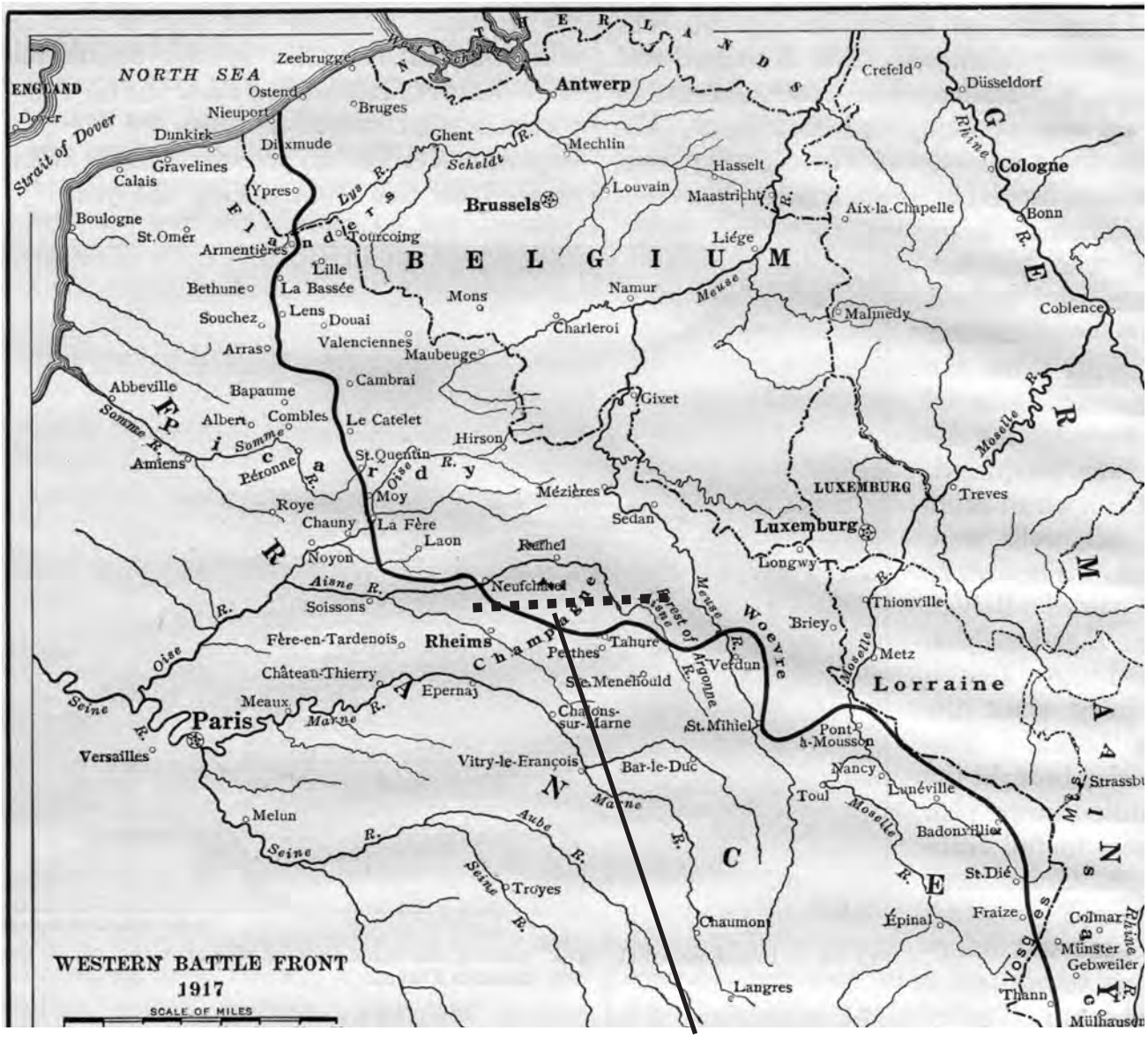


MAP-3 Compare with the preceding map to illustrate how little actual movement there was along the Western Front during 1916-1917. In fact a famous novel arising from The Great War was “All Quiet On The Western Front,” although to the troops it certainly was NOT quiet.

Initially both the French and the British wanted American units to be distributed and blended in with their forces as replacements. General Pershing refused this approach, insisting that the U.S. forces fight as American units. Since the arriving American forces had insufficient training, they initially were moved into quieter areas behind the front lines, in the southeast corner of this map ... toward the Swiss Border.

As their training progressed they were moved into front line positions along one of the quieter and more stable parts of the front lines, generally east of St. Mihiel and south of Lorraine, as shown by the dashed line above. .... In the early summer they were moved westward into much more active fighting in the area of Champagne. Eventually they were moved even further west to help stop the German drive in the vicinity of Chateau Thierry.

WESTERN FRONT, July 15, 1918



MAP-5 **Champagne-Marne Sector**

Compare with the front lines shown on the preceding map, which were at the close of 1917. By June-July, 1918 the German army was trying to consolidate its strengths, moving troops away from the Eastern Front with Russia and into the Western Front with the European allies.

The intent was again to try to break throuh to Paris and thus end the war with a German victory, ending what had been a war of attrition.

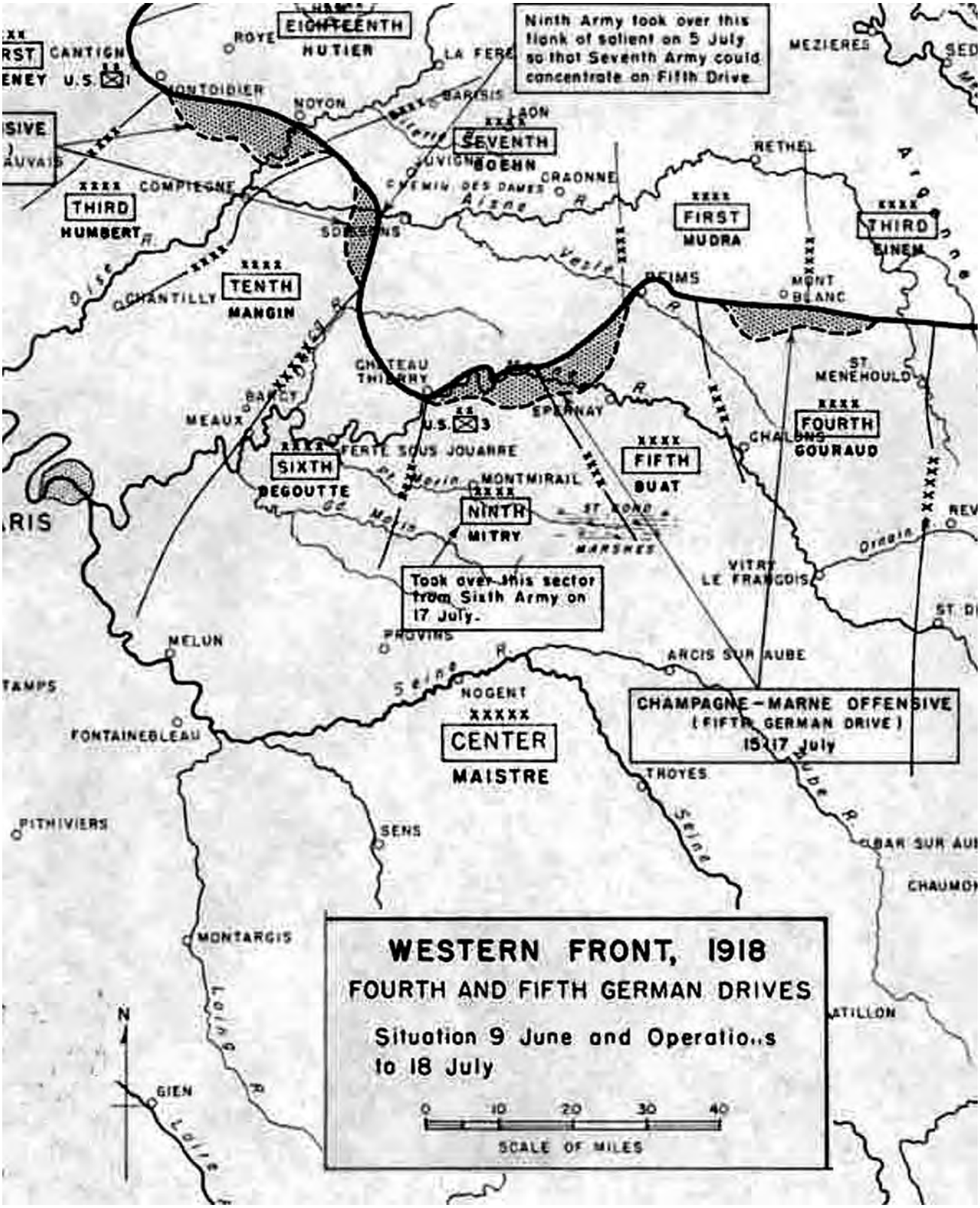
The evolution of those events is shown here and in the remaining maps of this Appendix.

As part of the effort to stop the German drive, the 42nd Rainbow Division along with other US divisions was first moved a bit to the west to face the Germans in what became known as the Champagne-Marne sector. See the heavy dashed line above and the following maps.

WESTERN FRONT, June 9-July 18, 1918

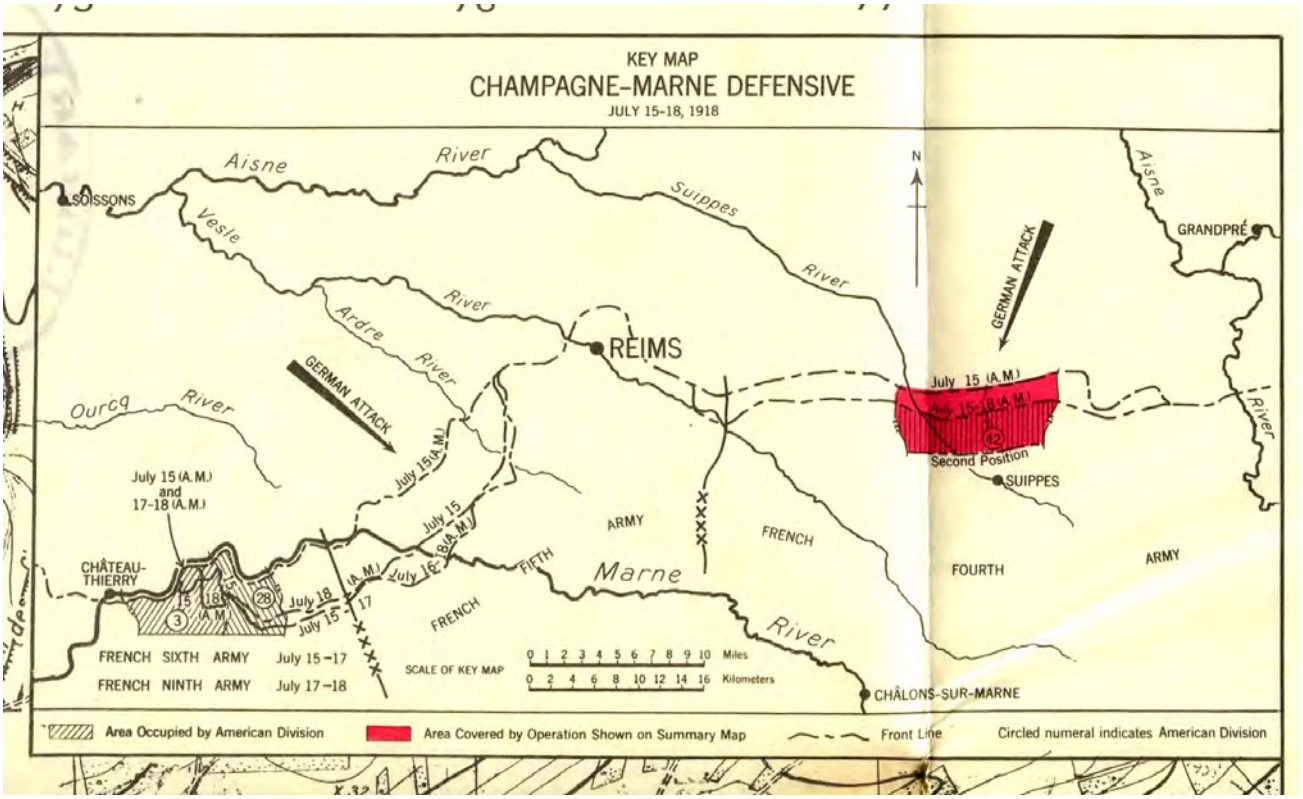
WAR MAPS-8

MAP-10

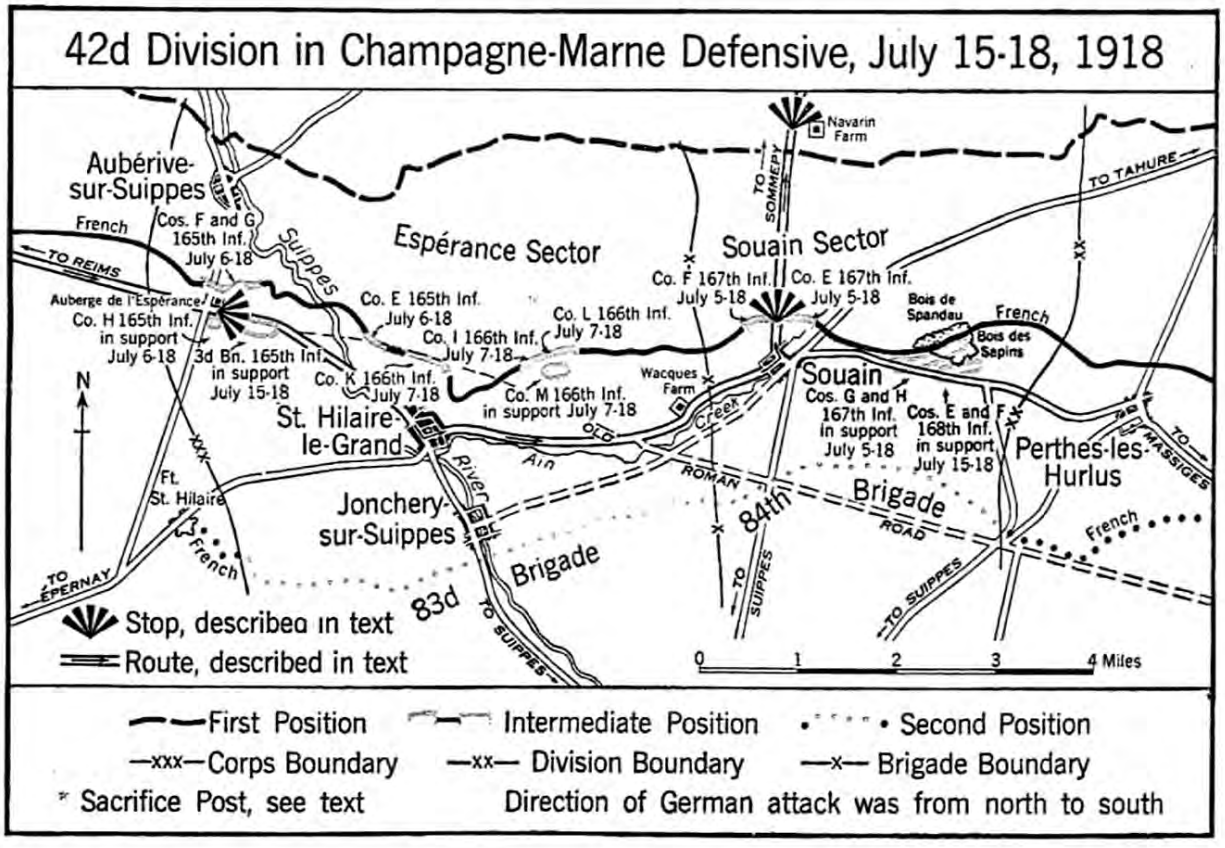


CHAMPAGNE-MARNE SECTOR, July, 1918

MAP-7



MAP-14

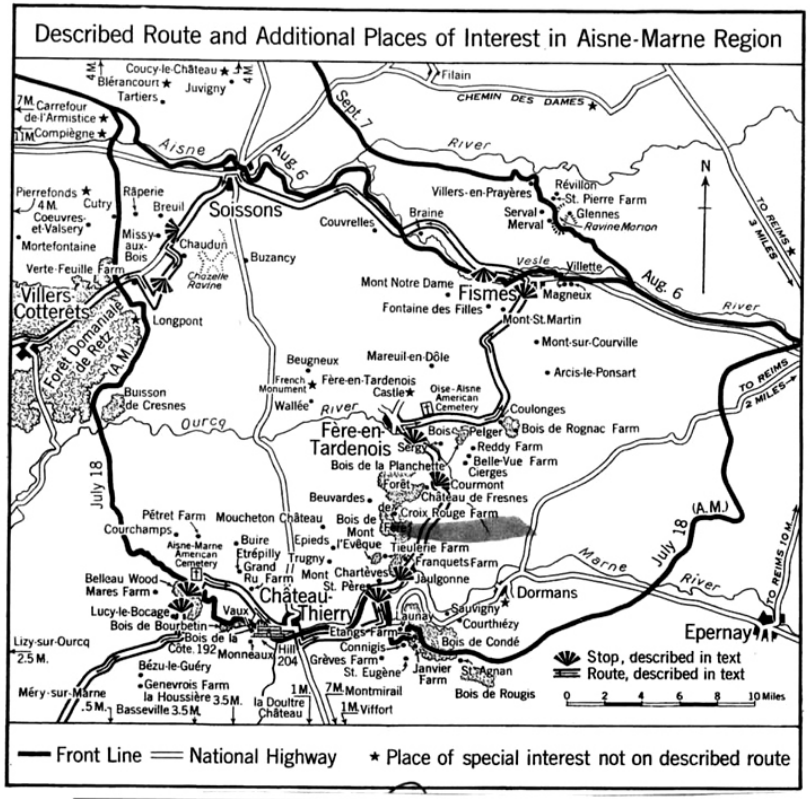


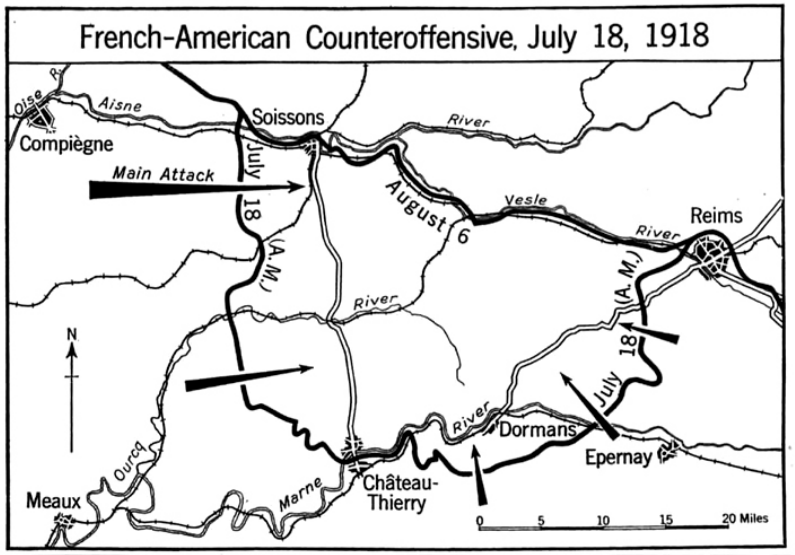
COMPREHENSIVE VIEW .... AMERICAN PARTICIPATION IN THE ALLIED OFFENSIVE OF 1918

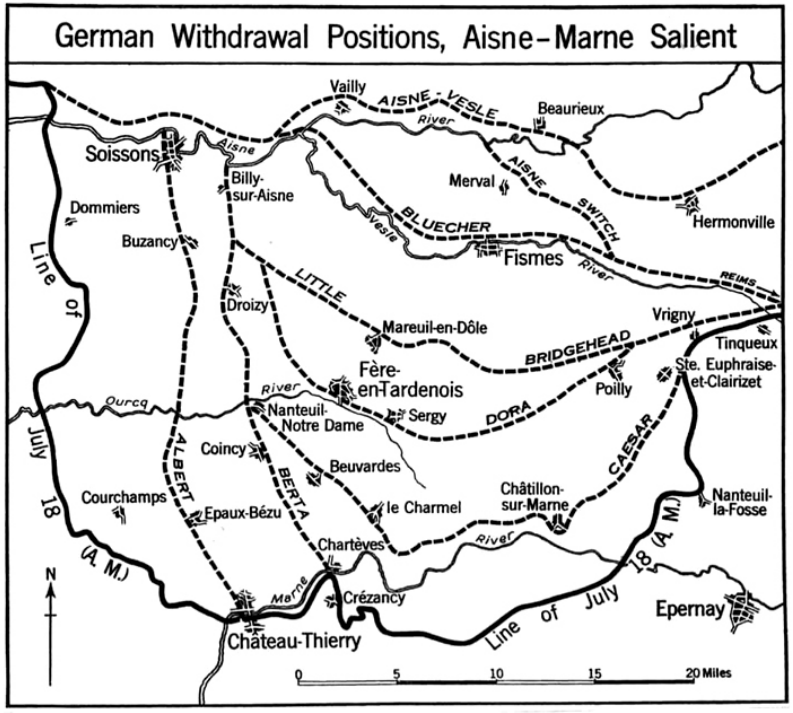
MAP-12

The above map provides a summary view of the Allied army movements in 1918 that finally broke the back of the German army, thus leading to the end of the war and the Armistice of November 11, 1918

The Rainbow Division had been moved westward to engage the German army near Chateau Thierry. O. B. Thomas was seriously wounded in that Aisne-Marne battle. After he was wounded and moved to the rear, the Rainbow Division again moved to the east for further engagements in the Meuse-Argonne and near St. Mihiel.



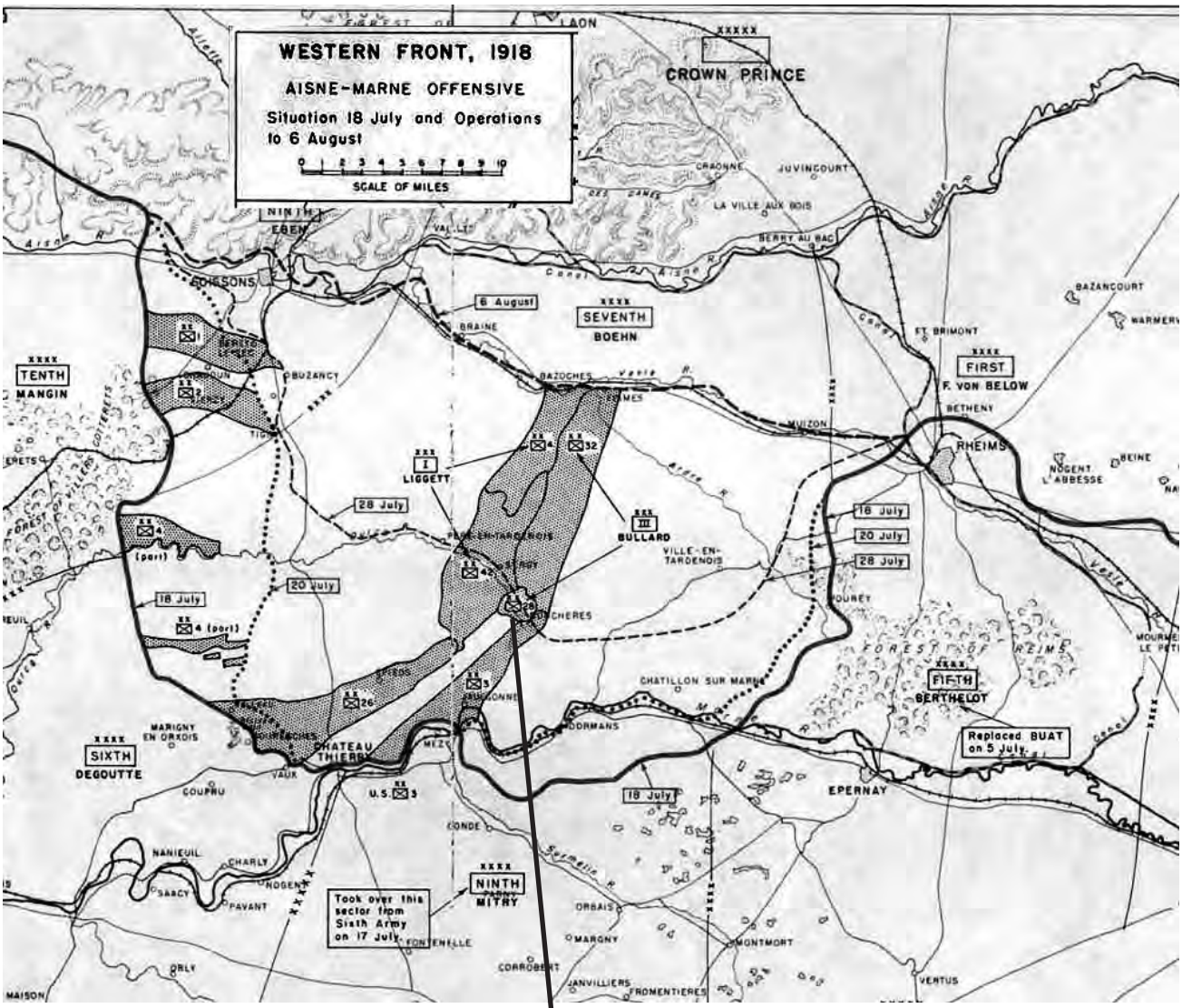




These three maps show the overall area of the German salient down to Chateau Thierry on the Marne River. This was the most direct route toward Paris {off to the left from Chateau Thierry}. The scale indicates that the salient was about 30 miles wide and 30 miles "deep" at the maximum penetration. In this small area there were a number of very large scale and fierce battles, with hand-to-hand fighting and high casualty rates. O. B. Thomas was severely wounded at the Batttle of the Croix Rouge Farm on July 26, 1918.

AISNE-MARNE OFFENSIVE ... July 18 - August 6, 1918.

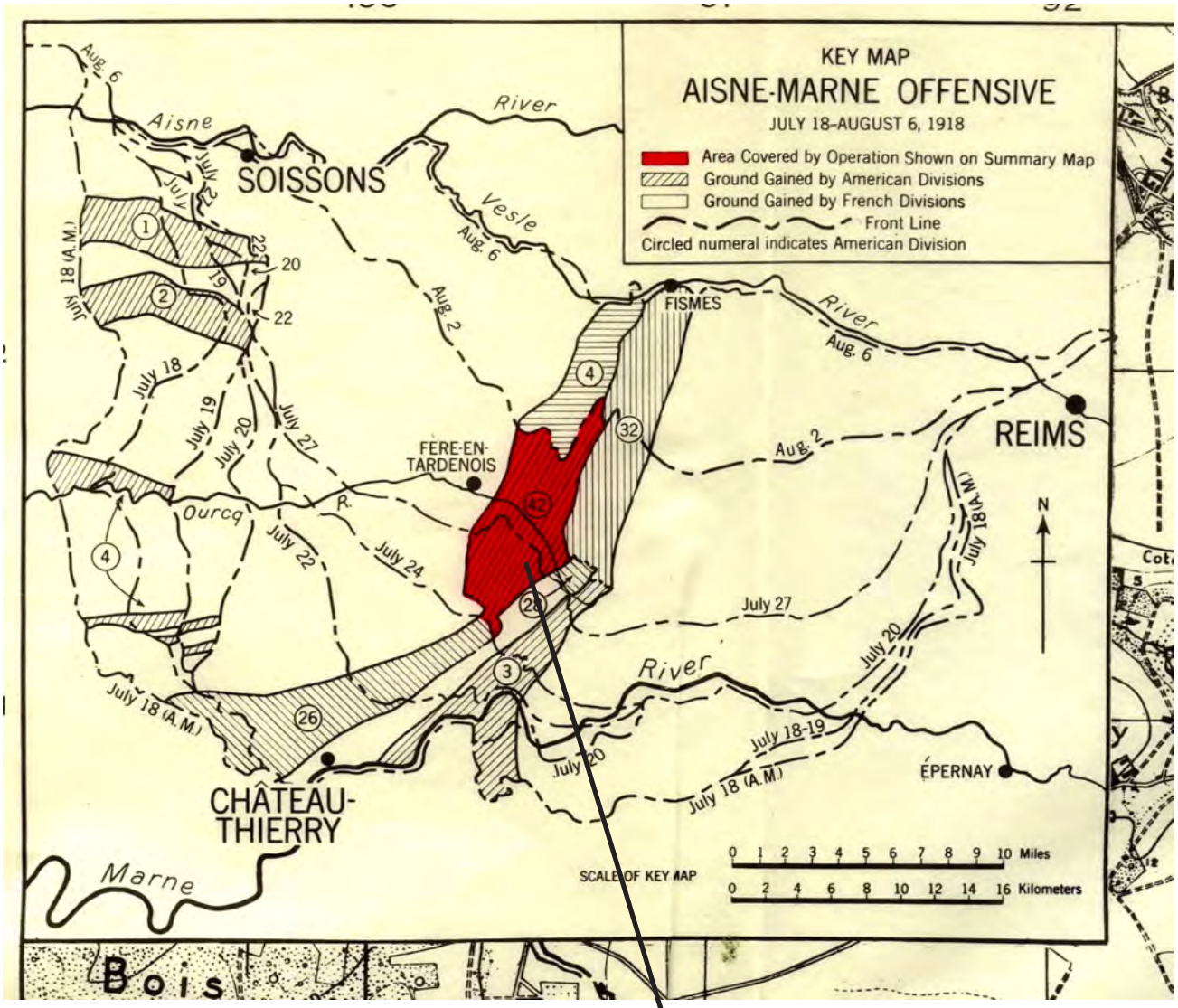
MAP-11



The 42nd Rainbow Division was very heavily involved in this battle that turned the tide of The Great War and led to the capitulation of Germany on November 11, 1918.

More details of this area are shown on the next few pages.

MAP-6



Approximate location where O. B. Thomas was wounded. See more detail in the following maps.

The 42nd Rainbow Division was heavily involved in the dark shaded area above. See dashed lines indicating the lines of advance for July 24 and July 27.

Since O. B. Thomas was wounded on July 26, these lines place him at the approximate location pointed to above.

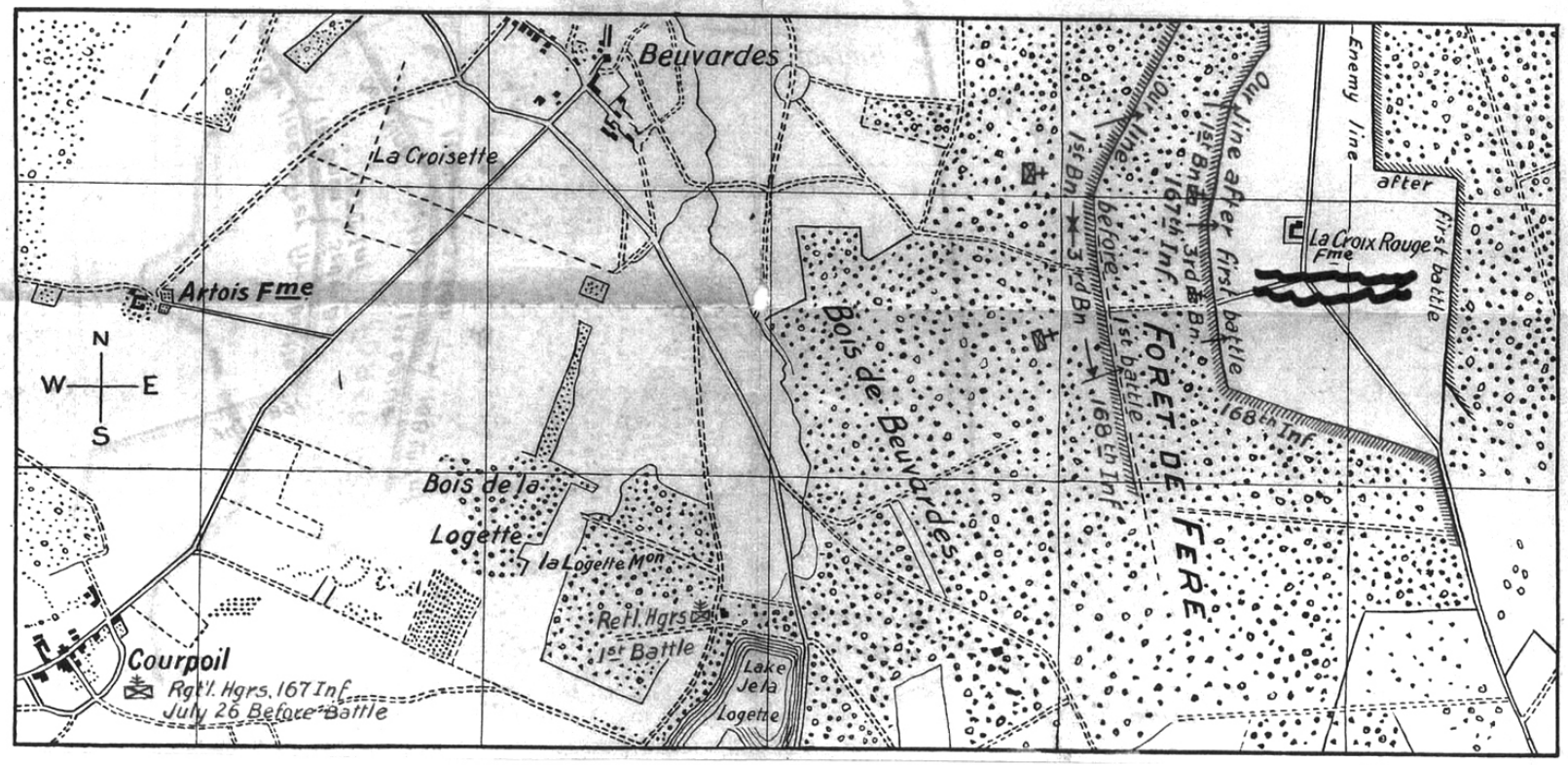
Colored areas except as otherwise indicated show ground gained b
American units in the Aisne-Marne Offensive July 18–August 6
▨ Ground gained by American units June 4–July 17
🟩 Ground gained by American units in the Oise-Aisne Offensive August 18–October 12
🟨 Ground gained by French divisions July 18–October 12
② Large circled numeral in a colored area indicates the American division which fought there
④ Small circled numeral indicates part of American division which fought attached to another division
Scale 1/200000
0
5
10 Miles
0
5
10 Kilometers
SOISSONS
FISMES
CHÂTEAU THIERRY
Aisne
Vesle
River
Canal
Ourcq
Marne
Villers-en-Prayères
Révillon
Merval
Baslieux
Guyencourt
Poilly
Arcis-le-Ponsart
Dravegny
Cohan
Coulonges
Chamery
Château du Diable
Fismette
Ville-Savoye
Bazoches
St. Thibaut
Chéry-Chartreuve
Mareuil-en-Dôle
Nesles
Sergy
Courcelles
Braine
Mont Notre Dame
Couvrelles
Sermoise
Billy-sur-Aisne
Arcy-Ste. Restitue
Droizy
Hartennes
Villemontoire
Buzancy
Berzy-le-Sec
Tigny
Parcy-Tigny
Vierzy
Vauxcastille
Chaudun
Ploisy
Hill 165
Breuil
St. Amand Farm
le Mont d'Arly
Missy-aux-Bois
Cravançon Farm
Maison-Neuve Farm
Beaurepaire Farm
Dommiers
Cutry
Coeuvres-et-Valsery
le Verte Feuille Farm
Longpont
Corcy
Chouy
Noroy-sur-Ourcq
Buisson de Cresnes
Oulchy-le-Château
Breny
Nanteuil-Notre Dame
Fère-en-Tardenois
Seringes-et-Nesles
Villers-sur-Fère
Forêt de Fère
Coincy
Rocourt-St. Martin
Beuvardes
Cierges
Roncheres
Courmont
le Charmel
la Croix Rouge Farm
Jaulgonne
Chartèves
Mont St. Père
Epieds
Bezu
Gland
Chierry
Blesmes
Fossoy
Crézancy
St. Eugène
Conde-en-Brie
Celles-les-Condé
Sauvigny
Courthiézy
Soilly
Dormans
Epaux-Bézu
Hill 204
Vaux
le Gonetrie Farm
Bouresches
Bois de Belleau
Belleau
Torcy
Hill 193
les Brusses Farm
Triangle
Lucy-le-Bocage
Paris Farm
Montreuil-aux-Lions
Coulombs
Chézy-en-Orxois
Neuilly-St. Front
Rassy
Priez
Courchamps
Chevillon
Hautevesnes
June 4
July 15
July 18 (AM)
July 18
July 19
July 20
July 21
July 27
August 1
August 2
August 6–Sept. 3
Sept. 4
Sept. 7
1
2
3
4
20
26
28
32
42
77

This map is from "Alabama's Own in France," by William H. Amerine, 1919.

There is no scale shown on this old Amerine map. But ..... by estimating from the larger Amerine map, the distance from Beuvardes to the east side of the Red Cross Farm seems to be about 1.5 miles. So, the the farm width shown here may be about 1/3 mile. There was VERY heavy hand to hand fighting here, and Oscar B. Thomas was wounded here by machine gun fire on July 26, 1918.

CHATEAU THIERRY OFFENSIVE

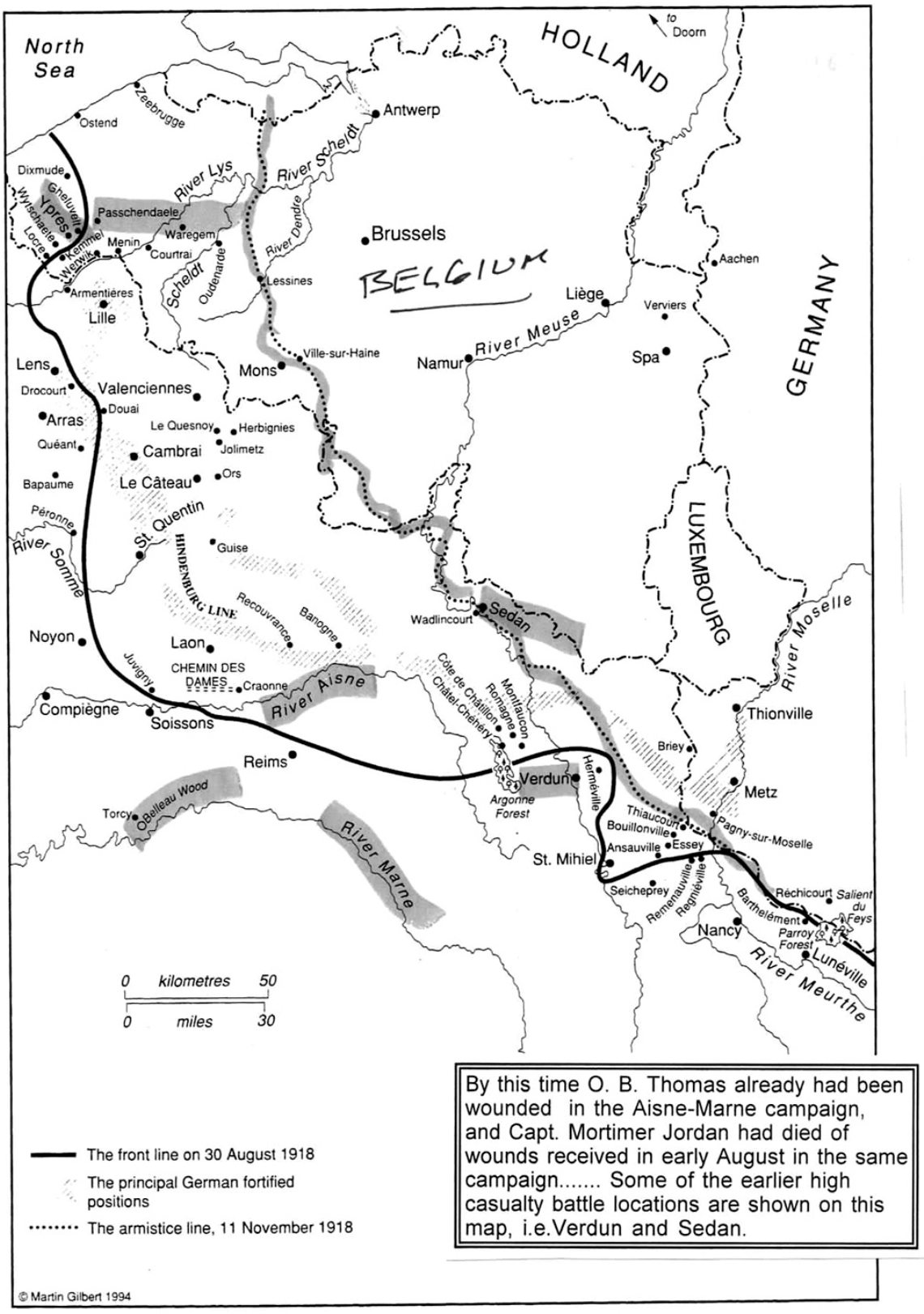
BATTLE OF 167TH INFANTRY FOR LA CROIX ROUGE FARM, JULY 26



Battle of the Red Cross {Croix Rouge} Farm. See the lines for the 167th and the 168th Infantry of the Rainbow Division along the western edge of farm. This was the area in which Oscar Burton Thomas was wounded on July 26, 1918. Dates for various lines of advancement are shown in other maps of this appendix.

WESTERN FRONT, Last Three Months of The Great War

MAP-18



By this time O. B. Thomas already had been wounded in the Aisne-Marne campaign, and Capt. Mortimer Jordan had died of wounds received in early August in the same campaign..... Some of the earlier high casualty battle locations are shown on this map, i.e.Verdun and Sedan.

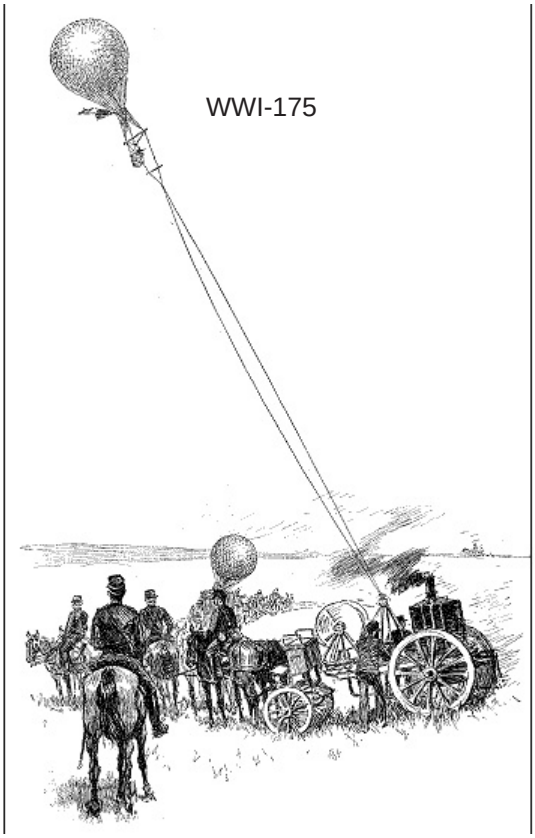
26 The Western Front, the last three months

Appendix 2

Aircraft Use During The Great War

Aircraft Use During The Great War

The ability to observe enemy arms and troop locations and movements has always been a basic need of the military. The advent of the hot air balloon in the late 1700s offered a new way to accomplish this. Balloons were used during the Crimean War and the U.S. Civil War in the mid 1800s. Some use during the French Revolution of the late 1700s, and even earlier in China is reported in historical materials. Balloon use was the first step toward the use of "aircraft" in military operations. Winged powered aircraft were first introduced during the First World War, also known as The Great War.



WWI-175

Balloons were used occcasionally during the Crimean War, which was a bit earlier than the US Civil War. The sketch at the left is from that war. Also, there are reports that balloons were used as early as the French Revolution.

Unmanned hot air balloons are mentioned in Chinese history. Zhuge Liang in the Three Kingdoms era, Shu Kingdom, used airborne lanterns for military signaling.

The first clearly recorded instances of balloons capable of carrying passengers used hot air to obtain buoyancy and were built by the brothers Josef and Etienne Montgolfier in Annonay, France. They were from a family of paper manufacturers who had noticed the ash rising in fires. After experimenting with unmanned balloons and flights with animals, the first balloon flight with humans on board took place on 21 November 1783.

The first military use of aircraft took place during the French Revolutionary Wars, when the French used a tethered hydrogen balloon to observe the movements of the Austrian army during the Battle of Fleurus (1794).

WWI-136

Hot air balloons were employed during the American Civil War. An early photo of a Union Army observation balloon is shown at the left.

Though the military balloons used by the Union Army Balloon Corps under the command of Prof. Thaddeus S. C. Lowe were limp silk envelopes inflated with coke gas or hydrogen, the Confederate Army did attempt to counter with a rigid Montgolfier style hot air, or "hot smoke balloon." Captain John R. Bryant inflated his rigid cotton balloon with a fire of oil-soaked pine cones. The balloon was soon captured by Union forces as the Confederate's techniques of balloon handling were not competent.

Note that several of the pictures here and on the next page are “double pictures.” These were made with a double lens camera to simulate the spacing between the human eyes, and thus get perspective. The double pictures could then be viewed with a hand held device called a Steriopticon, and one would get a three dimensional impression. For historical interest, I have retained the double images whenever available.

WWI-176 above: Lord Roberts Army advancing toward Johannesburg during the Boer War in South Africa, 1899-1902. Observation balloon in the background.

WWI-174 above: The Parseval-Seigsfeld “Drachen” was invented in 1893 and was built in large numbers during WW I. It was flown up to about 5,000 feet altitude. The elongated shape and the bulbous “rudder” appendage eliminated the problem of the balloon rotating in the air and thus causing confusion for the observer and for people on the ground getting the observer’s reports.

WW I Aircraft--3

WWI-170 Officer in the car of an observation balloon testing the telephone. WWI, date and location not known.

WWI-173 A British balloon during WW I. The date and location are not known.

WWI-171 Car of observation ballon in mid-air, showing the parachute attachment {although the nature of the parachute attachment is not obvious.}

Introduction of the "Powered Balloon," i.e. the dirigible, generally known at the Zeppelin

Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin became interested in constructing a "dirigible balloon" after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870/1871, where he witnessed the use of French balloons during the siege of Paris. He had also encountered the military use of such aircraft in 1863 during the American Civil War, in which he participated as a military observer on the side of the Union. He began to seriously pursue his project after his early retirement from the military in 1890 at the age of 52.

Convinced of the potential importance of aircraft, he started working on various designs shortly after leaving the military. He eventually purchased the rights to the designs of Croatian inventor David Schwarz after that inventor died suddenly before successfully flying. His first aircraft drew heavily on Schwarz's design.

In 1898 Count Zeppelin founded the Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Luftschiffahrt (company for the promotion of airship flight), contributing more than half of its 800,000 Mark share capital himself.

Construction of the first Zeppelin airship began in 1899 in a floating assembly hall on the Bodensee in the Bay of Manzell, Friedrichshafen. This location was intended to facilitate the difficult starting procedure, as the floating hall could easily be aligned with the wind. The prototype airship LZ1 (LZ for "Luftschiff ('Airship') Zeppelin") had a length of more than 300 feet and was driven by two 14.2 horsepower Daimler engines.

The Zeppelin design was elongated, in a kind of cigar shape, for aerodynamic reasons. The gas, however, was contained in several balloons inside that structure. Also, the crew and operating control room, bomb racks, and other equipment were inside the elongated shell. The engines were suspened outside in "nacelles." With some of the early German military Zeppelins, there was access to a machine gun operating station outside the shell on top of the Zeppelin.

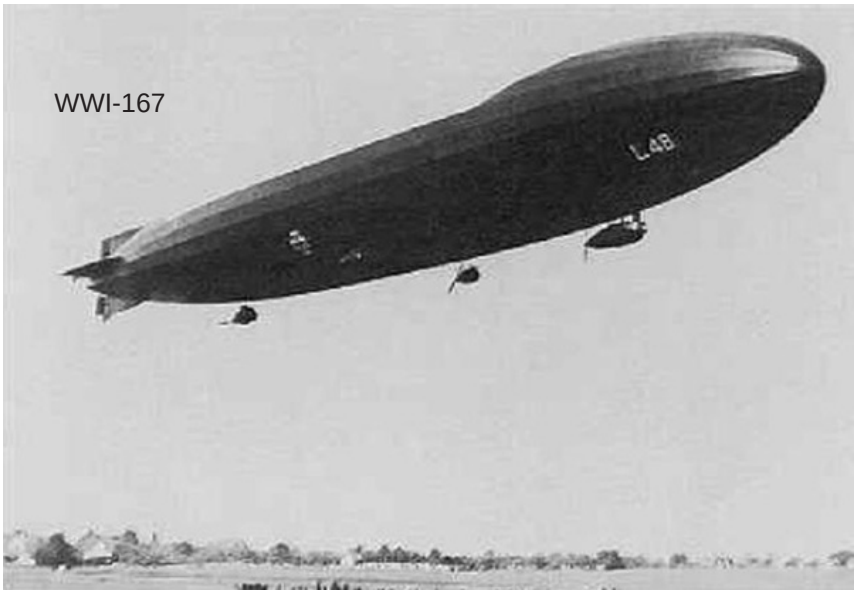
WWI-166 Howard Hughes' 1930 movie "Hell's Angels" was about air warfare in Europe during WW I. In the movie there is a long part about an attempted bombing raid on London by a German Zeppelin. There is extensive film coverage of the arrangements inside the Zeppelin bomber, which appear to be reasonably correct in an historical sense. In the movie the Zeppelin bombing raid ends in total disaster. Jean Harlow starred in the movie.

A large number of actual WWI aircraft were used in the movie. The movie was made only 11-12 years after the end of WW I, so many of the originals of those aircraft were still available.

Drawing of the Zeppelin L3, the first lighter-than-air bomber. This machine had brief life, only one month, because it was destroyed by its same crew forced to a landing of fortune in Denmark (Studio Kronos/Mondadori)

WWI-169 Although the source information for two of these pictures states that they are “drawings”, they appear to actually be photo-graphs.

WWI-167



Drawing of the superb airship Zeppelin L48. Its superior aerial technology was not exploited by the Germans for the fear of the attacks of the English fighters (Study Kronos/Mondadori)

WWI-168

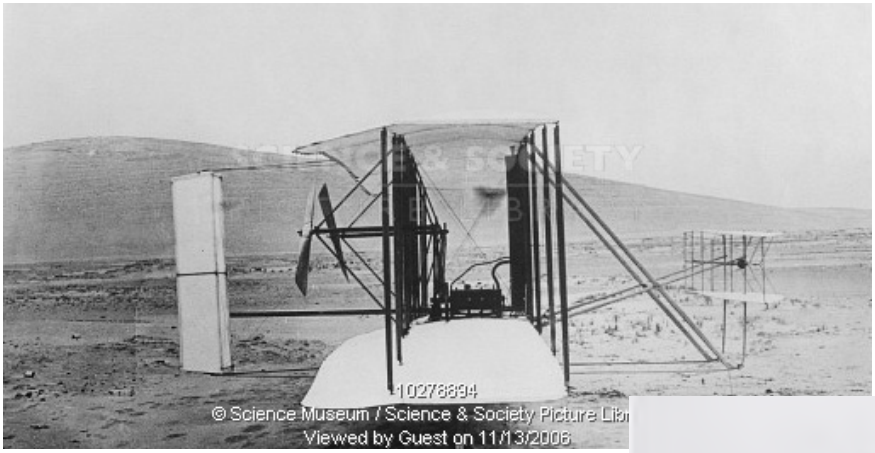
Early Days of Powered and Winged Flight
The Wright Brothers

By 1900 a number of people in the US, Europe, and South America already were trying to develop methods for powered and controllable winged flight. Langley, for example, was one of several doing so in the U.S.

Credit for the first success is almost universally given to the Wright brothers, bicycle mechanics from Ohio. Their work demonstrated that they were developing detailed technical understanding of the many problems, and that especially in the troublesome area of controlled flight they were first.

In 1902, the Wright brothers were successful with a glider. Although the 1902 flyer was the first truly effective, heavier-than-air craft, it didn't have a propulsion system, therefore is only as a glider, and not as an airplane. The problem for the Wrights in 1903 was to develop a powered machine.

Their first successful powered flight was in the "Flyer" at Kitty Hawk, NC on December 17, 1903. Their success encouraged the brothers to abandon their bicycle business and to start an aircraft production company in 1909 ..... only a few years before the start of WW I.



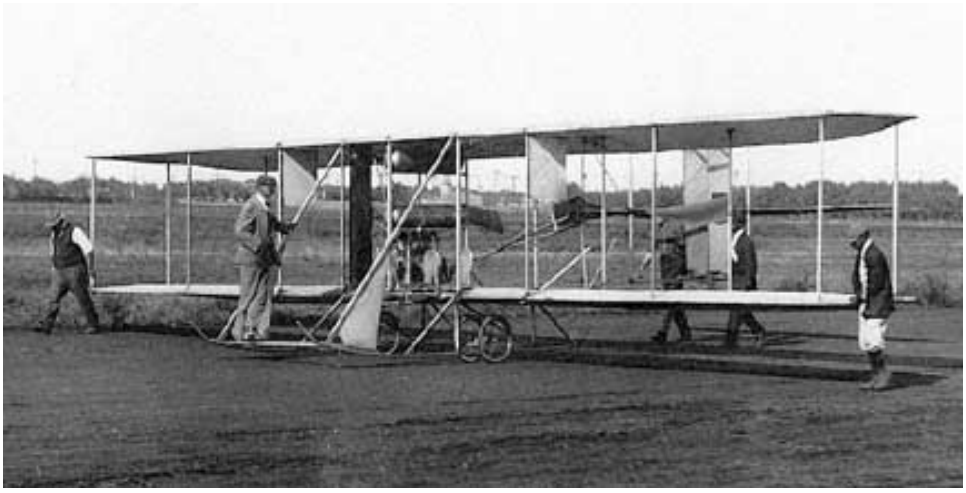
WWI-165 Three views of the Wright brothers 1903 "Flyer" are shown here.

WWI-164

WWI-177

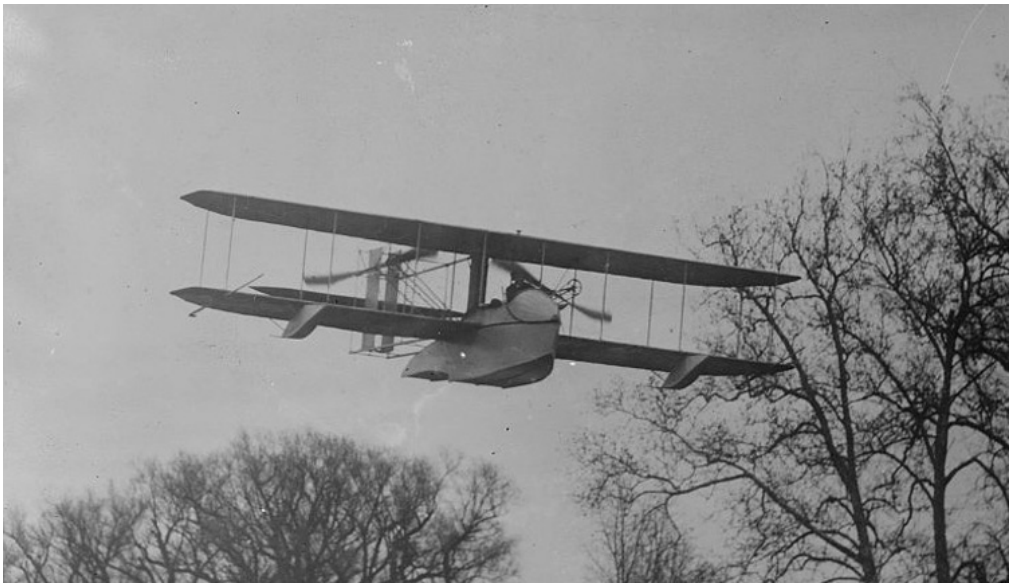
Progress Before the Start of WW I

WWI-160 Wright brothers
Type A, in flight August 24, 1909



WWI-162 Wright brothers 1912 Model B.

WWI-161 Wright Model G Aeroboat, over the Miami River near Dayton, Ohio, 1913.



Progress Before the Start of WW I

The Bleriot XI, designed by Louis Bleriot, was constructed of oak and poplar. Flying surfaces were covered with cloth. It used a three cylinder 25 HP engine, which offered one hour of flying time. Wing warping {instead of ailerons} was used for flight control, a method introduced earlier by the Wright brothers.

On July 25, 1909 Bleriot successfully crossed the English Channel from France to England in 36.5 minutes. There was fog and generally bad weather. He did not even have a compass to help guide his flight. The rain, fortunately, helped keep the engine cool. He made a very rough landing on the English coast and won a one thousand pound award from the London Daily Mail newspaper.

The flight across the English Channel generated great publicity. By September, 1909 Bleriot had received orders for 101 of his Bleriot XI from private owners as well as from the French military.

At the outbreak of WWI in 1914 the British Royal Flying Corps brought 23 Bleriot XIs into France that it had purchased earlier The specifications were:

80 HP Gnome engines
Wing span 33 ft 9 in
Length 27 ft 6 in
Empty weight 770 lb
Gross weight {with a crew of two} 1,307 lb
Max speed 75 mph {the English Channel was crossed in 1909 at a maximum speed of 47 mph}

Amongst military people, interest was emerging in the possibility of using such aircraft for military observation, as an extension of the observation work done previously by tethered balloons.

WWI-159 The original Bleriot XI that flew the English Channel in 1909.

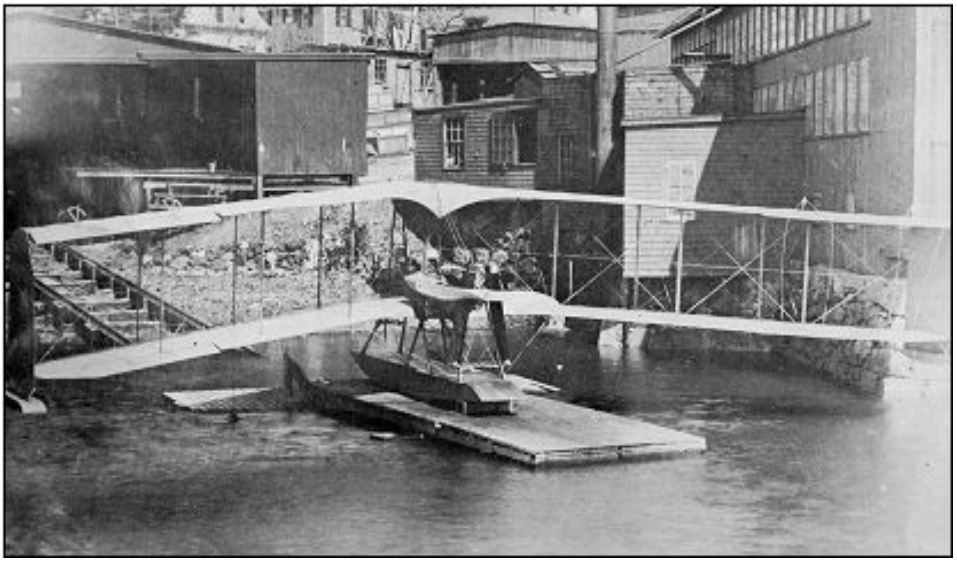
WWI-158 Another early photo of the Bleriot XI

WWI-157 Another illustration of the Bleriot XI.

WWI-156 A pilot flying a more recently built model of the early Bleriot XI.

WWI-155 Bristol BoxKite, 1911, flying over Stonehenge in England.
This was produced in England's first aircraft factory.

WWI-154 Burgess-Dunne float plane at its hangar somewhere in Canada, 1914. When Canadian troops left for Europe on September 30, 1914 one such sea-plane was loaded onto the SS Athenia for the trip. But, in transit the aircraft was heavily damaged and was no longer flyable.



WWI-153 Maurice Farman MF7. A larger open structure airplane in England just before WWI.

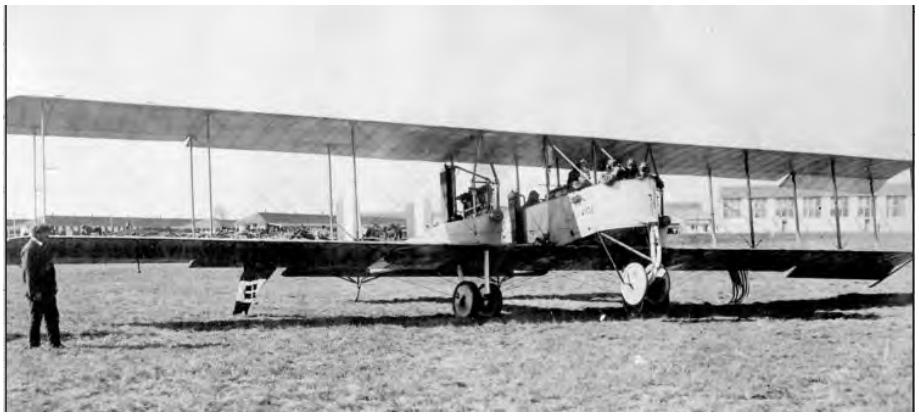
Early Years of the Great War

WWI-152 AIRCO DH2, which shows the progress toward an enclosed fuselage in the very early years of WW I.

This is unarmed and probably was used for observation.

Later models were armed and were used as fighters to attack enemy observation aircraft.

WWI-151 This may possibly be an armed fighter version of the AIRCO DH2 shown above. Note that the gunner had to stand in his gun position. Also, note that these aircraft used pusher propellers, at the rear of the body. At this time, no one had devised a method to use fixed position machine guns to fire forward thru the propeller.



WWI-150 Caproni CA 36. An Italian single engine bomber used early in WW I.

A triplane Caproni Ca.42. From its evolution had born the better bomber of World War 1: the Caproni Ca.46

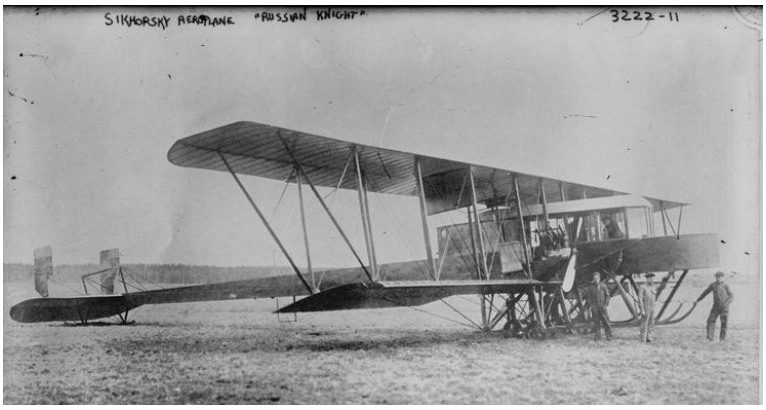
WWI-149 Caproni CA 42. An Italian twin engine triplane bomber that evolved from the CA 36 above.

Through the Great War

WWI-148 Vickers F.B.5 Gunbus, from ca. 1915. This was an early British fighter plane. Note the front mounted machine gun and the backward facing engine and propeller.

Vickers was a major British manufacturer of military materials and was famous for the Vickers machine gun.

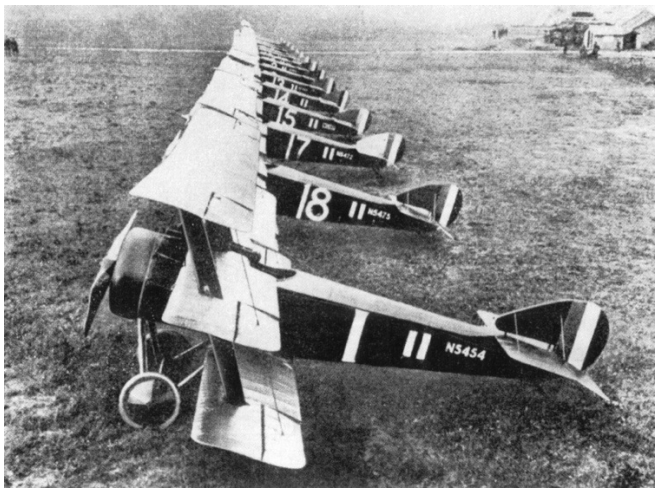
WWI-147 Curtiss 1911 Model D, Type IV, 1911. This was the second military airplane purchased by the U.S. Army Signal corps. Note the similarity to the early Wright design. The Wright brothers provided the first such airplane purchased by the



WWI-146 The twin engine Russian Sikorsky LeGrand which was designed by the young Igor Sikorsky before WW I. He later came to the U.S. and became the moving force for the development of helicopters..... This aircraft initially was designed for passengers. The passengers could stand up in the cabin, and if they had sufficient nerve they could open a rear door and stand in the open on a small sort of deck.

The aircraft later was modifed to operate as a bomber in WW I.

WWI-138 and WWI-137 below. Other configurations of the Sikorsky LeGrand.

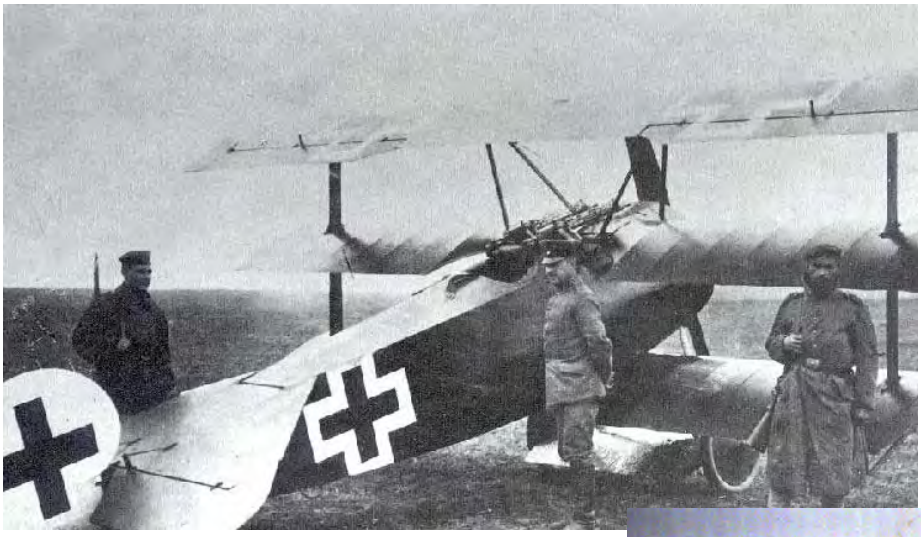


WWI-145 British Sopwith triplanes in Russia. Both Britian and the U.S. engaged in military operations in Russia after the end of WW I and after the Russian Revolution ... to no avail.

The tri-wing design was used to provide greater wing lift and greater maneuverability. Germany also built many Fokker triplanes.

Earlier Sopwiths had two wings, i.e. a biplane configuration.

As one can see from the series of photos in this aircraft section, there was very rapid development in aircraft technology from 1914 to 1918. During the latter part of WWI, designers developed ways to synchronize machine guns with the propeller so that the guns could be mounted firmly, aimed by the pilot and fired in a forward direction. ..... Another interesting but short lived innovation was the “rotary engine.” The propeller was fixed to the engine and the entire engine rotated when running. It was an excellent way to keep the engine cool.... BUT.... the rotating engine was a giant gyrosope which made it difficult and dangerous to try to steer the aircraft. This technique was used briefly on some of the early Sopwith aircraft.



WWI-144 A Fokker DR 1 German triplane of WWI.

WWI-109 The markins on the aircraft at the left indicate that it was part of an American unit. But, it is not a Spad and I’m unsure just what kind it is. The engine cowling and landing gear look similar to those on the British Sopwith Triplane at the top of this page.

WWI-178

Left: A bomb dropped by hand over the side of a German plane. In many cases the bombs were simply artillery shells that had been adapted by adding small tail fins to keep them pointed downward. WWI-178

WWI-142

WWI-141

WWI-141 and WWI-142 are photos of the Spad fighter plane that became famous for its widespread use and performance during the last year of the war. This was the fighter plane used by Captain Eddie Rickenbacker, the most famous "ace" of all the American fighter pilots.

WWI-139 Below: Allied fighter planes arrayed at an unknown airfield during the last year of WW I. The location is unknown, but probably is somewhere in northeastern France.

Manned observation balloons floating high above the trenches were used as stationary reconnaissance points on the front lines, reporting enemy troop positions and directing artillery fire. Balloons commonly had a crew of two personnel equipped with parachutes: upon an enemy air attack on the flammable balloon the balloon crew would parachute to safety. At the time, parachutes were too bulky to be used by pilots in aircraft, and smaller versions would not be developed until the end of the war.

Captain Eddie Rickenbacker and his Spad Fighter Plane 1918 in France

WW I Aircraft--14

WWI-140

Eddie Rickenbacker (October 8, 1890 – July 27, 1973) was best known as a World War I fighter ace. He was also a race car driver. From 1912 through 1916 he was a driver in a large number of races at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Later in his life he owned the Speedway.

Rickenbacker helped organize an advance group of soldiers to be ready if the United States joined the war. When, in 1917, the United States declared war on Germany, Rickenbacker had enlisted in the U.S. Army and was training in France with the very first American troops. Rickenbacker arrived in France on June 26, 1917 as sergeant first-class.

The military awarded Rickenbacker a place in America's first air-combat squadron, the 94th Aero Squadron, informally known as the Hat-in-the-Ring Squadron. He flew rudimentary aircraft, sometimes without weaponry, alongside French pilots. The 94th periodically faced Germany's legendary Flying Circus, led by the Red Baron, Manfred von Richthofen, until von Richthofen's death in combat. On April 29, 1918, Rickenbacker shot down his first plane.

Respect for him grew as his successes mounted. Rickenbacker was awarded the French Croix de Guerre in May 1918, for shooting down five German airplanes. On September 24, 1918, now a captain, he was named commander of the squadron, and on the following day, he shot down two more German planes, for which he was belatedly awarded the Medal of Honor in 1931. Rickenbacker's 26 victories constituted an American record that stood until World War II.

In 1927, Rickenbacker bought the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, which he would operate for nearly a decade and a half before closing it down due to World War II.

Rickenbacker's most lasting business endeavor was his lifelong leadership of Eastern Air Lines. With the help of friends he had met in the war, or in car racing, or in other walks of life, Eddie Rickenbacker combined Eastern Air Transport with Florida Airways to form Eastern Air Lines, an airline that would grow from a company flying a few thousand air miles per week to a major international transportation company.

For a time, Eastern was the most profitable airline in the post-war era. In the late 1950s, Eastern's fortunes changed, and Rickenbacker was forced out of his CEO position on October 1, 1959. Eastern was an early victim to a changing business enviroment that brought down other airlines during the late 20th century.

Performance Data of the Spad S.XIII	
Type	fighter
Engine	235 hp Hispano-Suiza
Wing Span	26 ft 11 in (8.2 m)
Length	20 ft 8 in (6.3 m)
Height	7 ft 11 in (2.42 m)
Maximum Speed	138 mph (222 kph)
Maximum Height	21,820 ft (6,650 m)
Endurance	2 hours
Armament	2 machine-guns

WWI-127 at left: Specifications for the French Spad fighter aircraft, used during the last year of the First World War in France.

It had come a very long way from the primitive designs used ca. 1913-1914 during the early years of the war.

WWI-143 above: A three wing German Fokker fighter aircraft introduced during 1918, in the latter part of the First World War. This also illustrates the rapid advances in aircraft design during the war.

Appendix 3

Horses, Wagons, Trucks and Tanks Used During The Great War

Pictures alone cannot convey the daily troubles and horrors that the soldiers had to endure. Even so, I have made a specific effort here and especially in the final Appendix to include pictures that might give some sense of what they had to face.

Tanks, trucks, wagons, and other vehicles used during The Great War.

The initial parts of The Great War had moved forward in an industrial and technology sense only by a small amount since the American Civil War and other wars of the late 1800s. Wagons and horses shown initially look similar to those from the American Civil War.

As time moved on from 1914 through 1918, more motorized equipment was introduced, but still of a primitive nature. A similar pattern can be seen in a preceding Appendix about aircraft of The Great War.

Much of the mechanized equipment used by the American forces .... both aircraft and ground equipment .... was British or French. The US had not made a rapid transition to an industrialized war footing {as was the case with the Second World War}, and was unable to manufacture and ship much heavy equipment to Europe.

WWI-024

American transport horses, lying dead in harness. Picture made at Cantigny, on May 28, 1918.

The date above is May 28, 1918 ... before the American forces became involved in the Champagne-Marne battle and then the Aisne-Marne battle. They still were a bit further to the east in areas called Òdefensive sectors,Ó although there was vigorous military action in those defensive sectors. Below: Allied field artillery, date and location unknown.

WWI-089

Artillery shells being carried by mules through a muddy area. Date and location not known.,

WWI-092 Right: 42nd Rainbow Division artillery passing through Sergy, France, August 3, 1918.

Capt. Mortimer H Jordan of Company K, 167th Infantry of the Rainbow Division was fatally wounded during that first week of August, 1918,

42d Division Artillery Passing Through Sergy, August 3, 1918

American Troops in Public Square of Château-Thierry After Its Capture, July 1918

WWI-091 LEFT: Wagon train with American troops in Chateau Thierry .... soon after its capture in July, 1918.

The Supply Train of the US 129th Infantry, 33rd Division, on the road at Bethincourt.

Above: A supply train of the American 33rd Division in France.

Below: An allied heavy gun being pulled by a tractor on a road in France.

The dates and locations for these two pictures are unknown.

WWI-046

American tractor pulling a big gun to the frontline. France, 1918.

American Red Cross soldiers transporting wounded Germans to an hospital. Picture made in Varennes, date unknown.

The American novelist Ernest Hemingsay as a young man drove an American Red Cross ambulance in France during The Great War. There is a picture of him earlier in this memoir.

WWI-018

Wounded soldiers being taken away by an American ambulance-car.

WWI-047

An overturned American 155 mm howitzer.

Guns were moved around by teams of horses or mules, on wagons, pulled by tractors, were mounted on primitive motor vehicles, and very large ones were moved by railroad.

Anti-Aircraft Gun in Action

WWI-081

Above: Another antiaircraft gun, mounted on a primitive motor vehicle.

Below: George Patton, the father of tank warfare in the US Army. He was a colorful person who became famous during the Second World War. He wore a pearl handled Colt revolver of the old cowboy style, and was known around Army as “Old blood and guts.” Because of his role in both wars, I have included some moderately detailed biographical information about him, starting on the next page.

BIOGRAPHY OF GEORGE S. PATTON, JR.

One of the most complicated military men of all time, General George Smith Patton, Jr. was born November 11, 1885 in San Gabriel, California. He was known for carrying pistols with ivory handles and his intemperate manner, and is regarded as one of the most successful United States field commanders of any war. He continually strove to train his troops to the highest standard of excellence.

Patton decided during childhood that his goal in life was to become a hero. His ancestors had fought in the Revolutionary War, the Mexican War and the Civil War, and he grew up listening to stories of their brave and successful endeavors. He attended the Virginia Military Institute for one year and went on to graduate from the United States Military Academy at West Point on June 11, 1909. He was then commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the 15th cavalry Regiment.

Patton married Beatrice Ayer, whom he dated while at West Point, on May 26, 1910. In 1912 he represented the United States at the Stockholm Olympics in the first Modern Pentathlon. Originally open only to military officers, it was considered a rigorous test of the skills a soldier should possess. Twenty-six year old Patton did remarkably well in the multi-event sport, consisting of pistol shooting from 25 meters, sword fencing, a 300 meter free style swim, 800 meters horse back riding and a 4-kilometer cross country run. He placed fifth overall, despite a disappointing development in the shooting portion. While most chose .22 revolvers, Patton felt the event's military roots garnered a more appropriate weapon, the .38. During the competition Patton was docked for missing the target, though he contended the lost bullet had simply passed through a large opening created by previous rounds from the .38, which left considerably larger holes.

Several photos of tanks, of either British or French design and manufacture, begin here. Dates and locations generally are not known.

WWI-082

American tanks advancing in the direction of the river Meuse.

After the Olympics, Patton kept busy taking lessons at the French cavalry School and studying French sword drills. In the summer of 1913, Patton received orders to report to the commandant of the Mounted Service School in Fort Riley, Kansas, where he became the school's first Master of the Sword. He designed and taught a course in swordsmanship while he was a student at the school.

Patton's first real exposure to battle occurred when he served as a member of legendary General John J. Pershing's staff during the expedition to Mexico. In 1915, Patton was sent to Fort Bliss along the Mexican border where he led routine cavalry patrols. A year later, he accompanied Pershing as an aide on his expedition against Francisco "Pancho" Villa into Mexico. Patton gained recognition from the press for his attacks on several of Villa's men.

Impressed by Patton's determination, Pershing promoted him to Captain and asked him to command his Headquarters Troop upon their return from Mexico. With the onset of World War I in 1914, tanks were not being widely used. In 1917, however, Patton became the first member of the newly established United States Tank Corps, where he served until the Corps were abolished in 1920. He took full command of the Corps, directing ideas, procedures and even the design of their uniforms. Along with the British tankers, he and his men achieved victory at Cambrai, France, during the world's first major tank battle in 1917.

Using his first-hand knowledge of tanks, Patton organized the American tank school in Bourg, France and trained the first 500 American tankers. He had 345 tanks by the time he took the brigade into the Meuse-Argonne Operation in September 1918. When they entered into battle, Patton had worked out a plan where he could be in the front lines maintaining communications with his rear command post by means of pigeons and a group of runners. Patton continually exposed himself to gunfire and was shot once in the leg while he was directing the tanks. His actions during that battle earned him the Distinguished Service Cross for Heroism, one of the many medals he would collect during his lifetime.

Tanks Manned by Americans Going Forward Near Boureuilles, September 26, 1918

WWI-080

An outspoken advocate for tanks, Patton saw them as the future of modern combat. Congress, however, was not willing to appropriate funds to build a large armored force. Even so, Patton studied, wrote extensively and carried out experiments to improve radio communications between tanks. He also helped invent the co-axial tank mount for cannons and machine guns.

After WWI, Patton held a variety of staff jobs in Hawaii and Washington, D.C. He graduated from the Command and General Staff School in 1924, and completed his military schooling as a distinguished graduate of the Army War College in 1932.

When the German Blitzkrieg began on Europe, Patton finally convinced Congress that the United States needed a more powerful armored striking force. With the formation of the Armored Force in 1940, he was transferred to the Second Armored Division at Fort Benning, Georgia and named Commanding General on April 11, 1941. Two months later, Patton appeared on the cover of Life magazine. Also during this time, Patton began giving his famous “Blood and Guts” speeches in an amphitheater he had built to accommodate the entire division.

The United States officially entered World War II in December 1941, after the attack on Pearl Harbor. By November 8, 1942, Patton was commanding the Western Task Force, the only all-American force landing for Operation Torch, the Allied invasion of North Africa. After succeeding there, Patton commanded the Seventh Army during the invasion of Sicily in July 1943, and in conjunction with the British Eighth Army restored Sicily to its citizens.

Patton commanded the Seventh Army until 1944, when he was given command of the Third Army in France. Patton and his troops dashed across Europe after the battle of Normandy and exploited German weaknesses with great success, covering the 600 miles across France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia. When the Third Army liberated the Buchenwald concentration camp, Patton slowed his pace. He instituted a policy, later adopted by other commanders, of making local German civilians tour the camps. By the time WWII was over, the Third Army had liberated or conquered 81,522 square miles of territory.

French Tanks With the 32d Division at Juvigny, August 29, 1918

In October 1945, Patton assumed command of the Fifteenth Army in American-occupied Germany. On December 9, he suffered injuries as the result of an automobile accident. He died 12 days later, on December 21, 1945 and is buried among the soldiers who died in the Battle of the Bulge in Hamm, Luxembourg.

Remembered for his fierce determination and ability to lead soldiers, Patton is now considered one of the greatest military figures in history. The 1970 film, “Patton,” starring George C. Scott in the title role, provoked renewed interest in Patton. The movie won seven Academy Awards, including Best Actor and Best Picture, and immortalized General George Smith Patton, Jr. as one of the world’s most intriguing military men.

American tanks heading for the Argonne, France

Appendix 4

Troops & Ground Operations During The Great War

Pictures alone cannot convey the daily troubles and horrors that the soldiers had to endure. Even so, I have made a specific effort here and in the preceding Appendix to include pictures that might give some sense of what they had to face.

THE TROOPS AND GROUND FIGHTING

Photos on the following pages have been selected {largely from what I could locate} on the basis of trying to show something about their circumstances during the ground fighting. View them with sympathy. As the pages move along, some of the pictures are not happy ones.

WWI-003

Dutch-American sergeant Louis M. van Iersel has his breast full of medals. He got the Medal of Honor because of brave conduct at Mouzon, France.

WWI-009

American intelligence troops search German Prisoners Of War in the Menil la Tour prison camp.

TROOPS-2

WWI-011

American officers toasting with captured German beer steins.

WWI-012

Soldiers of the 33rd Division in a German trench, drinking from captured beer steins.

WWI-025

American nurses arriving in England, enroute to France.

Mary Shannon Webster, American Red Cross, serving hot chocolate.

WWI-026 As mentioned in an earlier page, O. B. Thomas had a lifelong dislike for the Red Cross.

WWI-027

The hat worn by the soldier on the left clearly marks him as Australian.

Australian soldier (left) supporting a wounded American. Picture made on September 30, 1918.

American soldiers visiting a French café.

WWI-049

Pictures like this were circulated around, perphaps in an effort to show a cheerful side to the war.

TROOPS-4

WWI-059

American sergeant John Letzing, 104th Infantry, 26th Division, with German POW Robert Fröhlich.
Official US picture made on February 17, 1918.

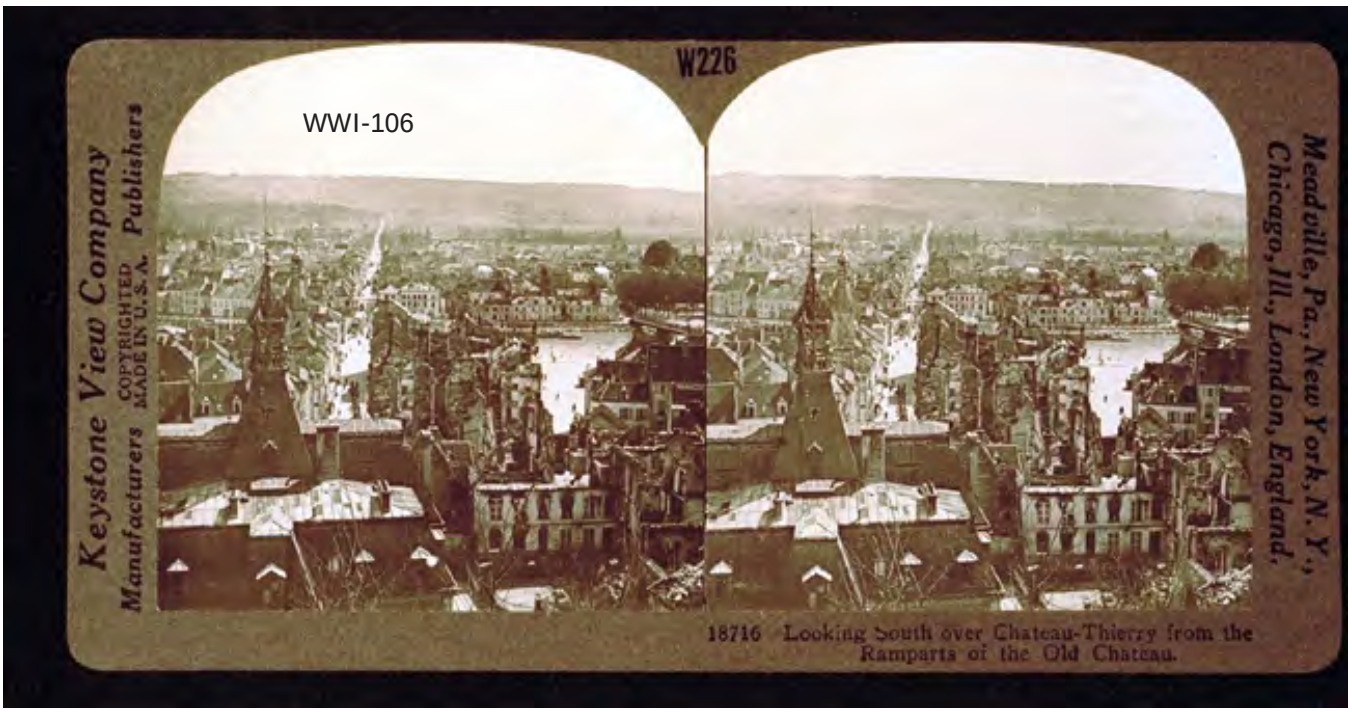
Above: An American soldier {right} with a German prisoner of war. The date is February 17, 1918. American troops who had sailed for Europe in November and December, 1917 already were actively involved in France.

Be;ow: Ramparts of the old Chateau in Chateau-Thierry, France. A vew of the old city from these ramparts is on the next page.

WWI-107

Above: Colorful paintings of this sort were often used to stir patriotism.

Below is a steriopticon view of old Chateau Thierry. The view faces west, with Paris somewhere off in the distance. The Marne River flow across the center of this view. The picture is from the ramparts of the old Chateau, shown on the preceding page. Chateau-Thierry is an old historical town, but since the end of the Second World War it has grown into a modern city.



WWI-001

TROOPS-6

Fatigued to the bone: US soldiers from the 121st Machine Gun Battalion, 32nd Division, resting in a shell hole

During 1915-1917 the war bogged down into static "trench warfare." Trenches often were close enough together so that the German and the Allied soldiers could shout at each other. Quite often there were forays from one line of trenches to another, grenade and mortar attack, gas attacks, bayonet attacks, etc., but generally with little or no actual movement of forces ... only loss of life. Periodically there would be a major pitched battle ... again with major casualties but little or no actual movement of forces. The group of photos that start here show come of the misery of life in those trenches.

WWI-007

WWI-098

WWI-008

TROOPS-7

Life in the trenches led to countless health problems. Latrines were located in small notches just off the main trenches. The wet conditions led to widespread problems with "trench foot," similar to a very agressive form of athletes foot.

If left unattended, it could be crippling, Even with care, it reduced the mobility and the effectiveness of the troops on both sides.

When troops were stuck in a trench location for very long, they would often try to improve on the quality of living conditions. This picture shows how the walls of the trench had been somewhat stabilized with wood and ropes.

WWI-043

WWI-005

A graphic illustration of the misery and unhealth conditions arising in wet weather from flooding in the trenches.

Troops had to live, sleep, eat, use latrines, and often get medical treatment in such locations.

If the level of military activity would allow it, there were efforts to rotate troops to the "rear" on some kind of reasonable schedule.

WWI-101

TROOPS-8

More views of trench conditions. A soldier can be seen part way up the embankment in the right side of this picture. That gives some idea of the trench depth at times. At other locations it might be only a few feet deep.

Snipers would peer over the tops of the trenches and try to pick off soldiers on the other side.

The area between trenches of the opposing sides was called "no man's land" and often was barricaded with barbed wire.

Earlier in this memoir there are comments about how O. B. Thomas and others would sometimes scout that no man's land.

For most of World War I, Allied and German Forces were stalled in trench warfare along the Western Front.

WWI-116

WWI-015

The C Battery of the US 109th Field Artillery, 28th Division, firing from the ruins of Varennes, in the Argonne.

WWI-017

Destruction of the US 89th Division ammunition dump at Lucey, France.

WWI-010

A bridgehead at Chateau Thierry. On the picture troops of the US 7th Machine Gun Battalion, 3rd Division

TROOPS-10

WWI-013

Gun team of the A Company, US 105th Machine Gun Battalion, 27th Division, firing at St. Souplet, France. Picture made on October 19, 1918.

WWI-014

Sergeant Charles Quick, Corporal Mark Young and Private Albert Lull, 126th Infantry, manning a 37 mm gun at Diefmaten in the Alsace. Picture made on July 25, 1918.

WWI-030

Wounded men of the US 312th Infantry, 78 Division, being carried to an aid station. Picture made in the Negremont Wood, near Grandpré, on October 21, 1918.

Allied field artillery near the front lines. The date and location are unknown.
WWI-022

WWI-034

Soldiers of the US 132nd Infantry, 33rd Division, holding the line on the west bank of the rive Meuse, opposite the village of Consenvoye.

American troops crossing the river Moselle into Germany.

WWI-035

WWI-037

US Colored Troops of the 92nd Division marching to the front in the Argonne-woods in France

WWI-039

A 340 mm gun, manned by US Coast Artillery Corps, firing in the vicinity of Nixeville, France. Picture made on September 26, 1918.

WWI-042

Soldiers of the US 318th Infantry, 80th Division, advancing through smoke screens. Picture made near Le NeFour, France, on October 27, 1918.

WWI-038 TROOPS-13

French children watch the advancing column of an American Ammunition Train
Picture made in Soulosse, France, springtime 1918.

WWI-045

Soldiers from the US 167th Infantry, 42nd Division, have taken positions near St. Banoit in the St. Mihiel salient. Picture made on September 9, 1918.

O. B. Thomas was in the 167th Infantry. The date, however, is after he was wounded and also after Capt. Mortimer Jordan was killed in action.

WWI-048

Yankee soldiers in the frontline, overlooking Nomensland.

WWI-050

The US 167th Infantry engaged at Seringes in France.

WWI-051

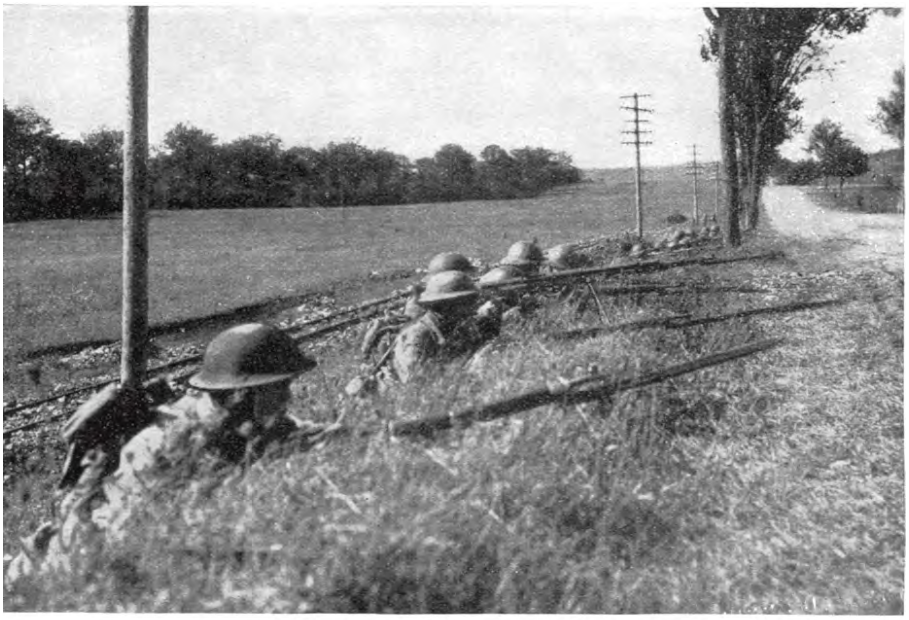
American engineers clearing wire entanglements from a captured German position.

WWI-071 at left: A soldier throwing a hand grenade across no-man's-land toward German trenches. This gives an idea of how close the trenches were at times. The design of the metal helmets indicates that these probably are French soldiers. ..... Note that from time to time there is a "notch" in the trench. This was a design intended to minimize the lateral damage that could be caused by grenade or mortar blasts.

WWI-079

Earlier photos show anti aircraft guns mounted on early design motor vehicles.

German Anti-Aircraft Battery in Position Near the Champagne Front. © G



42d Division Patrol Near Hassavant Farm, September 14, 1918

WWI-083

The date for this photo is after O. B. Thomas was wounded in late July, 1918.

CHATEAU-THIERRY *Rue du Pont - Américains devant une barricade Allemande*
After the battle, the americain the bridge' street

WWI-090

WWI-093

Snipers Firing in Villers-sur-Fère After Its Capture by the 42d Division, July 27, 1918

WWI-102

Left: Soldiers bringing their wounded out of a trench or a shell hole.

WWI-112

Sergeant Charles Quick, Corporal Mark Young and Private Albert Lull, 126th Infantry, manning a 37 mm gun at Diefmaten in the Alsace. Picture made on July 25, 1918.

French bayonet charge

WWI-121

Left: French troops in a bayonet charge across open ground. There were often very high casualties during such charges.

TROOPS-18

WWI-123

A bridgehead at Chateau Thierry. On the picture troops of the US 7th Machine Gun Battalion, 3rd Division.

WWI-124

Snipers from the US 42nd Division. Picture made at Badonville, on May 18, 1918.

WWI-125

Soldiers from the US 167th Infantry, 42nd Division, have taken positions near St. Banoit in the St. Mihiel salient. Picture made on September 9, 1918.

The US 167th Infantry engaged at Seringes in France.

WWI-128

WWI-129

The ruins of Carency after it was recaptured by France.

British infantry advance near Gingy.

WWI-131

WWI-072

American Ambulance workers treating a soldier wounded in the leg.

WWI-073

American Ambulance workers treating a soldier wounded in the head.

WWI-019

American colored soldiers manufacturing coffins.

Dressing a wound at the US Base Hospital number 18.

WWI-031 At left.

A hospital ward. Date and location not known.

WWI-070 Above: An American soldier assisting a wounded German soldier

WWI-032 Below: A hospital ward. The caption says the location is Sebastopol. That is a Russian coastal city in what then was southwestern Russia.

I could not dig out any further information. But, at times during the war there were indeed allied military activities in that area.

The Fracture Ward of the US Evacuation Station at Sebastopol.

This picture is a composite between two incomplete photos found at two different locations.

WWI-036

Returning soldier of the 369th who lost his leg in France, being welcomed on his return home to New York.
The loop of cord on his left shoulder is the decoration that every member of this regiment is entitled to wear. It signifies that entire regiment has been awarded the Cordon of the Croix de Guerre by the French.

WWI-020 Below: Only three days before the armistice of November 11, 1918

Bois de Consenvoye, France, November 8, 1918. Americans burying their dead.

WWI-023 Below: Date is May, 1918. We have a few others from that early part of 1918. This was the period BEFORE involvement in the Champagne-Marne and the Aisne-Marne battles ... a period and a location euphemistically described as “Defensive Sectors.”

American soldier dies during a German gas attack. Picture made in May, 1918.

Dead Americans of the 38th Infantry. Picture made at Mezy, on July 21, 1918.

The remains of German soldiers at Verdun. WWI-130

The face of death, a reality of war for both soldiers and civilians caught in the midst of hostilities. It's impossible to show with pictures the damaged lives of countless thousands of those injured and stressed beyone endurance. Even so, within twenty years of the end of The Great War another great war started, the Second World War.

In memory of Oscar Burton Thomas
February 13, 1892 - February 13, 1947