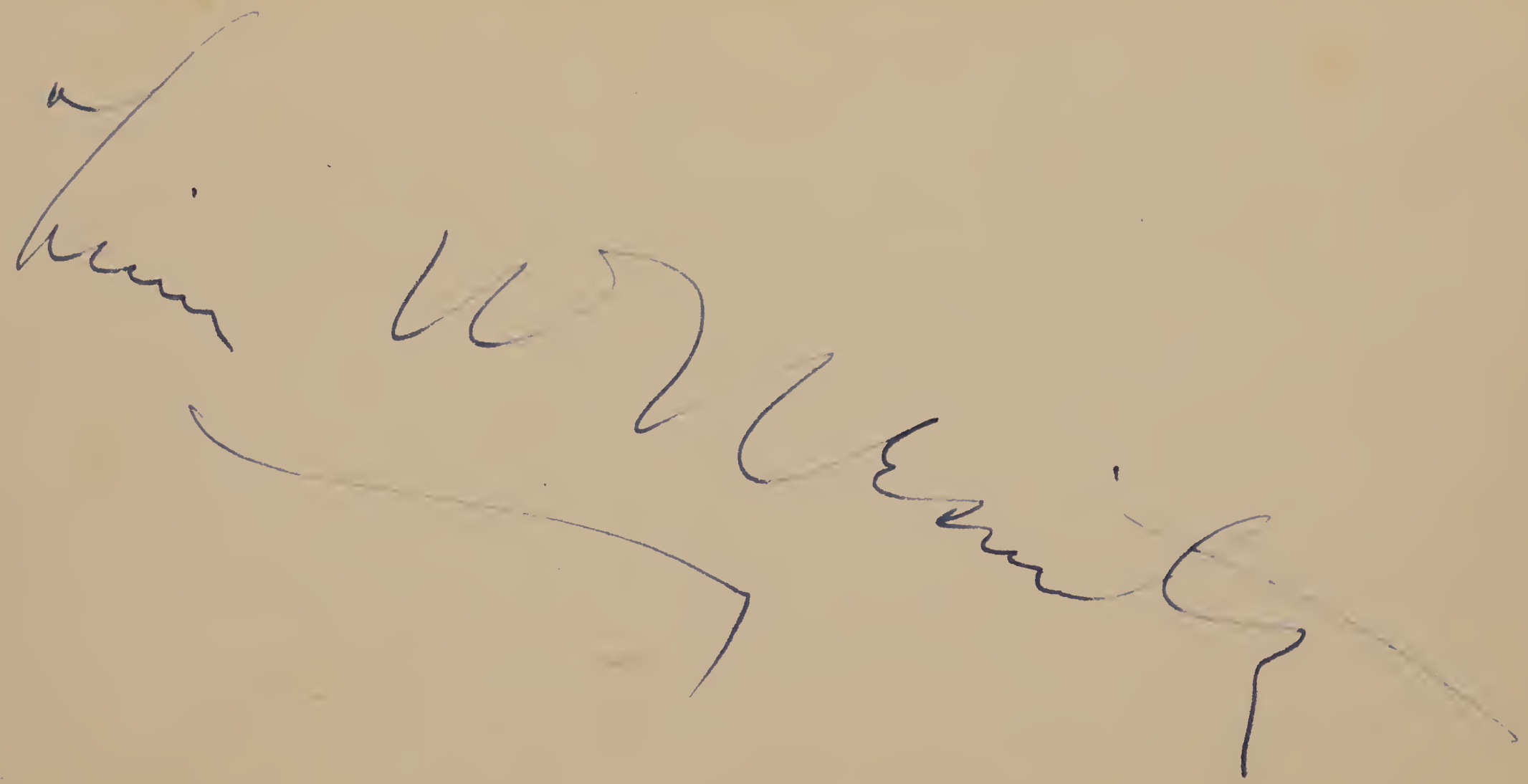
THE HISTORY OF

ENGINEER WAGON COMPANY 5



THE HISTORY OF

ENGINEER WAGON COMPANY 5

23RD ENGINEERS

AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

AND

ARMY LIFE AT HOME AND IN FRANCE

By

CORPORAL DONALD GWYNNE CAMPBELL

AND

CORPORAL EDWARD W. SPENCER

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FOREWORD

Caserne de Geslin, Labry, France,
April 18, 1919.

This brief history is written while we are still in the service, and still in France. Up to this moment we are "carrying on," our teams are working today. Home and everything, "back there," is weeks, perhaps months away. More than a year ago we embarked for France, and everything we left behind us has grown increasingly dear as time has elapsed.

We have prepared this little work under difficulties. When the sun sets in the west, and the army mules nestle in their beds of straw, we lay down our stable fork, and trip over to our quarters, in the first barracks on the right as you come in the gate. We ate an excellent supper, then we ceased to be K. P. to twenty-nine mules and became the Tainest of our company. We discard our work-a-day fustian, and assume our least worn O. D. breeches. We suppress the village scent the mules have imparted to us with the subtler odors of M. M. Rigaud and the perfumers of Paris.

Then—we tread gingerly in the footsteps of our fellow historians, Guizot, Macaulay, and Ridpath. From evening mess until "taps" we claim the consideration due those who preserve immortal deeds in prose.

The reader may ask "why write a history of Wagon Co. 5?" We answer, "Well, the proper study of mankind is Man." Almost everyone in this company is a man. Some have gradually become men since they joined the company. Another reason, we are proud of our company; there may be better companies, but we have not seen them; we are satisfied with the work we have done and with each other. Also, we helped win the war.

Wagon 5 will soon separate; her members will resume their important or humble occupations in the civil life in the United States. The great adventure of our lives will be over. Our story may not interest others, it is not written for them. But it is of interest to us, and will be valued beyond its worth as literature, by our parents, wives, and children.

Biographies and histories of small military units convey the best idea of military operations to the public mind. More ambitious histories deal amply with causes and results. The soldier must often find in history the explanation of movements he assisted in carrying out, but he knows the life of the army, and all habits worthy or faulty, that become an endowment of his occupation.

Ours is not a story of armies, divisions, brigades and regiments, but the story of a single company, and of the soldiers on its roster. The unswerving steadfastness of the soldier when in danger, the discipline and unity of the squad, the purpose of the individual to do his best at all times and endure uncomplainingly the unavoidable hardships of campaign life makes possible the successful fruitions of the leaders' plans. Their military reputation, and much more important issues depend on the men who carry their orders into effect. We do not think of our work as an "humble part" in overthrowing autocracy. Those who stake their lives, leave home and employment, and in the event of incapacitating ability contracted in service, leave their future involved in governmental red tape, have ventured all they had, and hazarded all the years they had yet to live.

They have reached a worthy height of self abnegation, and contributed to the full measure of their opportunities. In one's mental film of the war, the A. E. F. appears as a man, a vast army, but to every home "back there" one form in khaki stands out from the rest, an object of anxious affection. He is their hero, though usually only a man in the ranks. To the homes from which the soldiers of Wagon Co. 5 came, and to which we hope to return, an unbroken company, this story is dedicated.

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HISTORY OF ENGINEER WAGON COMPANY 5

23rd Engineers

CHAPTER I

Organization

The 23rd Engineers organized at Camp Meade, Maryland. While still in embryo the 23rd obtained a splendid prospective reputation. A wonderfully skillful recruiting campaign and lavish advertising induced many very able men to enlist in this organization, men skilled in engineering or allied pursuits—the latter seemed to include everything from artists to stonecutters. "Join the army and work at your trade!" was the slogan which filled our ranks. Colonel Johnson, as a recruiting officer, outclassed anything in history. He was forceful, magnetic, appealing, and gifted with a rich poetic imagination.

The "Pied Piper" of Hamlin had nothing on him, the 23rd had a waiting list. Men aspiring for the position of "buck private" in this elate organization brought recommendations from their congressmen and clergymen. In its pre-natal period ours was the best advertised regiment in the new army and the advantage offered by the 23rd was so fluently set forth that men hastened to enlist before it was too late.

We will never forget the prospectus that lured us to Camp Meade. Common labor was not solicited; the unskilled work would be done by "service battalions and German prisoners." We were informed officially, that "pick and shovel wielders" were not desired. We wanted to go, and appreciated this golden chance to serve in the occupation we followed in civilian life. We were told that the 23rd would depart for France with the least possible delay. Many men of unusual ability, or ambition, wrote or wired Colonel Johnson for full information. A member of Wagon Co. 5 cabled him from one of our remote territories, others called on him at Washington. The colonel was on the job, attending to business apparently twenty-four hours a day and all written or wired communications received

a prompt and satisfactory reply. Possible volunteers, who met him personally, were charmed by the clarity of his statements and "The Sunshine of His Smile." They were convinced that the regiment had a wonderful future, was launched under auspicious circumstances and led by a splendid galaxy of officers.

Everyone was in love with the colonel. They seemed to find in him the concentration and energy of the professional soldier, the vision of a seer, and the friendly interest of an old neighbor. The *Engineering News-Record*, and other influential journals circulating among the engineering and construction interests, apparently opened their pages to the recruiting propaganda of the 23rd. We heard extended eulogies of this regiment from many sources, and comparatively little of other engineering organizations. So "we gathered from the hillside and rallied from the plain," to the recruiting stations, north, south, east and west, raised our right hands, and said, "I do," at the proper time, and went forth to proudly inform our admiring friends that we had joined that crack organization, the 23rd Engineers. Some men came directly to Camp Meade, but the majority filtered in after several days of initiation work in the great mobilization centers which served as clearing houses for the training camps.

Many of these centers were Regular Army posts, with good quarters and some semblance of system; some of these centers seemed to be less unpopular than others, possibly owing to their proximity to cities, and freely issued passes. Fort Slocum, New York, is not a post about which fond memories twine, though the food was good and the barracks warm. No camp rivaled Meade in disillusionment the first days in these newly made training grounds, for the great army, in their then congested, unsystematized and partly organized state, was a period of mental anguish, and often in the severe winter of 1917–1918, of physical suffering from cold and insufficient or poorly cooked food.

In the light of subsequent experience, we see that the order, space, abundant and well prepared rations, which obtained in the garrisons of our small Regular Army, could not be expected when the War Department with limited and unassembled resources, and still more limited experience in organization, was suddenly called upon to arm, feed and equip an enormous army.

For many months the production and accumulation of supplies

and construction of barracks did not keep pace with the requirements of the men who joined the colors. It was imperative to prepare armies for the aid of our sorely pressed Allies.

It was apparently difficult to care properly for the health and comfort of these troops after they were mobilized. Even before mobilization many of the posts were crowded beyond capacity, and hundreds of fortunate soldiers were quartered at hotels, at government expense, enjoying for several weeks three forty-five cent meals a day and a decent bed.

The situation in Europe could not wait for overcoats or sufficient blankets. There was unavoidable suffering—there was also avoidable suffering—at times the new soldier was given a hard boiled reception, usually by men of no intellectual imminence.

Very many of our National Army officers were little more experienced in military matters than ourselves, and like us required time in which to learn, and made mistakes while learning. Other men were given positions for which they were utterly unfit. They held these places for a time and created a great deal of misery; this is especially true of many warranted or acting non-coms. In those busy days of organization the officer, unacquainted with his company or recruit detachment, turned to the non-com., as one in more intimate contact with the men, for information. The average officer, however deficient in ability or experience, is not generally inhuman. It is the privilege of the non-com. to inform his commander of the condition and needs of his men, but many only complied with their orders and enforced obedience. The unsuccessful officers and non-coms. were either men temperamentally unfit, or unused and unable to handle men, or too selfish to take cognizance of needs and ambition other than their own. Many possessed an inordinate thirst for promotion, and the army's welfare was a strictly secondary consideration.

Many have expressed the opinion that our lot would have been better had we been under the direction of Regular Army officers. This is doubtful. Regular Army men were not accustomed to commanding men who had been, to a great degree, their equals in station and education. A few years of military command tends to narrow one's horizon, and curtail adaptability. The Regular Army man soon becomes, in many respects, a routine man, and our military establishment has always had policies and politics quite its

own. It is a separate world. Many of the new officers of the great army had handled larger propositions in civil life than commonly fall to the lot of the West Pointer. This is true as well of many of the enlisted men, some of whom had accomplished more in their civilian occupation than their leader. A notable proportion of officers and men possessed the brains initiative, and mathematical ability to equip, shelter and care for any number of men, if given the means to do so.

The civilian man of affairs is in nowise more efficient than the professional soldier, and had the same responsibility for the army's organization rested on the shoulders of the old army, many an old army man's well-earned reputation would have been wrecked. The Spanish War was no prodigious affair, yet it teemed with scandals of considerable gravity. The government called to its aid, in many departments, imminent civilians. These men gathered food, organized transportation, and marshalled the nation's resources successfully.

We were the victims of complacent unpreparedness, and as the country became prepared to wage war, long after the war had begun, the condition of the army improved. Whatever the cause, or however well we understand it, cold and hunger are hard to bear, and in Camp Meade we endured these, and neglect in other forms.

The companies of the 23rd Engineers were organized from recruit detachments, in which the enlisted men were first placed. There were several detachments usually commanded by a first and second lieutenant. These officers were "but moving shadow shapes that come and go." As they were assigned to permanent organizations, other officers succeeded them in the training of the recruits, thus the men of the recruit detachments served at one time or another under many of the future company commanders of the 23rd. Some of these officers won the respect of the men by their efficiency and a warm place in their heart by the care they exercised on behalf of their helpless wards.

To any man who spent part of that winter in Camp Meade, that period will be clearly recalled, when the eleventh of November is forgotten. The barracks were of the usual type, considerably less weather proof than the average barn; each room was heated to a limited extent by a large stove in the corner and men bunking in the outlaying districts were "out of luck." For a few weeks the

MAJOR MAURY ANDERSON

CAPTAIN LAUGHLIN P. MORRISON

supply of blankets was insufficient. There was scarcely coal enough for the bath houses, owing to railroad congestion partially caused by the heavy snows and increase in traffic to ports of embarkation. Camp Meade had been in existence for some months, but apparently no one had taken thought for the winter; a great military city sprang up here almost in a day and faced the winter, with a day or two supply of fuel. Meade had the advantage of being as free from temptation as a centrally located wilderness could possibly be. The site was cold, damp, and windswept; we had to depend on the neighboring forest for fuel, the stoves were fed with wood carried by the recruits from points often a mile distant, and frequently through a heavy snow. Man labor was cheap and abundant but there was a painful lack of lumbering appliances of even the simplest description. A couple of crippled axes, and at first very rarely supplemented by a buck saw or cross cut, formed the ideal apparatus for supplying two hundred men with warmth.

At night a detail of men attended the fires in the platoon room; the recruit saw that they discharged their duties faithfully, but under the best conditions the heating system at Meade was a doleful failure. Here and there, a man was the fortunate owner of a comforter or extra blanket from home, and the long overcoats at that period helped wonderfully, when we got them. Many of us were uniformed by installments—two pairs of sox now, a pair of leggings the day after tomorrow, a campaign hat the following week, shoes, a pair of O. D. breeches. We emerged from our civilian attire as gradually as the worm changes to the butterfly. In a company of recruits were men in ordinary clothes and an army hat, in regulation breeches and impossible derbys, thin dress shoes, and silk lined overcoats were worn by some, and others were fully equipped as to clothes.

And so we drilled in the snow and cold of the severest winter Maryland had experienced for years. Wet feet and colds were very common, congestion of the lungs, pneumonia, and other afflictions became so. Sore feet and blistery heels were universal, a natural corollary of wet feet and shrunken leather, and our new field shoes, Kipling's advice, "If your heels are blistered, and they feels to ache like hell, just put some tallow in your sox and that will make them well." We tried tallow and other remedies, and found Kipling incorrect.

The food was insufficient, and greatly inferior in quality to the standard rations. It was often carelessly prepared. The cooks must have been selected at random from the army at large, perhaps they were drawn by lot. In some kitchens, quantity considered, the dinners were not bad; at others the recruits fared vilely and were treated like dogs when, like Oliver Twist, they wanted some more. We were in a chronic state of hunger; men would slip into other mess lines, but two meals in succession would scarcely appease an active appetite. Beans were our daily portion and frequently we enjoyed them twice a day. The principal element that composed our breakfast was a diminutive helping of corn-meal mush anointed with a triply diluted spoonful of syrup. Army coffee is seldom superior, at best it only faintly suggests the kind that mother used to make, but that issued to the 23rd at Meade surpassed in dissimilarity to real coffee any ersatz used in Germany.

Strangers were blindfolded, and allowed three guesses, when regaled with this invigorating beverage. Through lack of proper storage facilities, potatoes and onions were often frozen, and served in a condition unfit for human consumption. We received minute quantities of meat concealed in a stew known in the army as "slum." Men would often secrete a boiled potato, piece of bread, or an onion and eat it in their barracks.

At P-24 we were once given our choice between cold and hot water; a piece of bread and a cold boiled potato, accompanied this cheering drink. At times the supply of bread ran short, that is, shorter than usual. To this day uncertainty exists as to which door the blame for these conditions should be placed—inattention of officers, inefficient mess sergeants, or the desire of some organization to secure a mess fund. Those recruit detachments under quarantine were sometimes obliged to march a mile or more and back over snowy, icy roads three times a day for their meals, and on reaching the mess hall wait outside until others had finished eating.

Serious epidemic of measles, and other contagious diseases, kept the recruits in quarantine during most of their stay at Meade. The medical service was hampered by an insufficient supply of medicine. Salts, O. D. pills, iodine, and castor oil were all the contributions our galens seemed able to garner from the pharmacopœia in any abundance. The doctors were at their wit's end and a few, who

early retired from the service, did not have to go far to reach their jumping-off place.

When the base hospital was completed, the resources, service and talent were all that could be desired, but for weeks the number of men in need of treatment exceeded all facilities, and their condition was pitiable. Men were sick in quarters who should have been in the hospital, and drilling or carrying wood, when they should have been in their quarters. They would buy such remedies as they could obtain at the canteen, and say with grim fatalism, "What's the use of going on the sick book, they will only give you salts or paint you with iodine." Most of us assuaged our hunger with "Ward's cakes" and bottled milk while the money lasted.

We felt then that such conditions might exist without exciting any surprise during a campaign in some foreign land, but to men newly departed from good homes such privations seemed needless, if not criminal, in our own country. We may have been wrong in our conclusions, but this opinion was held without dissent by the enlisted men in the 23rd Engineers in Camp Meade.

Men occasionally fainted in the ranks at retreat, perhaps from cold and exhaustion. Meade through various causes seemed a sort of Andersonville to the Engineers. We were powerless to protest, it was our first taste of stern military life, yet in some respects it was a horrid travesty of army life. "Those who wasted us, required of us mirth," well meaning and enthusiastic young officers, well fed also, we hope, would cheer away our hunger and charm our ailments out of existence with a trite expression, "You are in the army now."

The American loses his sense of humor only with his life. "You Are in the Army Now" became our popular song, and we sang "There's a Long, Long Trail A-winding," and "Indiana" with pathos and feeling. For the first time we were under absolute authority, and it was not always kindly, wise or competent. Men accustomed to manage large affairs were reduced to confusion, by a "bawling out" by some acting non-com., who in life might have been the employee, for lack of dexterity in the "school of a soldier."

Some portions of our training was permanently beneficial. Discipline demands stern insistence at the very beginning; neatness was demanded; we kept the barracks spotlessly clean, scrubbing them with mops frequently; we policed the grounds diligently,

picking up scraps of paper, burnt matches and cigarette butts. In time we avoided making needless work for ourselves by putting trash where it belonged. Our egotism diminished, we soon regarded ourselves "as worms of the dust," and were so regarded by many of our superiors. How we envied the mere boy, who was quick and snappy at drill. In respect to comfort, we had sluffed off the luxuries and conveniences of forty centuries, and were as inured to hardship as the cave dwellers. Those primitive people had the advantage of us, in fact, in an abundance of fire wood and fresh meat.

This heroic training prepared us for war, or polar explorations. The physical hardships of France did not appall us, in fact we fared far better there in clothes, food and care. Perhaps in the future a crimson service stripe will be awarded to the Engineers who wintered in Meade and Laurel.

It is only fair to record that our rough training bore good fruit. We were ready and able to endure. This history does not apply to other organizations at Meade. We saw the troops about us enjoying many things of which we were deprived. The Pennsylvania regiment were near home; they seemed to be well fed, and in some of their barracks were pianos and pool tables; they had other means of amusement which we lacked. Above all they were near their homes and were occasionally visited by their families.

The Y. M. C. A. at Camp Meade did good work and was under the direction of earnest men. No means of indoor amusement were provided for, and the quarantine debarred us from the privileges of the Y hut, much of the time. We often assured each other that everything would be all right when we were assigned to companies.

CHAPTER II

Wagon 5 Is Formed

The recruit detachments were melting. The technical companies were organized. All the wagon companies, and all but one of the truck companies. Wagon 5 is almost the youngest child of the regiment. The companies were organized to some extent by reference to the qualification cards, but as a rule the officers in charge of the recruit detachment creamed them as far as possible for the companies to which they were assigned. Men sought to follow their favorite officer, or to be included in some company where friends had already gone. The days came when a Mack truck would roll up to the barracks and a few comrades would jubilantly load their blue barrack bags and join their companies. Those who remained were a little envious.

Wagon Co. 5 was organized in Barrack C-36. This noble pile and C-37 was a mile from the Engineer Block P. The detachment, which had occupied this building, originally large, had nearly all joined their companies. Capt. Edgar Day Knapp was in command and moved in on the ninth day of January, 1918, with about thirty men to which were added four men from C-36.

There was only one man in the company at that time capable of carrying on the difficult work of organization and the instruction of the company in the infantry drill. This was Sherburn N. Prescott, a previous service man of New England stock and western rearing, who had served his country in time of war and participated gallantly in several engagements, well past the draft age, with an honorable record in the old army, which had been recognized by promotion. He was actuated to enlist by the highest motive, he was in every respect disinterested; as a man he would rank 100 per cent American. With a large experience, and knowledge of men in the army and out of it, he set about his work with energy and tact. For several vital weeks he was "second in command." All who were members of Wagon Co. 5 at that time recall his patient insistence on a straight line at any company formation. We did not

think it was a very important matter then. Later on when parade was an evening occurrence and reviews not uncommon, we said of this and other things, "Prescott was right."

Several days were spent in Barracks C-36, during which we were engaged in drill. New men continued to join our ranks, and the nucleus of Wagon 5 had opportunity to take stock of each other.

Many were still half attired in civilian clothes, and the organization as a whole presented a motley and unmilitary appearance, which was misleading to those who formed a summary estimate of Wagon 5's qualities. In selecting the first contingent, some care had been taken to find men qualified with previous experience to handle horses, but a certain proportion were thrown in for good measure, whose previous occupations were not even remotely connected with Wagon Train work. The men from the same recruit detachment were, of course, more or less acquainted with each other and naturally grouped their cots together. Chester L. Phillips and Charles Chavey broke the ice and established a community of interest in the company at large. We were all wolfishly hungry when these men received boxes from home of such ample proportions that they made a substantial donation to all the members of the company. We saw at once that these soldiers came of good stock, and came from excellent homes. The quantity and quality of the provisions sent them certified the one, and their generosity testified to the other. The advent of Phillips' box revealed to us the most wonderful appetite in the army; this too, belonged to Phillips. The Patriots in the upstairs room watched Phillips in amazement. "If he can work as he can eat, what a worker he must be," was our dominating thought. For two days Phillips devoted every moment not occupied by drill to masticating roast chicken and angel cake. His efforts did not stop with day; he proceeded gravely and mechanically, he did not eat ferociously but fluently and effectively. Our last sight before "lights out" was Phillips, lying in bed with a drumb-stick in one hand, a piece of cake in the other, dividing his attention squarely between the two.

The real skinners were satisfied they had been assigned to the work for which they had enlisted. Others felt that their surroundings would be more genial in truck or technical companies.

At that time wagon companies were thought to be composed of rough and uneducated men; they were a little looked down on by

some of the men, and were not considered very classy by many officers in other elements in the 23rd. This attitude had a stimulating effect on us, considered rough-necks, called "skinners and broncho busters"; well, we would get what was coming to us any way.

As an army we were "Going to show the Kaiser" what the yankee boys could do, and Wagon Co. 5 was ultimately to show the regiment its ability to properly carry on any work that technical companies can do. The good-natured taunts of our former associates in the "recruits" were soon returned. At first on meeting a former recruit the new skinner would be asked, "What company are you in?" "In a wagon company," we would respond listlessly, and change the conversation. The friend would mention our supposed misfortune commiseratingly to mutual friends in companies supposed to have a strong stand in, "Did you hear what happened to Smithers?" "He is in a wagon company." They would shed a few sympathetic words in reference to Smithers' shattered prospects and revert to their own bright hope.

In France, the men who knew nothing about horses, the men who were wished on the company, and on whom the company was wished, contributed the qualities that enabled a practically wagonless wagon company to do for months a technical company's work.

On January 17, we removed to Barracks P-10 and remained there for two days. In the short period since our organization, we had developed quite a little company spirit and began to act like a "regular outfit." We drilled near the guard house and a number of prospective squad leaders began their try-out and taught the rest of us whatever they happened to know. When we went to mess, and any one called out, "What outfit is this?" we answered proudly, "Wagon Co. 5," and tried to look as bold and confident as our sure enough skinners.

At P-10, we were again strengthened in number and Captain Knapp made every effort to secure full equipment for us. We besieged the supply office by day and night, and when we left Camp Meade we were fully covered with army issue. Prescott was reluctant to lead us forth wearing a civilian cap, and unable to secure a new campaign hat he at last mustered in a weird second hand headpiece, which, he averred, had been previously occupied by a colored soldier. Prescott was not proud of his hat, and even with

the lining removed it perched rather coyly on top of his dome. The hat had seen a great deal of rough weather and drooped about his visage like a small Liberty Bell. Alexander, the Goliath of the company, was the despair of the army outfitter. This lusty person's clothes started at the seams with every movement of his body, and until wrapped leggings were issued nothing in stock could properly surround his pillar-like calves.

On the night preceding our departure, Captain Knapp entered our quarters, and instructed us in the art of making a horseshoe pack. On the morning of the 19th of January, 1918, we marched to Laurel, Maryland, and were assigned to squad tents, and rationed with Company K.

Tenting in mid-winter did not prove a hardship. The ventilation in our barracks at Meade had been so perfect and so rigidly enforced that the tents were quite comfortable; they were heated by Sibley stoves. On cold nights, when wood was fairly plentiful, members of the squad took turns in feeding the stove.

The first battalion was still at Laurel; they started for France on January 22. Several companies and a number of recruits were also there. This was a 23rd Engineer camp, and one of the best known race tracks in the east; our company streets were as a rule back of the stables. At this time part of the regiment was at Belvoir, Virginia, some companies were camped at Glen Burnie, Maryland, originally the Maryland National Guard Rifle Range, but Regimental Headquarters were with us.

Laurel became to us a synonym expressing mud, but our condition was infinitely better than at Meade. K Company's mess until the advent of Mess Sergeant Fisher was nothing remarkable although Scotty Wallace, the chief cook, prepared the materials at his disposal very skillfully. Wagon 5 was served second, and K Company never restrained their robust appetites for comrades yet to be fed. We had eaten so sparingly in Meade that K's Spartan mess came to us like manna to the famished wanderers.

Wagon 5 was not permitted to eat the bread of idleness. We performed most of the duties of the camp; wood was conveyed in trucks from points several miles distant. We won a considerable reputation with our axes; we carried the logs on our shoulders through the snow and slush to the trucks waiting at the road. We shoveled snow, built platforms and raised tents for our weaker sisters, made

roads, dug drains, placed the water system of the camp in working condition; a detail from this company took care of the furnace at Headquarters. We built latrines for the occupants of the other companies, unloaded cinders and made company streets through other company quarters.

We have indicated in the previous chapter, that that winter was exceptionally cold, yet at times we perspired freely. Once or twice during our stay at Laurel we paused to draw breath. When we had nothing else to do we drilled. When the snow was too deep for the trucks to draw wood we went out and drilled in it, one week we spent eight happy hours per day in this festive employment. The pavilion back of the grand stand enabled us to drill under cover when the weather was too stormy even for Wagon 5.

A few days after we came to Laurel, our quarters were occupied by recruit detachments and we were given a large company street in the rear of Company L mess hall and a few stables. When we began to attain our full strength we occupied the entire street.

At this time the opinion was prevalent that troop movement was closely watched by German spies. Men of Teutonic antecedents were severely scrutinized, their natural affinity for each other's society made them seem at that nervous period probable conspirators. We were often unjust, but it was not a period for calm reasoning.

Health conditions were much better and there was a little illness; boots and slickers had not yet been issued to us; oilskin jackets and pants were then unthought of, so were caps, overshoes and gloves. We survived and became hardy and vigorous and worked under conditions that would have prostrated us a few months before. Captain Knapp did his utmost to secure clothing for us, particularly shoes and socks. Many of the men had no shoes, except the army dress shoe, and were obliged to work in these when the soles were almost worn through.

To the battalion and regimental supply officers, Wagon Co. 5 "was the terror that flieth by night and the pestilence that stalketh at noonday." Many of our subsequent misfortunes were probably due to our insistent desire to be decently clothed and treated. Our field shoes were excellent and durable; in time our feet became adapted to this heavy roomy covering. At first they tired the body, and were stiff and intractable to the majority of men, whose feet

were habituated to light shoes. We were supposed to have two pair, but most of us did not secure the second pair until some weeks after we reached Glen Burnie; as a result, our men working in the snow, came in with wet feet; after thaws the ground was converted into mud, the melted snow formed pools of water and slush, the shoes were not waterproof; overdried at night by the side of a red hot Sibley they shrunk and wrinkled up and mangled the feet like implements of torture.

Men clung to their dress shoes; true, as working shoes they were worthless but they did not abuse the feet like the field boot. No inconsiderable portion of the company were temporarily crippled by foot trouble, and our available working strength was greatly diminished. A constant occurrence of wet feet was responsible for many colds, congestion of the lungs and sore throat. Captain Knapp possessed the excellent quality of thoughtfulness for the physical well-being of his men. This trait was conspicuous in a regiment where many officers devoted much time and thought to the improvement of their personal position. We saw gross neglect on the part of many commanders of needs and wants which could only be supplied through commissioned authority. We were always aware that the nation did not intend us to lack for anything.

The unstinted liberality of the American people sought to procure for us not only everything that we needed, but comforts and advantages hitherto unthought of for enlisted men. The worst of it was that the impression was given them that their wishes had been carried out, and that we were soldiering under ideal conditions. After many months we were fully equipped, and able to work under the best possible circumstances, making due allowance for the unavoidable inconveniences of war.

We found ourselves under autocratic army rule, our letters were censored, conditions which might have been remedied were forbidden discussion. A great many officers lived apart in spirit if not in reality from their men. As we relapsed to the subserviency of long past serfdom, and lived in fear of violating some minor regulation and incurring a severe or humiliating punishment, others reverted to the pomp and arrogance of the remote master-period.

As a whole the officers of the new army have made a record, unapproached by any nation raising a vast levy "en masse." Most of those, whose preparation had been slight, possessed enough intelli-

gence, patriotism, and adaptability to grow into their jobs. Theirs was a position abounding in temptation; they were placed in command of large units of their fellow citizens, but a temporary social gulf intervened between them. In the most democratic of armies, which ours is not, equality is impossible, obedience must be established by discipline, discipline must be supported by penalties. Egotism is one of the most ordinary attributes of human nature: the desire to rule and receive incense is [inherent] in all of us. That the great majority of our officers were gallant in action and indefatigable in endeavor is what the nation expected; this was true of the rank and file but that the majority of them kept their heads, and maintained the artificial distinction of rank because it was required of them, and for the good of the service, and remained in spirit if not in person on a parity with their men is the highest tribute that can be paid to their manhood.

Before serious work in France gave the shallower minds better occupations a few officers and non-coms. devoted much time to the jealous guarding of their newly acquired distinction, but these men were never popular even in the social group formed by the army officers.

It must also be said that in every unit there is a certain number of unreasonable and incorrigible soldiers. Ungrateful and unappreciative of fairness and consideration shown them, these trouble-makers are usually shirkers and frequently drunkards, many of them flannel-mouthed. Although the proportion of such men is small, they are responsible for much of the severity in the army regulations and bring upon their well behaved comrades many curtailments of privileges which would not otherwise be imposed. There is a criminal, near criminal and utterly worthless element in every unit, such as were termed in former times, masterless men. In civilian life or in the army such men must be mastered if social or military organization is to be preserved, and for the safety of society, and the continuity of military operations. Almost invariably men of this class do the whining for the whole community.

It is probably true that law as it stands in military application is unadapted to the best moral and physical interests of an army of free and intelligent men, enlisted solely for a great emergency; and that men unwisely entrusted to power have been responsible for many wrongs; that thousands of men in the ranks are equal in

breeding, morality and education to their commander-in-chief, should be the pride and boast of the American Army, and that such men served through the war as privates, proved beyond peradventure the high quality of their patriotism and their character.

Wagon Co. 5 was fortunate from the beginning in the relationship existing between the officers and the men. At Camp Laurel the Red Cross was our frequent benefactor; the sweaters, scarfs, socks and helmets they distributed were of inestimable service. Throughout the war this organization has been devoted in service, and maintained the high standards of its previous history. Every soldier who has left a Red Cross hospital bears enthusiastic testimony to the unwearying devotion, kindness and efficiency of the Red Cross nurse. That a rather selfish law restricted them to the society of officers when off duty in France was our misfortune, but not their fault. These noble girls were less afflicted with "Officeritus" than the girls at home; their hearts were with us, and nothing that they could do for our welfare was left undone. We fondly believe that they were with us. In most cases the officer was just a passing incident in their lives.

We had not been long in Laurel when Company K departed and we succeeded to their mess hall, and installed a mess of our own. The mess is a subject which every wise soldier taboos in conversation. Discussion of the mess and its attaches is apt to produce a hobnail barrage, and much profane language. But we must plunge in this vivid subject, or like the boy about to take a swim, put one foot in the icy water and later on the other. A man who has been mess sergeant need fear nothing short of eternity, all life's waves and billows have rolled over him.

There were no warranted sergeants in Wagon 5 until some months later. Our acting mess sergeant was John B. Haan; the head cook was Leonard Bieberdorf. Haan came from a prosperous town of Woden, Iowa; he had harmed no one, and had attended promptly to his duties. Captain Knapp seemed to like him and yet he made him mess sergeant. Haan protested, sat down on his bunk and wept, but the decree had gone forth. He bade his friends good-by and walked falteringly to the mess hall to begin his duties. At that time he was a cheerful, robust man; he would wake with the thrush and carol a little song about "Lulu," a popular melody in Woden. From the time he entered that kitchen, until months later at Nevers

when he became a peaceful detail sergeant, he never smiled. Haan fell away in flesh; naturally a brunette, as the weeks wore away, he grew pale and melancholy. For him songs had ceased, only sighs passed his lips, and a little occasional tobacco juice; he became devout, he was seldom found in scenes of gaiety and mirth, but at every religious service when possible Haan was present, beseeching the throne of Grace for help and mercy. The mess, while we were in America, was the envy of all the other companies in the 23rd. For a short time in France there was a paucity of food but this was the fortune of war; troop movements at that time somewhat curtailed our supply of food. Two of Haan's leading characteristics were frankness and energy; in industry and obedience to orders he was an example to all sergeants. As a detail sergeant he usually had in his charge a considerable number of horses and he became intensely fond of them, and used to say, "The horses at least are human—they have a heart."

Arthur R. McCarthy became at this time acting first sergeant. Few men of his years are the fortunate possessors of as much energy, experience and social charm as this young sergeant. A modest and unpretentious man, he was naturally refined, and instinctively correct in deportment. No one ever heard McCarthy use an obscene expression, and his conduct in every relationship was honorable. Captain Knapp was a tireless worker, very apt to rouse his sergeants from their slumbers at midnight. McCarthy was exactly similar, he never had to be aroused, for even at that hour he was awake and working. The company was being prepared physically and in equipment for overseas service, but owing to the as yet unperfected system of supply there was much annoying delay; checking up was a daily occurrence, heart and lung inspections were frequent, and many other inspections; we were severely levied on for details, and left with a limited amount of men for our company work. To carry on under these disadvantages and to survive the lack of sympathy which fourth battalion showed us at Glen Burnie was an undertaking, fully man's size, and very successfully completed by Sergeant McCarthy.

Second Lieut. Lloyd J. Hamilton was at this time company clerk. Hamilton snailed onto that job two minutes after the company was organized. Like another celebrated character he "never deserted his trust until his trust deserted him"; never forsook a good job, until he got a better one, and he was one of those unusual babies, born with his

eyes open. He had the faculty of getting on with men, the ability to speak persuasively for himself, and great energy and concentration. Hamilton was human but he did not fully realize this at that time; his career in the army was uninterruptedly popular and successful. Nearly a year later at an Engineering Training School in France he would sometimes recite, "Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud." Hamilton nobly survived the hardships and indignities of that school, graduated well up in his class and he will return to Visalia, California, as energetic, as able, and as pure as he left it. His interests have widened and his sympathies are more extended. It is fortunate that he left that progressive but rather inland city and came to France, fortunate in attending that Engineering School for Officers—he saw a great deal of woe there, the woe did him good, he got wise. He was a very popular first sergeant, and will always be popular in any capacity. He does not want to be president any more, but everyone in Wagon 5 is sure that he will continue to climb; we expect him at least to become governor of the great prune state. And when he dies, "He will be climbing up the golden stairs to glory."

George Madson and McGee had charge of the supply tent, two of the most conscientious men on earth. When Madson receipted for any goods, realizing the uncertainty of life, and the uncertain tenor of non-com. positions, he signed receipts for issue stuff, "George Madson, temporary acting assistant supply sergeant." He was a well educated lad of honest Scandinavian stock and never overstepped a military regulation. One could as readily fancy Gibraltar leaving its base as Madson going A. W. O. L. He was a gentleman in heart and conduct. McGee was a much older man of a similar type but he possessed a Celtic humor and a gallant bearing and melodious voice inherited from his great ancester, King Brian Boru. He played the mandolin very fluently, and beside this was really a competent business man. Both of these boys were in poor health; entering the army through the cleanest patriotism, they were unable to make France and were honorably discharged for physical disability.

John Wayne Hazelton was even then an acting sergeant engaged in office work and later he became the best supply sergeant the 23rd Engineers ever had. The only fault with Hazelton at this time was an excess of modesty; for a man of twenty-eight he had been unusually successful in Baker, Montana, and other places; one could hardly say that he lacked confidence in himself, or that he was timid. We have

seen him a very lion in times of danger, but he was unmistakably bashful, particularly in ladies' society; in conversation he expressed opinions in a tentative hesitating manner, and was inclined to defer almost too much to the views of those who were older and as he modestly thought, wiser. Hazelton has largely overcome this slight temperamental defect, but he will never be really bold or assertive. At that time the only subject he discussed positively and with strong feeling was "Montana." As an exponent of Baker and Montana he expressed all the proudest citizen could wish.

Robbins, our company barber, glided unostentatiously into his permanent place in the company at Laurel. We did not realize then that this meek unobtrusive person would become one of the most useful and influential men in Wagon Co. 5. Barbers are natural confidants; Phillip, the barber of Louis the eleventh was the most trusted confidant of his King. Robbins became the adviser and banker of a large portion of the company and the friend of them all. He is perhaps the only soldier in the A. E. F. who never crabbed; his optimism was a valuable stimulant in the Argonne, where no other stimulants were available. Robbins must be a very useful man in Utah, the Queen of the West. Here, he took everyone's place but the company commander's, and no one doubts his ability to command a division if so ordered.

Private Earl King was the best known man in Wagon 5 at Laurel. He was enlisted at Indianapolis, Indiana. The mystery attached to King consisted of his being in the army at all. He was a youth of large stature and great physical strength. This he carefully conserved. He seemed to be adapted only to the social side of military life. He was supposed to be of obscured mentality and was released from the service for this reason, yet his career was in a way more successful than any of ours. This anomaly at arms was the only private of the buck variety, who, entering the army without friends or influence, or qualities that would develop affection and create enthusiasm, had things his own way, within very broad limits. Military law did not exist for him, detail work was not aided by King unless he was allowed frequent intermissions. He was not awed by anything under a captain, and expressed his opinion of a non-com. and their orders with a candor that was gratifying to the privates. If he felt impelled to visit any portion of the camp, he would act promptly on this impulse. He was the life and despair of the company; he got by the recruiting officer and continued to get by, unsubdued and untrampled. After a time a soldier

was detailed to be his companion, First Class Private Austin Marley served in this capacity and he was succeeded by Private George Walters. Both of these guardians were men above the average in intelligence. Marley was very kind to King, and King had the good taste to become fond of him. Walters and Marley were relieved of other duties while acting as King's convoy, but no one envied them for it was the only non-laborious job not regarded as a snap.

It was necessary to conserve fuel; we were much better provided with this than some recruits near us, but we had none to spare, and not always enough. Oft in the stilly night the recruits would raid our wood pile but increased vigilance soon made this resource unavailable, and they turned wistful eyes on a coal pile in front of the bath house which was in our care. To prevent the pipes from freezing we were obliged to maintain constant fire, and the coal heap was strictly "verboten" to all the camp, still under the very noses of our bath house guards, coal was removed nightly in noticeable quantities.

Captain Knapp ordered one of the non-coms. to capture the offenders and bring them to his tent, so one rainy slushy night Private Frank Forst, the most shadow-like sleuth in the Wagon Company, was stationed in the shadow of the stable near the coal and reinforcements crouched in the lee of an adjoining building. Forst had all the acuteness of a youth whose playground had been the streets of Chicago. After a two-hour wait he gave the signal agreed on and leaped like a cougar on the shoulders of a marauder; a terrific battle ensued, it was a running fight, the bandit ran and Forst hung on, commanding him to halt in the name of the Lord. Two others ran in opposite directions pursued by members of Wagon Co. 5's posse. We heard Forst's voice rapidly diminishing in the distance, urging his steed to halt, which he did, slipping on the ice and falling violently in the snow with his rider. Forst was on his feet first and grasping his partially stunned quarry by the collar, he dragged him across the camp to the captain's office. He resumed his post and assisted Sergeant McCarthy in capturing four other aspirants for fuel. These boys escaped with nothing more severe than a reprimand, but the rights and property of Wagon Co. 5 were afterwards respected.

Our stay at Laurel was not unhappy. Wagon 5 had responded rapidly to good food and good treatment and on February 12, 1918, we were prepared for a better camp, if not for a better world. We broke camp and marched sixteen miles to Camp Glen Burnie.

CHAPTER III

Glen Burnie

Corporal Spencer remembers the march to Glen Burnie, the little jaunt from Laurel to our camp. He claims that a large part of the country over which they traveled was inundated, according to the corporal, the water and slush was ice cold; we knew that we could depend on his word for he is a thoughtful, methodical man. We permitted him to march in our place—enthusiasm should always be encouraged—and we felt quite safe about Spencer. Captain Knapp was along and besides, "We knew that God would take care of him." It is over a year since Spencer marched to Glen Burnie for us but his recollection of that event has not diminished with time. He assures us that this ice-water came over his leggings in places, and that it was wet and uncomfortable. Quite a few of us marched vicariously, or by proxy.

About thirty of the company developed serious foot trouble the evening before our departure, and others were needed to see that the truck drivers took the right direction. Taking Spencer as a representative marcher, and assuming that his feelings were shared by those who marched with him, we gather that the company ignored the really fine landscape through which they traveled. That part of Maryland contains many noted colonial homes, rich in historic association. When Spencer arrived at Glen Burnie a few hours after us, we rushed up to him and asked about these places. He rather repulsed us and dwelt strongly on the discomforts and inconveniences of the trip. He expressed a wish to get by a big fire and dry his clothes, so we let him hunt up some wood and build one. While we are speaking of Spencer, and have him on our mind, we will indicate how this expert railroad and office man prospered in the Wagon Company. He was assigned to Wagon 5 because he had for years led a sedentary life, another reason was that he could not learn about horses any younger.

The natural place to put a man with his qualifications was at some sort of hard manual labor like digging holes in the road; he

was willing, plucky, and did not complain, so he was allowed this strenuous exercise, and others were as considerately allowed to complain. Some of the things promised us came about the time we were ready to sail, such as German labor and service battalions. About this time Spencer laid off his muscular occupation and assumed charge of Lieutenant Killourhy's office at Billy-sous-les-Cotes, making good there as he had everywhere else.

Glen Burnie is a fine camp. Our tents were pitched in the shadow of the pines, the site was well drained by nature, healthful and isolated. We were in quarantine at Glen Burnie, as we had been at Laurel, so that our existence and important military secrets would not be revealed to the foe. Our letters continued to be censored, and only rosy tidings were permitted to reach the home folks.

This was a sailor rifle range. The sailors and their officers were fine, clean men, and lived happily, and went where they listed under a normal régime. We found the fourth battalion at Glen Burnie, Major Moller commanding. Our association with the men in the battalion was very harmonious. Truck Co. 9 lived on the other side of our street, and officers and men were the best of neighbors. We did not make much of a hit with battalion Headquarters; we became the hewers of wood and drawers of water for the camp, and had little opportunity to drill. Sometimes a hundred of our company were called on for detail work. If we were lashed with whips at Laurel, at Glen Burnie we were lashed with scorpions. Certain nations were unsubdued by the legions of Cæsar, as a subduer Cæsar had nothing on the major. He would inspect our streets and quarters daily with a portentous train of inquisitors. His approach was like the advent of a great sorrow. A certain luckless acting sergeant was elected to meet the major and be "bawled out" every day. Wagon 5 and her captain were not in the battalion inner-circle, but our affliction drew us closer together and maintained a company unity which has become very strong. We continued to live in squad tents, which were very satisfactory homes. Our street was at the foot of a ridge, and thus protected from the wind.

We had a neat little mess hall and probably the best mess in the regiment. Celery, oysters and eggs, grape fruit and bananas were often found on our menu. The most captious could not at this time

speak anything but praise for the mess, men from the aristocratic technical companies would steal into our mess lines. Sergeant Haan and Cooks Bieberdorf and La Mott upheld this corner of the company's reputation, when we were harassed on every side by the heads of the battalion. The discontented eye of the adjutant could find no fault in our kitchen.

We began to stand battalion retreat, our total strength then was less than one hundred thirty. We were seldom able to drill as a company, and while proficient in squad drill, we lacked confidence in company formation. The captain and sergeants did all in their power to remedy this, but with large details working on the roads, getting camp wood, policing under the Master Engineers, standing guard or working at the butts, still others practicing at the rifle range, they had only a handful to drill.

We were esteemed for our work alone, otherwise we were in hot water. Master Engineers said in effect that a detail of Wagon 5 men put more punch in their work and accomplished more than a similar number from other companies. Our efficiency did not win us official praise; the men soon saw that we had no stand-in at Headquarters; men in other organizations obtained furloughs; Wagon 5 was turned down.

We marched on the parade ground with fear in our hearts for the stirring music inspired us like the Death March in Saul. When we heard the terrible voice proclaim, "Pass in review," our blood turned to water, and in that pretentious presence we were at our worst. We marched unhappily by the great man and turned our "eyes right!" with the pitiful expression that a whipped dog wears, sensing the sardonic sneer and sarcastic comment of the reviewers. A little encouragement and kindness would not have harmed us during those trying weeks.

Captain Knapp did not fit into the departmental scheme of things. He is a gentleman by birth and not by act of the War Department. Battalion Headquarters did not seem to understand him; this was natural. If his men were in need of anything or had apparently been treated unjustly, he went at once to Headquarters to speak for his command. This anxiety for the enlisted man was probably deemed quixotic, and what he did for us did not strengthen him with his immediate superiors.

Courtesy was not Major Moller's leading characteristic; he was

frequently far ruder than he would have dared be if unprotected by his gold leaf and uniform. The adjutant was a good military man, active, and in a narrow way, intelligent. The major was not without ability, and in the proper place he would have been useful and likable. He was splendidly adapted to construction work in the tropics, with coolie or peon labor; afforded such conditions, his methods and personality would have secured success.

Our commander preserved his dignity, uttered no complaint, and suppressed every expression of dissatisfaction on the part of the men. Captain Knapp endured more for love of country in Camp Glen Burnie than most engineer captains did in France. He enjoyed the esteem of the whole battalion.

An edict proceeded from Headquarters that as no wood would be issued to the soldiers in France, the wood issue would cease in Glen Burnie, so that we would become hardened. Officers and supply tents were omitted from this rule. Captain Knapp directed his orderly to remove the wood from his tent as he wished to fare no better than his men. Through an arrangement with a sergeant of Truck Co. 9 we secured a large unofficial supply of wood for both companies. One day a master engineer appeared on our street with a detail, and started to remove the wood to a nearby buzz-saw. A Wagon 5 man urged him to leave it alone, but he explained that Headquarters was short of warmth. Our man suggested that the major and adjutant should be "hardened" for the wood shortage in France. We held the wood, sawed it up, and stored it in our tents, but our triumph was short lived. We were not permitted to secure any more, and for a few days suffered from the cold. Then the "hardening" order was revoked, and a small amount of wood was issued to each tent. This may seem a petty incident to record, but it was not petty to us in February, 1918.

In some companies of the battalion, the rigid quarantine resulted in many A. W. O. L.'s. In one technical company a squad tent was emptied one night; the soldiers gone on vacation left a note pinned on their tent for the major. To advise an officer in this manner was contrary to military regulations, and an unwise breech of discipline, but the advice was good. Wagon 5 had a few A. W. O. L.'s, and these were principally young men from the west, who wished to see a little of the nearby cities of Baltimore and Washington. Wagon 5 gamely resolved to grin and bear it, the best resolution the soldier

can make. Throughout our period of service no man in Wagon 5 has committed a serious offense. There have been very few court-martials. Our company has quite an exceptional freedom from venereal cases. We were commended for our record in this respect by Headquarters. In France our company fraternized with the natives, respected their rights, assisted the inhabitants of the devastated, the reclaimées, in many material ways. When our company departed from any French village, they were regretted by the population individually and as a unit. The mayor of one town wrote to Lieutenant Killourhy, commending a detachment in his command, in which he expressed his regret at their departure, and stated that our men had exceeded in kindness and correct deportment any American soldiers with whom he had come in contact.

Again rumors began to circulate, forecasting an early departure for France. We had been in the shadow of this coming event for many weeks. Preparation and secrecy were our watchword. The regiment's attempts at concealment were very amateurish, but the men were deeply impressed with our importance as a regiment, and faithfully believed that the German Intelligence Department was concentrating its spy force on our incomings and our outgoings. We thought that the slightest indiscretion or contact with the outside world would reveal our whereabouts at sea to the German submarine. We believed the air to be vibrating with wireless messages to Berlin from concealed stations in the towers in the village of Glen Burnie, or in the tree tops about us. Every man likes to play "detective," and almost equally well he enjoys the custody of a secret. We played both games in the 23rd by hunting German spies, and concealing the whereabouts and movements of five thousand Engineers. Some pretty village girl in Maryland might be in the pay of the Kaiser; her seemingly innocent questions might send our regiment to a watery grave if we replied truthfully. Her kiss might be a betrayal. The cornfield darky, toiling by the roadside, who called out as we hiked by, "When is you all goin' to France?" may have been meditating treason. Our contact with the outside world was limited, and our answers to natural questions were crafty and ambiguous.

The officers and men of the 23rd were neither imbecile nor childish. A state of war engenders suspicion. German propaganda with millions at its command was the theme of every newspaper's daily

scare lines. It was eventually demonstrated that German propaganda was wasteful and inefficient. The straightforward way was again proved the best way, and the least expensive. We still took the Germans at the superman estimate of themselves; we did not underrate them, we felt that it was best to be extremely careful. It was a good way to feel.

We began to secure our overseas equipment soon after coming to Glen Burnie. Wagon 5 stood well with the enlisted men in charge of the Battalion Office. We helped them voluntarily in loading and unloading trucks at all hours of the day and night, and on the principle of "mutual accommodation" we were generally allowed a first shot at the cargo. We were one of the last companies to begin equipping, we were among the first prepared to go; like our original issue of O. D. wardrobe, we acquired this overseas stuff very gradually, a piece at a time. Supply Sergeant Hazelton's previous experience in the clothing business enabled him to quickly summarize our needs, and check up our rapidly accumulating acquisitions; his affability and energy made him very successful in securing supplies under the most discouraging conditions. Since Sergeant Hazelton took the Supply Office, we have been promptly equipped with every issue article as soon as it was obtainable. In France we have been the best equipped and physically cared for company in the regiment, and probably in the army.

Several men joined us at Glen Burnie, bringing our company to full strength. Two or three weeks before we sailed 2nd Lieut. William E. Tabor reported to the company. His appearance created intense interest—and trepidation. We understood Captain Knapp, and knew what he would do and what he would not do. This new officer was an unknown quantity. We did not call lieutenants, "Loots" or "Looies" in those days, or think of them except with reverence and Godly fear. Had not an officer who trained us as recruits sternly said, "When you address an officer, always say Sir; come to 'attention' with a snap, give him a snappy salute." This semi-daily lecture was always followed with a humorous excerpt from the I. D. R. about the Roman who saluted to show that he was a free man, the poor feeble-minded Roman.

To return to Lieutenant Tabor, who does not like to be kept waiting, he looked young and quiet. We had seen so many officers who looked that way, and proved very volcanic, that we took no chances

CAPTAIN ARTHUR TAYLOR

LIEUTENANT W. E. TABOR

with this one; we saluted him as often as possible and said "Sir," much as we would have addressed God, and walked softly before him; we also moved the "crap game" to the rear of the sixth tent. We were relieved to discover that he did not seem to pine for adulation. He had a wonderful capacity for silence, several days passed before he said anything in our hearing, and our ears were at acute attention. It is the habit of new officers to rearrange affairs according to their liking; we had been badgered and buffeted so constantly by Headquarters that we expected our new lieutenant to zealously spy out additional defects; we agreed that he did not seem ferocious and apparently planned no innovations; he smiled sometimes, that was a good sign, but he looked too strictly reared, too good for rough army life. The first days he looked about him, though sparing in speech he seemed endowed with excellent vision. When our working time was reduced, and we began to drill, a great and rapid change came over him. This man, who at first glance impressed one as a recent graduate of a religious college, at drill or work proved a little tornado. He had two tones for conversation, one mild and agreeable for ordinary purposes, the other for use when things went wrong, and this was very much like the muffled growl of an English bulldog; he could shift from the first to the last automatically; if he began any remarks in tone 2 with a preface, "Saay, you fellows had better—" we got "organized" at once, and kept our eyes on the grand old flag.

We soon found that he was for the company, a kind and perfectly fair man with plenty of practical common sense, with more knowledge of the world than most men twice his age possessed, and more experience in handling men, and handling them right than a majority of the officers in our regiment. We have always been sincerely for the lieutenant, and everything that he has done has been "jake" with us. The captain and lieutenant harmonized like father and son, and were ample for our present needs, but Headquarters, in its infinite wisdom, concluded that we needed still more help to whip us into shape. Although it was reluctantly conceded that ours had become the best company formation at battalion retreat, a few of our men, in moments of military madness, expressed a desire for a "real" military man. How well this wish was gratified! Headquarters loaned us First Lieutenant Twitchell! If the lieutenant had lived in West Point from infancy until he was attached to

Wagon 5, their ideal could not have been more completely realized. Lieutenant Twitchell had all kinds of confidence in his own judgment, but this did not arise from vanity or egotism; his past work afforded some basis for his assurance, he seldom asked a subordinate's opinion, he did the thinking and gave the other bird clear and definite orders.

He was firm and unemotional, at the same time thoughtful and free from bias. One felt that he would treat his brother like anyone else, that no one had a "stand in" with him. "Graping up" to him was a useless and dangerous waste of time. He had that superlative quality of an officer, taking care of his men; had he been a hod-carrier or a general he would have been just as sure of himself and just as self-respecting. Consequently he was unswayed by personal ambition, an isolated figure, complete in himself. Aside from his vigilant interest in his company's physical well-being, and a resolute insistence on having his beef steak fried to the medium point only, all his other emotions and feelings were articles of war and infantry drill regulation—a most unusual character. This silent spartan-like soldier seemed three centuries out of place; he was a man of Cromwell's time, hardly human, yet when out of the line of duty, which was seldom, he was kind in a restrained way and according to his light, square. For force and soldierly qualities, he outclassed very many men who outranked him, and they knew it. He labored indefatigably to do us good, and succeeded. He was in full accord with the policy of our officers. First Lieut. Arthur Taylor was added to our staff and Lieutenant Twitchell returned to his company. We had only time to conclude that he was a man of benevolent motives, before we sailed for France.

Our first lieutenant drilled us faithfully and constantly, the last few days were entirely devoted to drill. One day an order came to pack all company and personal property, and march to an unknown destination, the kitchen force would follow. We worked enthusiastically that night, quite ready to bid good-by to Glen Burnie and America; in the morning we marched forth very gallantly—with hardly a farewell look at the old camp—bound for France. We seemed to be going in the direction of Baltimore, and spent our rest interval discussing whether we would go by boat from Baltimore, or take train from there to Hoboken; we were so frenzied with enthusiasm that we did not remember that the Baltimore and Ohio Rail-

road ran beside our camp, and afforded very fair transportation. We marched on and on. Presently we seemed to be reversing our course, leading rather more in the direction of Cincinnati than Baltimore; soon, to our intense disgust, we saw the peaceful little city of Glen Burnie, Maryland, and the camp we left behind us. Knight raves about it yet and doubtless will when he thinks about it for many years. He has a wonderful capacity for indignation.

We thought we had all the officers the law allowed us; in so thinking we showed our ignorance. One day at evening when the sun was set, Capt. Laughlin P. Morrison appeared; we were informed that he was "attached" to Wagon 5. This poor bewildered company "stood in amazement" and murmured "pourquoi?" We were more highly favored than any company in the regiment. Perhaps ere long they would attach a general to our devoted band.

An attached officer has the softest berth in the army, absolutely no duties so far as we could discover, "nowhere to go but out and nowhere to come but in." When we went anywhere as a company our spare captain went along. We began to feel that we were objects of great consideration; Headquarters apparently thought "the captain of Wagon 5 may be taken sick some night and die suddenly, we will not leave them comfortless; we will attach an extra captain to them to provide for such an exigency."

One night a sergeant dashed wildly through the company street, shouting, "All out, fellows, all out! Up to Headquarters!" We rushed there tumultuously, thinking the place was probably on fire, but all was quiet and sepulchral. The entire battalion was there waiting expectantly, though they had no idea of what they were waiting for. Presently the major and his staff appeared on the veranda. He smiled and looked pleasant, and spoke for the first time in the memory of man in an agreeable tone of voice. Poor major—we are compelled to conceed that he was at least patriotic, and as anxious to go to France to serve his country as any of us. Some good hearted person cried out, "Three cheers for Major Moller!" Wagon Co. 5 cheered—like hell. But the rest of the battalion did, and now, softened by the lapse of time we are glad they cheered him, he looked still more human, it did him good. He said weakly and feelingly, "Men, I don't know why you are here, but I suppose you want to hear the news. We are going to France, and this time there is no camouflage about it." In less than two days we were on our way.

CHAPTER IV

The Social Life of Wagon Co. 5 in America

As a unit, Wagon 5 was in some sense a community. A community without recreation, enjoyment and social intercourse, is impossible. However restricted one's opportunities may be for exchange of thought and participation in different forms of recreation, men will find some source of mental and physical pleasure. While we were in Laurel the winter conditions and our activity precluded outdoor games. There was no dance hall, recreation room, gymnasium, or social meeting place in that camp, our outside liberty was restricted to two or three visits to Laurel, to attend local dances or religious services. There was a small writing room in Laurel, with no one in charge. The equipment comprised a phonograph and some writing paper. Twenty-five men would crowd this room to capacity. For these reasons our amusements were restricted to visits in each other's squad tents.

Systematized work in giving entertainment to the troops had not been introduced in Laurel or Glen Burnie. Left to their own resources, and craving recreation of some sort, the winter evenings were beguiled with little games of skill. A group of men would gather about a bunk and intensely watch the peregrinations of a pair of dice, this game requiring little space, and no expensive paraphernalia. It is an ancient pastime. The vikings used to shoot dice in the narrow holds of their sea rovers. Visitors from other companies frequently attended our little gatherings, and paid considerable sums of money to learn the game from our experts. Occasionally some mighty man would arise in another unit and utter a defiant challenge, like Goliath of old. Of our many good dice wielders, Sergt. Frank L. Carr was probably the best. An ancestor of Carr's broke the bank at Monte Carlo. Fortune smiles on the brave; Carr would invite the rival dice wielder down to our tents, or modestly falter over to his, with a notoriously obedient pair of little red cubes, and almost invariably he laid him low. Thus Wagon 5 was enriched with the spoils of the Egyptians.

Carr's genius was not limited to this single diversion. Profoundly nationalistic his education had included a course of study in the elementary and advanced varieties of that American game called "Poker."

Our men may have lacked much in classic scholarship and knowledge of the deceased languages but in poker they were second to none, and by deeper study and constant practice Carr was the superior of them all. He played with intense concentration, coolness, and thorough attention to the minute details which the tyro overlooks. With him it was not the casual employment of leisure time, but a loved art; he would shuffle the cards as tenderly and sympathetically as an artist adds a touch to a masterpiece. Had some of the officers of the 23rd waived rank long enough to indulge in a game of draw poker, with our brilliant adepts, they would have returned to their quarters with an amended opinion of Wagon 5's ability, and our finances would have been improved.

Carr knew another game, of heathen origin, with a peculiar name (we are uncertain as to the name, it was either "Tin can," "Can-can" or "Coon can"). As Carr describes it, it is an interesting and expeditious means of procuring wealth and amusement, but he was seldom able to induce any one to venture in the higher ranges of refined sport. We do not wish to imply that "Blackie's" usefulness was restricted to his ability as an indoor entertainer. He has all the attractive qualities of a southern gentleman; outstanding among them are an affectionate esteem for the ladies and abhorrence for alcoholic drinks.

Civic improvements as the company spirit increased, a desire for comforts and conveniences, and an attractive environment courses through the veins of our community. As the improvement of our quarters involved arduous work this may not seem the proper place to treat of it, but to our band of enthusiastic patriots this particular work was play. In all of Wagon 5's camps in America and France, the superiority of our quarters to those of the troops around us was commented on by our visitors and inspectors; an inspector general in his official report termed our camp a "model for all others, the best he had inspected." Looking about us we saw other company streets mere billows of mud, so we graded Wagon 5's street and crowned it with cinders, drained it for its entire length and cross-drained it, our first feat of engineering.

Hughbaert and Holohean were the pioneers in this advance movement; we were all uplifted by their zeal in carrying on the drainage system. The ground was either frozen or tenacious mud but Hughbaert and Holohean were undeterred by these natural difficulties; they would have looked cleaner standing "knee-deep in clover" but they were heroic standing knee-deep in mud. Hughbaert is a Belgian. He struck with his pick as furiously as if attacking the despoilers of his native land. Holohean is one of our "mosquito fleet" or younger members. To say "Holohean" is to say "tireless energy;" he worked as steadily as if he had been delving in the kitchen garden back of the house in Kingston, New York. These two men would scarcely quit their work for mess, it was unwise to allow them to impair their energy. Holohean never fully recovered but this work gave him useful ideas which he imparted to us in the form of frequent suggestions when we were repairing roads in France.

Of course so resourceful a company has musicians, both instrumental and vocal. Wagoner Hauer brought a mandolin from somewhere in Indiana to Camp Laurel and at times played it to our edification. Indiana has produced several great statesmen, James Whitcomb Riley and Booth Tarkington, and at least one great musician—Hauer. Tears would often spring unbidden to our eyes as Hauer picked over the waves on his instrument. His repertoire was quite large; besides the opening number he could play "Indiana," of course, and 50 per cent of "Rock of Ages." Besides this Hauer is an excellent mechanic; with the aid of another gentleman from Indiana, Horseshoer Chastain, he constructed the chests in which our company property went to the wars.

Several of our boys can play the phonograph. Drummer Forst and Buglers Paul, Gleeson, Johnson and Koehler donated martial strains sometimes to us. As a measure of safety, or to avoid interruption, these comrades selected a forest or a distant vacant field in which to practice. Paul and Gleeson were our original buglers. We expected great things of them because they were exempted from other duties and devoted the working day to practice, and probably to musical compositions too; we assumed this to be the case as many of their calls varied interestingly and materially from those in the manual; we understood what they meant, however, especially when they blew "mess" call, and our buglers' improvisations and varia-

tions were wildly applauded by the company whenever they "bugled." Old army men admitted they had never heard anything like it.

We have several sweet and vigorous singers; musical talent is notoriously sensitive, even irritable. Some men like Corp. Frank Wright have sufficient self-control to sing anywhere. Wright was piloting the "village choir" at Glen Burnie, when an officer rushed into the church, called out all the Engineers and hastened them back to camp. Wright was not responsible for this; he is one of the most diligent men on our roster, capable, efficient, and irreproachable. His singing annoys no one and is even enjoyable. That Methodist congregation was more interested in Wright's melodies than in the address, which was on the subject of "Temperance." This worthy topic is not new; Wright's singing was distinctly so. The pianist of Wagon 5 is James Wesley Curran; he is devoted to music and marksmanship, to the exclusion of almost every other interest. In France we became possessors of a souvenir from Berlin in the shape of a piano. Curran brought us back to the music and dance halls at home, with his inimitable touch; this sort of work did not seem to fatigue Curran. Stopping for the night at Olley, France, this little artist of Wagon 5 discovered an abandoned church. Its wonderful organ was intact; he was soon seated on the bench; our soldiers were deeply affected as he rendered the splendid melody of the "Ave Maria" and then carried them on in a sympathetic encore of "Alexander's Rag-Time Band."

Corporal Tolleson was gifted as a singer and unequalled as a conductor. He composed the Wagon 5 song which was as vibrant as the "Rebel Yell."

K Company is the first company;
M Company is the next company;
L Company is a good company;
But the best company,
Is the Wagon Company.

Chorus

As we go marching,
And the band begins to P–L–A–Y,
You will hear them shouting,
The Boys of Wagon 5 are on their way.

He also invented our "war cry." This unfortunately is copy-

righted, and any way cannot be produced with the English alphabet. The uncopyrighted part follows:

"1–2–3–4–5,
hee haw, hee haw, hee haw, hee haw, hee haw!
Whoa!!"

But the real important part, the climax, he learned from a cougar in the state of Durango, Mexico. He spoke "Cougarese" at times very fluently. He was an ardent and impartial sportsman with a penchant for baseball. If the umpire's decisions were unsatisfactory, he would reason with them physically for an amendment.

A half dozen of our men were permitted to attend a dance at the village of Laurel; men were willing to go any where, or attend any thing, even church, to get out of camp. At this gay affair they became acquainted with the "Cocoanut Queen," and perhaps called on her a few times subsequently under pretense of going to prayer meeting. It is the policy of the army to permit and to even encourage church attendance on the part of the soldiers. On the occasion previously referred to, we were allowed to go to church under escort of an officer, and at another time we were permitted to attend a church social in Glen Burnie surrounded by several sergeants and Lieutenant Twitchell. This penitentiary practice was novel to us but did not greatly limit the pleasure of our intercourse with the civilians or enjoyment of the occasion.

During the latter part of our stay at Camp Glen Burnie, the baseball season opened. We were lucky enough to have several "Big League" pitchers in our company. Sergt. Alpheus T. Lindem had been a "twirler" for the "Polar Bears" of Red Hemlock, Minnesota. Sergt. Oscar I. Cousino had cultivated a deceptive thrust, serving in a like capacity with the "Tigers." Corporal Tupper was formerly interlocutor of the *Yakima Plainsman*. We lost one game to K Company and won from K, L and M and Trucks 9 and 10. Wagon 5 was distinctly a combative outfit. An effort was made before we left Glen Burnie to respond to the troop's need for amusement. Lieutenant Rasch from L Company and Lieutenant Reed of K Company induced some ladies from Baltimore, highly gifted as entertainers, to afford us two pleasant evenings. A tent large enough for a one ring circus was erected for these occasions. Our first boxing contest was held in the sailor's mess hall and Wagon 5 and Truck 9 were active in promoting the event; we contributed

"Kid Garrity." He left our company in France. As a clean game fighter Garrity was a dazzling success; on this occasion and all others he won the decision; another man in whom we were greatly interested, Williams of Truck 9, defeated Neilson, the vaunted champion of K Company. We had very little athletic paraphernalia and our men fought in O. D. breeches while the other champions wore the purple and fine linen of pugilism; but this failed to help them in the squared circle. Presently our men employed every evening in boxing gymnastics on the company streets.

Two evenings of boxing and wrestling were arranged at Annapolis and a few of our battalion were permitted to go there under escort. We contributed principals on both occasions and brought home our share of ribbons. Another secular social attraction was a largely attended lecture by an army surgeon on venereal diseases.

Religious services were held regularly in camp. Men were permitted to attend the village churches, when proper guarantees for their return could be secured. They were marched in formation to the edifice that housed their particular faith and a census was taken before and after, probably to prevent any miraculous ascensions to the skies.

With this paucity of amusement, craps and poker continued to be available. Two detachments heard a symphony orchestra or something, in Baltimore, under guard of course. Occasionally these expeditions to the world from which we were cloistered were in charge of human young officers and the severe rule of our order was relaxed slightly. On the whole our social life was barren, but at each camp progressively there was an improvement, in the words of the hymn, "All along, the way grows brighter." Ultimately, the fact that we were normal human beings would be established.

Month by month our conditions have been favorably modified and life has seemed less and less like a penitentiary, but at Meade, Laurel and Glen Burnie the conditions under which we enjoyed our privileges were quite similar to those obtaining in penal institutions, and our privileges about as numerous as those allowed to convicts before the prison reform agitation. A man who knew the soldier well has written, "For single men in barracks, don't grow into plaster saints." An event of interest to our little commonwealth was the first time Sergeant Knight attempted to eat oysters. Knight developed into splendid manhood in the interior of the states of

Texas and Washington. He had enjoyed the usual privileges of American youth. His father told him all about hell and how to keep away from it. He had been secretary of the Sunday school and faithfully reported the attendance and weather conditions on the Lord's day of the previous year. His early advantages and trustworthiness made him a natural company clerk and he has the esteem of a large circle of friends in the army as well as at home. He obtained a pass to go out and eat oysters, as always he was honest about it, God has been pretty strict with Knight; the sins of an infrequent sinner always find him out. Knight's place that evening was at a prayer meeting, and he knew it, but he allowed his wayward untrained longing for oysters to lure him away from the House of God. Now God is a jealous God and he did not like to have His faithful young servant neglect Him so he was permitted to go on his heedless way to punishment.

Knight is naturally an Empire builder, a pioneer, full of vision. Baltimore is celebrated for oysters; they loomed large in his vision; he was always ready to tackle the unknown; he entered a restaurant, and said in a loud manly voice, "Bring me a plate of oysters!" "Raw or fried, sir?" He had been in the army long enough to yearn for anything edible in its natural state. "Raw," he responded promptly. "A dozen, sir?" Knight has large storage capacity for anything good; he reasoned, oysters are good, there is not too much of a good thing, therefore a dozen oysters are good and twenty-four oysters are better. "Two dozen—to begin with," he said. We will relate the rest in his own language. "She brought in a big plate full of large raw oysters; they didn't look very attractive, sort of a dirty white, and a good deal of slime clinging to them. She shoved a few mugs of horseradish, mustard and pickled beets, a pepper shaker, a vinegar cruet, and a bottle of tabasco sauce around my plate to make them taste good, or disguise their flavor. As soon as I saw that 'line up' I realized that I would be disappointed. I like food that can stand on its merits without an infinity of accessories—well, they were there and had to be eaten. I took one up on my fork, he dove back on the dish again. I speared him the next time, soused him in the condiments, and conveyed him to my mouth. A lot of the natives were watching me enjoy myself, or I would have obeyed my better judgment, and quit right there. I was too brave, that's always been my trouble, so I shut my eyes

and threw the other twenty-four right in, one after the other; didn't get a chance to chew them; they slid right down the esophagus without a stop, I guess that I didn't 'savey' the right way. I saw right off they weren't going to be contented in my stomach, their home was in the raging sea, and they wanted to go there—or some place—pretty pronto, too. I threw down four bits, picked up my hat and didn't bother to shut the door.

"On the way to the camp, I broke all previous track records. The guards tried to stop me but I knew they weren't loaded with ball, and I wouldn't have stopped if they had been. The oysters came up one by one, and I dropped them wherever I happened to be at the time, I don't know what became of them, I hope that they fell into the hands of some person better able to get along with them than I was. I felt pretty wild for a few days. The doctor put me on light duty.

"Oysters! Huh! They'd make nice quiet pets for anyone that don't like playful animals, but any man that will eat them and pay four bits a plate is 'tres malade' in his 'think tank.'"

Hazelton contributed a mystery. Society always enjoys a mystery. The mystery is, what did Hazelton do in Washington? Hamilton has forgotten and Blackie Carr won't tell. To relate this in the approved manner of Dr. Watson, we must continue as follows: John Wayne Hazelton, previous to his enlistment was the proprietor of a man's furnishing store in Baker, Montana. Otherwise his reputation was good. With the customary versatility of the western American, he had engaged in several occupations, and prospered in all of them. He was about twenty-seven years of age when he enlisted. He was not driven to this act by remorse, his smile was as piquant and bland as when, in Baker, he persuaded a client that a pair of Florsheim shoes became his complexion better than "Walkovers," yet there was something that made one think of Hazelton and romance at the same time. Something that reminded one of Burns' lines, "The happiest hours that 'ere I spent, were spent among the lasses, Oh." Had he enlisted for some girl's dear sake? Had some one sent him away with a smile?

There is an attraction in this sprightly young man that precluded refusal; it is a pleasure to serve him; everyone enjoys contributing to his abundant store of happiness. Hazelton knows this. He presented to Captain Knapp appealing reasons for permission to visit

Washington. He said that Montana had responded liberally to stricken Freedom's call for men and means. Her populace was unanimously patriotic; every new town that sprang from her fertile soil, every camp on her pinnacled reefs was swathed in bunting. Their trails resounded to the footsteps of warriors; the air was melodious with the martial strains of the wooden war drum and the one string horse fiddle.

Soon their rough-riders would tread down the German battle lines, shouting their "Powder River" war cry. Then they would return to their reservation. They had heard of Washington; it was to Hazelton's tribe what Jerusalem is to the devout Jew, or Mecca to the Mohammedan. They loved the great father who dwells in the White House; many of their young braves were eating his bread and receiving his wampum. His messages were inscribed on their tribal records; they taught them to their little children. If he survived the war, Hazelton expected to teach them to his progeny.

If he was permitted to see the buildings in which the wise men of the nation held their deliberations, he could make these patriotic lessons more impressive. He would stand—if he came back with the usual number of legs—at the great council fire and tell the tribe of the National Capital. The stoical expression would vanish from their faces, each statement would evoke a wondering grunt. When he concluded his chant, the tribe would boom out an awful whoop, and express their readiness to scalp any enemy of the republic. He already was eminent in his tribe. Had he not brought with him the young braves, Wilson C. Hansen, Ferguson, Jones, Curran, Smith, M. L. Phillips and Shanks? Where were braver and better warriors than these?

The captain said there weren't any. He valued patriotism above all other virtues. He glanced at Hazelton with the pride of a fond father. He said, "Go! My brave fellow! Here is a pass and a list of the places of historic interest you will want to see." So Hazelton set forth. . . . He must have lost the list, for when he returned he complained of a great weariness and sang, "There's a Girl in the Heart of Maryland" very sweetly.

Little social groups were formed in the company's early days, many of which were maintained through the war; when possible these friends would tent together, secure passes and go out together,

frequent the same places of amusement. I. M. D. Smith and Vosier had a common bond in their rich religious experience; they came from the same section. Louis Joseph Walter Maciejewski and Cyril Augustas Smith with Dynamite McDonald formed a natural triple entente; Terrel, Tolleson, Hazelton and Shanks, Corporal Williams and Sergeant Tournier, Prescott, Worsham and Osterberg, the "Hoosier" group; Chastain, Norman and Hauer, Pinkie Daniels, Eastman and Thomas, W. A. Thompson and Sergeant Caine. There were many other similar associations.

It required time for us to become adjusted to the different and difficult conditions of military life, to conform to it and eliminate habits that were hampering. We developed the power to live a rugged primitive life, to starve or gorge ourselves and survive—to eat nearly anything, and drink everything, to do without many things, to develop a self-helpfulness and mutual helpfulness to a greater degree than ever previously in our lives—and so our social life underwent elemental changes. As we became resourceful in creating necessities and even comforts, so at times, without churches, places of amusement, literature, women and children, pipes and tobacco, we created, did without or found substitutes for all these.

As a social organization, this company was as thorough, original and successful as it has been in everything else. Discord and inharmony have nearly always been healed by time or generous response to the finer characteristics we have discovered in each other during our days of hardship. One learns to know another better through the close contact of a year's companionship in barracks, battlefields, and hand to hand labor than would be possible in years of neighborhood intercourse. Pretense and concealment soon cease and the moral, economic, intellectual and social qualities in a man appear in undisguised reality.

The closing event of social interest was also one of military interest, a regimental review at Camp Laurel. This occurred on Sunday, which was also St. Patrick's day. We marched half way to Laurel with full packs, and traveled the remaining distance in Mack trucks. The race course was used as a reviewing field, portions of the cow pasture in which we stood were covered with a few inches of silvery water. We stood there some time waiting marching orders. With the exception of Captain Knapp, the company officers about us were frantically anxious; their reputation

as military directors depended to some extent on the showing made by their companies in the review. Woe to the luckless corporal or awkward private, yea, and to the flustered sergeant, who did not make his feet behave.

Wagon 5 was in a savage mood; the first platoon was standing ankle deep in an amateur pond, our very early morning start, long hike and slender dinner at Laurel had not made us ardently fond of our opportunity to march before the colonel, a visiting general and the beautiful girls of Maryland. Their admiration was a trivial reward for our exertion, in fact we did not "care a damn" what any one of them thought. A good opinion would not dry our feet. A few months later we became used to this sort of foot work in a section of France, where we marched thrice the distance in mud and rain and in darkness too, to protect our carcasses from "William's" guns.

Each man inwardly resolved to do his best for the captain's sake, and for no other reason. Preceded by the band, the regiment marched at last, after a little preliminary abuse from the adjutant. Wagon 5 passed in review and made a good showing. It is claimed the second best in the regiment, but this did not hurry up pay day, or get us anything but empty glory. We were proud to learn later by bulletin, that the general was pleased with us and the colonel proud of us. The one substantial advantage accuing to us was a holiday on the day following; this was Major Moller's contribution. We were cheered on our homeward way by the realization that the ladies in the grand stand, prompt to recognize manly beauty and gallant bearing, reserved most of their applause for Wagon 5.

The spectators experienced pleasant sensations—while we poor victims made a "Roman holiday." Had they been standing in our mud puddle their enthusiasm would have been quenched as ours was. A review seems to be the only available recreation generals and regimental commanders have. It is a cruelty greatly enjoyed by the populace; a parade is to the American people what a bull fight is to the Spaniard. It is the duty of the company commander to "kid" his unit into feeling that they are honored when some great man deigns to relieve his boredom by reviewing or inspecting them. A very young soldier falls for this, and would be happy to lose an arm if the general would only tell him he was a good fellow after the amputation, but the majority of units would gladly donate

the honor of the great man's presence, and attending inconveniences to some other organization, and sit down and smoke a comfortable pipe.

A review is a proper means of determining the condition of a regiment or army, but it should be supplemented by investigation of the conditions under which the men live, not when the camp is swept and garnished but when conditions are normal. The commander of a unit under inspection wants everything to pass, for he is officially responsible for any negligence. If a condition exists which cannot be explained away, the officer cannot at that time, "pass the buck" to the "non-com.," directly charged with the supervision of the work, but when he has taken his "bawling out," the non-com. is due for a few unpleasant moments. The non-com. is made of the same clay and presents the goat to some one further down the line, who in turn tries to shoulder the mishap onto some other patriot.

A victory or a success is the only important event in the army which does not end in a session of the army's great indoor game—*passing the buck.* The majority of enlisted men and officers are conscientious, but the penalties and consequences of any sort of failure involve so many, that a certain moral cowardice is likely to become established in the life of the soldier. The army is full of concentrated rivalry and ambition for advancement, and full of risk to one's personal prospects; these conditions tend to limit one's generosity and interest in others.

Reviews and parades are not always enjoyed by the officers and men participating, but within certain limits they are necessary. As Captain Knapp would have said, they are part of the "fortunes of war."

CHAPTER V

We Go to France

The day before we entrained for Hoboken, we lost Captain Knapp. Some weeks previously, being at the time worried and ill, he had asked a discharge, which was not granted. Subsequently his health had improved in about the same proportion that Headquarters relaxed in benevoling Wagon 5. At the eleventh hour, without warning, he was detached to the 601st Engineers. His last words were, "I'll meet you in France!" Finding little prospect of reaching France with the army, he resigned his commission and met us in France as he had promised as a Y secretary, in which capacity he was most efficient and useful.

On the 28th of March, 1918, we entrained at Saunders Range for Hoboken—we knew that we were going to Hoboken, but the Germans did not so we always referred to this place as a port of embarkation and pointed north. When we had occasion to speak of Newport News, we designated it in the same terms and pointed southeast.

The trailing arbutus was flowering among its bed of pine needles; we plucked some of the blossoms by the railroad siding and carried them with us as a souvenir of Glen Burnie.

We parted regretfully from the sailors; they were a splendid body of men, admirably organized, well treated and contented. As our instructors in rifle practice they were invariably patient and helpful. The quarantine did not apply to them and on their visits to Baltimore and Washington, they often executed little commissions for our boys, and on a few occasions, at great personal risk, they loaned the soldiers in other companies their sailor uniforms so that they could venture abroad unmolested. They had enterprise enough to conduct a canteen which was liberally patronized by the fourth battalion.

We were quite ready to go and equally well equipped. After a tedious ride and our first instalment of iron rations, we reached the Jersey City terminal, crowded on a ferry boat and there underwent a final and most perfunctory "short arm" inspection. When we

LIEUTENANT JOSEPH H. KILLOURHY

LIEUTENANT HARRY F. JUNE

arrived at the North German Lloyd docks at Hoboken, the excellent Red Cross ladies served us with all the coffee and sandwiches we could eat. I'll say we appreciated them. We went aboard the steamer *George Washington*, which afterward conveyed the President to the Peace Conference. Most of us were assigned berthing space on F deck with our excellent friends, Wagon Co. 3. We were issued large blue meal tickets good for the voyage.

This was the first time the majority of us had ever been aboard a liner, and our initial voyage was made on a wonderful ship—the passengers and crew would have formed a community large enough for a western city—and our civic accessories included every convenience except space, earth and shade trees. We had a daily paper, *The Hatchet*, and a radio station, also a telephone system.

We boarded the *George Washington* in the afternoon of the 29th and did not slip our hawsers until the night of the 30th, taking our last look at the Statue of Liberty about nine o'clock. For more than a day we were twenty minutes away from New York's skyscrapers—from Park Row, the Bowery, Chinatown, the East Side, and yet how far, for an angel stood at the gangplank of our Eden with a flaming "Springfield." We looked about us as much as possible. Our bunks were strips of canvas stretched over pipe, six in a section, three bunks high, approximately three feet apart from tier to tier; the top berth at times seemed to be about eighteen inches from the deck; on suddenly waking one quickly remembered its proximity.

The air was fetid, particularly at night, but one could not expect ideal conditions on even the best of troopships. The mess hall or dining saloon was commodious and standing at the table did not impair our appetites. The dining tables differed from those to which we had been accustomed; they were surrounded by a little rim and we saw the advantage of this arrangement later.

A ship is the cleanest habitation in the world; bathrooms containing showers were accessible and bathing was encouraged. We discovered that our land soap was not adapted to salt water, but even those who did not secure salt water soap from the sailors found the cold brine invigorating if not cleansing. We did not see the shores of America "fade in the distance" when we came on deck on the morning of April 1; we were out of sight of land, under a great dome of blue where in every direction the sky meets the sea.

Our old friend, Major Moller, was like poverty, he did not forsake us; he inspected our quarters daily and ordered all hands on C deck. With the exception of boat drill in the bow, going up on C deck and sitting on it, watching the dark blue ocean roll was our principal recreation. The sea seemed very fascinating to our numerous plainsmen, reminding them perhaps in some vague way of the great desert expanses in the far west. We were part of a great convoy; seven transports and a cruiser, some in battle grey and others weirdly camouflaged.

An intelligent effort was made to provide us with entertainment; boxing contests were a daily occurrence, concerts were frequent; but after dark the lights were strictly all out; we could sit up until "taps" or if we preferred, go to bed before "taps." We were informed that anyone detected smoking on deck after dark would be shot simultaneously so at night the regiment chewed the noxious weed. Every company was allowed the use of a library while in transit; this was an appreciated benefaction. There was also a supply of current literature which passed from hand to hand until it was worn out.

Our food was excellent, two meals a day, but they were very ample. The mess was in charge of Captain Page; he was a good provider and very jocular, and would often sit on a little dais overlooking the dining-room, and greet the boys with breezy sallies, "Take off your hats, boys, and don't put your feet on the table, remember you are not at home." The last two injunctions were, of course, needless.

We had the greatest confidence in the efficiency of our navy and while the submarine peril was constantly brought to our mind, we did not live in a state of fear. Lieutenant Killourhy, afterward of this company, was one of the watchers in the "crow's nest"; it was generally felt that no periscope could escape his vigilant eye. One of our convoys, the transport *President Lincoln*, on a later trip homeward bound, was sunk.

There was occasional target practice with the ship's big guns, and of course a daily boat drill as we approached the danger zone. The expert marksmanship of the sailors increased our feeling of security. We passed few sail. Our men were almost apathetically calm; they had expected to see strange things on this voyage and in France, and scarcely any possible happening would have surprised them.

The sea was comparatively placid, and few were seriously sea-sick. We slept fully attired and kept our life preservers by us at all times as we neared our destination. Our water bottles were always filled. We were informed that in the event of our sinking, any man who had not complied with this regulation would be unable to obtain water from any other source. At boat drill we were assigned stations, and we sometimes reflected that in case we were enforced to abandon ship, a few thousand of us would be out of luck for rafts and boats, but we were obliged by force to let the things of tomorrow take care of themselves and we refused to worry about that contingency unless it arose.

Religious services were conducted by the ship's chaplain and by Father Cotter, chaplain of the 23rd. The Easter service was particularly impressive. There were several deaths during the voyage and of course burial services. Death at all times induces serious reflections and at sea one is somewhat more apt to be impressed by the frailty of our tenor on life. It looked for a time as if two of our number would join the innumerable company of angels. Spencer had been frequently requisitioned for experimental purposes while in the states by our army hospitals, and we occasionally quarantined him and his tent mates, Hoover, Hamer, Jones, Lavin, Alexander and Beville when the camp required peace and quietness. Spencer always insists that he was never really in need of medical attention; be this as it may, it was a great relief to us to confine all that noise and revelry to one tent. This time Spencer was reluctantly obliged to admit that he did not feel well; in passing his berth, one of our men noticed one of his feet; for no particular reason he insists on sleeping with this particular foot uncovered. It is an unusual habit, still, it is not contrary to ship or army regulations. The foot was perfectly clean; Spencer is always neat, but it seemed as if he was holding out a danger signal, for the skin was a bright vermilion in hue. He reluctantly admitted that he had scarlet fever and was interned in the sick bay, rejoining the company at Never.

Virgil B. Landes was slightly ill, but affected a tolerable recovery before we landed. We were greatly cheered by his recovery as we had been perturbed at his illness. Landes is one of the most important and useful men in Wagon 5, and as a proprietor of profound silence he rivals C. A. Wright. He is from Indiana; our small but select Indiana contingents were so valuable to the com-

pany that we did not wish to lose one of them where he could not be replaced by another "Hoosier." Landes seldom talks, but what he says is always important and well considered, and we could visualize many instances in which a word in season from Landes might set us right, and we needed him as an example. So God mercifully spared him, probably for Piper's sake as well as for ours. Corporal Piper has a great many animal spirits, for in his moments of exuberance Landes clinches with him and turns his wandering feet to the paths of wisdom.

Corporal Paul was assailed with a variety of maladies and joined his military presence to our contingent in the sick bay. Paul was really suffering from overwork. He had frequently acted as sergeant of the guard, and one night in this capacity received a shock which had an undermining effect on his health. He was aware that many men of the battalion were "running the guard" at night, so he started to determine the fidelity of his sentries by attempting to pass the post of Private Halvor Stensland; Stensland ordered him to "halt." Paul did not halt; Stensland poured a series of injunctions in English and Norwegian, to which Paul paid no attention. Upon which, distrusting the accuracy of his marksmanship in the dark, Stensland charged upon him with two bayonets, one fixed on his rifle and the other drawn from his scabbard. Paul halted and revealed his identity. This instances Wagon 5's effectiveness; a soldier from Wagon 5 obeys orders with all the bayonets at his command. Paul's clean, wholesome life and good nursing secured his recovery by the end of the voyage.

We have alluded to the ship's daily, *The Hatchet.* This interesting paper was issued daily and printed on a press best operated by hand. Wagon 5 furnished the typesetter in the person of Wagoner Charles E. Sims. Every American naturally thinks that he is a journalist or politician, for Sims is able to officiate in either capacity; he had devoted some years previous to his enlistment as the editor of an influential journal in the state of Mississippi. In the army, he "skinned" mules as fearlessly as he had once protected the rights of the oppressed cotton grower and the down-trodden taxpayer with his untrampled, unsubsidized pen. Sims toiled while we slept; the rolling of the ship was not favorable to typesetting, but Sims never "pied" his type; stick in hand he would bound from side to side in the narrow press room, always alighting nimbly by

the press. His work was effectively done. Franklin was a many-sided man, but we doubt that he had more sides than Sims. To be sure, he controlled lightning, but Sims controlled two black mules, unsurpassed for limberness of limbs. Franklin instructed the French in the elements of Democratic government; his fellow printer, Sims, discoursed eloquently with their descendants on the superiority of American institutions. *The Hatchet* was a success and Sims's fine work helped to make it so.

Although tediously prolonged, the voyage was without important incident. This did not displease us for we were as well satisfied as if we had been torpedoed and obliged to continue the trip in open boats. Rumors were abundant. Aultman's unerring vision saw imaginary periscopes at impossible distances. One day we bombarded a barrow, and sunk it; again, a passing steamer, anxious to be on her way was halted by a shot across her bows and rapidly overhauled by our cruiser. There was as little gaiety as depression; it was a grim expedition, and attended with peril; the open sea afforded no accustomed refuge.

We had wireless reports of the great German advance on Paris; the situation seemed most menacing. We were to enter the arena of war when the Allies were fighting with their backs to the wall. The 23rd was in the first 300,000, a force seemingly too small to be of effective assistance in stopping the German rush. A very large proportion of the American forces then in France were S. O. S. troops, building, organizing, constructing roads and railroads and housing supplies, for the great combat army the allied forces had urgently summoned.

The Germans had then, the numerical supremacy. The Orient front absorbed a large number of English and French divisions. In Mesopotamia and Palestine the British army faced the Turks; Egypt and the Suez canal must be guarded. These far flung armies, and the civilian population of several countries, must be fed; this required thousands of men and an enormous amount of transportation. Our forces would be of no use without supplies and men to care for them, new lines of railroad and motor transportation to take them where their presence was required.

Bakery Companies, Butcher Companies, Supply Depots, and Hospital Units, must be placed in operation before we could strike. The food and ship shortage was an obstacle of the gravest kind. The

facilities of transportation, storage, garrisons, and care of the sick, were then hardly sufficient for the other allied forces.

The Channel ports, fairly well equipped, were needed by the British. The western ports of Brest, St. Nazaire and Bordeaux were assigned to us. These harbors were at least fifty years behind the times, in wharfing and storing accommodations. Heavy draft vessels were unloaded by lighter at Brest. Our valuable cargoes of food were stacked in mile long piles on the wharfs, imperfectly covered with tarpaulin, and more or less exposed to pillage and the constant rain, as Pinkie Daniels would have said, "And that ain't half of it." The railroad system of France broke down under the abnormal traffic. Our soldiers in the interior suffered for many weeks because that food remained under those "tarps." Everything was needed on the other side of France, troops, ammunition, food and equipment. Successful military activity depended on the coördination of these elements; not on the supply of one portion of them, but on the combination of all of them.

France is not a country of speculative construction; she had built to supply present needs, not to provide for future development. In the great expanses of America we build railroads to pioneer settlements, for the transportation of products at the time unmined or unplanted. The French are conservative. Their resources were narrowly adequate for the needs of the French population and the French army. A vital portion of their country, its industrial centers and coal producing region, was in German control. So we were forced to select the most vital of our vital necessities for transportation across France, conform our stomachs and our bodies to the French railroad, and we did not have, as in America, the choice of water transportation or parallel lines. Troop movements were slow, and when the troops began to arrive in great numbers as requested by the Allies, the problem arose, where to place them? The environs of the port were soon horribly congested. There was no opportunity to construct proper accommodations for these troops. Canned provisions easy to transport were the mainstay of the soldiers. The natural thought of the American people and of the troops also was that they would proceed to the front. At the front without food or shelter they would have been a useless mob, a positive detriment.

The antecedent to victory, the answer to the German advance

was American engineering work. If transportation was insufficient wishing would not multiply it. Congestion must be relieved by the construction of new standard gauge lines and necessary bridges, and thousands of miles of narrow gauge lines to tap our rail heads.

The Americans must put through a *better road movement* in France, with the graft that accompanied the road building in the states eliminated. New highways must be built. This was a mandatory preliminary to success, besides, great reserves of food and artillery ammunition must be accumulated and made accessible if we were not to be an army of spectators. We were obliged to do these things with impossible appliances; the best American Engineering machinery was laying on the wharfs; we could not wait for rock crushers, steam shovels and trucks, we must make such beginning as we could with sledge hammers, shovels and wheelbarrows. Fifty thousand sectional barracks were warping in the rain while we lay on the ground in "pup tents" three feet high.

We were unconscious of what was before us, but we knew that the German advance was crashing its way toward Paris, as we approached the shore of France. Perhaps we would be hurried to the defense of Paris as infantry, and form part of the rampart of flesh which then constituted the defense of democratic government.

A day's sail from the coast, a fleet of destroyers met us and our battleship turned westward. On the morning of April 13 the coast of France was in sight. We had learned from the sailors some days before that we were proceeding to Brest. We saw a little green blended with the red and yellow earth and rock of the cliffs above the beach. It was not a wonderfully attractive coast, but it looked as good to us as Mt. Ararat did to Noah when he hitched his ark to the old cottonwood there. We came through the long narrows, passing a few fisherman on the way in their red sailed luggers, the first of our brave Allies seen in their territorial confines. A large covey of seaplanes fluttered above and about us. We recovered our vivacity with a snap, shook hands, crowded to the rail and engaged in animated conversation with total strangers. One might have fancied us a picnic excursion. We entered the bay, passed a fort, and then saw evidences of civilization, an auburn cow and a dwelling house. How interested we were in that cow! Our regimental band, the best in the A. E. F., began to play such old favorites of the army as, "Hail, Hail, The Gang's All Here,"

"Good-by Broadway," "Joan of Arc" and of course, "The Old Grey Mare" which had become by common assent the regimental air. The band concert closed with the "Star Spangled Banner."

After all, our entrance into France was thrilling and will be better remembered than we can describe it. Even when it becomes an episode like the old "Grey Mare" of "many long years ago." More than one wept unaffectedly, some thought of the big white girl with the torch in the New York harbor, and all thought of what was before them.

We anchored and wildly cheered a French coasting steamer with baggy trousered French sailors on the deck. They paid not the slightest attention to us. We continued to cheer undauntedly. We felt very fond of the Allies we had not yet seen, sorry for them too, and quite sure that we could lick anything the Kaiser cared to send against us.

A little craft, probably the original steam ferry-boat resembling the bark that plys between Newton Hook and Athens on the Hudson, limped along side of us to convey us ashore. She was manned by Royal Engineers of the British Army. They were sober-minded Engineers, serious and middle-aged. They were our Allies, and we fell on their necks and embraced them, asked them if they had fought at Mons, how often they had been wounded, if the advance on Paris had been checked, what part of England they came from and if they were married, in one breath. But you can't disconcert an Englishman. They were a very good sort, part of a small detachment engaged in harbor work. We found them friendly, but weary beyond the possibility of enthusiasm. We often noticed this difference between our fresh troops and the war ennui'd soldiers of France and England. They fought on and were willing to talk of anything but their accomplishments in the war, fed up with military life. A year later we were much the same.

We found the population of Brest quite friendly. Glad to see us, of course, but their joy was quite impersonal. We were a barrier to the invasion. Our coming would save the lives of many French soldiers. With the advent of the "Armée Americaine," their chance of seeing their sons, husbands and sweethearts grew brighter. Looked we never so gallant, they glanced not at our new O. D.'s and bright hat cords, but rather searched our faces for indications of courage and endurance.

To the people of Brest we were the reckless, rich Americans, whose wealth and arms might save lives dear to them and punish a cruel foe. *Liberty, Democracy, World Peace.* Ah, yes, Oui. In the *Chamber of Deputies,* to adorn the proclamations of M. le Maire. But to them the kernel of the war was the threatened home, the absent boy or husband. They had seen other regiments of smiling happy young men march out of Brest during the four years past, but death, scanty nourishment and anxiety had made smiling a lost art as the years of dread and varying fortune passed over them. They were thinking not of us, our anxious wives, mothers, or our children; their own were so much nearer to them. We were marching through their streets, the American troops, the last hope of France. We analyzed their thoughts months later when we understood the war and France better.

It was good to find earth under our feet again. Brest is very old. Greater armadas than ours had entered and proceeded from its ports. Interesting sights abounded on every side. German prisoners working on the dock. Vividly clad Algerians of the French army. Townspeople clattering about in wooden shoes. Large boys clad in black pinafores which concealed their sex as effectually as the maid's clothes worn by Achilles. Old Breton farmers in velvet sombreros, knee breeches and double-breasted waistcoats, women with the plain coiffures of their provinces. The chemin de fer—such freight cars!!—such passenger coaches!! —little watch charm affairs. With what seemed to be little observatories at the end but which were in reality a humane protection for the brakemen.

We marched to the Pontanezen Barracks four miles from Brest. This is a historic place also. Napoleon used to roost there. The place where Napoleon used to wash his clothes is there and numerous other spots hallowed by his presence. We were too tired to be interested in the past. When we entered the gates we left behind us a little horde of "enfants de France" who had wished away our cigarettes, tobacco and chewing gum during the march. We were assigned to a substantial stone barrack of the Louis Quinz period; it was constructed along the general lines of a Pennsylvania Dutch stone barn. Late at night we had a frugal supper and retired to our beds. We thought these amazing beds were a survivor of the Noahian epoch, or perhaps an invention of the French, but we did

the French an injustice for thinking so for Sergeant Knight assures us that the French beds are extremely commodious, downy and comfortable, and will hold a lot of people. They are an American invention, about the commonest invention an American ever invented, unyielding, two deck, slat affairs, as hard as the proverbial nether millstone.

We reposed. The next day we obtained a couple pounds of straw apiece for our bed sacks and made ourselves comfortable. With the returning light of a gloriously raining day, we looked about us. This barrack was the model on which all "casernes" were constructed. There were many stone barracks similar to ours, a splendid parade, an excellent water supply and a high stone wall surrounding the whole. The army of General Hoche was quartered here preparatory to the contemplated invasion of Ireland in the beginning of the last century. His transport fleet was dispersed by clever strategy of the English Admiral Rodman, and only three transports arrived at their rendezvous at Bantry Bay.

A detachment of men in charge of Sergeants Hazelton and Knight remained at Brest to guard the barrack bags. Corporal Conant was in formal command of the various reliefs and had the oversight and custody of the company property and much of the regimental property in its transit from place to place from the steamer to the piers. This duty required great efficiency and alertness in both of which qualities Corporal Conant could hardly be surpassed; the piers were thronged at all times and congested with hundreds of thousands of bales and boxes. To identify our property and secure it from invasion under such conditions required unremitting vigilance. Corporal Conant's energy and efficiency was increasingly manifested to us and his versatility as well, as important tasks of every description were consigned to his supervision. Sergeant Tournier had an itching desire to visit Brest and get out of the drill and hikes on which the men not on detail were engaged, so he managed to be sent to the docks in charge of a detail of eight men to do—God knows what.

Pontanezen was humorously termed a rest camp. Here we became better acquainted with First Lieutenant Taylor. Captain Morrison and Lieutenant Tabor were busily employed with company affairs at Brest, but Lieutenant Taylor, faithful man, fully took their place. He conscientiously marched us all over the department of Finisterre

and when we had marched everywhere, drilled us unintermittingly on the parade ground. When a kind-hearted infantry officer persuaded him that we could drill better than the marines, he instructed us in gymnastics. It was rather cool but the lieutenant and his company perspired freely in these "setting up" exercises, and still continued with, on his part, undiminished enthusiasm. Lieutenant Taylor is the type of man who forgets nothing that he has acquired, a natural teacher. He thoroughly instructed us in all his military lore.

While at Brest Private Strzalkowski and Wagoners Davis and M. L. Smith were taken sick and left in the hospital. Strzalkowski is one of the most popular boys in the company. His efficiency as a guard was early recognized. He nearly always served on the regular guard and when there was any valuable object that needed to be guarded, it was committed to Strzalkowski's care. Guarding a canary bird or watching the Rhine made no difference to Strzalkowski. He neither made reply or reasoned why—just simply guarded.

The other two invalids were from the same state—Montana. Both of these excellent young men are quiet, faithful and intelligent. At the time of his enlistment, Davis was in college. Most of the company recall a visit from his father at Camp Meade. That gentleman, a wealthy rancher, crossed the continent to see that all was well with his boy. His parents were loving, and indulgent to an extreme. We hope and are convinced that he will continue in civil life to realize their high anticipations, and repay with filial solicitude their trusting unwavering love.

Smith is a Montana rancher, quiet, accommodating and thoroughly useful. Men like Smith are the backbone of every company; too modest to aspire to mere position, too manly to faun or cringe, they meet with few disappointments. When serious work is to be done their competence and dependability bring them some ultimate recognition. These young men rejoined us at Nevers.

A week's rest at Pontanezen left us thoroughly exhausted and in fine physical condition. We continued our journey on April 19. Marching to Brest we entrained for the first time in the celebrated "40 homme, 8 chevaux" freight cars.

CHAPTER VI

We Go to Nevers

Our destination was Nevers. This, like all of our objectives, was not disclosed to us; we found it out. We might call this a wild ride. We had had no "liberty" for approximately five months; we had reached the time when even rather sordid enjoyment seemed better than none, and some sort of relaxation had become a necessity. Our men had had no access to alcoholic stimulants to any extent for the same period.

In our marching about Brest we encountered our first French boot-leggers in the persons of small boys, who slipped bottles of horribly sour "vin rouge" to intentional stragglers for a dollar the liter. Compulsory goodness, however logical the purpose of the compulsion, or beneficial the results, seldom makes converts. Some of us paid this price, but did not obtain enough to result in anything but a stomach ache.

Our ride to Nevers was extremely uncomfortable. Some of our cars had been used for the transportation of cattle, quite recently too, judging by the souvenirs they left behind them. The men were crowded to the point of numbness; sleep was almost impossible, so were the iron rations. The train was under French management, and this was the reason for the eventfulness of our voyage. Our men had conceived the erroneous idea that all French people are in someway connected with the liquor business—there are exceptions, but the conductor was not one of them. It was discovered that this obliging person had a small quantity of cognac in his possession, and could be induced to dispense it for five dollars a bottle. Later, much later, when the company funds approached exhaustion he made a generous discount, to American troops only, and retailed it for four and a half.

Scarcely a man in the several companies on that troop train had a realizing sense of the abrupt and arrogant effect of cognac on man's benighted nature. To them it seemed a mild substitute for whiskey. We passed through many interesting places, but saw less and less of

them as the hours sped; presently the landscape became sort of blurred, one town seemed to run into another, everything collided, even individuals. It was a unity of spirit.

The conductor must have made several similar trips with American troops, for the little supply of spirits of which he spoke so deprecatingly withstood many attacks. When it was exhausted the plain people of France approached us at our stopping places and intimated kindly that they could spare a little wine. They retailed these vintages at prices varying from seventy-five cents to one dollar a bottle. A substantial advance on the local price of one franc fifty centimes.

For a time enthusiasm ran riot; total abstainers contracted fantastic whimsicalities. At Bourges one of our men informed the wondering French that he was the possessor of ten million yen. One of our scientific men carried on a sustained conversation, or rather a monologue, for five hours without exhaustion. The most peaceful of us all, he volunteered to whip any body in the A. E. F. for a trifling consideration. As we pulled out of Bourges a young sergeant saw a French officer and sought to stop the train, in order to impart some valuable information that would materially tend to victoriously end the war. He leaned out of the door of the rapidly receding train and shouted his advise for a few miles, in English, to indifferent ears, but his motives were pure and ingenious.

Until time shall be no more there will always be a tomorrow—there was a tomorrow after that little spree, the same sort of tomorrow, regardless of rank, for all who indulged so freely in these unaccustomed French drinks.

On the morning of the 22nd we were in Nevers. Oh, what a difference in the morning! The legatee of yesterday had lost his ten million yen and naturally seemed sad. The brilliant young sergeant, so expert in strategy, at Bourges, was morose and hesitant. The erstwhile belligerent scientist would have given his rich expectations for a bed. Quantities of men longed with yearning intensity for solitude and sleep. Headaches were very general. Many of the men had not touched a drop, and a majority of them assured every one that such was the case with themselves, personally.

But where shall rest be found? "Rest for the weary soul." Sleep on that first day in Nevers? No! Neither rest or comfort. We marched grimly from the depot to the garden of a villa, and

assembled there to listen to the band. From this assembling point we marched down the street and partook of a lunch near the banks of the Loire. Thus invigorated we marched five kilometers to a pasture lot called Sermoise. A large part of army life consists of waiting and longing. That march was the most severely trying of all the hikes we hiked during the war. Then we stood in company formation and waited. Lieutenant Taylor received his orders and determined our camp site. We took distance, we were too fatigued to know exactly what we took, drove our bayonets by our heels, found partners and pitched our "pup tents," and then and until long after dark we toiled with the company stores, lifted heavy boxes, helped install the mess, and settled our camp as much as possible. We had to convey water in buckets and milk cans from a farmhouse half a mile distant.

At last we were mercifully permitted to cease our labors, crawl into our pup tents and sleep sweetly on the moist earth, with Freedom's banner floating o'er us. The following day did not bring us a vacation, but rather a fresh accession of duties to be performed. Sermoise was a brand new camp, as yet a vision existing in completeness only in the mind of the colonel. It was up to us to make his dream come true so we proceeded to erect barracks, build roads, dig latrines in the rocky soil, and later for lack of horses draw, in dump wagons by hand, the stones we had dug to build roads. Our limited spare time was devoted to laundering our clothes, bathing in a turbid stream, and erecting private delousing plants. Fuel was scarce; the only things we had in abundance were rain and mud.

Similar work to that done by us in Sermoise was going on all over France; France had not even man power to give us, roofs to cover our goods. In a year we were living in a transformed France, modern unloading machinery was installed in her Atlantic ports, the harbors were deepened, hundreds of miles of piers and docks had been built, and up-to-date warehouses. In the interior cities and villages it was necessary to install modern sanitary conditions at American expense, to safeguard the health of our soldiers quartered there.

France is a land of open gutters; in large cities children often relieve themselves in the streets. Sanitation in the American understanding of the term is unknown. In Nevers, a city of thirty thousand, the water for household purposes was drawn in pitchers

and buckets from the town pumps. Street cars were not in use. The French lived amid these accustomed conditions, oblivious to the smells and unafraid of pestilence. The American Engineers in France attended to many of these little matters, curbed and paved city streets, erected great camp centers, motor supply and Q. M. C. depots, machine shops and railroad yards. They had only the bare ground to start with. Everything else except the rock for road building was transported from America and Americans quarried the rock, crushed it into suitable sizes, put it where it was needed and, as a hard boiled corporal in this company says, "paid the French for every bit of it."

This vital work was the Engineer's valuable contribution to the doughboys path over the top. Much of it was navvies work, pick and shovel mucking, as subway workers, section hands or western railway construction gangs do it, only under less favorable conditions, and often at unusual hours. We were handicapped at first, by lack of mechanical equipment, sometimes of the simplest description. If dump-carts or trucks were not available we carried stones and earth in wheelbarrows; if we had no wheelbarrows we nailed handles on boxes and used them; if there were no boxes we carried stones on our shovels. At one period we were ordered not to stop work for any ordinary rain, and we "carried on" when water poured into the holes we were digging faster than we could bale it out.

Officers and enlisted men worked under the high tension of this critical time, under the pressure of the well understood necessity. There was no thought of relaxation. The Atlantic was behind us, and the Germans were before us. Every man in the Engineers must apply himself to the problem of organization without delay. These were the conditions that confronted us when we landed in France, conditions with which we grapled for the first time at Sermoise, and which continued to drive us until the armistice was signed on the 11th of November, 1918.

The work of the Engineers in France is a succession of miraculous achievements. We came in at night from the concrete boxes, the crushers, the sand bars, roads and rivers of rainy France, wet, tired and uncomely, and laid down on the stones of the old mill or under the roofs of our flimsy barracks, and slept the sleep of exhaustion. In this chaotic epoch, we were often illy nourished, our dinners were at the base ports.

When we came to the cow pasture that was afterward Camp Sermoise, we found only the quarters of D Company. When we left on April 26th for Nevers, the camp was well on its way to completion. We marched to the Pratt Porcelain Factory, unslung our packs, stood our guns against the wall and called it "home." This edifice had been a monastery in the eighteenth century, a porcelain factory later, and at the time of our occupancy a few rooms were used for the storage of baled rags and paper. The building was large and rambling and greatly delapidated, the floors had settled in some places and risen in others. This undulating surface was entirely of stone, and not a soft variety at that. We made our beds on this floor, and a few days later ameliorated them with a little straw. The location was more attractive than the building on a broad boulevard on the banks of the Loire, shaded with magnificent plane-trees. We were near the two bridges, the Cathedral of St. Cyr, and the tower of Goquin—a portion of an old castleated fort, which had defended the fords of the Loire from the Roman invader. Two laundry boats were moored a stone's throw from us, and twenty-four saloons were in easy walking distance.

While at the Pratt factory many of our acting non-coms. received their warrants. A brief review of the army career of these birds may afford some clue leading to the reason of their advancement. We mentioned Sergeants Hamilton, Hazelton and McCarthy in a previous chapter. Sergt. William J. Caine received at this place an official assurance that the government of the United States placed all confidence in his fidelity and ability, and hereby appointed him to be a sergeant in Wagon Co. 5 and advised him to attend strictly to business.

Caine is a strong-headed bird and this serious counsel did him good, and automatically increased his bank roll to the extent of $15.60 per month. Caine invested some of his accummulated resources in a speculative enterprise and pyramided that $15.60 to 2200 francs—he was also a heavy investor in Liberty bonds after he was "made." While we were at Laurel, Wagon Co. 5 began to appeal strongly to the unfortunates belonging to other companies. Caine was a member of Wagon Co. 1 and after a few weeks with them he went to the hospital. Then he joined the recruits. With many others he visited Wagon 5 quarters and filled his empty stomach with Wagon 5's mess whenever possible. Had Wagon 5

LIEUTENANT EDWARD P. ROBERTS

SERGEANT EDWARD P. TOURNIER

accepted all the men who desired to join us, we would have been a battalion. Caine hung around so much and besought us so pitifully, that we consented to investigate his past, with his acceptance in view. Caine was delighted and like Moses, he would "rather suffer affliction with the people of God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

After a thorough survey of his early environment and habits, and correspondence with some of the distinguished friends of the family, we allowed him to join us. In a short time every one remarked the great improvement in his manners and language. Caine was very thankful. If we wanted any little thing, an armful of wood or a bucket of water, he would anticipate our wishes, and have some one bring it in for us. It was touching to see him go from tent to tent and ask if he could fill their canteens or clean the stove pipes. This excessive friendliness wore off gradually. But Caine still has a dynamic energy that no amount of work can appease.

Sergt. Oscar I. Cousino was also a Laurel accession. He was a good man at the beginning and Wagon 5 made him a good soldier. He is one of the many men in the ranks, naturally qualified for a commission, who have made no effort to secure one. The simplicity of his manner and his unassuming old-fashioned ways made us smile at first, and endeared him to us subsequently. In spite of his good qualities he got on in the army. He became an acting corporal! This promotion did not go to his head; he was, if possible, more honest and more unassuming than ever. Cousino's former squad recall how literally he obeyed an officer's suggestions to the squad leaders to read the I. D. R. to the men evenings. Cousino faithfully entertained us with this exhilarating work, evening after evening, and then practiced the heliograph code with a tent full of waving arms. Then, had an officer so ordered, he would have stood on the burning deck, "Whence all but him had fled," or on his head. In France, after considerable hesitation, he allowed himself to develop a mild sense of humor and played a little ball, but nothing worse. Cousino is still unmarried, but he has acquired a great deal of courage in the great World War. He hopes when he enters that Holy state that he will find a wife that appreciates him as well as we do.

Chief Mechanic Arstanus Humboldt Neilson joined us two days before we moved to Glen Burnie. He announced that he was

sick. Neilson looked sick, he looked like a steer that had wintered on the range when the bunch grass was covered with heavy snow. Somehow he gave one the impression of shagginess, and discontent, but he was friendly and discoursive. He came to us well qualified to write a little book, entitled, "How to Tell a Story." Neilson possessed a golden laugh. Men would crowd about and wait to hear him laugh. Before he settled down to the peace and quietness of the great war, he seemed to have led an exciting life. Reared on the great deserts of Nevada and Utah, this pioneer of "shot gun valley" seemed to find our camp narrow and confining. After he became acclimated and limber, he would pace restlessly up and down the company street, the genius of activity, gesturing wildly as if arguing with himself.

It was clear that work must be found for Neilson so that his thoughts would be withdrawn from the past. We introduced him to our various activities and he went at every task with ardent energy. The other men complained; it was unfair they said, despairing comparison was made in this human whirlwind's favor. Until Neilson came they had been considered good workers, had laboriously built personal reputations for industry, but now they were considered very ordinary. Their constitutions were breaking down under the strain of trying to keep up with Neilson. So Arstanus Humboldt Neilson was made chief mechanic; here, he is furnished an ample outlet for his vehement activity, and his exceptional gifts no longer reflect on the mediocre attainments of those less liberally endowed by Providence. He has become a connoisseur of axle grease. He hurls new wagons and side bars into space like a modern Jove, and flings bridges across the torrents of the Argonne by the mere impulse of his genius.

One night a stranger appeared at the door of Captain Knapp's tent in Glen Burnie. It was Private Ordinaire Alpheus T. Lindem, just arrived from the hospital at Meade. In the darkness he was only a vaguely defined shape. He said in a low sweet voice, "I would like a place to sleep." Like the hospitable Arab, we welcomed him to our tent and observed the rites of hospitality by helping him set up a cot. We arose at early morn and gathered around his cot, seven of us, to study the newcomer's physiognomy. Lindem slept, a peaceful snoreless sleep; we had not the heart to disturb him. Our comments were exchanged in whispers. "He pears to be upwards

of six foot long." "More, the cot's six feet six and just see how his feet stick out." "Wonder what he was in civil life?" "A preacher or a school teacher, I reckon, look at his brow." "Then he won't shoot craps or play poker." "Can't tell, he might, he's in the army now." "No, no! Not that bird! He looks too sincere." "Wonder what color his eyes are?" "Blue, I guess from the color of his hair." "Go on! his hair ain't blue." "I'll bet their black. Lots of Swedes have black eyes." "Well, you boob! they've got hair to match then, ain't they?" "This man's hair is a kind of a brown." "I wouldn't call it exactly a brown, it's more of a brindle." "It ain't red or pink, is it? I'll say it's brown, light brown." While we were arguing over his hair and eyes Lindem awoke. He proved a prudent, useful man, an ardent sportsman, an active participant in everything that worked to the company's advantage. As stable sergeant he won the confidence of all the horses and the friendship of all the wagoners.

In France he preserved an unblemished moral character, standing like a rock upon which the surges of temptation dashed in vain.

Charles Francis Shaffer became our saddler. If we had to describe Shaffer in three words, we would call him "the happy man." He has been of far more service in the army than many men gaily bedecked with chevrons. Quantities of "Looies" and Master Engineers have labored less, and less intelligently than "Mickie" with his knife and needle. In a wagon train, the saddler is pretty nearly the king pin of the organization. We can live without officers; a harsh voice and a preëmptory manner is the sole need of a "top sergeant," but a saddler must have brains. We must admit that we had not noticed any particular qualities in Shaffer until he was promoted. This is often the case. Before that he was simply always happy and always hungry. It must have been a great expense to Shaffer's parents to rear him to manhood. He ate twice as much as any man in the company, and he was very particular what he ate; somehow, he always contrived to get the largest steaks, the warmest pancakes, the hottest gravy, and the most sleep of any of us. Had regulations permitted, he would have outslept Rip Van Winkle. We can assure his folks that he was always consistently religious and attended the means of Grace that were available. He generally abstained from eating meat on Good Friday. The smell of victuals was the only thing that could distract him from the

fear of God and attention to duty. When he became saddler, Shaffer shook off his inertia, and plunged into his work with Celtic energy, but his appetite did not diminish. Now and then of an evening he would be laid up with stomach trouble. No mere human digestive organs could endure without rest the optimistic burdens with which Shaffer taxed his.

Shaffer is a man of impetuous bravery; bursting shells never disturbed his sleep and the boxing contests in which he engaged were the bloodiest affairs in Wagon 5. His happiness is contagious; he is not an Irishman, though affectionately called "Mickie" by the boys, but he has all of an Irishman's best qualities. When Wagon 5 marched into a French village, the sight of "Cheerful Mickie" with his enormous pack would bring him friendly glances from all the pretty girls. Knight, Hazelton and Nevius vainly exhausted their arts of attraction on the French ladies, if Mickie was with them. The pretty Mademoiselles preferred the hearty hug of our saddler. The "Gaie Americaine."

The home of Sergt. Hal S. Nevius is in a rich gumbo section of Illinois, a quiet place, nothing exciting ever happened there. Since Nevius left White Hall it must be very quiet indeed, for at least 20 per cent of the data contributed to us for coalition refers to this soldier. Our desk runneth over with notes on Nevius. He joined this company just before we left Meade and five minutes later he was the subject of general interest. We noticed his power of concentration. He restricted himself to one interest at a time and attended this interest with the care of a megalomaniac. Just then he was concentrating on a speedy peace; he walked over to our bed, and taking from his pocket a New Testament, he read an extract from the Revelation of St. John relating to a beast with numerous horns, naturally interesting to a veterinarian, and six hundred and several days at the end of which some one was due to be overthrown. Nevius explained the relation of his text to the carnage in which we were about to engage. He surprised us—some. This strange conversation was the first speech we had exchanged with the young man. Wagon 5 is not strong on New Testament interpretations, so we could not aid him in his researches. We saw that he was interested in his own thoughts and that his desires seemed quite important to him. He clung to his views of the Revelation and offered to bet money on it.

When as an infant, if he cried for castoria, he got it "tout suite." Everything continued to go that way with Nevius until he rushed into a recruiting station raised his right hand and said, "I do." Then life was all so different. We looked at Nevius and then at each other; he seemed a pretty rocky proposition. Too many loving friends—too many rich acres. Yet—in time—he became a "brave and noble soldier." He has saved the government thousands of dollars in valuable horse flesh, but to understand Hal as we saw him first read the character of Tony in "She Stoops to Conquer." There was nothing deliberative or reluctant in his disposition; he was prompt and untiring in any undertaking he wanted to undertake. We'll say he was. The life and soul of the tent he shared; his tent mates carried the wood and water and built the fire; Nevius furnished the human interest. It required all his fellow occupants to wean him from any settled conviction. His great military quality was adhesion to an object; he would stick to anything with the tenacity of "Old Dog Tray." There are several methods of subduing him to the rule of pure reason and we recommend to his friends the following: After a violent struggle, place him in a recumbent position, stuff a pillow in his mouth, let the entire family sit on him and continue there until he promises not to do it. Nevius is a man of his word.

He became adjusted in time to the army; ever prompt to master a mental task, he soon acquired the drill. He is decidedly a bon-vivant. In danger he showed a reckless daredevil spirit that was the wonder and inspiration of the company. His tendency to stand in the open and gaze at booming planes, and otherwise expose himself, was so pronounced, that his comrades were often obliged to convey him to safety by main strength. His frank dashing manner made him very popular with the French civilians. He nearly approximates the French social disposition, with its animated gestures and discourse. Many beautiful French girls eyed our gallant sergeant longingly, but he repulsed their tacit invitations with his negative gesture, and the remark, "Nothing doing, Frenchie, the American girls are good enough for me."

In his porte monnaie is a girl's picture. Nevius looks at it many times a day. She is very pretty. He murmurs something, perhaps it is, "Though I've wandered through life's gay whirl, you have brought me back to you." His friends will rejoice in his happiness,

and when this gay blade of our company of horse, becomes a benedict, the young lady and society will not be the losers.

Sergt. E. P. Tournier had been a member of Wagon 5 two months before he joined his company. He was not a A. W. O. L. being on detached service at various recruit detachment headquarters. His ability as an organizer was detected before he had been in Meade ten minutes. A general remarked, "it would be a shame to break down a useful life like this with hard manual labor and spoil his hands with calluses; there must be something in that dome; let him serve his country with his intellect; detach him to the recruits, and when there are no more recruits detach him elsewhere until it is time to sail." So Tournier remained in a state of detachment—detachment is his natural habitat.

His affections have always been variable, seldom centering long on one object. In the army he has quickly detached himself from any entangling alliance, and devoted himself entirely to the defense of the "Star Spangled Banner." Tournier is fond of luxury, rich living and refined society, and naturally he visited Wagon 5 whenever possible in order to mingle in society and eat food like that to which he had been accustomed. We heard from reliable sources that he was a virtuous man and a member of the church. We were glad to learn this, as we did not want the high moral tone of the company to become impaired. Visiting Glen Burnie, in charge of a detachment of sharp shooters, he ate in our mess. There were no seconds that day. This handsome soldier had the appetite of a tramp and the mannerisms of a top sergeant. With Sergeant Hamilton he drifted around the mess line to a seat in the kitchen, near the source of supply, where he could eat at leisure. He bestowed the same care on the inner man that he did on his personal appearance. As sergeant his business habits and knowledge of French made him very useful. His apparent geniality thinly conceals great firmness. Like the great Bishop Corrigan, he is a moss covered rock.

Sergeant Tournier is quite versatile and with the abilities already mentioned he combines many social qualities, among which is music. He has taken several lessons on the guitar and sings successfully in two languages. He has access to the best homes in France—French parents permit him to take their daughters all over Paris without a chaperon and he has received other marks of high confidence.

Tournier is a vigorous athlete, well seasoned by several winters in the world's gayest capitals he can stand more conviviality than any man in the company. No matter how he spends the previous evening, he is always able to be about the following day. As a former member of the Paris Society of Fine Arts, he has had an elevating and instructive influence on this Wagon train. He is respected by the men, and feared by the wrong doer. When Tournier inspects the stables, the most violent mules try to look as if they had sweet natures; they recognized Tournier's firm cut jaw.

Tournier succeeded Hamilton to the throne. He came into France unattached, and it seems that he will take nothing out. We hope that he will receive additional illumination as time goes on, and persevere in the excellent habits which have won him success in military life. As the hymn says, "He has tried to do his duty, and he has tried to do it well—."

Cooks Bieberdorf and La Mott have done much to make our success possible. Napoleon said "An army fights on its belly"; they took care of our bellies. They worked long hours, went with us on forced marches, cooked under shell fire, cooked when there was little to cook. It was only their excellent cooking that made "corned willie and gold fish" passably fit for Democracy. Every thoughtful man must appreciate their efforts to do their full duty and more. Doughnuts, cookies and pies, when possible, and other home-like dishes. They honestly gave them the best that was in their power.

Bieberdorf is intelligent and conscientious, able to accomplish things under difficulties. A rancher in the Western states, a stock raiser as well, familiar with the widely different agricultural conditions of Florida, well read in English and European literature, hard working and efficient, Bieberdorf would be a good man in any place. His good sense and good habits have won him confidence and esteem. Bieberdorf is a reticent man, and firm, very firm, as well able to take care of himself as he is to take care of others. He never limited his activities to mere army requirements; he has done whatever needed to be done. On marches he would precede us with his kitchen and have a hot dinner prepared for us at our halting place. He has had no time in France for mischief, and could always be depended on to devote his leisure to rational amusements and sensible recreation.

From childhood Cook La Mott liked to work around a fire. For several years he was a moulder, and for other years he had charge of a cannery, so in the army he came to the mess. La Mott is undemonstrative and slides into the landscape very quietly, he would not be noticed in a crowd, yet week by week he develops interesting traits. At first he seems to resemble in disposition the good old trustworthy family steed, the animal with distinctive peculiarities, the one that the women can drive, and everyone pets and allows to halt and nibble grass by the roadside. La Mott had apparently been petted a great deal; he was so cheerful and quietly joyous that when a cook was needed, and he suggested that he could do a little along that line, he was sent to be a temporary colleague of Bieberdorf's.

His first offering was "Johnny cake." The new cook stood behind the counter, and watched us as we extended our mess kit lids—his arms were folded, he looked as Napoleon was depicted after the Battle of Austerlitz. He came—he cooked—he conquered. He has displayed ability in other directions. Lighter or fluffier biscuits than his do not exist and once at Avacourt a soldier ate fourteen of them at one sitting, and he was not an isolated case. La Mott's biscuits were the envy of Company L; we would sometimes slip a few of them to the poor hungry souls. Who can sing the hymns of Zion as sweetly as La Mott? or at the close of a little game quietly remove all the francs from the kettle, and add them to his affluent roll. True his head is not as closely thatched as it was twenty years ago, but our flourishing gallants have found out that it takes more than hair to succeed with the ladies. He can walk off as surely and softly with their best girls as he does with their francs. "It's the wonderful way he loves."

Sergt. John T. Dolan has not an enemy in the company; the reason is that he is honest, truthful and kind. Dolan is a natural military man; he had served in the infantry on the Mexican border and is a thoroughly good drill master. Through the company's operations in France he has been in charge of some of our most important details and detachments. He appeared to particular advantage in the Argonne where his great natural courage and coolness were brought sharply to everyone's notice on two occasions. When large detachments of the company were under fire,

and in gravely perilous positions, had we gone into battle as combatants, Dolan would have been the leader if left to the men's selection. Good-hearted, easy-going, he reserves his firmness and severity for a crisis. "His two eyes of Irish blue" show no deceit; among the most modest of our men, we know that he is also one of the bravest, incapable of meanness or treachery.

CHAPTER VII

Our Work in Nevers

Our engineering activities in France, and our existence as a semi-independent unit began in Nevers. We had no horses at this time and engaged for several months in work usually restricted to technical companies. We were quite equal to it. Men who had been sent to Wagon 5 and who at first seemed unsuitable for wagon train work proved the very men we needed in our new rôle of a technical company. The "rush" was turned over to us; soon we were alone and glad of it; the Pratt Factory was a U. S. Army post and Captain Morrison the post commander. Wagon Co. 5 was the nerve center of army construction work in Nevers and for many miles about us.

Details under Sergt. Frank L. Carr and Corp. Eugene B. Conant recurbed and resurfaced a street leading out of Nevers to the Adrain Barracks. The traffic on this place was very heavy and constantly in motion. The surface was pitted with deep holes which impeded the rapid transit of motor trucks. Thousands of trucks coming from the front for repairs went over this road to the motor repair shops near the Adrain Barracks. This thoroughfare was placed in good condition by our details.

Corp. R. H. Williams in charge of a detail scarified and resurfaced another large section of the roads near the Adrain Barracks; his well-known ability in building work induced Captain Morrison to transfer him from road construction to take over the very important work at the camp now known as the Quartermaster Adrain Barracks. Twenty-five skilled men worked under Corporal Williams on this detail for a period of six weeks. They graded a camp site of 1,800 square yards, and erected seven standard barracks. They afterward moved three large buildings a distance of sixty feet, and properly aligned them. This was one of the most important and most successfully executed of Wagon 5's projects. Corporal Williams was splendidly commended by the post commander and the division engineer for the excellence of his work and the great saving he had effected with the material compared with the quantities specified.

Sergeant Caine later resurfaced an entire street, directing the efforts of fifty German prisoners. This road was later kept in repair by details in charge of Sergeants Worsham and Carr.

Another very important undertaking was the remodeling of the great Red Cross center for casuals. These buildings included a portion of the site used as General Headquarters by Julius Cæsar when he divided all Gaul into three parts. The buildings had not undergone general repairs, since Brutus put Cæsar under the lilies, and Mark Antony uttered a few memorable sentences over his corpse.

Sergeant Dolan was the archæologist selected to remodel these ruins. They were splendidly adapted to the requirements of the General Headquarters, casuals, rest center, or detail work. There is a little "estaminet" next door, full of kind hands and loving hearts. Long, long after the detail under Sergeant Dolan had completed the work, Wagoner Martin J. Lynch who has a profound interest in history was detached to the rest center as janitor. He soon discovered a relic of the old Roman occupation. This was a little door in the wall separating the estaminet garden from the garden of Cæsar's headquarters. Lynch found that the hinges were still intact, but he was puzzled as to the object of the aperture. He observed, sagely, "Sure, nothing can go through it above the bigness of a growler." Full of experimental enthusiasm, he secured a container, similar to those used in the states to convey beer to our homes, and passed it through the little door. He awaited the result with intense interest. In an instant a hand appeared and grasped the little pail; in a moment it reappeared on the Red Cross side of the wall, filled with a rosy fluid and a voice murmured, "Un franc, cinquante centimes." Martin passed the sum demanded through the door and closed it. This little miracle was performed by Wagoner Lynch on several occasions.

The detail labored here twenty-seven days. Their work included plumbing, electrical work done by Corporals Racker and Harlow, a great deal of carpenter work directed by Mechanic Granquist, glazing, drain laying, stone mason work carried on by Wagoner Lynch. Lynch's stone work was considered equal to the best accomplished by first class French stonecutters. The Red Cross greatly appreciated our work, and the detail was their guest at an elaborate dinner. Lynch did other work in the stone mason line, in curbing and guttering some of the streets in Nevers. He was

attached to the Red Cross rest center at the request of the manager, Mrs. Hunt, who in fact requested a general to have him permanently attached to the Red Cross.

Martin spent some of the happiest days of his eventful life at the Red Cross. He was on several occasions a wearer of the Red Cross uniform. Several times when Mrs. Hunt happened to be absent, the nurses dressed Martin in her uniform and took his picture in various poses. These were halcyon days for Lynch. "Sure, they were the fine young ladies, they'd have little feeds and send out for two or three bottles of beer, and I'd drink it for 'em. Madam Hunt and I'd go to the big market, thin she'd load me down like wan of thim little Frinch donkeys. 'Here's a sack of potatoes for you, Martin.' 'Yis mum,' an' I'd put thim on me shoulders. 'And six cabbages, Martin.' 'Yis, Mrs. Hunt, 'A basket of eggs, Martin, be very careful with them.' 'To be sure, Oi will, mum.' 'And can you take this basket of salad and butter in your other hand, Martin?' 'I'll try, mum.' 'Are you all ready, Martin?' 'Yis, mum.' 'Well, we will go home, then. Those things are a little heavy ar'n't they, Martin?' 'Oh no, not to speak of.' And so we would go back to the Red Cross, Madam Hunt walking ahead and me acomin' behind wit' them wegetables." "Do you remimber Madam Rodie, no?" "Well it couldn't of bin that I took ye down there. I took a lot of the young lads down there. A fine woman, Madam Rodie and a grand cook. She run a little saloon and vegetable store, sold eggs and butter and the like, a good deal cheaper than the stuff they sold at the market, it come in fresh to her ivery marnin'. It was right handy to the Rid Cross so we did our tradin' there. She'd give me a horn of rum ivery time that I come in, sure, thim was good days."

The work at the material yard at Nevers was taken over by Wagon Co. 5 from Company E. Sergeant Carr was placed in charge of a detail of forty men who unloaded the road material from cars running in on a spur track and loaded it on trucks and wagons, to be conveyed wherever needed. A spur extending from the main line was laid by our men. The work at this place was of the hardest description, but there were compensating features: the yards were located on a main street, and many attractive young ladies passed that way. Sergeant Blackie disliked to part with this assignment. There is a little café —— but that is totally unconnected with this

story. Sergeant Caine appreciated the compensating features of the material yard work, and had wished himself there for a long time. He succeeded to the command of the rock pile, and also succeeded in remaining there until shortly before we left for the front. There was an extremely pretty girl at that café.

Forty German prisoners worked under his direction for a time, and were later replaced by civilian labor. In addition to unloading and distributing rock, Sergeant Caine had general supervision of a rock crusher installed at the same place. The crusher had pulmonary trouble; it was in fact a wheezy, one-lunged affair. Caine is a very patient man, and his efforts with the crusher have "super-endowed" him with that virtue. He found the crusher hesitant, dilatory, and reluctant in disposition. He humored it with his best paternal care and got crushed stone for all the streets in our section of the operations. He would pat the engine on the shoulder in the morning, and say, "How is Trix" and put it in good humor. Whenever it seemed inclined to be balky, Caine would coax and soothe it just as if it was a member of the company. The engine became attached to Caine, and if he was absent for any length of time, it would sulk and refuse to run.

A big job ably completed was the resurfacing of four and a half miles of the city streets of Nevers. This mileage was scarified and resurfaced in the period between May 15 and August 26. For two weeks one hundred fifty German prisoners were engaged in scarifying; otherwise all the labor was furnished by our company. A fine water bound macadamized pavement was the result. This was a difficult and very laborious task and reflects great credit on Corp. E. B. Conant who was in charge of our men engaged in this work. Nothing accomplished by the company has been more perfectly performed, and none of our labors have been of greater benefit to our sister republic.

The maintenance of the Nevers-Vernuiel road, fifty-two kilometers in length, was assigned to Wagon Co. 5. All motor trains proceeding to the front went over this road. In addition, the transfer of the motor repair shops augmented the traffic on this road, for a time, by four hundred trucks a day. The road as a whole was in very bad condition and constantly congested with traffic. Detours were impossible. In some places the road bed had given away; in some places the water bed was close to the surface and springs

bubbled up on the highway. This condition rendered good foundation work extremely difficult.

This highway was not originally designed to sustain the enormous weights of our heavy trucks. These, proceeding at considerable speed, eroded the surface. Holes of various depths, some of them large enough to conceal a side car, pitted this road on its entire length. To patch these properly, without impeding the traffic, was our difficult task. Details under Sergeant Haan and Corporals Burns, Wright and Campbell, had charge of different sections of the road between Nevers and Decize. Sergeant Dolan with twenty men was stationed at Decize, rationing with E Company, worked the road from that point to Vernuiel, and in addition for a portion of the time from Decize to Beard. We worked on this road for over three months. Wagon 5 was complimented by Major Kingsley, superintendent of roads of that area. We thoroughly deserved the praise he gave us. The manner in which we lick our chops at favorable mention is a little amusing. In the army, "A breath can make us, or a breath unmake." Work must not only be good, but its goodness must be officially recognized.

The rebuilding of the old French bakery was one of our most interesting labors. For this undertaking Wagon 5 furnished the workers, and one profound thinker, in the person of Sergt. John C. Reed. Nine ovens were built, each containing 1,800 fire brick set in fire clay, an arch so that the regulation army field oven would set on the top. A concrete floor was laid over the entire surface covered by this enormous building and a large additional space was placed under roof. While this work was going on, capacity production was maintained. This was very necessary as thousands of soldiers were supplied with bread from this bakery.

Napper, of Company E, was in charge of construction work, Sergeant Reed in charge of Wagon 5 labor. As a worker Napper stands alone. He is the only man in the A. E. F. who worked for the joy of working. Sergeant Reed was an ideal man to place in charge of the bakery detail. He established a reputation at the French bakery, which he has consistently maintained and increased and it will follow him all the days of his life.

This place was full of distractions; how Carr or Caine would have rejoiced to work there, even with a pick and shovel! In the bakery and adjoining warehouse nearly two hundred French girls were

employed by the United States government. They were apparently selected for their great beauty. That place was a picture gallery. Those girls were dreams, how it all comes back to us! The work was hard but everyone pleaded with Hamilton to go on the bakery detail. Hopeful waiters sang, "How sweet it will be to be there!"

Any of our other sergeants, and particularly Tournier would have become rapidly acquainted with those French girls—not Reed. He reviewed our proceedings from a pile of cement bags with the stolidity of a cigar store Indian. A question much discussed in our company at that time was, "Can Reed be human?" He showed about as much emotion as a brick. The Queen of Sheba could live in the same house with Reed for months at a time, without securing the slightest sentimental attention.

If some girl eventually wins Reed's hand she will be some winner. A man who can read the I. D. R. and Emerson's Essays day after day, with those two hundred French girls around him and never glance at their winsome faces, is,—is—we don't know what he is. One of the workers there tells us that some of the girls working near the ovens wore a pleasant look and a very few other things, and we agree with him. Some of our men under Sergeant Reed loaded sand for concrete making at the river Loire, several miles away from the bakery much of the time, among them Corporal Spencer.

Reed is a synonym of ability and sobriety, with no offensive idiosyncracies. The men on his detail grew very fond of their silent leader. He was all one could imagine in fairness, cheerful too, and in a place where "A fellow needs a God," there never was a man truer to type and training. And what we want to say is, Sergeant Reed's type and training are good, none better in America. He has lived in France as near as possible as if he were in New England. He has seemed to enjoy life and be happy, not ecstatically of course; he would not be ecstatic over Heaven. He is content; Reed is as composed as the traditional Englishman who carries his bath-tub to the fourth cataract of the Nile. A bit of New England's best culture and efficiency in France.

On May 24 we gladly left the Pratt Factory, and took quarters in what is now the car facilities repair yard. Our men had been working on this site. Sergeant Osterberg and Corporal Williams did most of the building, erecting a very neat officers quarters, an office and an infirmary. Sergeant Osterberg also partially equipped the

barracks with bunks. Sergeant Osterberg enjoys great popularity with both officers and men. He owes the respect in which he is held to his ability, conscientiousness and soldierly deportment. When conditions demanded men of character and experience, promotion came to him naturally and without solicitation. No company could have had a more proficient provider in the capacity of mess sergeant. Under the most adverse conditions he obtained not only all that our hunger demanded, but special rations and luxury issues, like candy, were secured by him for us before some companies in the regiment knew of their existence. The close of our active operations in France finds Sergeant Osterberg firmly established in the esteem of his company. Our good friends, Wagon Co. 3, were encamped here with us, and worked with us in excavating a few thousand yards of rock cut, for a spur connection with the P. L. and M. R. R. In addition we graded approximately three thousand cubic yards of earth by team in the lower yard, working day and night shifts. We operated a steam-shovel on the rock cut and removed the débris in dump cars. Corporal Norman of Indiana responded to his country's call when a track layer was demanded, and laid the track with accuracy and celerity.

The next time we start a regiment, we will have two or three companies of Indiana men, and pay them a little extra. They seem to run in three sizes—like Norman and Chastain, about six feet nine inches in height, lean and powerful as the steam crane,—medium height and stocky like Hauer, Waldrip and Landes,—short and handy like Dale Williams. This Indiana combination is as useful as an alligator wrench, which takes nuts of any size. It is obvious that an Indiana company could furnish anything from a mess orderly to a hoisting machine. When quality is demanded, give us Indiana men. Corporal Norman can do anything, and do it well. If a watch was out of repair it was taken to Norman. He would go at it with his well-worn jackknife, and the thing would run. He would lay a perfectly new railroad in the same matter-of-fact way. If there was no one to lead the singing at the weekly prayer meeting Corporal Norman would clasp his great hands around his knees, throw back his head and lead out with, "Jerusalem, My Happy Home, Place Ever Dear to Me" accompanied by Alpers and Aultman, or "Shall We Gather at the River?" If there was a prospect of a home-like dinner, with some French family, Norman

SERGEANT LEONARD G. KNIGHT

SERGEANT FRANK L. CARR

would attend with an honest country appetite. We would look at him and think of the spare ribs and country sausage, buckwheat cakes and maple syrup, fried chicken and watermelon that he used to eat on the banks of the Wabash. He has an honest rural appetite; if one of the babies cried Norman was equally handy and it was soon restored to smiling happiness, riding on his knee. Corporal Norman does not speak French a great deal but the French ladies would walk by the side of this amiable giant from Indiana and listen to his tale of fishing for horned pout in the old swimming hole and the two big ears of Johnson County white dent that took first prize at the state fair at Indianapolis. Probably they understood for they would continue down the avenue Victor Hugo, one on each arm, and say, "Ah oui, Monsieur" at proper intervals. Corporal Norman is one of our three star Engineers.

Chief Mechanic Neilson worked assiduously in the supervision of the team work. His scientific management of the grading was the object of much praise.

Two details were sent out to secure horses under the command of Sergt. Charles M. Worsham and Sergt. Oscar I. Cousino. We will give Sergeant Cousino's own story: (Introduction by the Editor: Sergeant Cousino and a detail moved tarvia and other regimental supplies from the freight yards at Nevers to a storage warehouse near Caine's rock pile. We know that this was heavy work, for we were on his detail. The items transported ranged in weight from five hundred to twelve hundred pounds. Cousino bore our sufferings with patient good humor. When we had regained a little breath he would say with a freshness that our sweat could never wilt, "What do you say, boys, shall *we* roll up another one?" And *we* did.)

COUSINO'S OWN STORY

"Going after horses to La Courtine we improved a few hours layover at Bourges by visiting the great cathedral. We inspected the edifice from top to bottom. Who of the ten on that detail will forget that famous structure with its beautiful windows? The finest examples of mediæval glass work in the world." (Note by the Editor: The following men were on this detail: Hamer, Lewis, Morris, Davis and Lavin. They were very much interested in cathedrals and stained windows.)

Cousino resumes, "Our destination was distant and the trip tire-

some. The hospitality of the cavalry troop at that remount station made us forget our troubles. Two days at La Courtine, and then the trip back with the horses to Ussell. That short French train broke all speed records for France, down grade all the way, on a track as devious as the Horse Shoe Curve. All the night we traveled; in the morning we were in St. Germaine de Fosse." (Editor's note: The detail did not know where in —— they were. Everyone was broke but Cousino by this time, and he was the only one whose memory had not left him.)

Cousino resumes, "Who of that detail will forget the Red Cross angel that served our breakfast that morning? One real American girl with a real American heart. Dick Morris had only four cents—just enough for a cup of coffee, but he bummed meals for the whole contingent and invested the ten francs Thomas loaned him for other refreshments. Pinkie Daniels got lost—Pinkie had a habit of getting lost. He woke up in a forest with the 20th Engineers. Some way he returned to the detail."

(Editor's note: This was the time Davis traded a box of hardtack for kisses; he met a pretty French girl. She looked at the box of hardtack and then at Davis. "Comprée kiss?" she said. Davis did. He handed her a hardtack and got a kiss and anchored the hardtack for a kiss each until the box was exhausted; there were only twenty-four hardtack in the box. This gave Pinkie Daniels and Red Lavin an idea, their sole wealth was a package of Bull Durham. They traded it to another girl for a kiss apiece. They spent the rest of their time seeking for hardtack and Bull Durham.)

"There are things that stick to a fellow's memory and that breakfast is one of them. Nevers was a long way off." (Editor's note: So was the commanding officer, fortunately.) Cousino resumes, "But notwithstanding our lack of sleep and corned willie it did not seem so bad after that square meal." (Editor's note: The men and horses reached Nevers in good shape and everyone remarked the splendid spiritual progress they had made since they visited the church at Bourges.) Cousino resumes, "I then went to the camp Coquetdon with twenty-five men, Osterberg, R. A. McDonald, Tupper, Thomas, Morris, Hoover, Lewis, Burns, Red Lavin, Bentley, Van Oflen, C. L. Phillips, Dempsey, Harlow, Hamer, Dawes, Davis, Hadaman, C. Wilson, Liebernight, Miller, Alexander, Bieberdorf, Landes, Pinkie Daniels." (Editor's note: We will mention

in this place that Pinkie got lost again but Pinkie is a sailor by profession and sooner or later finds his way home.) Cousino resumes, "A long journey; slept the first night at the Red Cross hospital. We reached Coquetdon early in the afternoon and were assigned to fine new cement floors as a bed. For three nights we tried to sleep on this, then someone opened his hard military heart and found us real beds.

"Wagoner Morris, affectionately called 'Dead Eye Dick,' had afforded us much amusement on the trip, not because he wished to, but because he could not help himself. He came in one night so effectually disguised that none of us recognized him. His means of concealing his identity consisted of a shave and a haircut and included the demobilizing of a large upper lip decoration.

"Because of the lack of horse cars we are compelled" (Editor's note ? ? ?) Cousino resumes, "to wait at this camp over a week. This made us very sad, yet the time passed pleasantly and quickly. We would have sooner been shoveling rock or filling holes at Nevers, but we contrived to bear up. We enjoyed a freedom from restraint not experienced previously or since. R. A. McDonald had a small rubber hose which he used in extracting 'vin rouge' from barrels on the platform all along the way; the boys were never thirsty long. Our men treated the officers they met in a most fraternal manner. When a general at Tours asked Hamer, 'Does that road lead through the camp?' Hamer replied cheerfully, 'I'm damned if I know, I am a stranger here myself.' The French people were very friendly to this detail, thought highly of them. On one occasion the boys were carrying on a halting conversation with a French girl when I appeared. I asked her among other things what she thought of the American boys. She reflected for a few moments and replied that she believed she would rather marry an American than be captured by a German.

"We spent our days watching the American artillery practice (they were soon to do good work at St. Mihiel, Meuse and the Argonne) or playing ball or black jack. At night we relied on Corporal Tupper and Wagoner Hoover for entertainment. They would visit the places of amusement that lined the main stem and on returning Tupper would tell us about his relatives. Hoover, under the same inspiration, would do a marathon after Dead Eye Dick. One evening Hoover was making a spurt and rapidly closing in on

his victim when Wagoner Lewis, who was practicing with a lasso, let fly and roped him around the neck as neatly as the 'Virginian' would have done.

"There is an end to all good things. One day the word came that the cars were ready; we loaded seventy-five stallions in them and sent half of the detail with them to Nevers. The rest of us went to St. Nazaire by truck train, reaching the remount station at 1 A. M. We slept outside on a pile of hay. Next morning we were assigned to a fine large room, no cars were ready for us so we were obliged to wait again, this time for ten days.

"Here we must express our thanks to Captain Burke of Troop B, 15th Cavalry; passes were handed out, good from morning until 9 P. M. We were the only soldiers at this station allowed such liberty and we appreciated it.

"We were made to feel at home and the food was the best we had yet seen in France. We had a grand time at St. Nazaire—a daily promenade along the beach which was worth going far to enjoy." (Editor's note: And little visits at Cheyenne Charley's.)

Cousino resumes, "When the cars came Captain Burke again assisted us by not permitting more than four stallions to the car. Stalls were built for them which prevented fights, and facilitated their feeding. We reached camp in a short time, glad to have served our country in so pleasant a way." (*The end of Sergeant Cousino's story.*)

While in Nevers Cousino was usually sergeant in charge of quarters. This was an exhausting and responsible position, leaving very little time for diversion. Sergeant Worsham's detail was engaged in similar work—transportation of horses. The following men were under his command: Dawes, Bentley, Tupper, Phillips, Jack Carr, L. E. Wilson, Thomas, Monson, McDonald, Bieberdorf, Burns, Daniels, Miller, Walker and Alexander. This detail accomplished its work successfully, and was away for a period of two weeks. The boys seemed quite contented at La Courtine but very reticent regarding its attractions. Tex Wilson is truthful and free; he tells us that La Courtine is a kind of a village. "Well, Tex, what did you do there?" Tex scratches his head and thinks. "Well, we laid around on our bunks and slept considerably, and—and there is a cat house down town, but we couldn't get in; that was the devil of it, they kept a guard standing out in front of it all the time—as

long as we stayed there. There was a little beer there, too, and you could get other things. Burns and I were taken sick, poisoned—eating corned willie. When we stopped at Clermont I was out of my head.

"When I woke up I was in a real bed with lots of covers, a French family was standing around me and a girl was leaning over me stroking my head. When I came to, she brings me up a 'hot rum.' God, it tasted fine, but I had to throw it up. Then she brings me up another. I held that one down and went down stairs and they gave me something to eat. They wanted me to stay right there but I had to go to the hospital.

"They was sure fine people; there ain't a better gal than that one, not even in the States." Tex was in the hospital for some time and returned to us very grateful for the treatment he had received there, and grateful to the good French people, to whose home he was brought sick and a stranger, and was ministered to. C. Wilson tells us that his mind was in a whirl most of the time; there were so many events that he could not remember them. He recalls kicking over all the bunks one night and a good deal of music on the train. Morris recalls climbing over a box car one day and seeing some one who *looked* like C. Wilson kissing a pretty girl. Whoever it was shouted to Morris, "Get out of here. Go away from here! What in hell do you mean by coming around here?" Red Lavin also told him indignantly to "parti" and remarked indignantly that his presence spoiled the detail. We do not vouch for the truth of this story. Wilson's head was in a whirl; he does not remember the incident, but we know that this Montana skinner carries an awful punch in either hand, and we do not want our head to be in a whirl, or to return to America with black eyes and several of our few teeth missing. We want Wilson to be for us, first, last and all the time. He would be the best bodyguard in the wagon train.

Pinkie Daniels spent a few social moments with a colonel at Clermont Ferrand. The colonel happened along and Pinkie remained at "parade rest" on a dry goods box. Feeling a sudden interest in him, the colonel introduced himself and gave Pinkie a great deal of useful military information.

On the trip to La Courtine several of the boys traveled in the same compartment with a French school teacher. This lady spoke a little English. The boys did their best to entertain her; Osterberg

and Red Lavin sang, "Sleep, Baby, Sleep, Close Your Bright Eyes." At the same time Burns sang, "All the World Will Be Jealous of Me." He asked for her address. She said, "If you write as meltingly as you sing, I will lose my heart," and gave him an address which later proved to be that of one of her pupils.

Corporal Paul accompanied by Corporal Lindblade, Hauer, Leo Schneider and five Wagon 3 men, was detached to Pont-à-Vert, seven kilometers from Bourges. This detail was engaged in bridge construction. They worked very hard and were splendidly successful. They seemed to have made many acquaintances, and are authorities on the architectural and other beauties of Bourges. Corporal Lindblade still prefers Bourges to any city in France. We notice that his mail contains a great many French stamped envelopes from that place. Possibly he became acquainted with some French Engineers. The master engineer in charge of the work predicts a splendid career for Corporal Paul and proclaims him one of the most energetic and intelligent young Engineers in the army.

Sergeant Carr, after leaving the material yards, repaired Alsace-Lorraine street and built three roads through warehouse number 2 yard, also constructing culverts and drains. Sergeants Carr and Reed maintained the roads about the Usine Collette which were later turned over to Corporal Conant.

This is about all we did while at Nevers.

CHAPTER VIII

Social Life in Nevers

We were in Nevers over four months. Here we first came in contact with the people of our sister republic. Only three or four men in the company spoke the language. But when we left we felt a strong local interest in Nevers, Imphey, St. Quen, Beard, St. Eloi and other places in the vicinity. We were well-known and well-liked; probably no other American unit, not even the quartermaster company had the same capacity for making friends of the French people.

We were given our first liberty the second night at the old mill. Let the reader understand that this was our first liberty as a company since we had been a company, in fact many of us had not been given a pass or furlough since we had been in the army, a period of at least five months. It is natural to expect some excesses and disorders. Captain McCoy of E Company, at that time post commander, strictly enjoined his men to be on their good behavior or lose their liberty. Our officers admonished us in like manner, it looked as if both commands might suffer for the misdeeds of a few. Many months after a general order came out which did away with the system of punishing an entire command for the misdeeds of which a small percentage were guilty, but we set out on our first night's liberty fearing that it would be our last.

A few hours of relative freedom on pass! What this meant to us the people at home can never realize, or even our officers. Of course there were plenty of M. P.'s, and many resorts were "off limits," still it was such liberty as the army can give. Wagon 5 was soon broadcast about Nevers, generally in small groups, all enjoying themselves like college boys. Some visited the stores and purchased souvenirs lavishly, others wandered along the river, or strolled about the streets, gazing at the strange houses and seeking places of historic interest.

Wagon 5 will compare favorably with any hundred and fifty men in any community at home, morally and intellectually, but it

is quite possible that a few of the boys discovered the Rue de Blanche, the eyrie of the wild women. To the surprise and gratification of the officers, everyone returned to the mill in sober enough condition to pass the guard.

Nevers is one hundred forty miles south of Paris, in the heart of France. Balzac lauds his native Touraine as the country of a merry people, bewitching women and gallant men. Our memories of Nevers, will be more sentimental than our future recollections of any other city in France. Whatever good qualities the Americans lack, they are wonderfully adaptable. The strangeness of this old city soon wore off, and most of us developed a personal pride in Nevers as compared with other French towns.

Like all of France, we saw Nevers at its worst. Four years of war, poverty, social and family separation, losses by death, and the large soldier population had disorganized the social economy of the nation, and had weakened many of the safe-guarding bonds of custom and domestic security. The flower of Nevers' manhood had fallen in the war. Fathers, sons, husbands and sweethearts were in the military service. Many French girls and women formed companionships which were generally innocent with the American soldiers, this would not have occurred in the ante-bellum days, without proper introduction, guarantees and chaperons.

The Nivernese are at all times a friendly people and if when particularly tempted by loneliness, poverty and ennui, a few of them sinned, they sinned so fondly and gracefully that the recording angel will probably pass these little indiscretions by. We assure him that Nevers can furnish some very charming angels, who would be a great attraction in Heaven, and in case he lets them in, many of our men will so live that they may go there also.

Among the show places of Nevers is the Cathedral of St. Cyr, which was constructed by degrees, through the course of several generations. The sculptural work extends to the cornice of the tower and includes a quantity of apostles and saints, griffins, dragons and arabesques. The human effigies exceed life-size. It is not a very gay looking pile, but it is no less wonderful, for that it shows that other outfits than Wagon 5 could do excellent construction work under difficulties. Those long dead workmen were faithful and thorough, the remotest tracery in some hidden corner, three hundred feet above the street, was as heartfully executed as work

subjected to constant scrutiny. They were great builders; yes, they were great artists also. St. Etienne is next to the Rouen Cathedral, the oldest church in France; it is less sombre than St. Cyr and is almost pleasant. The stone is chrome-colored and much marble is used. This church is built after the pre-Christian architecture of Rome.

The city hall was formerly a ducal palace with many fine friezes in symbolic designs, evidently done before the resurge from the imitation of classic Greece took place in France.

There is a fortress of the middle ages, of crude but substantial workmanship, on a commanding height. Monasteries and other ecclesiastical structures, now converted to tenements and places of business, are numerous.

The houses of Nevers are old—it is cheaper to buy more beds than to build a new house. It is a city of gabled roofs with red tiles. When a Frenchman builds a house he uses fireproof material, stone, tile and cement; he builds it to resist the elements until the Day of Judgment, and if space permits he surrounds it with a massive stone wall. In any event, he builds a sharp steel pointed barricade on the street side and installs an iron door with a small wicket strong enough for a jeweler's safe; if the other walls are of stone, he embeds broken glass in the cement on the top. When he "ferme's le porte" at night, he feels reasonably safe from intrusion.

Streets like those in Nevers would not arouse much pride in an American city. They are narrow, primitively paved, and the principal business streets are without sidewalks.

Nevers has a pretty park, and of course a place de la republic, an arc de triomphe and a boulevard Victor Hugo. Scores of streets are named after celebrities and as many vital statistics concerning the defunct hero, as the memory can bear are added. We would name a street, Grant street and let it go at that, not so the French—with them it would be, "Rue de la General Ulysses Simpson Grant, President de la Republique, de l'Etat Unis d'Amerique." Streets are named for little incidents that happened several hundred years ago. There is the street of the Little Cakes, the street of the Wolf, a wolf ran down this street during the severe winter of 1537; they are a conservative people and the name still serves to recall the story.

There are several wine shops in Nevers, the bone dry movement

does not seem to take hold. The liquor business in France apparently works in conjunction with any other business or occupation. It would be quite possible for a funeral director to sell caskets for the dead and "vin rouge" and "cognac" for the living. Wine can also be obtained at almost any farmhouse. The French are not intemperate, and an intoxicated Frenchman is an unusual sight. Wine is used at table, moderately, as we would use tea or coffee. The Americans were good patrons of all the French stores. The old woman who sold oranges and walnuts outside the gate at the Pratt Factory must have amassed what in French eyes is a fortune. The furnishing stores catered to the soldier trade, with souvenirs, pictorial and sartorial. Embroidered handkerchiefs, ladies underwear, scarfs and hose. We paid cheerfully, rather steep prices for these articles.

Our most appealing amusement was eating, no matter how good army food or cooking is, it lacks the attractiveness of food especially prepared for the individual. At first we went to the "American Restaurant" but the "bifsteak" was too wafer like; prosperity went to the proprietor's head and we left the American restaurant for new comers, but under that name and with the aid of a little crippled Englishman they did a business Delmonico would have envied. We soon found places where our francs went further, including homes where the ladies excelled in the culinary art. The French are unequalled in ability to make attractive food from unpromising material.

The Arbona Café, also called the "Glacier," prospered because the keen witted Spanish proprietor had acquired the English language in San Antonio, Texas. There was a café right off the Rue de Commerce where they dispensed the best beer in town, which is not excessive praise, at a franc the seidel, the Café Madagascar, the Café DuPaye—this was the high toned place frequented by officers—the Washington Bar, where an English speaking Parisian served champagne cocktails over a cross between a bar and a pulpit. The bar had a brass rail and there was sawdust on the floor.

Wagon 3's hang-out was a little café, with a beer garden attached, and another cozy little room where one could get a home-like supper. Several friendly young ladies seemed to make their homes there.

There was a queer rambling structure two blocks from the depot,

frequented almost entirely by French soldiers and Algerians. The wine was only so-so, and the ladies were not pretty enough to tempt one from virtue's path, with the exception of a regal brunette, who looked like a pretty successful temptress.

A French soldier, with a rich baritone voice, sang there every evening for a collection of sous. There was the Café Nevers with pretty Victorine De Lume who captured two alleged German spies with the assistance of Gleeson and Davis of Wagon 5; that little place on the Rue de Grande Gerf, where dwells the second best cook in France—they had a few bottles of fine Medoc there—and such dinners!

We formed pleasant friendships with many French families, and spent our evenings and Sundays in their homes. The home life of the better French people has much that could be profitably imitated by the people of any country. Their hospitality was repaid in one sense by substantial gifts from the Americans, but mutual regard uninfluenced by other considerations was often the result of such contact.

Before our first enthusiasm evanesced one hundred and forty-nine of our company had French teachers. Serious visaged plainsmen would come to us every day and say in substance, "I met a lady from Paris this evening, her husband is a general in the French army. She invited me around to the house, and fixed me up a nice cup of chocolate. She is going to give me French lessons every evening." "Does she speak English?" "I should say she does; just as good as you or me." They would study very intensely, until the personality of the instructor proved more interesting than French verbs, after which they would sit in the Park, and converse in a language common to all countries. Our soldier with only, "comprong," "si' vou plas," and "coma," at his command, was able to make himself understood, and even ventured to describe his home, the cattle and farm, mines and plains, and the alert French girls understood him.

Sundays the soldiers would often ride about in fiacres with French mademoiselles. Occasionally four soldiers would charter one of these contraptions, and ride about aimlessly. They always looked extremely uncomfortable and self-conscious, but the poor fellows were trying to have a good time, and it was an innocent way in which to spend their meager and richly earned pay. Officers,

generally young ones, sometimes engaged these antiques, usually accompanied by a lady or two, and seemed to feel as awkward and misplaced as the enlisted men.

This is a business man's army. In conduct it will bear comparison with any army in the world. In the A. E. F. there was little distinction in morals and choice of amusement between the officers and men. Rank aside, they were merely young men and behaved fully as well as young men in general. The army's moral status has been the subject of much misrepresentation; some men are the worse and others are better through having been in the military service in France. A long stay in France without interesting occupation or engrossing duties would result in moral laxity. American men are not particularly continent, but they are usually free from the unnatural practices which mark the social evil here. The influence of the war on our men will be determined by the length of time they remain in Europe without needful and useful occupation, to employ their active minds and robust bodies. To supply these needs with many hours a day of drill is not only poor employment of their valuable time, an unproductive and costly waste, but it is as senseless as the practice once followed in English prisons, where men walked tread mills or turned a crank for years of their lives.

Confinement in great camps and restriction of privileges for an extended period makes A. W. O. L.'s, and enemies to government, and when the ban is lifted, excesses usually follow the repression. The tendency to hush up investigations leading to the improvement of conditions destroys faith in the honesty and motives of his higher commanders. During our last months in France, the welfare societies and the government have understood this situation more clearly, and have made an earnest, systematic effort to provide proper entertainment for the soldiers and to interest them in organized athletics.

It must be understood that our men did not as a rule come in contact with the best of French. In the recently repopulated districts this is especially true. The ordinary forms of association between the sexes have been almost impossible. Officers have enjoyed the advantage of meeting the best French people, because they naturally attribute to them all the qualities supposed to go with their commissions; they have practically monopolized the society of the American girls who are in France; this is due in part to

caste worship but in the case of the nurses it is the result of an order prohibiting their association with the enlisted men, except in line of duty. The enlisted man yields to no one in admiration for the splendid American girls who have done so much to make our life endurable and they would have been as safe in our society, and as courteously treated as if they had been the guests of generals.

In taking leave of Nevers, we must speak of the friends of the detail men of the Nevers-Decize road. We saw these good people every day for three months, and we grew to know each other well, of course we did not know them by name so we called them Jones or Campbell or Robinson or whatever we fancied. The children used to eat dinner with us under the trees. Two bright little boys near St. Eloi received instructions from us in English. We taught them to distinguish the rank of our soldiers and the American equivalent to their titles: "Un soldat, garçon?" The boys: "Hello there, bird." "Les officier." "Hello sox." "Oui, bon garçon." "Madam?" "Hello Birdie!" and they were very quick to learn.

Corporal Mills was devoted to the road work, and we would look around to see how Mills was progressing with the drains, and frequently he was not there; if we wanted him badly we went down to the farmhouse by the big spring and found him on the porch talking with Mme. Germaine. Charley Maguy also was extremely popular on the road. He had a facile command of French and people of high and low degree sought his society. The portly proprietor of the Chateau le Bance would converse with him for hours, so would Joan if her employers were away. Francine would pass by pretty often and the two sisters who were reaping wheat in the nearby field always had time to "parlez."

The events of the war had changed for the better; Chateau Thierry and Soissons had been won; it was evident that the big push of the whole war was impending. Life had gone well with us at Nevers, but we were beginning to be restless, all of our talk was of the front. How we envied the men who came to our hospitals. When they were able to be about, we shared the little we had with them, took them to dinner and bought them drinks; best of all we heard their stories.

We had enlisted as Engineers, but many of us wished to serve in the infantry. We knew that an engineer regiment acting as infantry had won glory at the Blois Bleau. Some of our least active

workers felt peculiarly qualified for service at the front and expressed their desires constantly. Some of them were not favorably impressed with shell fire on closer acquaintance.

Our details were drawn in and the company equipment and stock was loaded on trains. We told our French friends good-by and had farewell dinners in their homes, with soldier friends from other regiments, and on the morning of August 26 we formed on the company street and marched down the Avenue de Victor Hugo to the depot. Kiernan was our standard bearer and the little unit made a very smart and military appearance. Soldiers were no novelty in Nevers but all Nevers turned out apparently to say good-by to Wagon Co. 5. Meyers, Scott and Mills were especially well remembered.

We had thirty-eight cars of equipment, ten of stock and six third class coaches for the troops. These coaches were a great improvement over the "8 chevaux" cars. The apartments were supposed to accommodate nine persons and they would actually contain six Americans if they did not mind crowding. We left Nevers with the kindest feelings for its people, many a kiss was exchanged the night before, many a promise given to return after "la guerre" or on the first furlough. We were on the last lap of our journey. We did not know it then but we were the forerunners of the St. Mihiel drive.

CHAPTER IX

At the Front

On August 27 we arrived at Is-sur-Tille. Is-sur-Tille would be considered a fourth class, miserable, sun-baked hole in the most uninhabited county of the state plains of Texas. We stayed in this wilderness a day and a half and were equipped with gas masks, rifles, ammunition and steel helmets. We had junk enough to take care of before that.

Noah coated the ark inside and out with pitch; our Springfields were treated in the same manner with oil. We left on the afternoon of August 28 and arrived at our destination at 2.30 A. M. August 29.

This sweet spot was Belleville. At five o'clock a colonel roamed down to the depot and woke us up by remarking very explosively, "Get that train unloaded and everything out of sight by daybreak." That colonel was a roaring lion, until some days later; then he met our colonel, and our colonel took the roar out of him. He ranked all the 23rd officers with us and seemed to be the high card of that section. Captains and adjutants felt like worms of the dust in his presence. He had given us a large order, but shortly after daybreak everything was half a mile away, under the trees on the banks of the Mosselle Canal. It would have been a revelation to Neilson's friends to see how he worked that morning. Chastain, Norman and Burkman were as usual first in the breech, and performed feats of strength Sampson would have envied. The M. P.'s had the drop on us claiming that our unloading operations interfered with the trucks and wagons coming in for supplies.

We were between the devil and the deep blue sea. For the second time in France we pitched pup tents and assembled our scattered possessions. Our camp was within a few feet of the canal, under the thick shade of beautiful beach trees, apparently well concealed from aerial observation. The canal was an ideal bathing place and our situation had many advantages.

Belleville was a rail head within the range of the German guns, one of our most advanced and important supply depots. The trans-

portation facilities were inadequate and the storage capacity practically nothing. A large ammunition dump here supplied the allied front with artillery ammunition by light railroad lines; rifle ammunition was taken to the dough boys nightly by an ammunition train, mule drawn over roads that were constantly shelled. Belleville is near the ammunition town of Pompey and twenty kilometers from Metz. Pompey would have been an appropriate name for the entire section. The near by town of Dieulard and other villages were repeatedly shelled and bombing planes were daily visitors.

We began work at once, preparations for the St. Mihiel drive were being rushed; any miscalculation of the food and ammunition supply, or their non-delivery might cause defeat and the loss of many lives. Warehouses were to be built in a field near the main line and a spur line laid connecting with it; also a wagon road connecting with the highway.

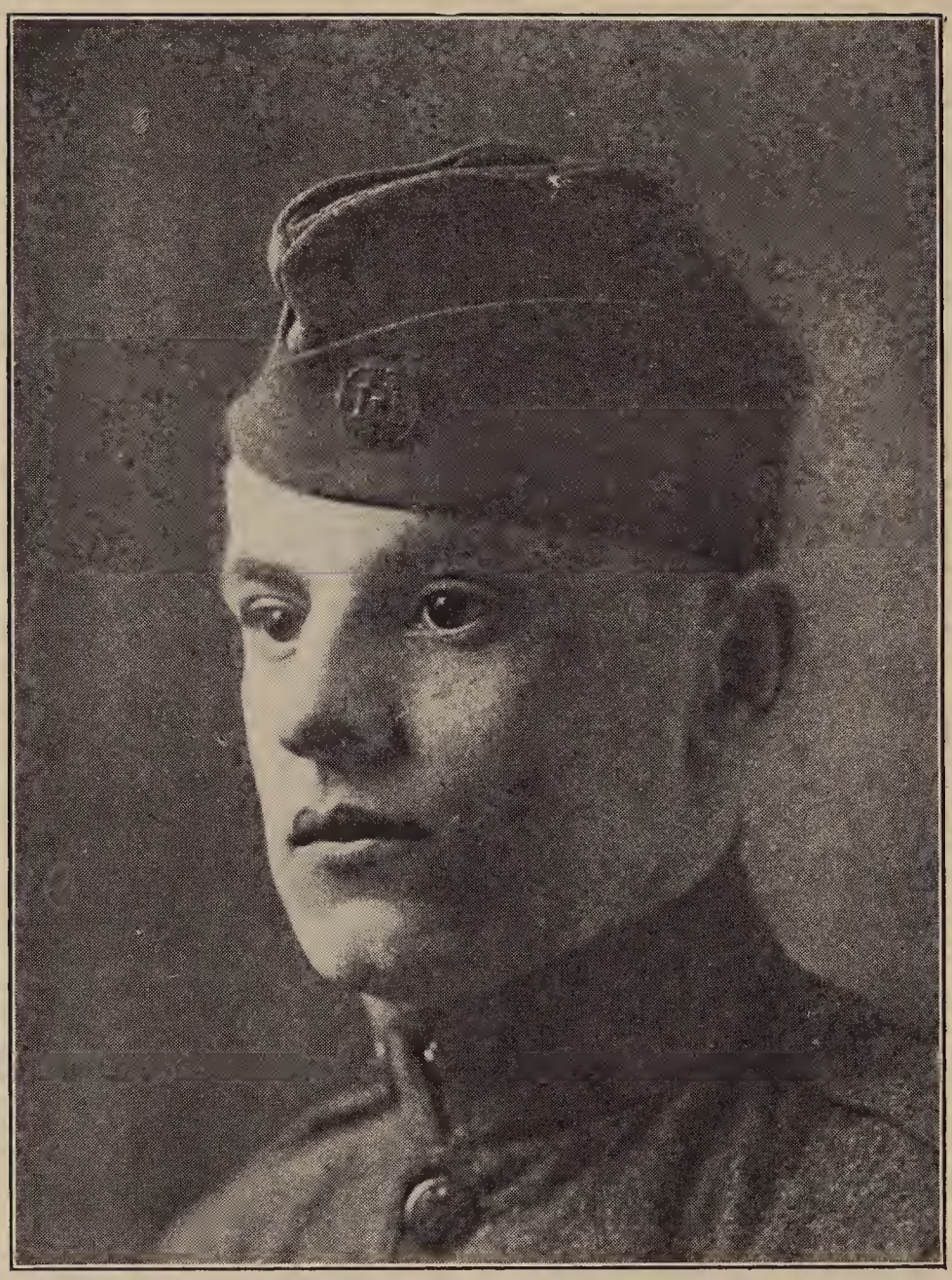
It devolved on us to do this road building and erect the platform on which the warehouses were to stand. The road in front of the ammunition dump was gone; it had become a respectable slough. It depended on Wagon 5 to make this ammunition available, which involved the construction of a new road with culvert and bridges. Corporal Williams, Mechanics Neilson, Granquist and Howard attended to the bridges and culverts.

A few days before the drive heavy artillery and ammunition trains crowded the road between Dielourd and Marbach. They were concealed on a portion of the road, both sides of which were lined with trees and protected by camouflage screens.

German scout and bombing planes came over in flocks and air battles were frequent. The ordinary day traffic on this road reminded one of Fifth avenue and 42nd street except for lack of pedestrians. The road was in bad shape, so a detail from Wagon 5 was placed in charge of it and jumped in and out among the cars while engaged in repair work.

A quarry and crusher near Dielourd was operated by the 28th Engineers; our teams hauled stone and crushed rock from this crusher to the seat of our major operations in Belleville. Heavy rock for base work, also gravel, was brought in by canal boat. We unloaded these boats by hand, and loaded our trucks and wagons in the same manner; sometimes working night shifts on the barges. All of this work was painfully hard and continued seven days a week,

SERGEANT-MAJOR LINN W. NESMITH



IRIS W. GRIM

rain or shine, generally rain. Another task was the building of a road around the warehouses already in use.

All our construction work was high class and of a permanent nature. A small percentage of the company were permitted to visit Nancy and Pompey on day passes. Most of us were free evenings, but like O'Brien, "we'd no place to go." Belleville was in an agitated condition, the population had not all returned, and apparently the attractive ones had remained away. They did not seem a wildly friendly people; German spies were numerous, and German sympathizers more so.

Several cafés sold a little very inferior beer. You engaged a bottle, a day or two in advance, and drank it without a glass, with a clear conscience, for it would not have harmed a child. The brewery that made that beer was probably a pumping plant, "On the banks of the Blue Mosselle." It made many converts to bone dry prohibition. There were no other temptations in Belleville. Anti-aircraft guns were stationed in pits, carefully camouflaged, wherever needed. There were numerous concealed batteries and naval guns mounted on trucks. A range of hills near our camp was filled with artillery, which could if need be bark on Metz. The French had been leisurely preparing for an attack on Metz, or the defense of that part of France in our immediate rear, for over a year. The Americans made a few weeks' job of it. Machine guns were numerously placed, and buildings, ammunition dumps and particularly troops quarters were carefully camouflaged.

Aerial bombing raids were of nightly occurrence on the part of both the Allies and the Germans. Damage was inflicted by both sides, but the advantage was increasingly on the side of the Allies. Our air forces were beginning their effective raids on the Rhine cities. The German airmen were very courageous, as in fact all aviators must be. The appearance of German spy planes promptly drew a swarm of our aircraft, and expensive fusillade from the anti-aircraft guns. The price of a good farm would soon go up in smoke. We never saw the anti-aircraft guns make a hit, but they kept the Boche on the move and disorganized his plans. Our aerial defense was excellent and successfully protected the stores and ammunition at Belleville.

The ammunition works at Pompey were shelled repeatedly while we were there but except in the destruction of residences and loss of

life these raids were unsuccessful. The enemy held our observation balloons in especial antipathy. A daring German would often appear from the clouds, riddle a balloon with his machine gun and escape to Dutchland, before our rescue squadron would arrive. The balloonist generally got away in a parachute. This is a spectacular branch of the military service. If any young man craves excitement and home life palls on him, let him become an aerial observer. This is an occupation free from suffering; if the parachute works you alight as gracefully as a butterfly; if it does not work, you will not require any nursing or medical attention.

A score of air battles took place in front of our camp, and near places where we were working. The first few times we dropped everything to watch the fight. On these occasions Sammie Aultman was our aerial observer. "Look, look, look, look," he would shriek in ascending tones, "Don't you see him, don't you see it? Don't you see it? There it is! There it is!" Every moment of the day was interesting to Sammie. Civil life will seem dull to him. Once, through a mistake of Knight's, his name appeared on the detail sheet with a corporal prefix. Sammie was elated. Had he only known it, a corporal is a poor friendless cuss, even more execrated than the sergeant, if that is possible. Sammie was formally congratulated by his friends. He already saw that reticence became an officer. "I don't know anything about it, I tell you, I don't know anything about it! Don't ask me—I didn't hand-shake for it. It was handed to me on a silver platter. The captain did it. Don't talk to me—talk to the captain. Talk to the captain. He must be a smart man or he wouldn't be holding that job and drawing that pay. I went to sleep at night and when I woke up in the morning I was a corporal. That's all I know about it."

We saw one German plane shot down near our camp after an interesting fight. In another air battle, when a plane dropped beyond the hills, we were too busy to learn its identity.

We rather lost our interest in these fights and wisely determined to let them fight and go on with our work. Our first nights in Belleville were rather exciting. The bombing planes made their nightly visits and our guns their usual response, discharging volleys of bullets through the trees above our heads. We had a misgiving that, if in their patriotic enthusiasm they forgot to elevate their guns, we would be out of luck. Pieces of shrapnel from the anti-aircraft guns

would often fall about us and splash around in the canal. We were afraid that this material would enter our tents and injure our equipment. We were glad that our couches were so close to Mother Earth. After we became accustomed to it, the barking of the machine guns and the roar of the batteries became a sort of a lullaby and we could not sleep well without it. Haan is going to rig up some pacifier of that sort in the back yard to insure a good night's rest for the baby.

While working on the road by the ammunition dump one day, a plane bearing allied insignia lazied over us flying very low. Caine and Carr were bullying us as usual and we were afraid to stop and look up. The aviator dropped something. Some of us thought it was a hat, Dynamite McDonald allowed that it was a souvenir, possibly a German helmet, and ran for the spot where they expected it to drop. In a fraction of a moment there was an able-bodied explosion. Dynamite made for the rear at a gait that definitely proved that he was alive. The whole detail was scattered about the neighboring hills with the exception of a few who hid under a car of live hand grenades and behind the ammunition dump. No, there was one exception—that iron nerved hero, First Class Private Molby, continued mucking and whistled, "Wait Till the Clouds Roll By, Maggie," until the boys came back. Long, long before they returned, the plane dropped another bomb within a few yards of our corral, this missile slightly pock-marked four army mules belonging to another outfit, and made a first class cellar with a little squaring for the farmer who owns that land to store his mangels in. The aviator unloaded a third bomb but this was a dud. He waved a cheerful good-by and left us.

One of our poets submits the following little effort as his tribute to the hostile plane:

There is humor in the tragic
  As I will try to show;
Many planes were flying overhead
  And one was flying low.

He was coming right towards us;
  He seemed to hold us in a spell.
Ah! I saw something drop!
  Sergeant Carr was heard to yell.

A few seconds of breathless waiting;
Then the same thing as before,
But the echo of the sergeant's cry
Was an aerial bomb's loud roar.

Carr's detail, well,—they scattered,
But he just lingered there,
And hugged a lonesome box car
Whilst offering up a prayer.

The aeroplane passed right over his head,
We watched it till beyond our gaze,
Then we gathered around the box car,
'Twas full of live hand grenades.

We were quite impressed by the efficiency of these bombs and shell fragments were scattered about for a hundred yards. Had we been gathered near that point, they would have gone through us like a dose of salts, and our wailing relatives would have been ten thousand bucks to the family to the good.

Previous to this several of our youngest men had marched about the camp with their packs and rifles, loudly voicing their intention of joining the infantry over the hill but on the banks of that shell hole, they made a solemn resolution. Dynamite was one of those to remain in Wagon 5 and keep their mouths shut, and all of us thought like Maud Muller "it might have been." We became inured to these dangers and realized that they were only a foretaste of coming events. We were so indifferent before we left Belleville that we would have said nothing if a bomb had dropped on us.

Our work at Belleville was very important. We challenge results with any similar organization in the army. The following non-coms. were in charge of details: Sergeants Haan, Caine, Dolan, Carr, Cousino, Worsham, McCarthy. Sergeant Reed visited all the details and checked up all their work. Corporals Williams, Rogers and Norman rendered effective especial service as did Mechanics Granquist and Neilson. Mechanic Howard and Wagoner Gorge operated the gasoline rollers. We were working strenuously on the morning of September 17 when orders were received at our headquarters to proceed at once to Gironville with combat equipment only, and at that point secret orders would be given us. A swift courier was sent to awaken Corporal Mills who had the dangerous duty of night patrol on the Marbach-Dieulard road, which was under

constant fire. The details were called in. We tore down our camp, cleaned up the débris and proceeded as directed; part of the company by wagon train, the rest by camions. Several men were at Nancy and other points and on their return found only the supply sergeant and baggage guard. We left Belleville without regret, we had no sweethearts there and wine ranged from seven to twenty francs a bottle. The Wagon 5 ingenuity had made our pup tent camp incomparably superior to those about us. Sidewalls of boards had amplified their proportions, some had woven mats of withes and rushes and even raised rustic enclosures around their frail habitations. Corporal Rogers' efforts in this line were especially tasteful. The St. Mihiel drive with its attendant bombardment had rocked us to sleep for several nights, and reminded us of other terrestrial things than our strained muscles. We did not suspect that this was the beginning of a general offensive, or more accurately the continuation of an offensive which had commenced after Chateau Thierry, and was now at the instance of Marshall Foch to continue on every front. So far as we gave the matter a thought, we assumed that we would remain in Belleville until our construction work was completed, turning from the road and platform work to the building of the great warehouses, but one cannot calculate with precision on any military condition.

The poor fellows sitting about this stove expect to be home the first of June, 1919; the unfortunate wretches are not aware that an order may reach us any moment nullifying their hopes.

The morning found us laboring at Belleville. In the afternoon we were speeding over the edge of the recently recovered St. Mihiel salient. We reached Gironville at dusk and before we were organized night had overtaken us.

CHAPTER X

A Long, Long Trail

Bread and coffee were served us and we lay down to sleep, most of us by the side of the road, without covering other than our blankets and ponchos. Some had not even that protection and found themselves on waking in the roadside mud or in the open fields. Holohean and Legg, for the first time in their lives, awoke at the foot of a cross; they had gone to sleep on a French soldier's grave; others stumbled into an orchard and slept in the shade "of the old apple tree."

It rained most of the night, but we were fatigued to a point where trivialities ceased to disturb us. From then on difficulties threatened our very existence. On the following day we learned that Gironville was far from being our destination, also that we were to rest by day and march by night. We were to become much better acquainted with corned willie and English biscuit than we had been in the past—or desired to be again. Our day at Gironville was more interesting socially than our entire stay at Belleville.

Gironville is remembered by the company as the hamlet where some earnest seeker found excellent Bordeaux at seven francs a bottle; in a few hours the local supply of vinous liquors was exhausted, so were the contents of the single grocery store. Abstainers fell off the water wagon at Gironville, and their systems responded in amusing ways to the smooth fluid of southern France and the vivacious champagnes of the north. No one was stupidly inebriated but many were very cheerful. I. M. D. Smith was an early riser and with his comrade and co-worker, Wagoner Vosier, sought and found the fountain of youth. He returned an hour later by no means the same man; he had bid dull care begone, and was singing "My Old Kentucky Home"; ordinarily Smith is not musical. Two orderlies assisted him to a cozy berth in a haymow and many men of high degree sought the same or similar spots. Sociable "Black Jack" games, enlivened by champagne taken "au natural" from the bottle, progressed blithely wherever there was shelter from the rain; and there were all kinds of music in the air.

This day must have been Wagon 5's celebration of the recent victory, or else like the famous ball before Waterloo, a gallant challenging of fate. By night the company was fit and trim, it takes a great deal of champagne, and vin in general to long impair the faculties of Wagon 5. After a warm supper, we marched through a desolate region; the road was filled with traffic and soldiers going, like ourselves, toward the Argonne Forest. After a long march through the rain and mud and through several deserted towns and demolished villages, we found a French barrack at Rupt a little before dawn. This was large enough to shelter most of us and the others slept in a barn.

As is generally the case, we had lost two or three stragglers who found their way to us several days later. Rupt was about the jumping off place of the retail liquor business—it might have been called the "Last Chance." The boys did not let the chance go by but we had discovered that rest would do us more good on these marches than sight-seeing and conviviality. Our third night's march was muddy and exhausting and in its later hours rainy. We came to a halt at the same hour as on the preceding day and after some searching in the darkness found a barrack and barns for our horses; after a hasty breakfast we turned in and slept very contentedly on the floor. The name of this place is Courouvre. We were quite sure that this deserted village could afford us no entertainment and with the wisdom of experience we took it out in sleep.

On our next and last march, we covered nearly twenty-four miles. The weather was in our favor and a full moon made our pathway clear. We crossed the Vesle where it was hardly more than a mill stream and found the road excellent, until within two miles of the camp. Several batteries of French artillery passed us as we were eating our midnight lunch. We admired their stock and the fine appearance of the men themselves.

About four o'clock we turned from the main road, and proceeded over a muddy country trail, to a little hamlet with a long name. The officers preceded us to this point and we followed them along a trail that meandered almost knee deep in mud through a marshy, wooded country. The trees shut out the moonlight and on account of the holes and pools, we were obliged to pick our way in Indian file, and proceed any way to get there.

We came to a halt in what would be called in the states, a white

oak swamp. We had arrived, but were quite in the dark as to where we were to find sleeping quarters, so we stood in the mud, waiting like Macawber, for something to turn up. Sergeant McCarthy developed initiative enough to hunt up a bed and with Sergeant Carr found a barrack in which we lived for a week. It was still occupied by French soldiers but they were marching out, and as soon as McCarthy and Carr broke the glad tidings to us, we rushed in the other door and occupied the recently vacated bunks. Had it not been for this prompt occupancy, we would have been obliged to pitch pup tents, for two companies of infantry were abiding in pup tents around this barrack, waiting for the French to move out. When those patriots woke up the next morning they found that the French had moved out and Wagon 5 had moved in. The Germans sent an occasional "barrack bag" over the camp tearing up some road nearby, and our brave Allies had left some "cooties" behind them, but none of these things moved us.

Our officers reported to the commander of Company A of the 23rd Engineers for orders, and from September 22 to September 25 we worked in conjunction with the brave fellows of A Company, of which outfit a Brooklyn, New York, paper says, "that on the morning after a certain battle, only forty men answered roll-call out of a total strength of 250." The A men were very sound sleepers.

Our teams were engaged in transportation from the engineer dump at Aubreville to a new engineer dump at Neuville, and in drawing rock to repair roads and to fill shell holes over our lines of communication. Our entire force, aside from the wagoners and helpers, were engaged in road repair work, loading wagons and trucks with road material and distributing the same wherever it was needed.

Our orders often took our details very near the German lines, all our work was done at night, and the movement of traffic was restricted to the hours of darkness. The Germans had the entire area checker-boarded and could drop their shells on any given square. They maintained a desultory fire on our lines during the day and no night passed without a general barrage. But allied ingenuity was fully equal to the situation. Nearly six hundred thousand American troops were in this sector and, until the drive began, they were out of sight. Enormous quantities of food and ammunition was coming in every night. After dark, the entire territory was densely populated; the roads flowed bank high with trucks and wagon trains.

At dawn, the German scout planes saw nothing. The object of the enemy fire was to destroy the roads, and delay or render impossible the transportation of munitions and supplies; also to blow up our magazines and dumps, which they sought to locate by aeroplane. Of course a general barrage would sweep anything in its way, a shell might strike the road well to our front or rear, but it was equally possible that it might land exactly where we happened to be. The crossroads were always under constant fire, and naturally in need of our attention, so the evenings we spent at these places found us under fire as well.

Storage dumps, like Aubreville and Neuville, were natural objects for German marksmanship, and as we worked in both places we were enabled to garner a fairly good idea of the effect of shell fire on a rural community.

Proceeding to Neuville on a truck one night, we halted a moment in a ruined town for instructions. A soldier there remarked, "A German shell just got a sergeant and six men, landed on that billet over there, yes, chewed them all to hell." Arriving at Neuville an officer called out, "Put out those damned cigarettes! Three men were just killed here, a Frenchman and two Americans." This was an unpleasant evening. We were unloading trucks back of the Neuville church. The rocks were wet, so were we, and at regular intervals, "Boche barrack bags" would sigh their way toward that rock pile. We could calculate pretty accurately the time required for a shell to reach its destination, and scatter, but we could not tell the correct destination. It was no time for hair drawn deductions; we were about as safe in one place as in another.

It would be childish to exaggerate our adventures, or multiply our hazards. They are sufficient without it. Every man and every detail had each their separate adventures. We were at once impressed with the Titan like nature of the conflict. We realized that we had no defense to offer if a shell landed where we were. Their destructive power was tremendous, but fortunately for us the German ammunition was deteriorating; probably 30 per cent of the German shells at this time were "duds," that is, they did not explode. Working under fire is perhaps a high test of courage. A detail of men and teams on reaching the section of road they were to repair learned that a soldier had just been killed, another wounded and a lieutenant's arm sheared off by a shell fragment a little ahead of them.

On the night before the drive, Lieutenant Tabor was on the Varennes road in a side car and found himself, to use a race track expression, "in a pocket" shells tearing up the track fore and aft. The lieutenant and his driver were obliged to disembark and assist the machine around the shell holes. They were further reminded of life's uncertainty by the bodies of disemboweled American soldiers and remains of lately living men, shredded and torn beyond human semblance.

Lieutenant Killourhy, then with third battalion Headquarters, was under orders to convey bridge timber as far as he could go to a place near Varennes where it was urgently required for bridging. He was given large discretionary power with only general instructions. He proceeded with trucks as far as the roads were passable and then unloading his trucks carried the timbers by relay through a ditch and across the open fields in what was then "No-Man's-Land." He was well in advance of the American positions and very near the German lines. In front of him was a machine gun nest, a wooded hill which held up the American advance at this point for several days. This was perhaps the largest machine gun replacement in the Argonne. Hundreds of guns were stationed there connected with the German rear lines by trenches and galleries. The Germans probably suspected that the Americans would attempt to bring up material for the bridge and craters near this point, and to be on the safe side, turned the machine gun fire on the road. Had Lieutenant Killourhy not taken the precaution to convey his timbers through the fields and ditches his command would have been wiped out; as it was, he delivered his cargo and saved his men. Soldiers have received a D. C. M. for less. This is merely one of the many gallant acts which have not come to public attention.

Every man of us profoundly admires the dough boy; we soon cease to envy him. The Argonne is in a general way similar to The Wilderness, but a much greater area, our forces had to fight their way over every obstacle German intelligence could devise. Soon after the Argonne drive began the Germans relied on their machine guns rather than on their infantry and artillery; the woods were full of them, even the tree tops. Our advance would often unconsciously leave German machine guns in their rear and be later reminded of their existence by being swept with their enfilading fire. Victories the world will sing for generations were won by his ren-

dered flesh, spurting life blood and shattered form. We have heard men pray for death in the agony of their suffering, we have seen what are cheerfully called "walking cases" limp, groaning and mangled, from the battlefield.

Men went into battle in the strength of young manhood, and encountering the hellish devices of modern war, emerged as human débris, food for statisticians. A fresh line is written on his serial card at Bourges, records are made at various headquarters in which his name appears as "killed in action." Like the discarded blankets and lost pack carriers, the dead soldiers are a part of the wastage of war, to be supplied by new issue, and reckoned as such by the statesmen who direct our race through these great convulsions.

We have a right, above all others, to ask if this war will make the world's governments truly democratic. Will it insure to the peasant and laborer the peaceful possession of his little property, the peaceful use of his time? Or will he in the future rear his boys for the battlefield and his girls to become victims of lust? Many of our farmer boys will not return to follow the plow on the fresh spring mornings. Many mechanics lie in the mold of the Argonne; they will never bid their families good-by, and go to their work whistling, with their dinner pails in their hands. Clerks and office men, they spent a few months in military control—little parts of a great machine, strong only in courage—and died in battle. Others are maimed or sick; the nation will give them vocational training. To be sure some will face the future sightless, others with an empty sleeve, but government aid will compensate them—partially—and the rest is their gift to the world's peace.

Actual hostilities have ceased. A few months more, perhaps, of military captivity, with drills and inspections to occupy our minds and keep our bodies fit, to develop a feeling of loathing and of longing for the freedom that comes with our discharge, for a return to a normal living and the affection of our homes and friends, and then the army will be absorbed in the civil life of the nation. If we come back the worse for our service with the colors remember that we were at war in a foreign land, and after the war was over we lived for many months without the resources and aids possessed by the civilians. Remember that we did what we were sent there to do.

Nothing that occurred during these days impressed us humorously at the time. We were proving our courage; the desire to be as brave

as our fellows stiffened our spines. After an incident of particular danger, the man who had allowed his timidity to become apparent was unmercifully "kidded," and those whose pride, or courage, had held them to the spot were pretty sure to inform the others that they were the "last to make for the dugouts," or that they stood "like a rock." This unbecoming boasting soon ceased. We were about equally courageous and soon agreed that unnecessary death or wounds would inconvenience us to a degree that no posthumous glory could repay.

We had to be a target for the German gunners in the line of duty, but to refuse shelter when no good could be accomplished by exposure was to put ourselves in the way of dying "as the fool dieth." A large detail was drawing rock to the roads near Neuville when shells began to destroy the road in front of them. They had been warned by some artillerymen not to advance further. Dolan told them that his orders required the rock to be delivered at a point beyond, and that the rock would reach there, shells or no shells. So they continued on their way; the artillery passed them later, and met with several casualties. Our advance was stopped by a concentrated fire at a point near Neuville, and we were forced to unload. The concussion threw one man to the ground, and the horses became uncontrollable. Sergeants McCarthy and Reed sprang to the assistance of the men and were narrowly missed by the flying shrapnel. The situation was further complicated by three gas attacks. It was necessary for the drivers and helpers to mask their now excited and unreasoning horses. It seemed as if their retreat would be cut off as the road in their rear was being deeply torn. Men sought refuge from the shrapnel under the slight shrubbery by the road side, Hicks and Burke contesting the possession of a wild rose bush. Others flattened themselves against the sides of saplings nearly as large as bean poles. Some one found a small dugout. This would have been rendered unavailable in the scramble, had not Wagoner Christensen coolly remarked, "If you fellows line up and go in there one at a time, you may get under cover before you get killed," so they lined up in mess formation and found shelter until they were reorganized sufficiently to continue home. In this mêlée, First Class Private Gleeson was injured. He was our first casualty. Gleeson, an exceptional, fearless man attempted to disentangle the stock and wagons and was picked up semi-conscious on the road, and

laid in a dump wagon. On the wild ride to camp, the lever became loosened and he was thrown out on the highway, the wagons miraculously passing over him without injuring him. At the field hospital examination he showed three broken ribs, a broken collar bone, four severe cranial concussions and numerous bruises. It was many weeks before Gleeson rejoined us. His ring career since then has been so successful and he has dealt and received such excessive blows that we have reason to think that his bones have knit successfully.

Once again a small detail butted into an artillery attack and two of the men protected themselves from shell fragments by holding slabs of rock on their heads. They had forgotten their helmets and marched for a long distance, sustaining the weight of these novel casques.

The only occasion of comparative humor that we now recall happened on an evening or rather early morning when we had failed to connect with our midnight lunch. We reached camp about daybreak, wet, hungry and angry. We supposed that supper or breakfast was waiting for us at camp as there were lights in the mess shack, and K. P.'s at work, so we lined up with our mess kits and advanced. The preparations going on were not for us, that is, not particularly. They were preparing the general company breakfast due to take place three hours later. We were in no mood to wait and helped ourselves to the supper that had not been sent to us and such other things as we could find. Most of the sergeants and corporals participated in this repast, and all but an unfortunate half dozen had eaten and gone when Bieberdorf appeared. He made a few abrupt, forceful remarks and left us to arouse Sergeant Hamilton. It made Hamilton rather peevish to crawl out of his nice warm bed and dress several hours before rising time, and he had not the same light on human suffering that was later imparted to him at Officers' Training School. Hamilton's remarks were highly critical and as we thought derogatory and ill chosen. Three of us were haled before Captain Morrison the next day and mildly reprimanded for our disorderly conduct.

On the night preceding the drive a large detail was loading lumber at Aubreville in command of Lieutenant Tabor. The lieutenant went toward Varennes, and ordered us to do nothing until his return. The detail was in charge of Sergeants Dolan, Carr, McCarthy and

Reed. Aubreville was a ruin like all the towns for miles about us, and was swept nightly by shell fire. While we were waiting orders the Germans were shelling back areas in our rear; then we had a gas alarm. Idling under these conditions was tedious and for the first time since we joined the army, we craved work. A lieutenant from one of the 23rd truck companies appeared and ordered us to load lumber on his trucks; this conflicted with Lieutenant Tabor's orders and we should have sat tight until his return, but we were anxious to be busy and yielded to the pressure of higher authority. The shell fire shifted nearer, and soon the missiles began to strike the terrain in front of us. We continued to load lumber.

Then a shell dropped in the lumber dump "and the boys of Wagon 5 were on their way." There was a dugout two hundred yards distant into which we dove head first and when it was filled the leftovers clustered at its outskirts and said their prayers.. A conversation like this took place in the dugout: Wagoner: "You put out me eye, Blackie, with your tin helmet, be gob, ye have. Ah! God save us, and may we live to see the loight of the day!" Sergeant, adjusting his helmet: "I didn't mean to do it. Are you sure your eye is out?" Wagoner: "Indeed, I can't see a foot before me. Git off me back! Do ye take me shoulders for a cushion?" Truck Company Lieutenant, from without: "Is any Wagon 5 sergeant in here?" Sergeants within: "Tell him no, Martin."

We resumed our labor and then Lieutenant Tabor appeared. The American batteries were about to open a barrage. The drive was on; the last motor and wagon transport convoys were coming up and every one was off the road but us. We had no business there and the lieutenant was anxious to get us out, but there were the trucks loaded with lumber. His voice was as ominous as doom: "Who told you to load those trucks?" We informed him; we were glad that some one else was there to draw his fire. "Well, unload them damned quick and get out of here," and then he met the other officer and spoke to him in a man to man fashion with a force and eloquence that did us good, for the space of two minutes. We tore the lumber from the trucks, deafened by the roar of hundreds of cannon and lighted by the bursting shells. We climbed into the truck and the driver let her out. Hell had broken loose. As we came flush with one of our concealed batteries, they opened fire and the concussion threw us in a heap. Once or twice before we turned

the corner, we were sidetracked while troops and ammunition trains passed us. The well directed German guns were sending shells all about us, and we were truly happy to regain the road again, and put several ranges of hills between Aubreville and ourselves.

About seven o'clock we were awakened by a gas alarm and donned our masks; two hours later we had broken camp and were following the boys who had gone over the top. We began a ten mile march by side roads to Neuville. Rumors of victory and a deep advance had already reached us. When we reached the main road we seemed to be in everybody's way and on a plain between Aubreville and Neuville we drew to one side and the mess force began to fry steaks on a field kitchen. It bid fair to be a lively dinner party. The Germans were falling a little short, their shells landing just across the fence from us in the field on the other side of the road. The cooks continued to fry steaks, then a shell burst in the road right back of us. Captain Morrison, an unemotional man of true courage, looked interestedly at the powder smoke and said: "Hitch up to that field kitchen, we will eat dinner somewhere else."

We made another halt on a side hill a quarter of a mile from Neuville, and remained there under casual shell fire until early evening, enjoying and digesting our deferred dinner. The road was narrow, and every outfit and four thousand officers paused long enough in passing to wish us to hell out of there. We coincided with them but had no idea where in the unoccupied trenches and shell-swept fields we would pass the night, and no one seemed to give a damn.

After dark, some one heeded Captain Morrison's importunities, and gave him permission to occupy some dugouts two miles ahead. Finding a spot we had never seen, with no identifying marks, in the midst of a battle and in darkness is not a simple matter. But we tumbled into the dugouts at last under a bluff in front of the American artillery, a battery of heavy guns was three hundred yards below us, and pumped shells over our heads the entire night. But we slept, and the trench rats made a hearty supper on the biscuits in our pockets.

The next morning we moved half a mile further. We had sense enough this time not to hunt for instructions. We found a nice, heavy, well-drained woods between Neuville and Varennes and took possession of it in the name of the Continental Congress. Before noon we had built another "pup tent village," raised the officers'

quarters and put up a picket line. The following day and in some cases, late in the afternoon of the day we arrived, we went souvenir hunting in the German trenches. We brought back articles of every description. John R. Legg staggered in with a machine gun, several bayonets, a German tent and two Bavarian daggers. Legg is the most wreckless devil in the 23rd Engineers and one of the best drivers. Most of the time his active mind is arranging complications from which it takes the whole commissioned personnel of the regiment to extricate him. His adventures would fill a large volume. He is known personally and sadly to every command in the regiment. His fondness for excitement has taken him to many interesting and unexpected places, but when all is said there are probably worse young men in the world than Legg. He is a more daring driver than De Palma, not only this but also he is an expert automobile mechanic. If his side car or light delivery breaks down Legg flops down in the mud, careless of his best O. D.'s and affects brilliant extemporaneous repair. He has a good heart; this is not generally suspected, but the day after we made camp, he disappeared for three days and served effectively on the battlefields as a stretcher bearer and in giving other care to the wounded. He is a fine type of the danger-loving American boy.

Our work at Neuville included building, in conjunction with other units, a two-way road around the crater near Varennes, hauling road material and securing the full complement of stock and equipment which we required as a Wagon Train. The company found this the most interesting part of our stay at the front. We were well situated to observe everything going on about us. We had also some leisure in which to wash our clothes in the shell holes and recuperate from our previous exertions.

The Salvation Army opened a canteen at Neuville the day after the drive and sent workers to the front line trenches with chocolate and other supplies for the soldiers in action. This was the best canteen we have seen in France and contained many articles not usually offered by other welfare organizations at the front. To those who had no money, supplies were freely given; these included soap, towels, handkerchiefs, razors, candy and cakes. Excellent coffee and sometimes doughnuts and pie were distributed gratis. The Salvation Army made up for its slender resources and small number of workers by its perfect organization, knowledge of the soldier's

WAGON COMPANY NO. 5

COMPANY SERGEANTS

needs and the devoted spirit of its workers. Nearly all the welfare workers in France wished to do the utmost but the Salvation Army knew how to go about it and make every dollar count. Soldiers from all over the front speak of them in the loudest terms, they were truly a Godsend to us.

For a few nights we had camp-fires in front of our tents, but one evening an irate artillery officer from a nearby battery crashed through the brush and into our camp and asserted that the glow from our fires revealed the position of his battery to the German observers and he objected to being blown to blazes unnecessarily. We had acquired a high degree of facility in expanding the area of our pup tents. We had learned what Sherman's men had discovered fifty years before—that a soldier owes it to himself to salvage anything that is good for his comfort—and with these salvaged articles from the German trenches, we made a very successful camp. The word, "salvage" began to be used by us here in its army application; it is a pretty inclusive expression. When we say "salvage" in this company, we instinctively turn our eyes to young Louis Joseph Walter Maceijewski. Louis always has some salvaged articles about him, and they are always for sale. He has wonderful commercial propensities and would make an excellent curator for a museum of war relics. Wagon 5 soon became as adaptable and provident in the zone of action as they had been in the S. O. S. We salvaged by hand, carrying great burdens on our shoulders; we salvaged over wide areas with wagons and occasionally pressed a truck into service. The high tide of our salvaging was reached at Avacourt.

At our Neuville camp a barrage sang us to sleep and another sounded our reveille. The hammering of machine guns was so common that we missed it when it ceased. Bombing planes sought our batteries and one day a Boche plane attacked a captive balloon in front of our picket line. The balloonist escaped by parachute while the persistent Boche lingered in an attempt to pick him off with his machine gun. Yet, relatively it was quiet, the war was moving on. We had left ordinary camp conveniences far in the rear; the water used for cooking and drinking was brought to a nearby point by rail and conveyed to us by water wagons.

CHAPTER XI

Our Town in Avacourt

On October 7 we hit the trail, as Billy Sunday might say, to Avacourt. The word trail exactly describes that military road built over a low range of shell-rent hills. It bore the merest resemblance to a road, but led us faithfully to the main highway, leading to Mont Faucon and glory. Avacourt was laid so low by repeated bombardments that we had difficulty in finding it. This is said to have been one of the prettiest small towns in France, but nothing was left then but one delapidated house and a few walls. We found a little valley near a brook which afforded good stock water but it was an exposed spot, and with limited possibilities for mud. The advantage was space for a picket line and fair freedom from shell holes. We pitched our tents again, and were allowed the following two days to improve our surroundings; the little valley was intersected with zig-zag trenches, and barbed wire entanglements were in our rear.

We noticed a large pile of French ammunition chests, three by two feet and eighteen inches in depth. We secured some of these, before Robins, Caine, and other bandits, who were already provided with a beautiful tarpaulin, had time to covet them. The following morning when we went down for the rest the bandits had converted them into the walls of an imposing home. We raided the trenches and dugouts for miles around, and systematically removed the available stoves, chicken wire beds, steel roofing, tar paper, and even furniture.

Speed Ball Fraser was the first enterprising citizen to secure a site in the new residential district on the Ridge—the Holywood Addition, we called it. Fraser erected a large angular structure of corrugated roofing and two by fours. He obtained from an officers' quarters in a dugout a double bed with a modern box mattress, and an eight foot pier glass of the period of Louis "Filliope" and moved in. Speed Ball is very domestic and makes himself a home, or at home everywhere. We inspected his villa, found it "jake," and

the stampede was on! After working hours that night Holywood began to grow. The blows of the hammer and rip of the saw filled the air. Groups of partners sought material and carried fuel from a nearby woods.

Haan and Mace built a substantial house of conventional type, closely resembling their homes in the states. Conant's château was perhaps unequalled in accessories and conveniences. Harlow's dwelling was unique, a close imitation of the architecture of the early Devonian period; he had studied this type among the Indians in Nova Scotia. Ferguson and Burns combined in raising an edifice that was altogether misleading. It seemed to show a commodiousness which did not exist in reality. They went to the expense of adding a sort of façade, and other supplementary proceedings to this building, which increased its delusively pretentious appearance. Corporal Williams built a warm structure with a general resemblance to an eskimo igloo for Sergeant Tournier and himself, and lugged in a stove and other furniture for the same persons. Tournier assisted him with many a kind and encouraging word, and suggestion regarding other improvements which would add to their mutual comfort. Williams was very grateful and carried Tournier's luxurious dreams into effect. The sanitary men erected a sort of pagoda, with an extra story for storage purposes, and the peak was surmounted with a skull gathered from an adjacent battlefield. Reed and several others contrived a sheet iron bombproof one. There were very many others equally deserving of mention, but the show place of the town was the dainty abode of Corporal Rogers and First Class Private Hough. Is it impossible for a poor person with limited education to describe this fairy palace justly. It was equipped with built-in bunks, a brick and stone fireplace, dome lamps suspended from the ceiling and the entire interior was wainscoted and draped in colored burlap and cretonnes of the softer shades of brown, green and cream. Nearly as much pains was taken with the exterior which presented a log cabin effect. In front of the door they built an adequate veranda. Many officers of distinction marveled at this gem in the wilderness which was the result of painstaking labor and artistic imagination.

In interior decorative art Corporal Rogers is a remarkable man; he possesses the ingenius ability to make an apartment richly attractive by the artistic use of few and simple materials. Our rest

room at Labry, of which he designed the interior arrangement, was frequently visited by officers of other units who greatly admired his work; it was quite the best thing of the kind in any of our army centers. While we have Rogers on our mind, we may properly add that as a soldier and non-commissioned officer his career reflects honor on himself and his country. His personality and opinion are respected even by those who do not comprehend the refinements of his nature. He has lately had the high honor of decorating the dining-room on the occasion of General Pershing's visit to the A. E. F. University at Beaune where he, Rogers, is taking a course in esoteric applied arts.

This is a pretty fair time to say a kind word for Hough. This young soldier has been an example to all of us in usefulness and conduct; he has committed no indiscretions about which we can focus a romance. He was perfectly sober at Gironville and piloted the rest of the company to its destination. Hough has always been a "lamp to our feet and a light to our paths," and he has talent. After months of conscientious study he became the best camp detail man in the 23rd Engineers. He drove daily into No. 1 barn and turned his wagon around with mathematical accuracy leaving all the posts intact. Ambition began to kindle in Hough's breast; he was not satisfied with his triumph and presently vaulted to a position in the office. Since then Hough has become hard boiled; his resemblance to Sergeants Knight and Tournier becomes more marked day by day. If he stays in the army much longer, he will make the hired men back on the farm "step lively" when he returns to Oshkosh.

At Avacourt we had a long session of rain and mud. We hauled rock from a rock crusher operated by L Company to the roads about Avacourt and in the direction of Mont Faucon—ten minutes rain in France reduces the soil to a semi-fluid condition. We also hauled the late village of Avacourt to the rock crusher where it was reduced to road material. While here our camp was inspected by a certain inspector general. This gentleman gave our camp the highest possible praise. He gave Lieutenant Tabor the highest encomiums.

Several radical changes took place in Wagon 5 while we were camped here. The most important was the loss of Capt. Laughlin P. Morrison. During the earlier operations of the Argonne battle, Captain Morrison had been gassed; he made light of this injury at

the time and, though suffering extreme pain, continued to attend to his duties, and devoted himself unsparingly to the management of our work and attention to our needs and comfort. His strength continued to decline and during our move from the Neuville camp to Avacourt he was unable to ride or bear the motion of a side car, and it was necessary to convey him by slow stages in a bed. We were encouraged by symptoms of gradual recovery, but his inherent ambition led him to undertake the duties of his command before he was able. After many painful and sleepless days and nights, and intense suffering which greatly weakened and emaciated him, he was obliged to leave us for the hospital, where after a long illness he recovered sufficiently to be invalided back to the states.

We were fortunate in having in Captain Morrison a man of mature experience and one accustomed to deal with men. He had been for many years in the employ of the government in harbor construction work. In intellectual attainments, natural capacity and engineering ability, he could hold his own with anything in the regiment and give aces and spades to a great many officers with shoulders full of leaves, eagles and stars. Reserved and quiet in deportment, he was invariably kind and generous as many of the company can testify during our period of deferred pay-days. We are glad to learn that in the genial air of home he is gradually recovering. Lieutenant Tabor continued in charge of the company and shortly after the captain's departure was promoted to the first lieutenancy.

Second Lieutenant Killourhy joined us here, and made at once an excellent impression on the men. He entered upon his work with characteristic energy and surmounted difficulties as they arose with the ease of long experience. On the 8th of November, 1st Sergt. L. G. Hamilton left us. Everyone regretted to see Sergeant Hamilton go, yet as our loss was his gain, we welcomed his admission as a candidate for a commission in the Officers' Training School. Lieutenant Roberts, our veterinary officer, was assigned to Wagon 5 upon receipt of his commission while we were in Nevers and remained with us until he entered the veterinary college at the university at Toulouse the last of March, 1918.

We worked under hard conditions at Avacourt, but Osterberg obtained food from many sources of supply, Hazelton secured boots and oilskins. We had constructed comfortable huts, and were

probably the best fed, best clothed, best sheltered and best satisfied unit in the Argonne. The only "rift within the lute" was a German bombing plane which visited us nightly for two weeks. Speed Ball Fraser, our guard, would shout, "Lights out," and we would all kneel by our bunks and promise to lead a better life if God spared us once more. Robins began to wish that he had paid tithes more promptly. One night he took a pencil, figured up, and found that he was back about nine years; this hardened his heart, but the next night the plane came directly over us; we could hear the whizzing of the propellers distinctly, and after a hard struggle, Robins made up his mind to come across. He was encouraged in this resolution by the explosion of two bombs which landed in proximity to L Company's mess tent and rock crusher. It was a terrible lesson to Robins; he looked at the shell holes the next morning and said, "This will set me back quite a few hundred dollars, but I am glad to have the burden off my mind." It is an odd coincident but the plane did not visit us again, and a few days later the armistice was signed. Before Robins got right with God we had several gas alarms and a long range German gun hurled heavy projectiles in our direction.

One day Wagoner Morris was proceeding across the parade ground to the mess hall. A plane sailed directly over us and dropped something. Morris plunged into a water filled shell hole and pulled the mud and water over him; it was an American plane and the bomb proved to be a bundle of the Paris edition of the *New York Herald*. We threw out a life-line and towed Morris to shore and gave him a paper.

Sergeant Osterberg salvaged a motorcycle and with the assistance of our mechanics and drivers restored its vitality. Osterberg promised himself much pleasure on this vehicle, and saw in fancy many pleasant trips to points of new historic interest; he had no doubt of his ability to run this machine. To the successful mess sergeant "there are no Alps." He remarked complacently that it was less fatiguing than a horse and more docile than a mule. Just to show how well he understood that motorcycle, he gave a little demonstration in front of the mess hall, and demonstrated its speed and power, but not its docility. The motorcycle turned towards the mess hall and before he could apply the coaster brake it had torn through the

building from front to rear, overthrown the mess counter, apple sauce, tomatoes, cooks, K. P.'s, pots and pans, and plunged into the open before he could bring it to a halt. This hearty machine was not injured, neither was Osterberg. He laid it on the greensward gently, and said slowly, "Well,—it is a blamed good motorcycle all right, and I'd enjoy riding it, but on the whole I think I will give it to Lieutenant Roberts. He is used to handling mules and he will get more pleasure out of it than I will."

On November 2 a detail under Sergeants Dolan and Haan were ordered to report to a detachment of Company E at Mont Faucon to haul rock on the roads in that vicinity. We offer the following interview given by one of the men on this detail: "We set out from Mont Faucon with fifty-eight head of stock and wagons and thirty-eight men—they were about the nicest men in the company—brave and fearless, and led by two of the best sergeants. The first day we didn't get there; we stopped for the night across the road from another detachment of E Company and bummed a supper off them. Everything was barbed wire entanglements, shell holes and trenches there, and we hadn't any time to improve a camp site. We flattened down the barbed wire as well as we could, put up our pup tents, and laid our blankets over it—it was nice and springy, and would have made a pretty fair mattress if it wasn't for the barbs. We tethered the horses to the wagons. There was a good deal of shelling that night and the horses got restless; one of them broke his tie rope and stepped off into a shell hole. Mace tried to pull him out but the first time the rope broke—the next time he tried the horse's neck broke. Mace is a damn sight stronger than a body'd take him to be. Then a truck came along in our direction with its lights burning and the Germans rolled shells right after it, them shelter halfs looked 'most-awful-damn-thin.' We were right alongside the road and we wondered if the shells would get us too. We didn't sleep much that night; between the shells and the horses raising hell all around us, it wasn't very restful." Our informant modestly withholds his name; he says, "I ain't much of a literary man but I can skin mules with any ——, ——, ——, in the whole wagon train. You can use them facts if they are any good to you, but it would be more modest to leave my name out."

We will respect our unassuming friend's wishes.

They were attached to the 815th pioneer infantry for rations, but the fifth division had a large ration dump near this detachment which diminished rapidly while they were there.

Three days before the armistice was signed, the premature rumor that it had been signed was disseminated in their camp by a drunken soldier who shouted, "Get—up—you S O B. Peace—has—been—signed." Haan was the only one awakened. Engagements were taking place in our immediate front almost to the time of the armistice. Every day German prisoners marched through Avacourt to the rear and they seemed so glad to have been captured, we saw that the end was near. When it came on the 11th of November, there was far less excitement over it in the army than there was at home. We thought less of the victory than of the American lives that were saved. We experienced a great feeling of relief and at the same time there was a breaking of the high tension under which we had lived for many days.

With the signing of the armistice there was a certain relaxation of the entire army. We gave way somewhat to a great and natural weariness. Men and officers had been under an extreme strain and had worked on their nerves; now hardships were promptly recognized. Mud, rain and cold were realities; the thought of home was dominating; when the army papers told us to keep on playing the game and officers dinned the same advice in our ears as if we were contemplating a strike, we were distinctly bored and said with the captive Jew, "they that wasted us, required of us mirth." We are a well-informed army and politicians have not yet sequestered the fact that you can't kid the troops. Fully realizing the difficulties to be overcome has not diminished our desire to go home or our realization that we are in a strange land. Statesmen may enunciate well-sounding and well-intentioned principles, and represent us as subscribing to them, or legislate for us as if we were reservation Indians, but—we want to go home!—and we are not ashamed of our feelings. Our homes are the best in the world, the places for us to be and the best places for the republic to have us.

At Avacourt we lost Gaquin and Vermillion by accidental gunshot wounds and Liebernight and Sabis by illness. Sabis was an expert road maintenance man with previous experience under arms in the Russian army. He was industrious and obedient. Liebernight was rated a cook but he had demonstrated his efficiency in

everything pertaining to our work before he entered the kitchen. He possessed an excellent character and thorough education.

When we left Avacourt we felt that our most important work was done. The Argonne forest was a wonderful school in political economy. There we saw the old order changed and realized that government not in the interest of the governed is bound to perish, and that nothing that was false or selfish or insincere will survive in any government. The German army had begun to think independently; they were well fed and as well equipped as ourselves, but they had been repeatedly deceived and had found their rules out. At the expense of loss in men and ruined cities they could have continued a defensive war even as France had done for a long time, but the demoralization which had caused their Allies to seek peace had reached the German army. They had irretrievably lost confidence in their rulers and their national policy. There was no possibility of victory. Marshall Foch had coördinated his forces, and every movement was well planned and well executed. Every move the Germans could make had been considered and provided for. The Allies had gained an immense superiority in all the resources of war. The Germans must relinquish little by little their own territory, and see their cities destroyed like Rheims and Arras. They were defeated, but not routed; they had done their worse and failed; they had not degenerated into an unorganized rabble, but they fought without hope and wisely resolved to quit before they were annihilated.

The Argonne-Meuse victory was one of the great battles of history. It was a deadly terrain, perfectly adapted to defense, and so strongly fortified with machine guns and mines that the heaviest concentration of artillery was necessary to enable the infantry to advance without the certainty of annihilation. The supremacy the Allies acquired in artillery was a determining factor but too much praise cannot be given our infantry. The expression on their faces told us that they were prepared to die or be crippled and that they had willed to win. It was unnecessary to exhort such men to bravery. They were not actuated by love of glory, or rewards to be gained, or territory won, or at the moment, by the love of democratic institutions. But in them was a personal pride that could not bear failure or do less than was expected of them and deeper down, a love of freedom and the principles of government under

which they lived, which even stern military rule with its many injustices had not caused them to forget.

On the 15th of November the detail from Mont Faucon returned to the company and on the morning of the 16th we broke camp and marched to the Fort Tavernes six kilometers east of Verdun. We passed through the ancient gates of Verdun late in the afternoon and caught a too brief glimpse of some of the important objects of that hallowed city. As we were not a tourist organization we did not stay our march. Part of the company went beyond their objective and retracing their steps, we picketed our horses on an old battlefield and made our beds in dugouts, the former homes of the French soldiers. In the morning we found ourselves in one of the most desolate wastes ever wrought by the hand of man. There had been a town hall near one of our dugouts and apparently a good-sized community, but not one stone was left on another. Battle after battle had plowed over this site so effectually that every timber in it was reduced to pieces the size of one's hand.

Wagon 5 was soon comfortably settled and engaged in its usual work, hauling rock for road repair. For the first time in months we were near an inhabited town—Verdun—but we saw little of the city and very much of the battlefields about it. No building in Europe is as wonderful as this desolation. One would have been less isolated in the heart of the Argonne, and the isolation of the desert would be less gruesome. The bleached bones of long dead soldiers were exposed here and there and relics of Verdun's great battles were abundant for miles about. An obliging bootlegger visited our men and disposed of considerable quantities of light wines permitted by army order. He sold Sergeant Tournier (who is an abstainer) twenty francs worth of excellent cheese. By this investment the sergeant set the company a good example and nourished himself for the performance of his military duties.

We moved several companies of the 803rd pioneer infantry from where they were to where they were going, improved and beautified the Etain road, made our dugout abodes safe and comfortable for future generations and on November 27 "parteed'd" for Labry. The time spent about Verdun was instructively employed, we saw the battle-ground as most tourists will not see it. Our company street meandered through an impromptu grave yard, the kitchen rested on two graves, in fact mortuary mounds abounded in every

direction. The dead defenders of Verdun were likely glad to have us around; we were their brothers in arms and had lived to accomplish what they had given up their lives to do. They seemed to rest in peace, probably happy in the knowledge that the invader had ceased to desecrate France.

We made the trip to Labry in a day and a half, resting to some extent the first night at Olley. On the 28th we arrived at the Caserne de Geslin, Labry. This was Thanksgiving day, and we had a perfectly splendid barrack to be thankful for. This was the Caserne de Geslin, a French military post, but occupied with the surrounding country by the Germans for the previous four and a half years. We were surprised soldiers, yes, a two story brick building with mess halls, stables, blacksmith shop and one of the best parade grounds in France. An ideal spot to work and wait 'till the boys go home. We could not imagine better winter quarters—in France. Labry is one kilometer from Conflans and Jarney. During the latter part of the winter and early spring frequent entertainments were given for the soldiers at Conflans, and civilian life had nearly resumed its normal course in these three towns.

Our work here was hauling rock for the maintenance of the roads in the vicinity. Detachments were sent to Domcourt, Valleroy, Hatrize, Avril and Mars la Tour to haul rock from quarries and crushers near those towns. We also installed the electrical lighting system for the post, cleaned the barrack and stables of the accumulated German débris and put the pumping plant in good working order.

On January 7 the company and stock were equally divided. Lieutenant Killourhy was placed in command of half of them and took possession of the deserted village of Billy-sous-les-Cotes thirty-five kilometers from Labry.

CHAPTER XII

Social Recollections of Meurthe et Meuse

When we compare our first and second winters in the service, the winter just passed seems almost gay, so full of social happenings that we do not just know at which end to begin. To men without our training Labry and Billy might have seemed unpromising but we knew that social and civic improvements would follow in our train, and that the crude resources of contentment awaited our developing touch.

At the barracks we drew upon each other's social qualities: we had salvaged an excellent piano, we had a splendid reading and recreation room, abundance of current literature, even books, writing tables and games, a grafonola, boxing gloves, little Monte Carlos for those who cared to court Fortune, the best mess in the army, beds to sleep on, homemade to be sure but beds for all of that, humane rulers and work enough to keep down the carnality of our natures. We were an independent unit; the other companies could drill their fool heads off, stand reveille and retreat, but we were relieved of these miseries for many months.

There was only one dim cloud in our azure sky—we might be ordered somewhere else or Lieutenant Tabor might die or be made major and a captain be appointed in his stead. How we watched that lieutenant; the first symptom of a cough would throw us in a panic. Those were blessed days. Here, in primitive Souilly, where the regiment spent the winter, our thoughts turn to Labry as to one who has loved and lost. Putting the best face on Souilly and saying all one can say for it is not what the psalmist would call a "hum dinger." The 23rd is consistent, however; it is the nearest thing to Laurel that could be found in France; its possibilities for the production of mud are only exceeded by the Yazoo Delta. These leaky, wind-wrecked, tin shacks would have been well enough if we had not lived in Labry, but Labry can only happen but once and we must be reconciled to all the sorrow that our reunion with the regiment has in store for us. It is saddening to think that our

comrades do not know how to enjoy themselves. Some of our sister companies could not get any pleasure out of life on Rockefeller's income.

The conditions we have described were our natural assets. Let us proceed outside the Caserne walls and see what additional enjoyment we can find. When our gay cavalcade entered Labry, the people were famished and depressed; for four years and a half they had been slaves to the Germans. Today they are fat, prosperous and saucy. Wagon 5 has been a mother to them. Many a petite commerce is thriving, taking in more francs in an hour than their combined efforts earned in a month. Madam Gheil's place is right here on the left, a most respectable store and café, and here too, is Madam's sister, Matilda, the Belle of Chauvigny, kind to every one, and Fraser's particular friend, Monsieur Albert she calls him; she is very pretty and what is more important very good. The Wagon 5 men are welcome to the family apartments. Sergeant Tournier has visited their home and it bears the safe sanction of his approval. Many a little supper has been enjoyed here by the soldiers and that excellent sauterne at twelve francs, that cannot be equalled this side of Metz. A trifle dear, perhaps, but one must live.

Poor Madam Buerta was living very poorly when Wagon 5 came to town, but her maison has been the scene of many grand dinners, which even the officers did not scorn to attend. Haan discovered this place and interested the soldiers and now the Buertas are proud and prosperous. Alice and Pauline washed for the sergeants. These glistening warriors were frequent visitors at the home of these industrious girls. The Notrai family was a discovery of Tournier's, and the scene of several banquets. We would send a Frenchman to Metz for the materials, and an humble of the company would assist Madam Notrai in preparing the dinner. They selected the homeliest man in Wagon 5 as chef because they were very sweet on Mlle. Marie Louise and Jennie and this person was the only woman hater in the group. We would send a French runner to Metz and obtain chickens, duck, and once a fat goose, solids, fresh fish, vegetables and—other things. Frog legs and mushrooms sometimes adorned the menu.

Our dinners were the wonder of the neighboring units, those birds lacked the imagination to start anything but they were often guests

at our affairs. Some mention of the Maison Desperviller is proper. A small group assembled there every evening. M. Desperviller is a well-educated man, and speaks some English; the boys liked to talk with him. Mlle. Simone is an accomplished musician and Madam "trés agréable." Blackie Carr discovered this family. There is a merry widow in Jarney in the millinery business; she is also a friend of M. Albert.

Shanks, Wright, Piper, Thomas and Grennan were admitted to the elite circles of Valleroy. Cotter, Holohean and Van Oflen enjoyed particular popularity in the same region. Rusch, Tex Wilson and Monson won all the smiles in Puxe. Rusch, M. L. Smith, and Knapp spent a week at Domcourt. There was only one pretty girl in Domcourt, and she was vigilantly chaperoned by a lynx-eyed old French lady, yet she contrived to fall in love with all three of these men. For the first time in France, Knapp forgot "Katy."

Fox, Walters, Hoover, Racker, Alpers and Hughbaert were best known in the Mars la Tour—Croitoumont section; Mars la Tour is a rather important town. Every once in a while in history a couple of nations fought a great battle at Mars la Tour. Racker and Fox were the "Ward-McAlisters" of the place; the presence of the Wagon 5 contingent was necessary to make any social affair a success.

Avril deserves more space than we can accord it. The first detachment sent to Avril was under Sergeant Carr; it was another Labry—the scene of several dinners. Some of us occupied the former quarters of a German general and lived in a state of happiness that princes seldom attain.

With the coming of spring, we organized a ball team. Caine was manager, Thomas was catcher, Lindem and Hart pitchers, Wright first base, Curran short, Tupper third base, Shanks left, Johnson center, Paul and Mills right field and Knight second base. We played the Bakers' Company, the third P. I., the 21st Engineers and Truck 1 and Company B of the 23rd Engineers, winning six games and losing two. This was becoming one of the greatest ball teams in France. They "were climbing up the golden stairs to glory," when we moved to Souilly. One of the important events of the early spring was a boxing contest and smoker held at Labry. The principals were all from the company, Company Headquarters challenging the Billy detachment. The first bout Williams of

Billy lost to Koehler of Headquarters. Mills of Billy won the second affair over Wilder. Gleason of Billy got the decision from Shaffer of the Headquarters. Knight won from Scott of Billy. Johnson of Billy won the decision from Hicks of Headquarters. The fight deciding the championship of Headquarters was between Private Stensland, the terrible Swede, and Private Ira Manderson Dorcy Smith, the Indiana Hoosier. Stensland won. Private W. A. Thompson, the Greek wrestler of Billy, issued a challenge to any one at 135 pounds but no one accepted. Headquarters also forfeited the indoor ball game. It was a pleasant evening.

BILLY-SOUS-LES-COTES

The detachment under Lieutenant Killourhy could say like Cæsar, "We found Billy woods and left it marble." The situation of this community is extremely picturesque. As its name indicates, it is sheltered by a range of hills, a branch of the Maratime Vosges. On either side is a broad champaign of rich agricultural land. Prior to the German occupation, Billy had been a very prosperous commercial center with many dependent rural communities about it. A celebrated Crème Fromage de la Billy-sous-les-Cotes, and the equally excellent Vin de Raisin Noir were celebrated all over France. But Billy had been in German hands for four years. The finer maisons and historic chateau were in ruins, the public buildings destroyed or seriously damaged. The mairie and other town buildings had not escaped the vandal's hand. The church was destroyed. The Germans fired the town when the advance of our troops forced them to evacuate. It was here that Lieutenant Killourhy was to find quarters for half a company and seventy head of stock. In order to secure homes through the inclement season, commensurate with Wagon 5's high standing the men of this command devoted their leisure hours to civic reconstruction, remodeling and repairing the ruined houses that had been assigned to them as quarters.

By the most laborious effort the appearance of this town was vastly altered for the better, quantities of débris were removed. Mason work and carpentry was undertaken. They made of these destroyed homes comfortable residences. There were men in this command representing nearly all of the building trades. Carpenters, plumbers, tinners, glaziers, these with the help of their able-

bodied comrades gradually installed conveniences that Billy had never heard of in its palmy days.

When this detachment came to Billy, the only inhabitants were owls and bats. There was nothing there for carniverous animals to subsist on but after the town had been made and had become inhabitable through the efforts of our soldiers, the civilians returned. A prison camp for German prisoners of war was established nearby, and numerous French soldiers added their blue to our brown. But the Wagon 5 men were the only American soldiers in the community.

The road work through a wide scope of country, traversed by important highways, was largely dependent on the exertions of this part of Wagon 5 for the transportation of the road material. Our teams hauled from a crusher operated by German prisoners in charge of the 28th Engineers at Hattonchattel. They also drew rock to be loaded on cars at St. Maurice, the loaders being furnished by the 28th Engineers. Company C of this regiment operated the train. This detachment extended its operations over a constantly increasing territory, in response to the urgent demand for road maintenance by sending details to communities at every point of the compass. A detail was stationed at Essey under Sergeant Worsham, one at Creue under Corporal Burns, another at Hattonchattel going out of Billy and another operated at Vigneulle. This detachment of Wagon Co. 5 met the strenuous demands upon it promptly and energetically. The men lived under exceptional conditions, and the atmosphere of the camp was one of contentment and satisfaction. This company also cleansed and sanitated the towns of Billy, Hannonville, Thillot, Hattonchattel, Creue, Vigneulle and the P. W. E. camp at Hattonchattel, rendering them safe and fit to that extent for civilian habitancy. We transported the barbed wire and other obstructions removed from the fields by the German prisoners to the dump at Vigneulle. Not only Billy, but many nearby towns and in fact the whole countryside was renovated and in a large measure restored to the population.

The social life of our men at Billy was as active as the remainder of the company at Labry. Lieutenant Killourhy allowed his men as much liberty as military regulations permitted, and assisted them in procuring all the rational entertainment that was obtainable. Entertainments were given several nights a week at St. Maurice. Lieutenant Black of Truck Co. 2 kindly afforded our men

MESS SERGEANT AND STAFF

MAJOR BOLES AND STAFF

transportation. The fraternal spirit of this officer, and the numberless courtesies he extended to this detachment are appreciated by them and by the entire company.

An unusual attraction of the highest character was afforded us by the frequent band concerts and vaudeville shows given by the 803rd pioneer infantry. This regiment had one of the best military bands in France, pushed Sousa right off the boards, as it were. The vaudeville troop of this regiment was talented and well trained. These entertainments were given in a theatre formerly used by the Germans. Of course there was a ball team. It was by no means a bush league, under the competent direction of the lieutenant who had been a prominent participant in collegian sporting events in the states; they were naturally posted. Our boys had a private bowling alley imported to Billy from Germany for the amusement of the German officers. Many an enjoyable hour was spent in this bowling alley.

The 28th Engineers courteously extended us the use of their bath house at St. Maurice. But Corporal Paul with the other men, Hamer, Burkman, Forst and Mace, soon constructed a very serviceable bathing house using odd pipes and sprinklers for the showers.

Many agreeable associations were formed between the French families and the soldiers, the population were refined and moral in character, and our men had become endeared to them by their labors in behalf of the community and their honorable conduct. W. A. Thompson, a cosmopolitan person, mentally and socially enriched by the social and intellectual culture of two continents, was vastly popular; his society was assiduously cultivated by the French and the entire company was proud of the esteem in which this honest and worthy man was held.

An occasion of great importance to the whole regiment was the horse show at Souilly. Wagon 5 made several entries in competition with other companies and won the following events, best saddle horse, officers' quarter-mile race, and chariot race, and second on four ups and two ups. The chariot race was the star feature of the show. The chariots were constructed on the front trucks of our dump wagons. Wagon 4 had an artistic equipage resembling Ben Hur's ensemble and a wonderfully robed charioteer made up like Ben himself. Wagon 5 had hastily prepared a contrivance arranged the night previous to the race at Billy, and quite guiltless of adorn-

ing. Frank E. Burke drove it and Burke's handsome face and form would attract attention in any gathering. He is the descendant of a long ancestry of handsome men and beautiful women. In his veins flows the blood of the gallant Fitzpatricks, the noble O'Shaughnessys, the cultured Bradys, who ruled the ever faithful Isle when England was a forest inhabited by savages. Burke required no long white robe. Decorations could add nothing to what he already possessed. He set forth from Billy like a crusader, amid the cheers and the tears of his French sweethearts, resolved to win or perish. He had every confidence in himself, his cause, and his two fleet mules, Cyclone and Tornado. As he caracoled and curvetted to the track he seemed unconscious of the sensation his appearance was creating. The officers welcomed him with a cheer, fair ladies waved their kerchiefs and threw him kisses. He gravely drove to the mark.

The signal was given. They were off! He allowed less experienced drivers to pass him. Whipping and yelling at their steeds, they attained a mad burst of speed, while Burke drove on with the haughty silence of an ancient Roman. Half the course was completed and Burke's chariot was still the last. A shade of gloom settled on the faces of his friends. Could it be possible that Burke could fail them? Had he waited too long? The ladies wrung their hands in vexation; some covered their eyes to exclude the sight of his defeat. But no! Burke sees an opening in the confused line! He is alert, intense! In a ringing, resonant voice he shouts, "Go!" His whip marks the flanks of his mules! They bound through the opening! Again, the leathern thongs sing through the air! "On —On!" Burke cries, "Kill me if you will, but do not fail me!" They hear their master's voice, and respond with all the devotion of their loving natures. Wagon 4 is passed! But so is the third post! They are on home stretch! The other drivers are cursing their steeds and lashing them like maniacs! Burke slackens his hold on the lines and again cries, "On—On!" The excitement in the grand stand is intense! Several ladies sink fainting to the platform! The regimental band in careless excitement crowd on the track! Burke has passed everything but Wagon 2! They are a hundred yards from the goal! Burke shouts in tones that ring from hill to hill, "On—on, my gallant mules, faster—faster!" He plunges through the band! Scatters drums, cornets and cymbals before

him! They are even! No, Burke is ahead! He is increasing his lead! Wagon 2, you are lost! You cannot overtake him now! He goes under the wire fifty feet ahead. The strain was too much for Burke's ardent nature. He falls slowly to the bottom of the chariot gasping, "Did I win?" "You won!" shout ten thousand spectators. Strong hands helped him to the ground, and sweet faces bend over his. Someone moistens his lips with a little rum, and Burke revives.

Burke is also the author of a mess song sung throughout the A. E. F. to the air of "Don't Bite the Hand That's Feeding You":

MESS SONG

If you don't like the cooks in the kitchen,
And if you don't like the mess sergeant, too,
Then don't pick on the food that you are getting
Because it's Uncle Sam that's feeding you.

The last happy meeting of the company which we have space to describe was a return boxing match and banquet at Billy. The advantage of the last contest rested with Billy and Headquarters met them with a determination to regain the laurels they had so narrowly lost. The return bout between Williams of Billy and Koehler of Labry was forfeited to Koehler. Hart of Labry, formerly with fighting A Company, won the second bout from Mills. The next engagement between Paul of Billy and Cotter of Labry went to Paul. Greenan of Labry won from Gleason of Billy. The last spectacle was a wrestling match between W. A. Thompson of Billy and Charles Thomas of Labry. Thompson won.

The refreshments and music were excellent, and the evening will be long remembered as one of the most congenial spent by our company while in France.

On the 16th of April, the company was reunited by the return of Lieutenant Killourhy and his detachment. At the termination of Lieutenant Killourhy's work in Billy, the mayor inspected the quarters lately occupied by our men and addressed a personal letter to the lieutenant, thanking him for the physical help and moral inspiration his detachment had given the community. He stated that they were the best body of American troops with which he had come in contact. He embodied these and other graceful expressions in his report to the prefect of the district.

CHAPTER XIII

Uneasy Days

The 21st of April, 1919, brought the end of our perfect day. We moved to Souilly, where the wagon trains and fourth battalion concentrated to proceed to an embarkation area. Probabilities are misleading in the army, but we assumed not unreasonably, that we would soon be aboard ship.

We began here to return to our "second childhood," from a military standpoint. It was like the beginning of our soldier life, when we were preparing to proceed to France. Orders were issued and countermanded, we watched the departure of Europe bound troops and speculated upon the number of the A. E. F. We were anxious to go and eagerly awaited our summons. The nightly checking up of overseas equipment, physical inspections, increased drilling and reviews were cheerfully regarded as the final preparation for our departure. Above all we lived in a world of rumor. Every man was a disseminator of "Latrine News." The current greeting was, "Have you heard when we are going to sail?" or "Did you hear anything today?" If a soldier was orderly at Headquarters, captain's orderly, worked in the company office, was on speaking terms with the man who swept out the office, or had been standing near the seats of the "mighty," his importance augmented. He was surrounded by fellow soldiers, detail sergeants, who hungrily drank in his erroneous conclusion. We were so anxious to embark for France that when the seeming certainties of yesterday were proven canards the new rumors were as ardently accepted. Our hopes found expression in song, "Where Do We Go from Here?" and an enlisted man's composition, "They say we're going over the ocean, they say we're going over the sea, they say we're going over the ocean, but it all sounds like ——— to me" were sung in our idle moments.

A year has passed, and we are again in "Dreamland." We were as anxious to return home as we had been to reach France. We learned to drill again, inspections became frequent, a mania for reviews began to afflict the higher officers. The sweet hope that our

poor mortal eyes would yet see General Pershing in his beauty was frequently proffered us. Yes, it was quite possible that the commander-in-chief of the A. E. F. would review us, and perchance address a few gracious words to the "President's Favorite Regiment." "But tho' we bask beneath their smiles, their charms failed to blind us." The army high command still sang the same old song, but it was to "blesse ennui'ed" men. We were wise; the old business of coaxing us with a piece of candy was "all off." From thenceforth until "hell freezes over" our confidence in military promises was deeply qualified. A recruiting sergeant's veracity was rated by us as nearly equal to that of Ananias. We ceased to draw conclusions from War Department statements, or the promise of statesmen. Hopes held out to us by general orders did not pass current until we actually realized on them.

We did not want our homeward progress delayed by any exhibitions or antics; no matter how exalted a man's station, we did not care to pause to meet him. If we had an eminent well-wisher the kindest act in his power would be to send us home, or raise our pay, and in either case "can" the conversation. Once, like Lo, the poor Indian, we would have rejoiced in baubles and decorations, in complimentary mention in general orders. Now, we were ready to release the government from all claims if we were deposited on the other side and given our discharge.

Hope springs eternal, we remain always children controlled by the things we desire. With no thought of praise to be gained we shouldered our heavy packs, drilled and drilled some more, furbished our rifles and bayonets and did all that we were ordered to do, so that they would let us go home. We no longer sang about our debt to France, "Good-by Broadway" had vanished from our repertoire; we recited, "Darling I'm going back, silver threads among the black" and we became rumor hunters once more. Six months had passed since the armistice was signed; we willingly conceded unavoidable delay, we believed the government was wrestling gallantly with transportation problems, that the hearts of all in authority over us were full of kind intentions, and that their minds were strained to the danger point by their enforced attempts to do many things at once. We realized the magnitude of their task, and limitations of human capacity but this did not modify our desire to go home, or our consciousness that we were wasting time and money.

Again we enviously watched other units depart—for America, we turned to the sailing lists whenever we snatched a paper. To be the "President's Own" is a grand and glorious feeling, but the love we inspired seemed to be a "Love that would not let us go." We thought with Burns: "Had we never loved so kindly, had we never loved so blindly, never met or never parted, we had not been broken-hearted."

Among the many earsful we received at Souilly was an order to proceed to a port of embarkation as soon as possible. Six minutes and thirty seconds later Sergeant Knight had packed all his belongings and put up a regulation pack; he was ready to go. This order was revoked and we were informed that our next move was to Le Mans to await the concentration of the regiment. Stygian Gloom! This solar plexus to our hopes was followed by a brain dazing uppercut, a rumor that the truck companies would not be released from work for several weeks. Knight hung his pack on a nail and stopped whistling. "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." Everyone was irritable and every military duty distasteful. Hopeful letters were followed by despondent ones. We advised our families to look for us in the ensuing autumn, some imbecile fathered the report that we were going to Luxemburg; little discourtesies and affronts were magnified. We salvaged our wagons at Souhesme la Grande, conveyed Wagon 3's vehicles to the same place, and cussed about it.

The way of the company transgressor was hard; patience and Christian charity had nearly evaporated at Souilly. The officers were as humanly anxious to see home as ourselves and as irritable as the rest of us. A near lieutenant from another organization scored the 23rd in his introductory remarks at a Y entertainment. The 23rd left the building, and were with difficulty induced to return. We derived some comfort from the reflection that the lot of Wagon 5 was better than that of most about us. No one was riding us; our officers did not add to our burden or use us as stepping stones to advancement.

While at Souilly, the company pictures and several group photographs were taken. The following promotions were made: Wagoners Grennan and Alexander and First Class Private Hamilton to corporal; First Class Private Cotter, Hough and Frank to wagoner; and John and L. G. Schneider, Gleeson and W. L. Thompson, to first class private. Lieutenant Killourhy became athletic officer

succeeding Captain Primley. Lieutenant Killourhy, realizing the men's need of recreation, placed an athletic schedule on the map. Probably more consecutive athletic events took place during our brief stay in Souilly than had occurred in the entire regiment during the preceding three months. Some athletic contest was featured daily; perhaps the most interesting game played was a 15 inning encounter between Wagon Train Headquarters, considered the crack team of the organization, and Wagon Co. 5. This was a draw game. Wagon 5's line up was as follows: Paul, catcher; Lindem, pitcher; Knight, first base; Wright, second base; Tupper, third base; Hart, short; Mills, right field; Johnson, center; Shanks, third base, with Caine as manager of the team. The features of the game from a Wagon 5 standpoint were the pitching and fielding. Lindem's pitching was consistently brilliant; the fielders' work the most phenomenal exhibition of the kind as yet seen in the A. E. F. Impossible balls were captured by skyward vaults. Rapid grounders picked up in wheat fields, water melon beds and potato patches, by a variety of handsprings, lunges and muscular contortions which have yet to be equalled in baseball circles. Wagon 5 played Wagon Co. 3 winning by a score of 7 to 3. The work of Lindem, Knight and Paul was excellent.

The lesser domestic animals of France rather take naturally to Wagon 5. We came to Souilly with two dogs. One had attached himself to Company Headquarters at Labry, the other was a scion of a proud canine family at Billy-sous-les-Cotes; these animals were named Rags and Fanny. They soon became acquainted with the Souilly dogs, and invited one to dinner. His name was Henri Nevarre, and Henri appreciated our cooking. Roast beef, gravy and potatoes had not entered into his scheme of life, and the misfortunes of war had separated him from omelettes and tasty French trifles for several years. He attached himself to our company for rations. Unity of domestic interest is one of the many admirable French traits. Henri had numerous relations and with characteristic French expansiveness he invited them to dine with his friends the Americans. They came in large numbers; dogs of old families in whose veins flowed some of the noblest blood in France; Montmorencies, Armagnacs, De Larries, and Bonapartes, noble but impoverished, like our sister republic in general, these alert animals felt that America owed her existence to France and they proceeded to collect, and invite

the neighbors. Soon we had enough canine allies to compete in every class at the Madison Square dog show. With war-sharpened perception they would distinguish our mess call and fall in line; a mastiff nearly the size of a yearling calf seemed to act as top sergeant. They were arranged according to height, tailing off with a tiny Pekinese, who was number four dog in the fourth squad.

Fanny was a social success at Souilly, lavishly hospitable, "Her house was home to all the vagrant train." She was if anything too popular; long after "taps" her admirers would continue their serenade and choruses, the rich baritone of the top sergeant and the little corporal's mellow tenor were very distinguishable.

We accumulated a few cats, one of these became the proud and happy mother of six beautiful turquoise kittens. As this was her first confinement the company was very anxious. Sergeant Nevius was detailed to take charge of the case, and when the labor became unnaturally prolonged he called in sanitary men Burge, Bouder, Meisel, and Williams and at the request of the family called in Fred Orland of Company K sanitary squad as a consulting authority in obstetrics. The cat's name was Louise DeVallerie. Louise's prompt recovery and the excellent health of her offsprings reflect great credit on Sergeant Nevius and his colleagues.

We were regretfully obliged to leave our menagerie behind us, and we parted with none so sadly as with "Camouflage." The day after Lieutenant Killourhy's detachment was stationed at Billy-sous-les-Cotes, the lieutenant and Sergeant Dolan and Corporal Spencer went on a salvaging expedition to an abandoned hospital camp nine kilometers distant from their new quarters. They recovered a quantity of tools, a basketful of dishes, ramrods and other supplies and four cats. The *felius domestica* or common cat clings to home—two of the cats returned at once to their former abode, another was taken sick of indigestion and committed to the care of John R. Legg. Legg was instructed to convey the animal to a French village in his side car—he may have done so but the next day the cat came back. She was then placed in a gunny sack and invalided to Regimental Headquarters at Souilly, and her name removed from the morning report. Only Camouflage remained. Camouflage was named by Lieutenant Killourhy. She would have been an excellent mascot for the "Rainbow Division," her color scheme embodied all the prismatic hues. She soon proved worthy

of her new "parrains," and though a female, she seemed to understand the army game. She attached herself to Headquarters and became part of the commanding officer's staff. Unlike most office functionaries, she was useful, clean, and attentive to business. Within an hour she had captured a mouse, and soon became a battalion of death to the rodents infesting the office. Cammie soon "comprong'ed Anglais," made her wants known, violated none of the laws of neatness and won the esteem of the entire command.

The company cat became popular in Billy; several civilian families offered to provide her with a home at the company's departure, but Spencer belligerently objected to separating the company from their cat and Cammie moved with the detachment to Labry, where she was assigned quarters in the officers' room and partook of their mess. To err is human. Cammie proved her soldier qualities by going on a spree, even to the extent of being A. W. O. L. After breakfasting one morning, she left Headquarters as if impelled by urgent business. She was gone two days and two nights, and returned, accompanied to the door by a friend of the "Thomas" persuasion. She ate her breakfast, climbed into her basket without a comment, and slept omnivorously the entire day, leaving again at night and returning the following morning accompanied by her gentleman friend. They parted at the gate and Cammie was herself again, and went out no more. There is a good deal of human nature in cats.

Sunday, May 11, our last permissionaires went on pass, nearly everyone in the company had taken seven day leaves, or had the opportunity to do so. In addition several men had visited Paris on three day passes, and four of our company had voyaged to England. The leave areas, and the leave system were greatly appreciated by the A. E. F. The system was a splendid success; our first leave men went to Aix-les-Bains, a mountain resort, later the majority of the company were sent on leave to Nice, Mentone and Monaco. The work of the welfare association, not always efficient at the front, was seen at its best at these recreation areas. The journey to and from the camp to the rest center was long and tedious, but the freedom from unnatural restraint, and the too short return to nearly normal living conditions was worth much to the men.

The entire plan is a credit to its promulgators. The army is

characterized by class privilege. The officers are protected by exceptions and immunities, even the sergeants are exempted from any of the hardships which fall to the men in the ranks, and the measure which made the plain "buck" a Riviera tourist at the nation's expense seemed to us a graceful recognition of the principle that the regular military man and his innumerable imitators seem bent on evading, that is, that the officers in the A. E. F. are in command of an army, who previous to the war enjoyed positions and possibilities equal to their own. An army, that when demobilized, will fully resume their former equality of relationship.

The desire of a few men unaccustomed to power to emphasize in various ways their transient supremacy and make their voluntary inferiors feel the full measure of their authority has been the one marring, discordant element in our army life. The flaunting of power or manifestation of tyranny is not an attribute of shoulder bars nor is it imparted to the system by the chevron on the sleeve. It is just a mean, natural trait subject to correction by future generations.

C. A. Smith and Pinkie Daniels were our last voyagers to England, and both renewed long severed association with relatives and friends. The hardy mariner, Daniels, rather took his section of England by storm, he was the guest of his grandmother and uncle. On his way from the depot to their home, he met Lily, a pretty country girl and introduced himself gratuitously. "Fine weather," said Pinkie. "It is indeed," said the English girl. "But I don't know you, do I?" "Huh! That ain't nothing. You soon will. How about taking a little walk tomorrow afternoon." "Why—why—I don't know." "Sure, come on. We'll have lots of fun." They spent much time together, and it is possible that when Pinkie visits England again he may marry Lily in his offhand way. Pinkie's uncle is a prominent churchman. "I came home late Saturday night. Sunday morning I felt rotten and wanted to sleep but uncle is the main guy in the Methodist Church and he says, 'Get ready for church, Howard.' There wasn't any way out of it, I had to go. On the way back uncle said, 'Howard, your cousin Cynthany is coming to see you at dinner, I have arranged for you to accompany her to church this afternoon.'" There was no help for poor Pinkie. He spent a rather mild afternoon with Cynthany. He was upheld by the expectation of an evening in Lily's society, wandering through English lanes in

the pale moonlight. He hastened to his tryst; Lily was there with the book of common prayer under her arm. She had arranged for them to attend the evening service of the Church of England. Pinkie's uncle wished to accompany them, but Pinkie's tortured spirit could stand no more. "No, no! Go to your own damn church! The Jane and I are going to the Church of England." Pinkie's summing up of that eventful Sunday was, "Yea, I went to church three times, that—damn Sunday, what do you know about that."

We had long since become the elite organization of the 23rd, and every individual strove to increase our advantages. Our mess, as usual, was all that could be expected, but Robbins looking over the rations one day, discovered what seemed to be "Wild Rope," thirty pounds to the issue. With a commendable desire to have something the other companies had not enjoyed Robbins began to pine audibly for "Wild Rope." He did not know how this article was prepared or what it tasted like but he believed that it might have been an ingredient in the "mystery slum" we ate in Camp Meade. Our mess has now passed out of existence; we dine at Troop Kitchen No. 15 at Brest, well but not too largely, still hoping that our curiosity regarding "Wild Rope," may be satisfied before we reach the other shore.

In the army the unexpected thing often happens, and on the afternoon of Sunday, May the 11th, we received orders to entrain for Le Mans the following morning. The long hoped for cars rolled in during the night. We had disposed of all of our engineering property at Souilly, and were no long time removing our other possessions to the train. Officers and men made this two day migration in box cars. Forty to forty-five men were crowded into a car. The floor was covered with our bed sacks, packs and rifles were hung from nails and wires, but these cars were infinitely superior to the French "40 hommes" in which we had journeyed at other times, better even than the French third class coaches.

We left Sergeant Haan and a detail to convoy our horses to St. Nazaire and turn them over to the proper authorities.

CHAPTER XIV

Wagon 5's March to the Sea

If the reader ever travels by box car by all means select the end of the car for a sleeping place. The advantage is protection from the draught and the reasonable probability that no one will "hoosier up" on your space.

We anticipated a very brief stay at Le Mans, a still shorter one at Brest. Something was doing at last. We began to estimate the time required to cross the pond, the time spent at the demobilization camp on the other side, how long it would take us to reach our home camps; we tried to remember the time tables from those places to our own cities and villages. Apparently only a few days stood between us and freedom from our bondage. Six months almost to a day from the signing of the armistice we departed for the coast. Every day of that half year spelled financial loss to all of us, and the loss of very dear associations. Since we joined the army babies have been born who have not yet seen their fathers, children have learned to walk and speak who only prattled baby talk when daddy went away, bigger boys and girls were striding to the dangerous period of adolescence while their natural protector was in France. Snap shots only show us how they have grown and now and then came a picture of a waiting wife or sweetheart. Owing to the delinquencies of the department paying out the allotments many of our families have suffered more than we.

Some had been aided by the Red Cross, by good hearted neighbors, and to the black, damning shame of whoever was responsible, some of our homes were saved from hunger by county charity. But we were at last homeward bound, prepared to make light of our past misfortunes. Delay we knew had been unavoidable, though no sophistical argument or arbitrary ruling had proved to us that we should properly remain in France while "one striper" went home before us, that we should continue to draw government pay and eat government rations when troops landed near armistice time had been promptly returned, and the great army in the cantonments at

home had been restored to their families. Any open questioning of these acts based only on the strangle hold of military power and bull-headed authority would have resulted in punishment. Fines would have reduced our small salaries and better men than the authors of these obnoxious measures would have found their way to the "hoosegow."

French railroad transportation moves in a mysterious way. We proceeded quite gradually to our destination by way of Commercy, Is-sur-Tille, Dijon, Nevers, Bourges, and Tours. Most of this was familiar ground; we had fried at Is-sur-Tille on our way to the front. From the vicinity of Decise to Nevers every foot of the road was as familiar to us as our own country highways. We recognized the houses along the roadside, remembered the spring under the arch near the bad hill by the Chateau le Banc, the old Count's home, Imphy and its munition factories. It was the scene of our early labor made interesting by many attractive social recollections. We had been at the front since August 26 and from that date we had seen little of civilization; it was heartening to view a pleasant settled country in which the only evidences of war was the presence of troops and the mourning costumes of the people. We were glad to see children playing, farming operations, life going on in the good old way, even though we saw it from the doors or iron-barred windows of a freight car. To our disappointment we came within sight of Nevers but did not pass through it; on the other hand we went over the "cut off" and Loire Bridge, one of the most noteworthy pieces of engineering operations of the 23rd Engineers. Taking into account the great difficulties under which they labored great credit is due the technical men for the permanence of their work, and the celerity with which it was completed.

The train stopped for a few moments at a small station near Nevers and Fraser got out to stretch himself—or something, and had not finished the process when the locomotive steamed away. He rejoined us a few days later and we presume that he did not have time to visit his many friends at Nevers. We paused at Bourges long enough to partake of coffee and sandwiches through the hospitality of the Red Cross, and exchange pleasantries with a few of the 450 pretty English girls employed in war work in that city.

We arrived at Le Mans Wednesday, May 14, very dirty and weary. The floor of a freight car is not a restful place. This trip was very

different from our journey from Brest to Nevers. For one thing our pay was overdue, for another it had been impressed on us that the misconduct of any individual might delay the departure of the company. We were extremely well behaved. Every station was a mile post homeward. Sergeant Reed and his invaluable map were in constant requisition: at every halt he would calculate by the scale the distance to the next town. So with Reed's good help in piloting the expedition and the assistance of the locomotive, we came to Le Mans. It is a great soldier city, the camp is about twelve miles in diameter. One might be in this camp for months with every waking hour actively employed without seeing the important civilian city of Le Mans. As a camp this embarkation area is very complete. Baths, commissaries, delouseries, welfare organization huts, a very well printed and very poorly edited semi-weekly and a soldier population of 50,000. Our feelings on detraining at this camp were such as a pious Christian may experience at the approach of death—strangulation and misery is the portal through which they must pass to the "land of pure delight where Saints Immortal reign."

We had entered "the valley and the shadow"; we must pass through Le Mans, Brest, an ocean voyage, and a demobilization camp with their deferred hopes, disappointments, never ending inspections, and formidable rattling of the scabbard of military channels and the ominous presence of the mailed fist before we could discard our O. D.'s and be free men again.

The unanimous wish of this army could be expressed in the word "Freedom." The invisible bars of their prison were stronger than steel. We hoped for a return to constitutional protection of citizenship, which was ours now only in name. A discharge from the military service of the United States seemed a greater bill of rights than the Magna Charter. With this in our hands we would be again under the protection of law, again able to protect ourselves, able to look a bully in the eye and tell him to go to hell. No boss would herd us about like a hard boiled non-com. The capitalist has fewer caste distinctions and privileges than the junker and we had seen that the irresponsible exercise of military authority had evolved a system prompt to avail itself of power, and shelter all but the rank and file from punishment and humiliation, that the military machine with its obsolete ideas would make junkers in time of all but the best

of men. The hitherto employee invested with military power becomes not a leader, but a ruler, too often convinced that the divine right to dominate other lives is not a fiction, for even the "top sergeant" can say like the centurion, "I say unto one 'Go,' and he goeth, and unto another 'Come' and he cometh; and to my servant, 'Do this' and he doeth it." Le Mans and Brest, again like death, "divide that Heavenly land from ours." As a camp much can be truthfully said in favor of Le Mans; the location is good and so are the sanitary conditions. Amusements of a high character, provided by the welfare organizations, are reasonably abundant. When not in formation one may go about camp without a blouse; this important little privilege was denied us at Souilly.

The unpleasantness of Le Mans consisted in the constant agitation, endless formations and inspections. Every spare moment was occupied in washing our equipment, cleaning mess kits, guns and bayonets, each dust storm or march across the sandy fields provided us with another opportunity to wash our belts. These things seem inconsequential in the telling but when they continue for days and a misplaced or lacking article might entail unpleasant penalties visited on us by some strange officer, every day is full of strain.

The paper work of the company must be in perfect condition or the company remains at Le Mans until it is. This is the place where it all comes out in the wash, lost vouchers, incomplete service records, any negligence or inaccuracy of antecedent occurrence is sure to be discovered and must be corrected. Officers, company clerks and supply sergeants set their house in order against the investigations at Le Mans. At this time when natural and proper requirements demanded all the energy of our office force, many new and unexpected additions were made to our work. For several nights Sergeant Knight remained at his desk without sleep. His days were spent playing on the typewriter; Hough faithfully assisted him, getting little repose and less praise. Harlow aided in the work and at last Knight emerged half dead with fatigue but with his work in such condition that our clearance papers were forthcoming.

Although Knight has done more work than the majority of our sergeants, and work of a confining nature, there are times when the company clerk's life seems like a grand sweet song, but at the end he is the goat, the "buck" is his natural heritage, the "top" could

pass it to the company clerk, the officers will hold him responsible, and if he delays the migrations of the company, one hundred and thirty-odd justly angry men will reveal his deficiencies to him. We are glad that this energetic young sergeant got by.

Hazelton never appeared to greater advantage than during our march to the sea. In easy-going days nothing predicates his capacity or suggests his real kindness and thoughtfulness. He had always been a liberal provider and popular with the company, but among ourselves, we had easy-going ways and were unexacting. At Le Mans it was necessary to provide each man with the smallest article of required equipment and divest us of our superfluities. Once issued to them, the responsibilities for these things passed from Hazelton. Many of our men were careless and he secured and replaced items again and again, ordinarily a bit quick-tempered, there, working without sleep, or regular meals, he was uniformly kind and indulgent. He put up with the childish actions of some of our boys, idle interrogations and frequent interruptions. He could have spared himself much work, he could have let others blunder their way out, he might have passed the buck a hundred times. Let it be recorded to the honor of his manhood that his temper was never as kind as in the bedlam at Le Mans. He did not pass the buck, but rather covered the carelessness of many of our members. The supply sergeants of other companies came to him for assistance which was cheerfully accorded. The horse detail under Sergeant Haan returned at the eleventh hour and Hazelton gave their needs the same calm, well-balanced attention. He would have been physically unable to have accomplished his task so long before our departure had it not been for the assistance of Robbins who worked with him and for us with an unselfish energy akin to his own.

When evening came, we felt like sleeping but our company ball team went forth one evening and smote Company K hip and thigh. The score was 4 to 3 in favor of Wagon 5.

On May 17 General Pershing, commander-in-chief of the American forces in France, inspected and reviewed the 23rd and other units in Le Mans. We spent most of the preceding day preparing for this event. A Bulletin from some high officer forecasted the questions he would probably ask us, and suggested an introduction to our reply.

Preparations for this review were added to our other nightmares

LIEUTENANT KILLOURHY CHARLIE CHAPLIN MARTIN LYNCH

BOBBY

and it was an even more trying session to our officers; if we fell down, they would be bawled out personally by the commander-in-chief. Had we not been so busy and fatigued, we would have been glad to see General Pershing, not as participants in the review but as spectators. As it was, the sight of General Pershing, or even a handshake from the President, would not have induced us of our own volition to remain in France an hour longer, and this without disrespect to either of those worthy gentlemen.

The general was to review us at 9.00 A. M. We were under arms at 8, and in our position on the reviewing field at about 8.30 A. M. Nine o'clock came but Pershing did not appear. We continued to stand in the blazing sun until 10. No symptom of a commander-in-chief; perhaps 30,000 troops were getting sunburned waiting for him. Eleven o'clock found the sweat pouring from us. The Aerial squadrons near us unburdened by "Springfields" began several covert "crap" games. At last, across the hollow square, we saw some commotion and General Pershing and staff appeared. Although he was accompanied by a major-general, a brigadier, colonels and other officers, the most interesting figure in the group was a nine-year-old American boy in ordinary school clothes.

History will determine John J. Pershing's merit as a general, but we are not in a position to gauge his ability correctly. We do not know what his part has been in planning the battles in which we have participated; we do not know that he has been responsible for our unreasonably long wait in France, or the preference junior organizations have had over us in returning to the United States; nor are we sure that he is responsible for any of the measures which have been carried out for the improvement of our comfort or physical well-being. We did not know Pershing as the armies of Sherman and Lee knew their generals. It seemed to us that his few pronouncements bearing on our life in France took account of us only as soldiers, and that the comfort and contentment of the army were, with him, infinitely secondary to the full and efficient performance of our duties, but this viewpoint may be incorrect. The general is a busy man and he may have done many things for us of which we are not aware, but the fact remains, we knew scarcely anything about him.

We were favorably impressed by his great energy. He did not pose or falter; his work at this review may have been needless and unimportant, but, such as it was, he did it very efficiently; he did not

pose or idle away any time. He went through the ranks like a shot out of a gun, yet he missed nothing. His remarks to the company commanders were severe or complimentary as conditions warranted but wholly impersonal and free of irritation.

The writer of this history was the first man in Wagon 5 to attract the general's attention. We have a graceful sylphlike form, splendidly adapted to a hammock; we can drape ourselves artistically over a portion of the mess table or twine ourselves about a Springfield as the ivy clasps the oak. We were aware that none of our habitual postures were adapted to the reviewing field, so we stood like a celebrated portrait of a British grenadier; it was a position Pershing had never dreamed of apparently, he said, "Lieutenant, this man sticks out too much." Max P. Wind was recognized by General Pershing as a man of fine military bearing; "probably an old soldier." He recalled seeing Holohean and others at work on the road over which he had passed and spoke of them in pleasant terms.

The general ascertained our venereal record from Lieutenant Tabor. He was greatly pleased, and stated that it was the best of any company he had inspected. This was a splendid compliment to the self-restraint, continence and moral qualities of Wagon Co. 5, and will be a source of great satisfaction and pride to the families of our men.

It is said that after his graduation from West Point, General Pershing intended to enter law and business. He impressed us as an excellent and energetic business man, somewhat limited in breadth of vision and knowledge of conditions outside of the army by a life time spent in the military service. He is certainly no shirker or slacker; he may attach undue importance to superfluous formalities, but according to his light and training and the demands of his position, he is a faithful public servant. With Foch at the helm as commander of the Allied armies, a good business man was probably more useful to the A. E. F. than a brilliant and original general. We believe that Pershing has done all that he was capable of doing, and measured by old time standards, he is to be respected for his singleness of purpose and his fidelity as a worker. We have heard nothing that would lead us to believe him to be other than a clean-living man and honorable in his public and private life. He has been too long in the regular army thoroughly to understand

the men who compose the army he commands. He believes that it is an honor to wear the uniform and that almost everything else should be taken as a matter of course. He would quickly see the advantage of better ammunition and artillery, the necessity for sufficient rations for men and mules, good clothes and boots; he will deal out justice according to the court-martial methods of the army, and that is about all. Naturally conservative, the product of a system, no great reforms or innovations will be fathered by him.

After the review our colors were decorated for the major battles of St. Mihiel and the Argonne-Meuse. Then the general addressed us. He has a good voice, but as a speaker he lacks the vocabulary of the educated man, and enunciates little that is original or impressive; on the other hand there was nothing foolish or fantastic in his remarks. He stated that it was a large undertaking to inspect two million men, that he had done so in order to see that the army was properly provided for and had attained the highest possible efficiency. He reviewed the American successes from Cantigny to the last battles of the war, and touched with considerable patriotic feeling on the high personal and military qualities of the A. E. F. He spoke of the splendid health record of the troops, their excellent behavior in action and among the French. "We had made many sacrifices but one could not give so much without receiving in return." Our appreciation of America and American institutions would be greatly increased by our service in France; we would return with a higher conception of our responsibilities as citizens and a stronger fraternal bond would unite us to the other nations of the earth. He thanked us for our efforts and expressed his pride at having been called to the command of this great army. Then Lieutenant Tabor led us out of the stampede and we ate a late and not very abundant dinner with splendid appetites.

Lieut. Harry F. June was introduced to our company at Le Mans. This young officer came over with the first battalion as a private, going at once with Company C to the American sector of the front, where he remained from February 23 to November 11, working his way by promotion to sergeant and first sergeant. He had been through all the difficulties that beset a new soldier's life; he had lived as we had lived, played as we had played, and had an even ampler experience of the front and combatant operations. The lieutenant actively participated in the two culminating battles

in which the 23rd figured, the St. Mihiel and Argonne-Meuse drives; but besides these he had many other engagements to his credit, including the Seichprey defensive, the first engagement of the American troops in their own sector and the Xivray defensive. Many months before we reached the front Lieutenant June had become acclimated to one of the most peppery sectors of the battle zone. The Americans were on the defensive, overwhelmingly outnumbered at first by the Germans. Raids, night attacks, patrol engagements of the bloodiest description were every day hinderances to his engineering work, in addition to the shell and bomb fire. In the major operations, the casualties per engagement are usually much smaller in proportion to the number involved than in such desperate hand-to-hand encounters between smaller bodies of troops. Trench raids by German grenadiers, additionally armed with Bavarian daggers, occurred almost nightly, followed whenever possible by counter-attacks in which the Americans relied more on quickness and courage than on numbers. The remarkably excellent engineering work of C Company under these very difficult conditions, "carried on" without rest and often in advance of the infantry for a period of eight months, is largely due to the courage and ability of Lieutenant June. We liked him at once and saw that success was in his case richly deserved. We were glad to find on further acquaintance that the gods were good enough to send us a man who would fully sustain one of Wagon 5's most cherished traditions.

We had so far been fortunate in having officers thoroughly devoted to the welfare and interests of the men; the best accord had always prevailed between our leaders and ourselves. They seemed to be satisfied with their company, and as we contrasted our situation with that of men in other organizations, we blessed our lucky stars for the square treatment we had received. We found that our new officer was imbued with the same feeling and possessed the qualities of a natural leader of men.

Major Shirley Baker held a personal and equipment inspection of our company and at its close congratulated Lieutenant Killourhy, who accompanied him, on the fine appearance and complete equipment of his men. Wagon 5 had not been long out of the wilderness, but we had adapted ourselves to the straightened conditions of garrison life with the same facility that we had displayed in main-

taining efficiency and securing comfort in the devastated districts. Major Baker's inspection was followed by an inspection of a camp inspector general. This infantry officer scrutinized our effects very searchingly. We passed an excellent inspection and were rather proud of ourselves that day. The commanding officer of a nearby company was vastly excited and strode up and down his line like a miniature war god, storming at his men until they did not know whether they were in the body or out of it. Lieutenant Tabor with full trust in our previous training and preparation moved quietly among us, blandly putting us right here and there, and met the inspector with a calm assurance which was justified by the result. Few men have managed the trying and minute inspections of Le Mans and Brest with less fuss and fuming and better results than the officers of this company.

On May 20 we entrained for Brest at 4.00 P. M. We were much more crowded than on our trip to Le Mans. We did not unroll our packs, most of us lacked the room to recline at full length and sat on the floor of the box car refreshed by an occasional "cat nap" until morning. Our meals en route were served in marmite's, placed on the train at different cooking stations. The marmite resembles a very large ice-cream freezer in appearance and is constructed on the principle of the vacuum bottle. We were served from these containers very fair army stew and coffee which, with bread and jam, made a good traveling ration, a great advance on the iron rations usually issued to the troops in transit. We reached Brest on the morning of the 21st, very tired but in a condition which was a model to the other units on that train. We ate an early dinner at the stevedore's mess near the Brest docks, recalling similar good feeds at the same place while working on loading and unloading details at Brest thirteen months previously.

CHAPTER XV

Waiting at the Port

We marched through the rain over the road to the Pontanezen Barracks, thus exploding the fond theory that like some fortunate troops, we might proceed at once from the train to the transport. We were sustained by the prevailing rumor that we would embark on the 22nd; we hated to leave the shores of the Atlantic for the hinterland of Brest. We cast many a backward glance at the ships in port and sought pleadingly for information relative to our embarkation. We plodded on undismayed by the rain except for its effect on our guns and bayonets. The Pontanezen camp had overwhelmed its own boundaries, and met us more than half way. A natural mud hole, Congressional investigation in the early months of the year had for once wrought a beneficial change. Duck boards and good roads had transformed it and so far as the physical conditions, cleanliness, drainage, etc., are concerned, we can suggest no improvement. We were assigned ample quarters in the tent area block No. 271, Area 15. Our new homes were the usual squad tents with board floors and spring cots. The first real beds we had rested in since we left Camp Glen Burnie in the month of March, 1918. An aged joke in the A. E. F. describes the demobilized soldier, standing at his dining table, and either placing the bedding on the floor when he retires or crawling into the dog kennel because it resembles the old "pup tent." We recognize the utility of our beds and obtained an almost forgotten quietude of repose. As at Le Mans we dined in large troop kitchens; our kitchen was number 15, the food served was well cooked and of fair quality but insufficient in quantity, apparently much below the army regulations.

The examinations and inspections at this camp are even more exacting than those at Le Mans. The camp discipline is peculiar. The military authorities in this area seem to have been allowed unlimited discretion as to the embarkation of troops and regulations regarding them in camp. Units are forwarded, regardless of the date on which they reached Brest and complied with the embarka-

tion regulations; others, like ourselves are retained here after the inspections and sanitary measures have been fully complied with, and after the lapse of five days are obliged to go through the same process again. We see in this camp the final and offensive flickering up of the flame of authority. And the obstinacy and unreasonableness of almost irresponsible power. We often hear something similiar to the judicial warning, "Anything you say will be used against you." Units are cautioned that the misconduct of an individual or open expressions of dissatisfaction might arrest the homeward progress of the whole. At every turn the camp government asserts and insists on the absolutism of its authority. A second lieutenant or even a sergeant major of the truly royal family in charge of this camp could make the colonel of the 23rd dance the hornpipe, should he care to amuse himself in that manner. A desire to create a favorable impression concerning this camp with the soldier and the American public is evinced in many ways, but the regular military man's obtuseness and unfamiliarity with his own public and with public opinion leads them to go about it with a characteristic awkwardness, and introduce some gratuitous irritation which acts on the soldier as a grain of sand does on the surface of the eye. They have been needlessly offensive to many officers and have made this really excellent camp very unpopular with the troops by their experimental ways of handling men and the seemingly purposeful disregard they show to the wishes and opinion of the officers and troops sent to this area. Readers of Dickens will recall Mrs. Pipchin's system of conducting her boarding school for children, which was to give the child whatever it did not want.

On May 24 several hundred men were demanded for detail work from this regiment. The order begins, "In order to prevent evasion of work, the following system of checking will be used—." An elaborate method of checking the efforts of each man follows: "Upon the completion of the day's work, the third copy will be forwarded to the transportation and labor officer (via camp detail officer), bearing a statement as to the efficiency of the detail (excellent—good—fair—poor) and any other pertinent remarks." By command of Major General Holmick, A. W. Holderness, Lieutenant Colonel, general staff, transportation and labor officer.

The bulk of our men dug drains and made other improvements in the negro area, while the negroes engaged in crap games and other

diversions, and enjoyed themselves watching the white highway engineers sweat. Another detail from our company prepared a volley ball court for the eighth infantry, the camp M. P.'s.

It is asserted that the two humorists, who devised this little program and continued to employ large details from our own other companies of the 23rd in humble capacities, have hit on this happy method as a test of morale and temper. It may occur to one of these ingenious birds to stick pins in some of us with the view of ascertaining the sweetness of our disposition. In another order for a detail they asked this company to send one of our mechanics to Kitchen 15. Supposing that some important work was to be done the most expert mechanic in the company was detailed, but on reaching the kitchen he was equipped with a large rag and ordered to wipe the mess tables, and he spent the day mopping up great drops of gravy. Wagon 5 was game and earned an "excellent" mark for its docility and industry. We often think of the legendary townsman made to dance by the revolver fire of some half-drunken desperado. It is said that the regular army wished to secure the passage of a conscription act and the establishment of a large standing army; if so, it is a mistake to play these little pranks on the troops and add venom to their last days in the service. There are surely better things for intelligent minds to find, and broad-minded men would not contemptuously emphasize at the last moment a temporary and artificial relationship.

A mistrust of our governmental methods has been engendered in this army which will lead, perhaps, to changes and improvements. When the formal inquiry was made of this company for the names of those desiring government aid in securing employment no one responded, not because all were sure of work but because we had little faith in the expeditious transactions of business through military channels. Cases of allotments deducted but unpaid for periods varying from four to thirteen months, and other instances of departmental inefficiency have sapped our faith in departmental procedure.

Huge sums are collected from the people at home through loans and taxes. Allotments, insurance premiums and fines are readily deducted from our pay. With us efficiency is made compulsory, with the departments at home, it should be; but resentment has followed the officials who have tried to befriend the soldier in the administra-

tion of his income and protection of his person, and those who have sought a public cleansing for their Augean stables have been forced from their positions.

The bureaucrats of every war have justified the weakness of their methods and their general incompetence by victories which were won in spite of them. A place holder is apt to worship the God of things as they are. We feel that the existing system, had it been possible to apply it to all our operations, would have resulted in failure. There are no regular soldiers better than ours, but we have not seen that that regular soldier conducted himself better in battle than the late civilian. As large a proportion of regular army officers were sent to the rear for inefficiency at the front as officers in the reserve. The very core of our success on this side of the ocean was the accumulation and distribution of supplies and engineering work. The reserve officers and men were more competent to carry on both on the large scale demanded by our vast needs than officers and men of the regular establishment.

Guardsmen and volunteers have always been the victims of the Regular Army's narrow-minded criticism. Given equal opportunities, it is probable that the volunteer general is as efficient as the regular. War has become increasingly a business affair and a matter of mathematical calculation and where these elements apply the well-trained reserve officers do not work at any comparative disadvantage; they are frequently men of more personal initiative for the regular army officer is sure of his job, the civilian must make good.

Political appointments or promotions are always disastrous, they proved so in the Civil and Spanish Wars, and have sometimes bestowed commissions and good salaries on men unworthy of them in this war. Our system of selecting officers leaves much to be desired. As a whole the enlisted man in the regulars is doubtless better cared for physically than the enlisted man in the volunteers. He has the advantage of well-defined duties, the privileges allowed him are hallowed by custom, and his officers are trained to regard such of his needs as the military regulations recognize. Sure of gradual promotion, they are seldom tempted to drive the enlisted man in order to rise through his efforts. The heedlessness of many officers as to the welfare of their command has been keenly felt by the men, but the regular army officer has seldom suggested any improvement in pay

or privileges for the troops. They have, as a rule, resisted innovations of any sort.

The public should never forget that the materials of war were mobilized, our merchant marine was built, and the war itself was won by civilians.

Our last "Permissionaires," Jones, C. Wilson, Benoit, Legg and D. M. Williams rejoined the company at Brest. Legg returned on the 25th of May, the others on the 26th. They were absent sixteen days and had nearly as many adventures as Sinbad, the sailor. They went from Souilly to Nice and after spending eight days and their money very pleasantly on the shores of the Mediterranean, they started to rejoin their company, not knowing that we were no longer at Souilly. They went as far as Dijon on an American special and continued to Bar-le-Duc on French locals, expresses and freights. They visited the A. P. M. and found that they had traveled from the extreme south of France to the north needlessly, where he informed them that Wagon 5 had moved. The A. P. M. wired the adjutant at Commercy, who ordered them to General Headquarters at Chaumont. Until this time the boys had enjoyed the hospitality of the Red Cross. At G. H. Q. they were ordered to report to their organization at Le Mans and if the company had left Le Mans, to follow. Here they were issued the regular "iron traveling rations" and adjusted themselves gracefully to the change from sumptuous hotel life at Nice to "corned willie and hardtack."

At Le Mans they slept at the Red Cross and learned from the M. P.'s that we were at Brest. Legg did not remain with them; he jumped a freight and arriving at Brest he was issued a White truck with which to proceed to camp. The other boys did not tear away from the flesh pots and good cheer of the Red Cross until the following day. With them all our scattered faculties were reassembled. Stensland, Scott, Peel, Grimm, Marley and Fox concluded their studies at the American University and preceded us to Le Mans. Knapp and Rogers remained to join the university regiment and complete their course. Knapp was always enthusiastic about military life and naturally dislikes to leave the army. His fondness for drill and reviews will probably be gratified. If he does not join the marines or regulars, we hope to eat a thick sirloin steak with Knapp at Smith's restaurant. Rogers' decorative talent was soon recognized by his instructors. His originality and tech-

nique secured him every advantage and he naturally desired to remain and perfect himself through the study of advanced art and European commercial decorative methods for the high place he will undoubtedly attain in his profession.

Sergeant Ferguson with a detail had convoyed a select party of mules to a remount station in the department of Cher. His trained logical mind met all the objections and sur-rebuttals raised by the mules. His decisions were respected by the animals and his detail and by the appellate division in the company office. We submit that a man who can successfully care for a detail of soldiers and a carload of jackasses, should represent his district in Congress.

So far as we know Larson is still at St. Nazaire where, as an experienced rigger he has been engaged in harbor improvement work since we first came to France.

Lieutenant Killourhy was promoted to a first lieutenancy on May 3 and sworn in at Le Mans. By an arrangement very satisfactory to the company and the lieutenant, he continued with the company. Had Lieutenant Killourhy continued in the service, he would soon attained a captaincy and possibly higher honors. His promotion was due to the efficiency with which he had discharged the duties that had fallen to him in humbler capacities. As a private, master engineer, second lieutenant, he had more than fulfilled every expectation. Having proved his energy and ability to his superior officers, they followed the army fashion by designating him to perform many of their duties; he had for months assumed responsibilities as well as dangers, moral and physical, which are usually apportioned to men of greatly higher rank. The lieutenant's athletic work was undoubtedly a factor in winning the recognition and approval of his superiors. For several months before he became athletic officer, the lieutenant was called on to umpire many of the most important sporting events in the A. E. F. His services were frequently called for at Toul and other Headquarters. The lieutenant continued to arrange or umpire games until the very last days of our stay in France, sometimes putting on two events a day at Brest and remaining employed nearly all the night in attending to the affairs of the company. The importance of this athletic work will be realized when it is remembered that thousands of men were confined in limited areas, filled with discontent and desiring above everything else in the world to be sent home and be discharged from the military

service. These games were by no means a panacea, but they did for the time relieve the soldier's mind of unpleasant thoughts and substitute interest for irritation; all of the affairs in the lieutenant's charge were naturally and tactfully managed. It could not be said of him as of many of our "would be" entertainers, "They that wasted us required of us mirth." He seemed to enjoy every moment of his work. He accomplished all his undertakings promptly and smoothly with the maximum of efficiency and the minimum of friction. Perhaps no other officer is better known or more highly regarded among the officers and men of the regiment.

We were at Brest nearly ten days, days of intense weariness. The length of our stay obliged us to be repurified for embarkation. For the benefit of our grandchildren, a description of the delouser through which we passed may be of interest. The delouser is the most efficient army institution. You enter a building something like the waiting room at the depot. The world "silence" is displayed in several places. Long benches with backs and numbered compartment seats fill the room with the exception of the aisles. These compartments are numbered; you fall in in a column of twos, take your seats and "strip," hop nimbly to the tall benches and undergo a brief medical examination; again you fall in in a column of twos with nothing on but your "birthday clothes" and proceed through a large door. Your movements at all times are directed by officers and assistants with megaphones. In this apartment are a great many showers on either side of which are covered troughs filled with soft soap. You halt under a shower and an agreeably warm bath of something like kerosene emulsion is enjoyed. After anointing yourself liberally with soft soap, you are rinsed off, fall in line and pass through another door, going by a clothing counter from which you are handed socks and underclothes. A hasty "rubdown" was also part of the schedule. The line moved so rapidly that frequently a two hundred pounder received garments adapted to a man weighing a hundred and vice versa.

Here we learned to make another kind of "pack." There was no uniformity in the pack system, and every camp seemed to have a local variety. The Brest pack was perhaps the best of them all. The body of it consisted of two blankets and a shelter half, and under the haversack an O. D. shirt, drawers and undershirt, each tied compactly with horse hide laces, and three pairs of socks. At this

blessed spot we were presented with "ditty" bags. Marching to an examination building, we opened the top of our packs only and displayed to the admiring view of the inspecting officers, the articles of clothing mentioned and on a towel neatly laid in front of the pack, a comb, handsoap, shoe dubbing, mirror, razor, brush, shaving soap, tooth paste and toothbrush; on the other side, mess kit, knife, fork and spoon. These little soirées were not humorous, they were often preceded by several dress rehearsals. Inspecting officers were pretty numerous at Brest, probably, "Like the stars a shining overhead, because they'd nothing else to do." Woe unto the poor cuss who failed to display a box of shoe dubbing. This was the first time in our long stay in France that shoe dubbing had been issued us. We had marched through the mud and rain scores of times, and dubbing was unthought of. Now in the last days of the game, when we were to be displayed to reviewing generals and inspecting officers, appearances counted for much and we were furnished many little items which we had previously purchased with our own money.

At Brest we were amazed at one mess when a good sized lump of cheese was issued to us. We had read, in the official paper of the army, of the importation, as an army issue, of cheese and ham, but it had failed to connect with us. Millions of pounds of these excellent articles had apparently reached France but they had never formed part of our menu in the S. O. S. or at the front. Now we knew the reason why; they were waiting us at the port of embarkation. Our mess had purchased issue ham on two occasions but here at Brest a couple of wafers were issued to us without money and without price, also a lump of cheese.

On May 29 we were ordered to proceed to a certain dock on the 30th and embark on the *Cap Finistere*. This order was subsequently changed, postponing our departure until the 31st, but the gloom lifted; true, there was doubtless another fortnight of hell before us, a slow voyage on a crowded transport, more keel hauling and bully-ragging at a demobilization camp, but, the end was in sight and we could pretty accurately forecast the number of days between us and our emancipation. No ante-bellum negro was more interested in the approach of the rumored jubilee than was the A. E. F. in the dawn of personal liberty and the resumption of civilian life and privileges.

Some of us arose at 3.00 A. M. on the morning of the 31st and trans-

ported our company baggage and the baggage of two other companies who had neglected to send adequate details to the road. Later we policed up, rolled our packs, we hoped for almost the last time, and marched to the port of Brest by a somewhat long and circuitous route. After several long and tiresome waits we marched down the pier to the strains of a military band, which in compliment to the wagon train, played "The Old Grey Mare." The Red Cross girls gave each of us a pair of socks filled with cigarettes, tobacco and chocolate, and then we boarded the lighter *Knickerbocker* which conveyed us to the *Cap Finistere*, well out in the harbor.

CHAPTER XVI

On the Raging Deep

The *Cap Finistere* is a large Hamburg liner formerly in the South American trade. She was recently contributed to our transport service by the de facto German government, although a boat of respectable dimensions, 560 feet all over, 14,500 dead weight with seven decks. This little bark was launched in 1915 and had been out of commission since the beginning of the war. In her normal state the *Cap Finistere* had only a moderate passenger capacity and with her pleasant saloons, promenade deck and bathing pool, she was doubtless an agreeable home. As a troopship the *Cap Finistere* was scarcely as pleasant with crew and first class passengers. Our floating population was about 4,500; a small city full in very contracted quarters. The 23rd contingent consisted of the Wagon Train, Wagon Companies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 under the command of Major Bowles, two M. T. C. R. Units of about 1,500 men, a small fragment of the 81st division under command of Brigadier-General Moses. This person was also in command of all the troops on board the ship, many nurses, a few welfare workers and about sixty "war brides."

General Moses' adjutant is Lieutenant-Colonel Van Cise. We learned the few sweet syllables that compose it soon after coming aboard, "Shall we forget, ah, no! For memorie's golden chain will bind our hearts to those two birds, 'till we meet and touch again." We were assigned with Wagon 4 to berth space F 4 and F 5 on F deck. When we came to France on the *George Washington*, we thought that we were crowded; here we discovered that our thoughts were childish superstitions. On the *George Washington*, the berths were three tiers high; on the *Cap Finistere*, four. Every available inch of deck space was used for troop accommodation. There was not room in our quarters to swing a cat had anyone so desired. The promenade of B deck was shielded from the waves and wind by canvas curtains and filled with berths. The deck space unoccupied by sleeping accommodations and officers was densely populated. Hatch, wind-

lass and capstan, every roost and resting place, except the Olympian heights from which those in authority reviewed us when they were not walking the deck or reclining in their steamer chairs, was occupied by soldiers. Promenading was out of the question with us; when we sought to proceed from the deck to our quarters or vice-a-versa it required some moments to disentangle ourselves from the throng. Once or twice in the day, perhaps, one could obtain space enough to lie at full length on the deck. The next most coveted desideratum was a sitting place with something to lean against. Several backs supported every funnel and someone seized a vantage point astride each funnel; the sides of the life boats were back rests for a score of soldiers each. Even a two-inch brace or stay supported someone's shoulders. A thoughtful government provided all of us with overalls and jumpers and a guard to arrest us if we appeared without them. These fatigue clothes enabled us to sit on the deck without soiling our O. D.'s. Those whose sitting space was restricted folded their feet under them, "Turkish or tailor" fashion, and those who had no place to sit leaned on the bulwark and watched the deep blue ocean roll.

Our berths were an improvement on the accommodations we had had on the *George Washington;* they consisted of the regulation steel cot, sans legs, two ends of which were supported by chains, the other two ends fastened by iron stanchions. Our dining-room was on D deck. We remained in Brest harbor until nine o'clock Sunday morning, and steamed out in fair weather for New York harbor. The proper thing would have been to indulge in a sentimental look at France, but our longings and heart throbs were bent in another direction. Without prejudice toward France or the French, we had had nearly enough of both. When the barracks were cleared at Souilly preparatory to our departure for Le Mans, some one painted the following inscriptions on two of the buildings: "Good-by dear Souilly, we may go to hell, but we'll never come back to you." The other was, "We paid our debt to La Fayette, who in hell do we owe now?"

Fully recognizing the fact that the French nation is impoverished, burdened with excessive taxation and made famished and wolfish by war, we had seen everywhere a tendency to play the United States and individual Americans for all they could possibly extract. In national transactions, this grasping spirit was as marked in Eng-

land and our other Allies as in the French. It was a trait which does not auger well for future international partnership.

Our individual relations with the French when unconnected with commerce were generally very pleasant. We formed very agreeable friendships and naturally assumed that any financial advantage arising from our intercourse should go to the French. It is an undoubted fact that France has been largely supported by the freely spent pay of the A. E. F. It is asserted with apparent truth that for many months our army spent twenty million dollars a month of their pay in France.

The French are greatly our superiors in management and economy; they evade the high cost of living by doing without expensive luxuries and even what are ordinary stables. Our sister republic could exist on what America wastes. The beautiful forests of France are not decimated by the ax; the smallest twig is collected and forms part of the faggot. The "frog" is viewed with a speculative eye as soon as he emerges from the tadpole stage, and proceeds to the frying pan at an early age. Buttercups and daisies have a certain cash value; the "flowers that bloom in the spring, tra-la-la," are raved over with the Gallic enthusiasm, but it is not forgotten that they have a value in sous and centimes. Strange herbs appear in soups and salads, and the really excellent French cooking transforms many humble objects into a luring if not very satisfying food. The French are inordinately fond of bon bons and preserves, but they command their admiration and fondness when these articles are expensive. They are as careful of fuel as the Chinese. One never sees a furious fire on a French hearth or in a French cook stove; heat is applied scientifically to the fowl or soup in course of preparation and very moderately to the living and sleeping rooms. We will be compelled in time to adopt many of these habits, and could do so at once with profit to our pocketbooks.

The French have a wonderful aptitude for commerce. A very small capital is sufficient to establish a business that affords a livelihood for a family. Many of our soldiers, glorying in their oppulence and the resources of our country, would have been surprised to learn that three fourths of the entire population of France have bank accounts, that the per capita wealth of France is greater than our own. A Frenchman is scarcely driven by any stress or suffering to live up to his capital. Only the most serious emergency will induce him to

evade it. The people of wealth and fashion are neither lavish or wasteful; they know to a franc all of their detailed receipts and expenditures. The French of all classes have learned how to obtain the most tranquil pleasure from life at the least expense, how to present the best appearance at any insignificant outlay; they are excellent judges of human nature. They soon assimilated the important fact that the café with a pretty bar-maid would secure the majority of trade; if the services of the young lady are more expensive than those of less well-favored girls, the difference and more can be readily made by diluting the beer or selling an inferior wine. These bar-maids are often girls of considerable ability; they extend themselves rather further to hold trade than American customs would permit, yet they are often virtuous—in body—and their smiles and occasional caresses are matters of thoughtful calculation.

As a whole, the French make the so-called shrewd American seem as if his eye teeth were still uncut. It is said, and perhaps truly, that much of the exploitation of the French by our troops is due to our recklessness and vanity, and some of the seemingly poor French whom we grubstaked could have bought and sold their benefactors. A certain sergeant from Iowa found a poor and forlorn old woman living on a crust of bread and coffee furnished by the Red Cross. At his request several of us joined in nourishing this miserable home and placing opportunities to earn money in the old lady's way. A French friend of the writer who was aware of our little charity sometimes praised Madam Mills and at each perusal, he would hoist his eyebrows an inch or so and remarked that the "argent" that alighted in Madam Blank's pocket was seldom released. A few weeks later, the old lady opened a large café and épicerie, turned out to be a considerable landholder and several francs less destitute than her lacrimonious representations led us to believe. It is consoling to feel that the little we did was appreciated, that we will doubtless be remembered. The old girl's eyes doubtless twinkle now as she recalls our child-like ways.

We did not spend much time looking our last at France. To be sure it was the scene of our glory. We had participated in colossal events but we felt that our intercourse with all our Allies had been a little on the "jug handle" principle—somewhat one sided.

We cannot let France fade in the distance without alluding to her

receding coast. The red cow which was grazing on the shore when we entered the harbor fourteen months before was no longer there. She had probably been resolved into the "bif" steaks for American consumption; she must have realized her weight in silver. Otherwise the strand was much the same. There were several lighthouses scattered around at various points, and at the end of the mainland a lot of rocks jutting out into the ocean for several miles. In ancient times they probably kept goats or prisoners or something on these picturesque islands.

All in all, a farewell view of France is the most beautiful piece of scenery we have ever witnessed. The first two days out were not tempestuous so far as the ocean was concerned, but seasickness was very prevalent. Men would promptly deposit their dinners over the sides. This act is sometimes termed, "feeding the fishes." We had little to give them and that was not very nourishing. If it was not wicked, resistful and resentive to authority to mention it, we would bear record that no old-fashioned lime juicer of an English tramp freighter ever exceeded this ship on this voyage in poverty of diet. Not only this but the food was sometimes unfit for human consumption. We rather look forward to our second Sunday dinner. Hope springs eternal in Haan's breast; an hour before mess on Sunday, June 8, Haan said to the writer: "I hear we are going to have a sort of 'going to shore' dinner today; it is going to be pretty nice." Haan seldom deviates from the truth intentionally, but he had been grossly deceived. He comes from a rural section and some designing person had betrayed his unsuspicious confidence. The dinner started out well; they had intended to reach the high average of a Sunday dinner in a county jail or poor house. The bill of fare was pork, canned asparagus, bread and coffee. While we were in the mess line we noticed those who had preceded us were marching to the garbage can with their roast pork; it had a sort of an original odor. When we passed by the serving counter in the dining room, this fragrance was marked and easy to identify. We resolved to do without it and dined daintily on five stalks of asparagus and bread. One of the officers in the mess room had courage enough to take a mess kit full of roast pork to the officer in command of the troops.

A man from Wagon Co. 3 summed up the dinner very neatly. He gazed at the roast pork for a moment and remarked thought-

fully, "I've been most everything in the army, but I ain't going to be no—damn buzzard." It is alleged that the troop commander had stated on a previous occasion that the soldiers were eating too much and from that viewpoint our Sunday dinner may have been quite satisfactory. This man and his adjutant are still a puzzle to us. Now, at the end of the game, it is wisdom to send us away with a smile, but these officers seem to be an excellent argument against entrusting great power to all men. The conduct of the troops on this ship has been excellent. Crowded, hot and ill fed, we have been cheerful and uncomplaining because we are homeward bound. It may be that in this case, the officer in command is not directly responsible. Sometimes in military households, the tail wags the dog, that is—the adjutant is the real functioning power. But several orders emerging from these quarters lead us to believe that a complete concord and littleness exists between these men. General Moses, Lieutenant-Colonel Van Cise and Lieutenant-Colonel Lee are of the 81st division.

The troops are generally indignant at the treatment accorded a certain sentry. This man was wearing his cap at an incorrect angle. Lieutenant-Colonel ——— passing his post placed him in arrest and confined him for a time in the "hoosegow." A man would have admonished or at worst reprimanded him. We do not know the sentry—he may be a good man or a crook. We do know that he had committed no other offense on post. Assuming him to have been a good soldier with a clean record, the action of this narrow-minded officer was outrageously unjust. It would tend to smirch a record perhaps otherwise clear; if so the punishment dishonors not the man but the officer. Orders came to us from the troop commander's Headquarters to shave daily or incur severe disciplinary penalty and all the troops were ordered to secure a military haircut at once. Many of them were broke and unable to obtain credit. In this endeavor to make a showing at the last moment an order was issued on June 9 holding every company commander personally responsible for any man in his unit not freshly shaved or with a military haircut. There had been many months during our service in France, when, so far as the higher commands were concerned, the comfort and appearance of the troops was utterly neglected, but as our departure for the United States drew near these conditions were reversed and we became the objects of excessive

attention. We are not yet able to determine if this interest in our appearance, not our comfort or our real welfare, is intended to create a fallacious impression or to establish a reputation for these officers which they may not have been able to acquire in a more gallant way.

On this boat we were given a new formula for arranging our bedding and effects, and after we got the hang of this we passed excellent bunk inspection. Our quarters were in charge of Lieutenant McMasters of Wagon Co. 4, 23rd Engineers. Lieutenant McMasters is an excellent and energetic officer. In charge of a horse convoy at St. Nazaire, he extended to the Wagon 5 men the same care that he gave the detail from his own company; he secured passes for them, and advanced them money to purchase various needed articles. Lieutenants Killourhy and Tabor made every effort to better our condition, but they as well as ourselves were entirely disregarded by the general staff. However arbitrary the regulations under which we had lived at Le Mans, Brest and aboard, Wagon 5 "hit the ball" and complied with most of the *Cap Finistere* unreasonable rulings in a manner that compelled praise. We recognized the arrested mental development of some of these military martinets and believed that they lacked the practicability to collect fares on a trolley car. We saw that they were pursuing a system lately popular in the military circles of Prussia, but obsolete in most other armies.

With four hundred thousand court-martials to its credit, we have General Wood's opinion that seventy-five per cent of these were needless. A soldier in the M. T. C. R. Unit 302 stationed at Verneuil, France, near which place this company had a detail, was subject to a company order, ordering his unit to turn in their mess kits at the kitchen; he turned his in to his company first sergeant and obtained his receipt for the same, and fancied that he had complied sufficiently with the order. To his surprise, he was court-martialed; the only hearing he had was before a Captain Hubbard of the medical corps at which his statement was verified by his sergeant. The charge was, "Disobedience of orders." He was later informed that he was fined two thirds of three months' pay amounting to forty-four dollars. Such proceedings bring military law into disrepute and originate grave doubts as to the ability of many of our higher officers properly to command troops. This is the only mark on this

particular soldier's service record during a service of eighteen months.

When the government hushes up all inquiry and, as in the case of General Ansell, employs the strong arm method of reduction in rank, our confidence is shaken in the integrity of the government and in the existence of the straightforward honesty it publicly acclaims. The Captain Hubbard referred to above was promoted to major.

Among the interesting incidents of the voyage was the occasional appearance of whales sporting in the waters near the ship, and the occasional passing of a ship. During this long voyage we had an opportunity to realize the vastness of the ocean. On the third day out we had engine trouble and for twelve hours were obliged to proceed at the reduced speed of four knots. Continued engine trouble unduly protracted the trip. The French brides and their husbands were as interesting as the whales. From our place on the after deck we would gaze across the ship at "Love's Young Dream" and interestedly watch these couples lavish affection on each other. The contact of the troops with the sailors was at all times friendly. Chief Commander Steward Shea handled the soldiers at mess. He is a bright snappy young man and soon became a favorite with the soldiers. "Don't wait boys! Keep moving! Shake a leg! A little of the real old army pep!" were some of his expressions. As we write these lines we are a day's sail from New York, the engines are still reluctant and the ship after four years in a German harbor needs a thorough overhauling. Within two or three days Wagon Co. 5 will have passed from existence to history; we will be split up into little groups, sent to the cantonments nearest to our homes, and then discharged from the military service of the United States. The narrow space of days which intervenes between us and freedom seems longer than the months that have passed. We will leave the service and we hope to do more for the nation on our resumption into civil life than we were enabled to as soldiers of the Great War. We understand the theory and practice of government in which, at the time of our enlistment, we were the veriest "rookies." We appreciate as we never did before the great heartedness of the American people. True, much that they gave for us has been wasted or improperly applied, but this we know is no fault of theirs. We have successfully fought the foreign foe we were sent to fight, and we will continue to fight the foes of prosperity and public peace

which threaten the welfare of America at home. The foolish accusations brought by justly frightened place holders to uphold an antiquated order that has failed to make good are untrue. We do not recognize the right of unpractical idealists to continue to lead us and form our opinions. We cannot commit the lives and happiness of the people of our great republic to men unable to fulfill the trust. We join hands and spirits with the patriots at home who have flung their earnings into the national treasury, that victory might be assured, who have given to the administration all the faith, confidence and power that it demanded.

We are not sullen, resentful of control, or tainted with any of the modern political heresies. We returned the nation's defense against Bolshevism and Anarchism, and also against the idealistic fancies that place our national volition, our national interests and our lives in the hands of wilful sophists and dreamers, men who seek to seem but are not wiser than the first president who warned us to beware of entangling alliances. It is for the loyal people of the country and ourselves, whose patriotism is impervious to approach, to determine the course our country is to pursue. Our ears are deaf to the plea to make America an imperialistic nation. A militaristic class is no protection against real or fancy perils. We will have no "junkers" in the United States; we are fully aware of existing border conditions, of the menace in the Orient, and we are thoroughly for preparedness, but the war has not demonstrated to us that the power and resources, which the present army system demand to be placed at their disposal, may safely be given them. The capability and responsibility of the powers that be must be assured in some commission of the representatives of the people to whom the custodians of our lives and wealth and liberty and honor will be thoroughly accountable.

Exceptions "in extra territorial jurisdictions" must not be given again to a limited number of inexperienced men who disdain civilian intelligence and civilian control. We understand war and all its mysteries. Our stake in the country is equal to any others. We have learned to despise the selfish government of politicians whose aspirations do not rise above personal, political or party ends. We did not fight alone to defeat Germany, but that in the words of Abraham Lincoln, "Government by the people, of the people and for the people should not perish from the face of the earth." We

return unenriched by the war but with courageous hearts and strong hands. Confident as to our personal futures, and deeply impressed with the sacredness of our civic responsibility. Ours is a great country. Europe as an armed camp has not been a success. After decades of military competition and enormous taxation, she is in ruins and she has not learned the lessons of the war. Let us develop our own land. There are yet untilled expanses of the United States; let us continue to be the greatest of the world's producers, the storehouse and granary of the universe. Let our charity begin at home and continue while there is poverty or need of education, or homeless families or ill-paid employees.

Let us develop on the lines which have made America great and prosperous. To us at this moment, the great menace that threatens America is the introduction of the system we have overthrown in Europe, a lowering of the American man's standard of living, wasteful use of the public funds, a tax on our earnings which will not promote security, prosperity, or productiveness. In short, the Europeanizing of America, and the increase of unrepresentative power. Ours must be a democracy in fact as well as in name, in which the child of the poorest laborer may cherish the same ambitions and attain the same honorable distinction as the child of the millionaire. The rich man has marched beside the mechanic, he has eaten the same corned willie and hardtack, he has been bossed by the same sergeant. Sympathy and understanding exists where they did not before, the wash woman has given up her pennies to the Liberty Loan, the capitalist of his wealth, red-headed Terrance and nicely groomed Reginald have clambered through the entanglements of the Argonne and the mud of Flanders, against the machine gun hail of a common foe—and for the glory of their common country. "They drank from the same canteen." Terrance and Reginald have buried the class hatchet. They will not allow another class inferior to either of them to arise in our land.

We have unlimited confidence that success will continue with the men of Wagon 5. They will go to their several communities as missionaries of the stable civilization. We will part from each other with regret, but with the knowledge that our voices will unite while we live from east to west in the declaration of the great principles of Americanism.

Our officers, Lieutenants Tabor, Killourhy and June, have been

our friends as well. We take this opportunity of informing their families and acquaintances that they treated the boys "white," shared our pleasures and our hardships, fought for our interests, and were always ready to assist us when we needed their support or counsel. We are proud of them and we have reason to think that they hold the men of their command in high esteem. Ours has been an exceptionally favored company in the quality and manliness of its officers.

We here confide what remains of Wagon 5's history to the memory of its members and bring to a close this chronicle of army life. We have prepared this work under unusual conditions, where time was limited and dictionaries unavailable. At times we have worked all day and until ten, twelve and one o'clock at night in a noisy barrack. The last pages have been written in the hold of the *Cap Finistere* and we want to say that the air here is not very sprightly. We are conscious of the imperfections of this work, but if our production falls below Demosthenes or Cicero, don't view us with a critic's eye but pass our imperfections by. Spencer and I have our faults, we are erring creatures, "Prone to wander as the sparks are to fly upward," but we have written with "malice toward none and charity to all." We hope to meet in a better land (America). Let us close with the following petition:

"Our Father who art in Washington,
Baker be thy name.
Thy cables come, thy will be done,
In Le Mans as it is in Bordeaux.
Give us this day our long delayed pay,
And forgive the bugler, mess sergeant, Y. M. C. A.
And those who wear bars.
And lead us not into the Army of Occupation
But deliver us from another service stripe,
For thine is the army, the M. P., the Q. M. C.
And the Engineers, forever and ever. Amen."

Author unknown.

CHAPTER XVII

Essays and Songs and Additional Biographies of Wagon 5

The ensuing chansons, and proverbial expressions are contributed by the boys, usually unsigned.

C'est la Guerre

Mule
Sick.
Nevius
Quick!
Nevius
Came.
Mule
Same.
Gave
Pills.
Mule
Kills.
Mule
Dead.
All's
Said.
—Burge.

Psalm of Wagon Co. 5, 23rd

1. Wagon 5 is my company. I shall not want for work.

2. Lieutenants Tabor and Roberts maketh me do double time all the day long but they lead me not beside the cognac waters.

3. Sergeant Tournier restoreth my discomfort; he leadeth me in the paths to the stables for the sake of "Democracy."

4. Yea, though I walk through the valley of mud I fear no dampness, for Sergeant Hazelton hath issued me a pair of forty pound boots. Sergeant Knight, pencil and pen staff, they marketh me up for K. P.

5. Sergeant Osterberg preparest a table before me from sauerkraut salvaged from mine enemies. Sergeant Nevius anointest my mules with oil.

6. Surely these and other sergeants will not follow me all the days of my life but I shall receive my discharge and live in my Father's house forever.

—Burge.

The gifted writer of the above poems was in civil life a banker, in the army an excellent sanitary man.

"THINGS THAT NEVER HAPPEN"

1. Blackie Carr sleeping through an air raid.
2. Stensland getting up on time.
3. Sam Aultman talking with his hands in his pockets.
4. Abbie Alpers telling a small one.
5. A sunshiny day in February.
6. Hicks kissing a "frog."
7. Fraser laying down three aces.
8. Charles Wright talking over three words at once.
9. Monson with a goatee.
10. Sergeant McCarthy calling the roll correctly.
11. Sergeant Ferguson petting a rat.
12. Neilson without a pail of axel grease.
13. Hansen with white cheeks.
14. Chester Phillips missing "seconds."
15. Frank Wright with a grouch.
16. Thomas coming in late from work.
17. Maciejewski without any salvage articles.
18. Robins absolutely "broke."
19. Piper getting a pail of coal.

—Tupper.

THE CHARGE ON THE "HOLE IN THE WALL"

How well I remember the night we went over the top. Blackie Car bravely led the way, closely followed by Dick Morris, Thomas, Rusch, Miller and similar brave men. We charged the heights, leading to the hole in the wall; right through Champagne valley, we advanced, and after a fierce struggle took Fort Tripple Sec.

The enemy counter-attacked repeatedly, using cognac gas. We were equal to the occasion using our funnel masks. By 10.30 we cut the entanglements of Vermouth Cassis, and had gained Chartreuse with our front line facing Crême de Apricot. We paused long enough to send out a patrol, and learned that we were opposed by the rum. We then waited for the word, and our leader said, "Boys, we must take the hole in the wall. Don't give up until you have spent your last shot." The zero hour was 12 G. M. Our artillery opened up with a terrific barrage of francs. We met no opposition at Vin Blanc, but at Benedictine, on the river Citronelle, the struggle was fierce. General Pommard, with his troops, repulsed us with a violent attack of hand Grenedines. However, we rallied, and with the aid of our Mareschino guns, stormed the heights of Curescoa, and after much hand to hand fighting, sent the enemy retreating towards Chablis. Bringing up our large guns we started a barrage, with the hole in the wall the main target. Never will I forget that barrage. Every shot hit the hole. Never will there be another battle like this! We marched up to the stricken place and captured many prisoners, including Colonel Vin Sucre and Major Cherise Brandy. No doubt this will go down as one of the decisive battles of the war. —Tupper.

Corporal Tupper divides the honors with MacNabb as the company humorist. Tupper was our best and constant entertainer, the center of every group in which he stood. He is a descendant of the English poet of the same name, an excellent construction man, and endowed with an original humor that will ultimately be more largely given to the public by means of the platform and the press.

It is said, "Save your money for a rainy day." Then who in hell could get rich-in-France?

PRAYER OF A HORSE

Hard is my lot, for when I go on sick report, the Doc painteth my back with iodine, and giveth me many C. C. pills and marketh me "duty."

Lo, I work all day in the rain and mud, and cometh in hungry at night, and Sergeant Haan feedeth me—not. I am a horse.

FROM TUPPER TO ROBBINS

If ever I enlist again,
A barber, I will be.
Never out in the rain
And taking life so easily.

Always raking in the dough,
Both day time and night.
Never on details have to go
When not feeling exactly right.

Oh, how I envy this man,
Who is never out in the slop,
But I don't see how in the world he can
Keep from slipping when shaving the "top."

THE NEAR LIMERICKS ARE FROM THE SAME FACILE PEN

Graceful and tall
Feet not very small
Face sharp as a razor
Who? Speed Ball Fraser.

Mademoiselles and wine
Features very fine
Hair as black as tar
Who? Blackie Carr.

Good nature, always cheery,
Hercules of the company
Face always a pleasant sight
Who? Corporal Frank Wright.

FAMOUS SAYINGS

Oh! I knew you had it, but I had to see 'em.—Private Fraser.
I'll shoot a dime.—Wagoner Vosier.
What we need is efficiency.—Corporal Conant.
Don't you think I'd make a good top?—Wagoner Phipps.
Kitty.—Sergeant Cousino.

The phejanza got under the fake.—Private Joe Miller.
I'll get three of them, yet.—Corporal Rusch.
Sure, I am a union pipe fitter.—Private Alpers.
My widow in Nevers.—Wagoner Lynch.
So-o-o-o-o—Corporal Campbell.

"THINGS YOU NEVER SAW"

Alexander losing weight.
Alpers on the job.
Aultman with nothing to say.
Benoit not talking about home.
Bentley looking cheerful.
Buckley spreading the bull.
Carr Brothers writing a letter.
Chastain without a soup strainer.
Chavey without a frog.
Cotter knocking the Irish.
Cousino talking about the French.
Curran without a book.
Dempsey in a big hurry.
Forst up for reveille.
Fraser without cards.
Gauquin leaving Boston alone.
Haan or Campbell all alone.
Hamilton satisfied with one job.
Harlow with a visible mustache.
Hazelton rustling supplies.
Hughbaert speaking English.
Hauer doing his share.
Holohean up bright and early.
Johnson blowing a call right.
Knapp up at taps.
Knight without a big smile.
Legg without a debt.
Linden stealing forage.
Mace without a lame leg.
Maciejewski without souvenirs.
Marley spoiling leather.
Mills when he wasn't seeking favors.

Morris with a clean shave.
Meyers on hard work.
Neilson not on a salvaging tour.
Nevius caring for horses.
Peel spending his jack.
Prescott handshaking.
Reed all excited.
Robins giving a swift shave.
Roberts, Lieutenant, without the latest dope.
Rogers without his toys.
Schneider, J., satisfied and happy.
Smith, I. M., stripped for action.
Spencer without a smoke or two.
Stensland all cleaned up.
Tabor, Lieutenant, waiting for breakfast.
Thomas all alone in a corner.
Thompson, W. A., as a buck private.
Thompson, W. L., without a grouch.
Tupper with a new joke.
Vermillion with nothing but his own.
Waldrip smoking cigarettes.
Walters without a tune.
Williams not handshaking.
Williams, D. M., with his eyes wide open.
Wilson, Tex, unhappy.
Wright, C., having a noisy time.

CHAPTER XVIII

Officers of Wagon Co. 5

The Friend of Wagon 5

Major Maury Anderson is a graduate of the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee. He is a native of Virginia—born in Norfolk. His professional life has been spent in Virginia, Tennessee and West Virginia, and at the time of his enlistment he was practicing in West Virginia. Major Anderson received his commission as first lieutenant May 24, 1917, and was assigned to Ambulance Co. No. 313, at Camp Meade, September 24, 1917. Assigned to the 23rd Engineers January 6, 1918, he was commissioned captain April 13 and was with Wagon Companies 3 and 5 from April 26 to August 8 at Nevers, and again with Wagon 5 at Avacourt. He was commissioned major October 1, 1918.

When by ourselves we refer to Major Maury Anderson, always affectionately, as Major Andy. We have found no phrase that describes him as well as the expression, "He is a gentleman." Not a gentleman of any particular school or section, just all that a true gentleman should be. In the practice of his great profession at Camp Meade, he was different, somehow, from many of his colleagues. With his knowledge he combined great kindness and sympathy. At Meade and elsewhere every man in his care felt that this officer was interested in him. No officer in the service commanded more voluntary respect. He is held in the same high regard in the commissioned ranks of the army. Honor has come to him without seeking, respect without compulsion, and affection as the spontaneous reward of his interest in his fellow man. We feel that he belongs to Wagon 5, and we are proud to believe that the esteem in which we hold him is reciprocated.

Capt. Laughlin P. Morrison

Capt. Laughlin P. Morrison was born in 1869 in Houghton, Michigan. Graduated at Royal Military College, Kingston, Ontario,

as second lieutenant of artillery. After graduation he entered the service of the United States War Department as a civilian engineer. He was engaged in the following important engineering work: Improvement of St. Mary's River, the Soo locks, Buffalo Breakwater, Bay Ridge, Calumet, and New York harbor, Port Arkansas harbor, Texas. He entered active service October 1, 1917; joined the 23rd Engineers March 2, 1918, and was assigned to Wagon Co. 5; was commissioned captain of Engineers August 15, 1918. The captain continued with this company until October 20, 1918, when he entered the hospital, the victim of a gas attack. Captain Morrison left France February 12, 1919, and arrived in the United States February 22, 1919.

LIEUT. WILLIAM E. TABOR

First Lieut. William E. Tabor, after the completion of his education, was employed by the Southern Pacific R. R. of Mexico, supervising at the same time his extensive mining interests in Mexico. In 1912 he was connected with McArthur Bros. Co., in the construction of the Live Oak Canon Extension of the Arizona Eastern R. R. and grading the site for the Inspiration Copper Co. Plant at Miami, Arizona. In 1913–1914 he was connected with the firm of Chadwick and Deyo, contractors, at Tucson, Arizona, and employed in the construction of the Tucson Farms Project and the Burro Mountain Extension for the E. P. & S. W. R. R. from White Water to Tyrone, New Mexico. He was also superintendent of construction of —— and reservoir for the Arizona Copper Co., Morenci, Arizona. In 1915 the lieutenant was assistant superintendent for the contracting firm of McVeigh and Poupore, Great Falls, Montana, on Sun River, U. S. Reclamation Service. During 1916 he was building estimator for the G. C. & S. F. R. R., with headquarters at Galveston, Texas. He has also been assistant engineer for the New York Central R. R., employed in federal valuation work and superintendent of tunnel construction for the firm of McVeigh and Poupore on the I. C. R. R. tunnel at Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

Lieutenant Tabor received his military training at Camp Lee, Petersburg, Virginia. Upon the completion of the course he was commissioned second lieutenant August 15, 1917, and promoted to first lieutenant September 21, 1918.

CAPT. ARTHUR TAYLOR

Capt. Arthur Taylor, formerly first lieutenant of Wagon Co. 5, was born at Fort Washakie, Wyoming, January 23, 1888. He was graduated from Stamford University with the class of 1911.

Before entering this service Captain Taylor was chief engineer and superintendent of Imperial Water Company No. 3 at Calipatria, California. He was also engaged in general hydraulic engineering in Los Angeles and San Diego. In 1913 he was instructor in the San Diego High School. He joined the 23rd Engineers February 27, 1918, and was assigned to Wagon Co. 5, March 16, 1918. In the latter part of July Lieutenant Taylor returned to the United States to organize a sapper regiment and was promoted captain. The armistice prevented his return to France, greatly to his regret, and this able and devoted officer was mustered out of service.

LIEUT. JOSEPH H. KILLOURHY

Second Lieut. Joseph H. Killourhy was born December 31, 1876. The lieutenant resides in the city of Laconia, New Hampshire. He is the father of seven children who were minors at the time of his enlistment. Lieutenant Killourhy has been in the employ of the city of Laconia for the past twenty-one years as assistant superintendent in the offices of city engineer, street commissioner and superintendent of sewers. Lieutenant Killourhy is widely known throughout the New England states as an officiator of sports; for five consecutive seasons he was the official umpire at Dartmouth College at Hanover, New Hampshire, and for ten consecutive seasons he was the official referee at all basket-ball games at the New Hampshire State College at Durham, New Hampshire. The lieutenant has also handled many of the largest semi-professional baseball and basket-ball games in this section of New England.

He enlisted at Fort Slocum, New York, October 31, 1917, as a private; was promoted master engineer, senior grade, December 18, 1918, in the 3rd battalion of the 23rd Engineers. He was commissioned second lieutenant September 21, 1918, and assigned to Wagon 5 of the 23rd Engineers. Lieutenant Killourhy saw active service in the St. Mihiel and Argonne drives and was entrusted with some of the most important and dangerous of our engineering work in advance of the lines.

LIEUT. HARRY F. JUNE

Second Lieut. Harry F. June resides in Chicago, Illinois, and is thirty-three years of age. He graduated from the Chicago High School in 1905, and having qualified as an all-round athlete at inter-school contests, he accepted an opportunity to engage in professional athletics for a substantial consideration. He played semi-professional ball in Chicago through the seasons of 1906 and 1907. In 1908 he signed up with the Oshkosh, Wisconsin, State League; in 1909 he played for the Peoria 3 "I" League and the Pekin, Illinois, Missouri League, and in 1910 he was engaged by the Chillecothe, Ohio, and the Ohio State Leagues.

During these years Lieutenant June employed his spare time in the study of civil engineering and highway and street construction, obtaining at the same time practical experience through employment with several well-known firms between the baseball seasons. Having acquired a thorough, practical and theoretical knowledge of these branches of engineering he obtained a position in the paving department of the city of Chicago, and was later promoted to a responsible situation with the board of local improvements.

Lieutenant June enlisted as a private November 7, 1917, and was assigned to Company C, 23rd Engineers. He was warranted sergeant May 20, 1918. Graduated from the Engineer Candidates' School at Langres, France, December 28, 1918. He was made sergeant first class March 3, 1919, commissioned second lieutenant May 12, 1919, and assigned to Wagon Co. 5, 23rd Engineers. The lieutenant came to France with the first battalion of the 23rd and remained in the Toul Sector from February 23 to November the 11th.

He participated in the following engagements: The Seichprey defensive, which was the first engagement of our troops in their own sector, the Xivray defensive, the St. Mihiel drive and the Argonne-Meuse offensive. His construction work in C Company, both of camp sites and roads, was carried on under great difficulties, yet no better work of the kind can be shown by any unit in the organization. Lieutenant June's address is 5744 Race avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

2ND LIEUT. EDWARD P. ROBERTS

Lieutenant Roberts resides at Eldora, Iowa. He graduated as a veterinary surgeon from the Kansas City Veterinary College, class of 1910. Enlisted November 26, 1917, as a private, and was assigned to Wagon Co. 4; promoted to sergeant April, 1918, and was commissioned second lieutenant February 15, 1918, his commission reaching him on June 11, 1918. He was assigned to duty July 5 with Wagon Train Headquarters, 23rd Engineers, and attached to Wagon Co. 5. He was ordered to report to the Universities of Nancy and Toulouse in March, 1919. The lieutenant is married and thirty years of age.

CHAPTER XIX

Brief Biographies

Sergeant Worsham is a native son. The Golden State has contributed two sergeants and several thousand pounds of prunes to Wagon 5. Like many other patriotic men, Worsham had enjoyed the advantages of position and education, but like many similar men preferred to enlist instead of entering an officers training camp or using the undoubted influence of his family and friends to secure a commission. He is cheerful and expansive, and his contentment and enthusiasm did much to reconcile his comrades to their rough army novitiate. Worsham quickly demonstrated his capacity to direct the labor of his comrades, and was given a sergeant's warrant. His details have been free from friction. He has possessed in a large degree the friendship of the company, particularly of the men who worked under him and knew him best.

Sergeant Ferguson, like most of the army, is from the state of Montana, a mild, unopinionated man and we thought at first that his quiet matter of fact way would dissever him from the rough pastimes and amusements of the soldier life. But he has entered heartily in all our social enjoyments and proved as steadfast in hardship and danger as he had been quietly happy in normal army life. The sergeant has exercised a fine conciliatory influence among men and has done his full share in every dangerous and laborious work.

Burns has been our bard; his sweet tenor voice rendering the popular songs of America and the old classics made us homesick in Glen Burnie. In France he sang inspiringly. This was not all, he has always displayed the sturdy qualities of his English ancestors and has reflected the influence of his excellent home training.

Mills is the genius of eternal youth; it is doubtful if he will ever grow old. He is full of optimism, everything interests him. Time may increase his dimensions, but Mills will always be entertained and entertaining. He brings a smile to every face even when he

tries to interest you with his hopes and projects because he is young and happy.

Piper is quaint, shrewd and amusing, always cracking jokes with Tupper. But at work he is altogether different. He has never caused any unhappiness in the army and there is not a more competent all around man at our various kinds of work in the company.

It was Racker's ambition to join the signal corps. Like many quiet men he had absorbed a great deal of Nick Carter literature in his youth, hiding these periodicals under the mattress in the day time. Racker wanted to repair telephone lines under fire and plunge around with a field telephone among the entanglements and trenches, but fate cast his lot with ours and he has added highway engineering, in which he has become very proficient, to his original repertoire.

Scott is a young giant, with all the individuality that confident youth usually possesses. Scott has more judgment than the average young man. He makes good under responsibility and during his spare time he enjoys life in France with his friend Mills, and the ardor of those with whom life is young.

Terrell is a mature business man, and was of great assistance in our company offices until Regimental Headquarters wished him away from us. He participated in the pleasant social affairs of our more advanced social set and was endowed with two qualities without which a soldier is friendless—generosity and loyalty.

Fox is representing us at the American University. He is a representative young American and a real Engineer. What we had to learn Fox already knew and more. He did not parade this knowledge or seek for favors; just did his duty and took what came his way.

Shanks is another man good in any place you put him. He has never descended to the petty knocking which mars the harmony of company life; at the same time, like one of his sorrel team he can kick if it seems necessary. He has been valuable to the company in several capacities, in his able handling of very mean horses (one of them broke our pipe with his hind foot), in his ability to get along with all kinds of men and occasionally install unusual comforts through his skill as a mechanic.

Hansen is one of the "Soldiers Three," from Baker, Montana. They have made Baker the best known American city in Europe with the exception of New York and Chicago. Hansen is as patriotic and as full of local pride as either of the other two. He has a remarkable faculty for making friends and his straightforward, open disposition attaches them to him permanently. Such men have leavening influence which permeates the community or unit to which they belong with contentment and solidarity of interest. He is a natural organizer. The limitations of the service have not permitted him, and many thousands more, to render to the cause all that they are capable of accomplishing. But he has cheerfully and successfully achieved everything demanded of him. We can assure the family of which he will some day be the father, that in all the dangers Wagon 5 encountered, Hansen was one of the most courageous of our many brave men.

Harlow's ancestors guarded England behind the famous walls of oak; explored the new world with Hawkins, Drake and Frobisher. They drove the great *Armada* on the flushing sands, and the rock bound coast of Norway, and founded an empire in the woods of America. Harlow came near being a sea king, too, that is, an electrician on a man-of-war. He later determined to fight this war like his other ancestors who won Waterloo on land and the Peninsular victories and stood by Marlborough's side at Blenheim. So he joined Wagon 5. Harlow is a fine electrician and a fine man.

Lindblade is one of our giants, an aimable giant despite the fact that he was Frank Gotch's training partner. He takes a fall out of the boys occasionally, with holds and twists that seem to prove the hand quicker than the eye. In every capacity he has been one of our best and most trustworthy men.

Rusch battled his way up to two stripes on sheer merit. His acquaintance with petroleum mining has been very useful to the regiment. Rusch has been digging for oil on half of the highways of France and he says that France looks like a rich mineral country. He thinks there is gold somewhere in the hills—so far he has found nothing but calluses.

Burkman can turn his hand to anything; he has been "right guide," he can drill a platoon, he is a skilled mechanic, an experi-

enced tourist, he likes a good dinner and knows where to find it. Whatever a mule's original intentions are, it always leaves his shop —shod. If Burkman displays the same versatile ability at home, he will become rich and esteemed as he deserves to be.

Corp. Milton J. Carr is Blackie's older brother. He possesses all of Blackie's good qualities in a higher degree, and many others, which will only come to the younger man with added years. He was one of our best acting sergeants and has the distinction of being one of the few men in the A. E. F. who declined a recommendation for promotion. He has had long experience in the kind of engineering work we have been engaged in, and he has no superior in this company as a drill master. Carr never meddled in company politics. He is an honest man and attends strictly to business.

Chastain is the chairman of the Indiana delegation, as we have said elsewhere. They are all good men. He is also the *Nestor* of the company. When men of his age leave their homes to fight for freedom, the battle is won. He has probably done more hard work while in the army than the average well man at the age of twenty-five could accomplish in twice the length of time. If Chastain was real mad and unfurled his long arms in battle, we would rather be a spectator than a participant.

Muckey is another solid boy, one of the company's horseshoers. A large portion of our hard work has come his way, for other companies have borrowed him, and he has found little rest and recreation in France. He is one of our leading athletes. No one boxes with him unless he wants a vacation in the hospital.

Mechanic Granquist is a *real* mechanic, thoroughly trained in his trade. He is the same every day, no fault can be found with any work he turns out. Aside from his technical information, Granquist has forgotten more than three fourths of our "wise birds" know. If any one makes a fool of himself, Granquist only smiles, if some one "slings the bull," Granquist continues to smile. He is very obliging, and in his spare hours he has made souvenir boxes for us all, without distinction of rank.

Mechanic Howard is another experienced man. He has worked on large projects in the southwest. One of the unfortunate features of army life is that men of great ability generally have little opportu-

nity to show what they can do. We see business men able to handle the Q. M. depot digging ditches, and engineers who have reclaimed a desert running rollers, and very often working under some young bird who has never been fifty miles from his cross town village. Our work has been very simple for such an expert, and we are all conscious that he has large reserves of talent upon which the army has never drawn.

MacNabb is a natural executive and just as a little joke the army made him a cook; he is quite a joke in himself, and took this little pleasantry in good spirit. At that he has the right idea of frying steaks. He is the only man in the regiment able to fry a steak without making it taste like a newspaper. MacNab is better known in the company for his writings which appear frequently in our religious magazines, and his great influence for good on the wayward.

Little Alexander should never have been made a wagoner. When he is on the wagon it is useless to add anything more in the nature of a load. He is such a shining mark that had he joined the infantry he would have been killed in his first battle. He has had more narrow escapes than any man in the company; some part of him was always sticking out as he entered the dugout. For a man like Alexander the army is unsafe. France is too small and crowded for him, his motives are noble but we hope that Alexander will not join any more armies, that he will continue in the future to cultivate the broad plains of Dakota where he has room enough to turn around.

When he joined us Benoit was the child of the company. Now he is the despair of the supply sergeant. He grows like Jack's bean vine and bursts out of his O. D.'s every week. When he entered this wagon train, he could not tell a horse from a cow. He is now one of our best skinners, and can give some of our "wild westerners" points on handling a team.

Buckley comes from one of the best families of the west. A wagon train is unfortunately a narrow and confining field for one so exceptionally qualified. From his refinement and familiarity with social usages we saw at once that Buckley had mingled with standing and culture. In spite of his reticent manner he has been the "broncho buster" who has reduced our hard boiled untrampled horses to a condition of usefulness.

Christensen is a pleasant practical fellow; his merry blue eyes and blonde pompadour made a very agreeable impression on the French public. He is an excellent practical worker, quiet usually. At one time he had a brown horse; this horse could not see things as Christensen did, but after he recited a few Norwegian Sagas to him, the horse began to respect his opinion.

Dawes looks more like a preacher than a mule-skinner, and his behavior would be a credit to most preachers. No one ever heard him "crab," or found him a slacker. He is one of that element of good and energetic men who form the backbone of the organization.

Eastman spent his early years digging potatoes in Aroostook County, Maine. Later he was a cattle man in the far west. Here he eats potatoes, drives his team and sees France with Thomas and Greenan. This trio are like the "three guardsmen" of Dumas, and had nearly as many adventures as those heroes of fiction. Raising potatoes will be pretty slow work for this snappy young soldier, "Après la guerre."

Greenan came from the great prune district around San José. He had had enough prunes and joined the army. There's where Greenan got stung; he saw more prunes in France than he had ever picked in California. He is going back to San José, and it looks as if prunes would follow him all the days of his life. George has done a great deal of good in this company. If any of the boys were a little under the weather, George tucked them in bed and concealed their back sliding. In charge of details, he has been a sensible handler of men and has accomplished his work to the satisfaction of his superiors. Greenan has more native gumption than the average sergeant major.

Steve Gorge used to entertain us at Camp Glen Burnie and in Nevers with songs of his native Roumania, but he has little time for diversion. He has nearly always been in charge of some engine or roller and has done his work faithfully and well. Gorge speaks several languages, and about fifty per cent of every company have done less for democracy than this man.

When Hadaman was assigned to the wagon company he was distinctly the right man in the right place; there is very little about the stock game that Hadaman does not know. His work has been

that of an expert. There is not a skinner in the whole wagon train with whom we would rather risk our neck. His service in the war has been very valuable.

Hoover is a concrete construction man, formerly in the city employ. Some part of his life must have been spent in the country for he knows how to harness a team. He also manages to obtain the best stock in the company. The writer was Hoover's helper for several weeks, and greatly admired the care Hoover had taken of his stock. When we were not on the road, Hoover kept us grooming those horses or cleaning their harness; while working for Hoover we scarcely had time to eat. Hoover would come to our hut about eleven o'clock at night to ask if we had blanketed the team. He was constantly thinking of conveniences for those horses which we were compelled to make. Hoover is a fine manager.

It was little Dick Jones who rode the bad mule of the 34th Supply Train—"There never was a knight like this young Lochinvar." He, Pinkie, the Wilsons, Tex and C., Charley Thomas, Eastman and Rambo were comrades in France and they did not have such a bad time in France, for they would have a good time any way. Apart from all this Dick is a first-rate soldier. The only unpleasant thing that Jones ever did in Wagon Co. 5 was to enter into a conspiracy with Red Lavin and come down with the mumps, thus placing the men in his tent under quarantine.

Every squad tent in Glen Burnie wanted Red Lavin as an occupant. Red has the most expressive face in Wagon 5. Sometimes it assumes the solemnity of an elderly billy-goat, so Red boarded around from tent to tent—his face cheered them. His natural home was with Hoover, Hamer, Jones, Alexander and Spencer and when Red was with them, they said that he made more mischief than a monkey, but when he went to visit his other friends, Hoover would hunt him up, saying "it seems lonesome without the little devil." A great change came over Lavin; he began to talk about his baby, a boy recently born and named for him. His chest expanded several inches with what we supposed at first was fatherly pride, particularly when he received the infant's picture (it is a nice looking baby and does not resemble Red). We thought at first that he was married. He is daring enough to be, but we found that the little one

was his nephew. Lavin has a lot of hard sense and always the best of an argument.

Lewis has made good here and has the character and qualities to make good in anything he undertakes. He has been employed by prominent people where his responsibilities were exacting, and has brought from each of them excellent testimonials. We think that there is no office in this company which Lewis could not fill successfully but like most men of real merit he has little to say for himself, perhaps too little. One has to find him out. If any man in Wagon 5 minds his own business it is Lewis. Speak for yourself, Lewis! In America we toot our horn if we don't sell a clam.

Mace had previous military training with the Idaho National Guard. Mace is a dead shot, making with Sergeant Hamilton the highest average at Glen Burnie. Making "sharp shooter" easily, we presume his home in the Rockies is filled with grizzily hides and trophies of the chase. With Waldrip, Moore, and Tolleson he has been incapacitated for some duties by lameness due to rheumatism, but he has guided his team with the skill of the mountain navigator or taken charge of a considerable portion of our stock. We hope that freedom from exposure and specialist treatment will ultimately alleviate their suffering.

Monson had been a government surveyor in the state of Nevada and a rancher in Utah. He is much more cheerful than he looks. He seems to take a pessimistic view of life and of human nature, but his disposition is not really severe. Religiously trained, and reared in the good atmosphere of a quiet Utah town, the frivolities and excesses he has witnessed while in the army have disgusted him. He has not evinced this feeling in conversation, but he made it the subject of much reflection. He is one of those complex characters, occasionally found in Scandinavian literature. He has met more than adequately the simple demands of the army. He is capable of great things and will accomplish much good if he gives himself up to the leading of Providence, but he has to struggle with the natural impulse to follow paths of his own devising. These ways are respectable but they fall short of the higher usefulness and the greater good of which we believe him capable. When the awakening comes he will be of more than local usefulness. In a non-material sense his is perhaps the brightest future in our company.

Peel parted from us to attend the American University at Beaune. His particular service in Wagon 5 has been the capacity of driver to the officers. Of a noble British family he has not scorned tasks that must seem menial to one of his station. This is pure patriotism. In his contact with us Peel was always affable, quite one of the fellows. He associates freely with all the men, and is lavishly generous in disposition. There is a natural inherent tone to Peel, a hall mark of distinction which cannot be disguised by fatigue clothes. Peel's presence has been wonderfully inspiring and the roughest of us have acquired a certain degree of culture through association with him.

In our previous reference to C. L. Phillips, we left him at the company's organization, but since those remote days his career has been very eventful. Wherever there was danger and work Phillips was always found. He has been acting stable sergeant. Then he drove our Packard and this machine in his hands was as destructive as the war chariots of the ancient Britons. On his second day, he demolished a French owned automobile. The other driver tried to cut across his path, but Phillips had general orders to proceed without delay so he calmly reasoned that the Packard would not be greatly damaged and calmly drove ahead. Phillips would have been a good man in a tank corps.

Phipps is one of the most agreeable men in Wagon 5. He has enjoyed the advantage of good education and surroundings. His apt mind grasped the military science more quickly than did most of ours and, in the early days of the company he drilled a platoon; much of our expertness with arms is largely due to his training. Phipps also makes a good wagoner. His previous advantages have enabled him to derive benefits from his sojourn in France which are not obtained by those of less studious natures. Nothing escapes Phipps' notice. He measures everything by its instructive or moral value, under every condition he has obtained food for thought and an accession to his store of knowledge.

LeRoy Prince is by no means the Fauntleroy sort of person his name might suggest. He is a very serviceable person, one of the best men to run a pump in our company, a good driver, too. He has a wonderful fund of interesting Indian stories; he knows all about the Poncas. We have enjoyed many interesting evenings

with Prince. He has lived close to nature and from his contact with nature and Indians he has derived the wisdom superior to that contained in books. Like the old prophets he responds to the great elemental forces; his soul is entombed with a firmament.

Wagoner Rambo is seriously ill as we type these words; his third sickness in the service. Whatever the outcome may be we will recall him as a frank and generous man, one whose acts and motives like his rifle and bayonet always stood inspection. Some one recently remarked, "If you are square with Ralph, he will give you his last cent." We record that he is a square, patriotic American who has withheld nothing from his country; popular and full of the joy of living, as ready to answer the "last call" as he was to answer the call of his country.

Sogge is naturally from Minnesota, the home of the hardy Norseman. He is a thrifty person. Beside the paternal acres, business acuteness and a sturdy frame are part of his inheritance. Sogge has taken good care of himself, and will return to his friends not seriously impaired in health. For several months Sogge was a cook. His knowledge will be of wonderful assistance to his wife, for he will prepare many strange dishes of little odds and ends that would otherwise be wasted, and remind her that the Wagon Company used to eat such things in the great war. She will have to watch him, sitting by the fire, thinking of the money he is going to make, for he will let the soup burn if she doesn't watch out. He has also been a fine and fearless wagoner.

The more we see of Charley Thomas, the longer we listen to his conversations, the more fully confirmed is our conviction that Charley is a wise boy. There is not a more active man in the company than Thomas and time never hangs heavily on his hands. He was our first drillmaster in Wagon 5; a man who can drill the writer of this history and still be patient and sweet tempered is a saint. Thomas is the only saint that ever drilled us; most of our drill masters, knowing that some day they would be mule skinners, used to practice on us with the language they afterward used so successfully on the mules. Thomas is the sage of the younger set. His early years were devoted to navigating the raging sea, so in the army he has taken shipwrecks and disasters as a matter of course. For

several months he piloted four mules from the larboard to the port side of the Argonne forest. He has trained these animals to obey sea commands, instead of "Get up!" he would cry, "Heave anchor!" For "Back up," he would use "Reverse speed!" Desiring to go to the right or left, he would command, "Ports or helm" or "Helm a-lee!" If Thomas shouted, "Wagon a-hoy," the mules would stop knowing that he wished to converse with another driver. He has enjoyed life in France, but after his long cruise he is anxious to be homeward bound.

Wagoner Vosier was formerly an evangelist, and from saving sinners this gifted and consecrated man has taken up carnal weapons in the defense of democracy. He has laid down the scripture, as it were, and taken up the Springfield. Vosier did not apply for a chaplaincy but entered the service as an enlisted man. In Wagon 5 he did not seek for clerical work but contributed his great physical strength to the hard labor which has been the company's daily portion. Wagoner Vosier has had many opportunities for personal work among the men of this command and his life has been an example to all of us. About the stables we frequently heard Vosier's powerful voice singing the familiar camp meeting hymns, other soldiers joining in with him.

Dad Walker left his young homestead in the Santa Yenez Canon to serve his country. Some time ago he took down the old squirrel rifle that his great-grandfather had used in the great War of 1812, a weapon with which he had plugged many a gopher at a hundred yards, slung his powder horn and pouch, saddled one of his plow horses and rode like the wind for the nearest recruiting station. The recruiting officer was glad to see Dad. Dad had just finished grubbing out forty acres of mesquite, so he advised him to join the 23rd Engineers. Walker did not see the connection at the time, but in France he found that the abstemious life of a hard working homesteader made him a very useful man. The detail sergeants discovered that Walker was as wiry as a mustang, always ready to work his head off, could endure great extremes of heat and cold, and live on practically nothing so he was welcomed to every detail. This has been a great life to Walker and he has enjoyed every moment of it. He will return in fine trim to grub the mesquite on the other forty and ready to serve his country in the next war.

Johnny Walters is Burke's vaudeville partner. At Avacourt they would put on a little sketch at every mess, their specialties, "Jackie Frost" and "We are five young ladies," were often called for. He is one of our mosquito fleet or younger members, so he has done as much to make life interesting for the company as any of our members, beginning his series of entertainments at Camp Glen Burnie, Maryland. In the Argonne he went squirrel hunting with a captured German rifle. A general's headquarters was concealed in a part of the forest. Headquarters was awakened by a fusilade; a patrol was sent out to ascertain the force of the Germans, and found Johnny Walters shooting at a mark. They surrounded him and conveyed him to Major General Ligget. The general and Johnny had a heart to heart talk, on untimely squirrel hunting and Johnny remained there for three days, "K. P."ing. Johnny's last contribution was a class march through the squad rooms after "taps" with several comrades, most of them survived a "hob nailed barrage." As a skinner and worker John Peter made good. He drives the handsomest team of stallions in the army and none are better groomed. We hope that Johnny will spend the next few years in the domestic felicity of his home.

Charles Arthur Wright came from the pretty town of Moab in the state of Utah. There was no one in Moab to talk with, so he lost the habit of speech. When he joined the army, he said, "I do," after a little practice. He also says, "Here" at formations; then his vocabulary is exhausted for the day. Once at Nancy, Wright found his voice, and long forgotten words came back with a rush, as is usually the case. He has shown more courage and has accomplished more than some of our "bull" shooters. He is one of our most reliable men.

Wagoner Wilder is one of our well educated, well brought up boys. No one in the company has better realized a high ideal of manhood. Wilder has not deteriorated, or succumbed to any of the bad influences which were probably new in his life. Few of us are his equals in refinement and no man in the company is superior in character; he proves as well that the good man is braver than the bad man. In boxing contests he has not hesitated to take on men many pounds heavier, and in any sort of danger Wilder would stand fast where a rough neck would seek cover.

Abbie Alpers has highly developed social qualities and at home he was once president of a young men's association, selected no doubt for his acquaintance with etiquette and his large hearted, genial nature. A highly paid, experienced mechanic, he has cheerfully adapted himself to the crude work and long hours of the Engineers, and his pleasant, unenvious, contented disposition has made his presence a necessity on every social occasion. Alpers is utterly self forgetful and seems to find his principal happiness in contributing to the enjoyment of others.

When Dempsey was born his parents named him after Patrick the saint and Patrick Henry the statesman, so holiness and patriotism are the outstanding features in Dempsey's life. But he is always willing to fight for a principle. Some times the motives seem a little obscure as on the occasion when Dempsey, Greenan, Maguy and Fraser differed successfully with a battalion of M. P.'s and two squads of French infantry. Dempsey is shrewd and quiet, quiet in the sense of not being noisy. Like Mr. Dooley he is a sort of philosopher and his reflections are always interesting. After working hours a little group gathers about Dempsey and listens to the wisdom of his ripe experience, Dempsey driving home a point from time to time with the stem of his pipe.

One of the grandest things that can be said of Frank is that he looks like Walker. He came to us from Wagon 1, and naturally has been happy ever after. Walker feels complimented when any one takes him for Frank and Frank feels the same way when any one takes him for Walker. This company was one good man better off when he joined us, and Wagon 1 has not been quite the same since he left. He has been an effective worker on all of our projects, one of our best ball players and heartiest eaters. Conscientious and willing in all his doings.

Iris Wallingford Grimm is from Turtle Creek, Pennsylvania, a fashionable suburb of Pittsburg. This family is one of the oldest in the great steel city. Julius Brutus Wallingford Grimm fought with Washington in the attack on Fort DuQuesne afterwards Pittsburg. He is the great, great, great-grandfather of First Class Private Grimm of this company. The elder Grimm was fascinated with the scenic beauty of the region about Pittsburg, and moved

there at the close of the French and Indian War. Pittsburg was then a frontier fort with 53 inhabitants exclusive of the company of infantry in the garrison. He opened the first manicurist parlors in Pittsburg on the site of what is now the Franklin Monument. Later he became the president and the board of managers of the Allegheny Valley steam laundry. The Grimm family has been identified with every substantial industry and improvement in Pittsburg, for the last hundred and seventy-five years. Iris J. B. Wallingford Grimm was assigned to duty with Wagon 5 as a private. He later rose to the rank of first class private. Grimm entered the army to get away from luxurious living. He saw the effect of dissipation in the life of Harry Thaw and other young Pittsburg millionaires, and voluntarily choose the severe and simple régime of Wagon 5. We appreciate Grimm's presence here and realizing his heavy future responsibilities, we have tried to exempt him from the harder kinds of work. Accustomed from infancy to the society of distinguished people, Grimm naturally became officer's orderly. At other times he has supervised the preparation of meals. At present he is attending the A. E. F. University.

David Gunn Hamilton is one of our willing workers, always has a song on his lips and a smile on his face. He is a descendant of the semi-royal family of Hamiltons. One looks at him and at once recalls Sir Joshua Reynold's picture of Lady Hamilton, one of the beauties of the English Court. When Hamilton graduated from the camp team, he became one of our skillful chauffeurs. He is untiring and uncomplaining, his work is bounded by no certain hours, but Hamilton is always ready to forego personal comforts at duty's call. It was fascinating to watch him steering his car around the bursting shells. One of his brothers is a sergeant in another unit, and an uncle is a wealthy stock raiser in the Argentine Republic.

Hardenstein is from Vicksburg, Mississippi. One thinks of him and George Cable's stories, and chicken gumbo soup at the same time. He speaks with the soft southern accent of the characters of Page and Harris. This splendid fellow worked with us in Glen Burnie, carrying cases of ammunition, boxes of shoes and other things. We want to state that no matter how heavy the load Hardenstein always arrived at his destination—ultimately. He is very fond of animals; humoring this amiable weakness, he was placed in

charge of our picket line at Avacourt and found the work a pleasure. The horses and mules all knew Hardenstein, and neighed with happiness when he entered the stable. Some of them, if removed to another barn, refused to eat and pined away. A man that inspires such affection among animals should have no difficulty in finding a wife, and we hope that she, like the mules, will meet his coming with a song.

First Class Private Clarence Henry Hicks. If the 23rd Engineers had been composed of men like Hicks they would have accomplished four times as much work. Hicks understands work, just the kind of work we have been doing and none have done our work better and many not as well. When Hicks is quite uncoiled he stands about six feet four, and is strong in proportion. In fact Hicks understands his work much better than many of the men who direct it. He likes to see work properly performed and discusses it with his officers and sergeants, as he would with an employer in civil life. This has been good for the service as Hicks is no shirker or time killer. Hicks never lacked a square meal until he came to Camp Meade but there he suffered pitifully. Hicks has two articles of faith, the superiority of the city of Baltimore and his boarding mistress's good dinners. When we were tightening our belts Hicks would tactlessly describe those Baltimore dinners, and make us more hungry than ever. He never talks about things he does not understand, and always talks intelligently about things he does understand.

Johnson is a strong young man. He can bugle very sweetly, and succeeded Gleeson in that office. Before this he was one of our road men and has been night guard or attaché of mess. Johnson's previous employment in a steel mill was an invaluable aid to him in the preparation of food, particularly in the arrangement of "iron rations." In athletics, baseball and boxing especially, he has won many sporting events for Wagon 5. In boxing he is obliged to restrain his strength, at the risk of inflicting fatal injuries on his opponent. His strength and skill are so well known that only strangers will box with him. One of his brothers is a lieutenant in the infantry—a fighting family!

Knapp enlisted with us at Poughkeepsie, New York. He intended to join a railroad regiment, but wisely changed his mind and hitched

up with the 23rd. He often refers thankfully to the recruiting officer who got him into a good outfit. We have never found a man as appreciative as Knapp and if he has spoken about his enlistment once he has mentioned the subject a thousand times and always with deep emotion. Knapp is the only man in the A. E. F. whose spirit is unbroken by our army customs. He has little native love for rank and caste. Positive in his convictions and a loyal Democrat, he will support the administration till "hell freezes over." In religion he is an "old school" Baptist, halfway measures do not appeal to him. As a singer he confines himself to "Beautiful Katy," but his nature is so expansive that we doubt if he will restrict himself to the caresses of one individual for a good many years to come.

CHAPTER XX

Brief Biographies (Concluded)

Ledward is an embattled farmer. Only the most enterprising citizens of the old world leave their familiar and loved surroundings for the new. America owes much of its enterprise to the select citizens of other lands. Ledward has the mild, pleasant habits of the English peasant; he would often recite "Gray's Elegy," and the historic "Wiltshire Ballads." His company nickname was "John Corn." He was a good worker and earnest eater. It was Ledward's great misfortune to lose his wife early in the year 1919, leaving him with a motherless boy four years of age. For this reason he was given an honorable discharge from the service, and returned to the states.

Marley is an artist in leather. He had had previous military experience in the English army, and so underwent none of the annoyances we experienced in learning to drill. Marley is daring by nature, and qualified for usefulness in many directions for his opportunities have been of the best. He was a very busy man during the Argonne drive, particularly so at Avacourt. He is at present in school at the American University at Beaune.

Kiernan was a good natured, kindly man, anxious to do all in his power to defeat the Germans. We recall his earnest desire to reach the front and his keen regret when illness compelled him to leave the scene of battle, a few days after we reached the zone of action. He was the company armorer, and was generally entrusted with metal work of particular delicacy, for he was far too skilled to be wasted on pick and shovel work. He is also remembered for his contributions to the entertainments of the organization. He was a semi-professional boxer. His wit and refinement made us sorrow for the circle at home deprived of his presence. In France, he acquired hearts and the language with great rapidity. He was the first to learn the French expressions, "Comprée up on the roof?" and "Mademoiselle, how about taking a little promenade over in the park?"

Aloysius Lawrence Meyers was young when he decided to give his life to his country. His interesting career should have been preserved in book form. Horatio Alger would have written "The Adventures of Aloysius, the Orderly," and we regret that Alger did not live to meet Meyers, for he would have been a boy after his own heart. We skittishly tackle this subject as follows: Aloysius lived in the quiet little city of Yipsilanti, Michigan. "Yip" is named for a celebrated Greek patriot, the only one who never kept a confectionary store. Al was an industrious model boy, washed the dishes, cut the kindlings, kept the water bucket filled, and rocked the baby, because he loved his little sister and was an obedient son. On Sunday, clad in a neat norfolk round about and breeches to match, with a pale Windsor tie, and little straw hat, he would lead the younger children to Sunday school, helping his little sister over the curbs and the street where the trolley car runs. Ladies would watch him and say, "Isn't Mrs. Meyers' boy a little dear?" Aloysius was no milksop. The blood of a long line of martial ancestors trickled through his veins, and in his leisure moments he read, "With Clive in India," and "With Lee in Virginia." He longed for the time when he could leave peaceful Yipsilanti and the "If love be cold, do not despair, there is Yipsilanti underwear" industry on which her fortunes depended, and carry freedom's banner to strange lands beyond the sea. He yearned to become the trusted aide of some truly great leader, like Bonnie Prince Charley, or Gordon, or some freebooter like Captain Kidd or Morgan. In fancy he saw his leader surrounded with foes, cleaving a path with his shining blade, and Aloysius saving him from an unguarded thrust by plunging his sword in the enemy's sternum.

His leader would pluck the fainting boy from the saddle, and carry him out of the fray, binding his wounds with his own handkerchief; he would convalesce in his general's home. The general's beautiful daughter would read to him, and then—. At school he learned about Yip, and how Byron fell at Missolonghi. The story fired his blood, permanently. At high school Al did not monkey away any time, and on graduation day he gave a thrilling declamation on "Liberty," closing with the lines of "Marco Bozzarius." His slender frame rocked with emotion, and how they cheered him! The president of the Underwear Factory presented the diploma, and after the benediction he congratulated Allie's father. He said:

"Mr. Meyers, that's a bright boy of yours. He is a credit to Ypsilanti and her system of education. I ain't an educated man, myself, but I know a smart boy when I see him, and we must keep that lad here. There's a future for him here in my factory. I'll start him as shipping clerk at sixty dollars a month; when he gets a year or two more on his shoulders, I'll put him on the road. A boy that can talk like that can sell underwear." So his future was assured. Secretly, he despised commerce, and with the entrance of this country in the great war came his opportunity—we must ask you to turn to larger books for the subsequent events in his army life. His original conception of modern war was a little mediaeval, but in a revised sense, his dreams have come true. He helps older girls over the curb now. He is our leader's orderly. He holds the interest of the men and at any hour of the day you can hear voices in the barracks shouting, "Aloysius,—Aloysius—where in hell is Aloysius?"

Molby would make a righteous judge. We are prepared to swear before any court military or civil, that a more honest man does not walk the face of the earth. Molby is uncomfortably honest. For many months he was one of our cooks; he lived in our tent and we were friends. Molby feared that for this reason some one would say that he was showing favoritism in distributing the food. We would come up with our mess kit—Molby would look us squarely in the eye and select an inferior piece of grizzily beef for our consumption, or give us a half ration of soup or stew, reserving the T bone steaks and large helpings of stew for those with whom he was not intimate. Molby should be employed in the mint, the United States Treasury, or some public office where absolute integrity would be appreciated. There is nothing elastic about his conscience. Unofficially, he is generous and kind, ready to give or lend anything that is his own, but in a position of trust, this strong-willed little Dane is a tartar. We would advise the people of his township to elect him tax collector, and we'll say he would collect the taxes; or send him to the legislature, he will see that the public money is well spent. He would have Knute Nelson wiped off the map.

Waldrip was taken sick at Glen Burnie and was left at the Base Hospital in Meade when we sailed for France. He could have secured a discharge, as his family and a lovely young lady urged

him to do, but in spite of his quietness and good habits, Waldrip was no quitter; he "followed the boys over here," and one day appeared in our camp at Nevers, somewhat crippled but happy to be with us and ready to go to work. Many officers and men have had their Congressman and friends pull wires to get them home, and plenty of people have slobbered over them and lauded them when they arrived. This quiet, decent, unassuming young man could have gone home at any time; he had business and property interests, and a fine girl waiting for him. He went through the St. Mihiel and Argonne with a tightly bandaged knee and attended to his duties during the tedious months of waiting after the armistice. If one says to him, "Waldrip, the war is over, why don't you go home?" he replies, "I want to go back with the company." Some bird that never heard a cannon bark, and has drawn a better salary in the army than in civil life, and had more than he had enjoyed in his entire previous life, will speak at some public gathering, where quiet Waldrip will be a listener, but Waldrip has the goods on him at that.

It is a pleasure to think of Otto Wittkop; he came into the army a boy, a good boy, and he has been one of the best, hardest working boys in the company. He has grown in manliness and dependability. The army is a hard place for a boy, young and unformed; there is everything leading to temptation, and trouble. Wittkop has matured a great deal; our life in France has mercifully left him unharmed. He owes this in part to good officers. The shrivelled heart of a military martinet makes no allowance for boyish fun or inexperience. When the former officers of the A. E. F. become candidates for public positions, we will not ask them what they did for their country during the war; we will ask them how they treated their fellow citizens over whom they held, for a time, an almost absolute authority. Wittkop and all our boys, so far as their company officers were concerned, were in kind hands. Otto will continue to be a good son to his mother, a help to the younger children, and by and by a good husband to some girl. We hope the girl will be worthy of him.

"Peep Sight" Williams got his army name because of his unerring marksmanship. He could be absolutely depended upon to mow down objects a hundred feet on either side of the target. Once he

struck the target, but that was an accident; the only stain on his record. Dale is one of our very best men, and we hope that he is as much appreciated at home as he is in the army. Two days before we left Laurel, the name D. M. Williams was called at reveille. Sergeant McCarthy continued to call D. M. Williams several mornings at Glen Burnie. We were a thoroughly cowed, subdued and abject regiment of soldiers—at that time we would not have disobeyed the smallest of the military commandments intentionally. What kind of a "swashbucklet" could this D. M. Williams be? Some raw boned six footer, a bar room bouncer, perhaps. He must be a bold venturesome man to be called so often in vain. One morning D. M. Williams responded, "Here" in a low boyish voice. The Aunt who had raised him had been at the point of death and Dale just naturally went to see her. After formation, we looked at him, a small chunky, pleasant-faced, country boy—the officers remembered that he was a boy and let that brief absence pass. Boy and all, his record is one any man might be proud of; not a dozen men in the company have done more work, no one has a better conduct record. Once when one of Dale's chums was attacked by a larger man, the little Hoosier stepped out with clenched fists, and told the big fellow that he would have to lick them both or lay off. Dale's family have every reason to be proud of their boy's conduct. He was with the detachment at Billy and since that time has been officer's orderly.

Achenbach is one of the best looking men in the Wagon Train. So far as the girls are concerned, "To know him is to love him, to name him but to praise." His European mail is extensive. His neat execution of the manual of arms, and soldierly look, greatly helps the appearance of our company formations. We homely old fellows stay in the rear rank and let Achenbach shine for all of us. He takes a great interest in our cuisine, although he has done some of the most important construction work in which we have been engaged. He has been of even greater assistance to us in the arrangement of our menus. He has given this work his best thought; he has endowed our mess with practical adaption, and rich imagination, and has dreamed, like a master chef, of foods for our delectation.

Bentley is one of the Washington contingent, a rugged stalwart character, full of "pep," a particularly fine skinner, and wonderfully

adapted to camp life. Bentley was very much at home in the Argonne, entirely indifferent to danger, and farsighted enough to surround himself with plenty of firewood and a multitude of home-made comforts and appliances with which he made life in the wilds endurable. He is very popular with the sergeants who rather compete for the presence of this steady young man on their details.

Tom Beville is an experienced stock man. He understands domestic animals from A to Z. He may be called an authority on stock production, one of our most important industries, and one upon which first and last many depend on for their livelihood. Beville is a perfectly ideal man for a Wagon Company. In everything relating to Wagon Train work, Beville knows how; this is the result of years of practical work, and knowledge gained by experience through personal work. He carries out his orders literally, and as a guard leaves nothing to be desired.

When Hart joined us from Company A, A's ball team went out of business. He is a mighty fine pitcher; his lithe, graceful form appears to exceptional advantage on the diamond. There is a great deal of charm in his dancing. He is an adroit, scientific boxer. The way that young man tore into the work when he joined Wagon 5 amazed us; our burdens were lightened. We never thought the introduction of one man would make such a difference in a company. We find Hart everywhere doing everything. Where there is action you will always find Hart. He must have been one of the busiest young men in his home town. He is in everything, willing, and anxious to be of service.

Horton is a steam fitter, well known in the social and fraternal circles of Massachusetts. His qualities are substantial rather than showy. Some feats are recorded of him which show his large reserve qualities of courage and firmness. Among these the most celebrated is his mastery of the stallion "Charley Chaplin." Charley was a bad horse. On moments of irritation, he would kick the sides out of the barn, and shatter any wagon to which he was hitched. Several "regular skinners" refused to handle him. It was necessary to harness him with a stable fork, and take him to water with kicking straps. So they turned him over to Horton. In a few days Horton was driving him on the water wagon and Char-

ley Chaplin was as peaceful as a lamb. We mention this single incident because it is characteristic of Horton. He has accomplished this and other hazardous feats without any whip cracking, yelling or cursing.

Cotter came over with the first battalion and joined Wagon 5 at Nevers. So he is a little more of a veteran than the rest of us. His mechanical pursuits have made him very helpful on our block and tackle work and all sorts of machine hauling and hoisting. When our road operations ceased, he developed a remarkable tact in handling horses. Cotter enjoys harness work, taking a pride in the appearance of his outfit. He is one of the best lightweights in the regiment and never allows any one to speak disparagingly of the Irish; a good singer, very agreeable to the ladies, and a very popular young man.

Hamer is a versatile yankee; he has labored for his country in many capacities and earned his pay many times over. In the army, it is seldom that a soft snap falls a good man's way; in the Engineers the more a man is capable of doing the more he has to do. Waldo has had all the mud and rain and mucking coming to him, and in emergencies, a great deal of repair work and general tinkering. He is a very likable man, perhaps a typical American with plenty of initiative and the ability to work out little problems; he applies his intelligence to a proposition and attains the solution by good reasons. After Marley went to the American University, Hamer became the saddler of the Billy Detachment and there was no falling off in the quantity or quality of the work. A selfish man has no friends in the army; here personality cannot be camouflaged. Hamer has many friends because he is kind and sincere.

Koehler is one of our boys. Fifty years from now he will be one of the surviving veterans of this war and we older men will be long in our graves. His experience in the army will mean more to him as the years go by for there's nothing regrettable in his record. He is quick and aggressive, perhaps a little sensitive, but honest, of quick conception and attentive to his duty. He is the company bugler.

Larson was with us from Laurel until we had been a short time in Nevers, from which place he was detached to a base port as a rigger employed in dock construction. Larson made several voy-

ages during the war in horse transports and proved so capable that he was placed in charge of the feeding and care of the stock at an attractive salary. He knew that the army could offer nothing as good in position or remuneration, but nevertheless he enlisted. Larson is a man of excellent ability in many capacities. He has knocked around the world so much that he has learned how to do important things and to avoid doing what he regards as needless.

"Freedom shrieked when Kosciuszko fell," and later on Lewandowski's family moved to America to breath the pure air of freedom. Love of liberty and a hatred of despotism are Leo's strongest passions. The monarchies which had enslaved the country of his ancestors were seeking to impose their cruel will on other free people. It made Lewandowski's blood boil, and when he could not stand it any longer he enlisted in the United States army, resolved to contribute his full strength, and if it must be, his blood, with the overthrow of tyranny. Leo's contribution has been a great success. The war is won, without the sacrifice of his life, and as things look now he will return to his family in pretty fair shape.

Dabney McDonald is one of the most winning and attractive characters in Wagon 5 and it is a matter of personal regret to us that after demobilization we may never meet him again. Some lives are like sunshine after a long season of clouded sky; Dynamite was that way for a meeting with him has a stimulating effect of a bracing ocean breeze. We realize what the absence of such a boy means in his home; how they must long for him to return. He is called Dynamite not because he is explosive, or very emotional, but as a natural tribute to his energy and physical prowess. Resolute and strong of constitution, his exertions have been intense and undiminished by time. When our faculties become enfeebled by years, and the incidents of the war, and the names and faces of our comrades elude our memories, Dabney McDonald will be the last to be forgotten. It is possible to forget the courtly Caine, and the day may come when we will try in vain to recall Hazelton's humorous stories, Tournier's personal grace may be in time a dim memory, and Knight's indefatigable industry a lost chord, but in Dabney are embodied all the good qualities which separately dignified their lives, and his image will rise as eternally in our future, as do those hopes which are "Anchors to the soul, sure and steadfast."

Maguy has lived his life in the city of Chicago where his contact with people of all classes has liberally expanded his general education. In France he has shown great facility in establishing pleasant friendship with our Allies; a keen analyst of character, he has found the army a studio in which all types exist. He has carefully studied human variations and distinctions, and the problems of governmental economics, and has perhaps unconsciously prepared himself for even greater civic and social usefulness. He possesses great clarity of expression and an appealing individuality.

Joe Miller is one of our finest appearing soldiers, one of our best skinners and thoroughly acquainted with grading and dirt moving operations. Such men are invaluable in an Engineering Regiment. Miller has worked for some of the best firms in California. He was a trusted employee of Moring Brothers, schoolmates of the writer, and of "Such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Miller is an excellent entertainer and impersonator and his representation of a patent medicine street faker on the "big night at Billy" was one of the most appreciated numbers on the program. While on furlough, Miller visited many of the principal cities of France, and he will doubtless have many interesting stories for his friends in the San Joaquin Valley.

Swanson was a co-worker of ours for many weeks on the Nevere-Decize road. Unaccustomed in civil life to laborious or mechanical work, he soon became an expert road maintenance man, doing or supervising every job with thoroughness and care. His record as a soldier and engineer is remarkable, in that he has so quickly mastered the details and principles of occupations widely differing from his own. In the execution of the military tactics he has no superior. Swanson is a globe trotter, has been a resident of many of our important cities, a man of striking physique and splendid appearance.

John Schneider has been employed on some of the largest railroad systems in the United States, working principally in the intermountain states where the weather conditions are often severe, and the grades difficult. To work under such circumstances and for railroads of such standing requires ability and conscientiousness; these qualities Schneider brought to Wagon 5. For many months he worked under conditions which deprived him of the opportunity to

do the work for which he was best adapted and trained, yet he accomplished every duty to which he was assigned with painstaking neatness and all of his work was of a high order. No one bears a better character for honesty, industry and sobriety. Under Lieutenant Killourhy his knowledge of machinery was turned to use and since then he has had charge of our trucks. He also installed and operated the sawmill at Billy and placed an excellent water system in the mess hall. Schneider did much voluntary work at Billy and is highly regarded by his commanders and men.

L. G. Schneider, no relative of the above, is one of our best young men. He has borne the fatigues and dangers, incident to military life, very cheerfully, and few exceed him in scientific road maintenance. He at different times has been connected with the mess, but owing to his strength and robust constitution he has been elected to carry on much of our heavy work. He has had sufficient resolution to withstand the temptations that come to us and has been calm and self-reliant when our lives were in peril.

I. M. D. Smith is our great wood worker, one of our best sporting men, and a knock out boxer. He is fond of horses and tries the new teams for the less experienced skinners. Smith is a good engineer, and the service will get quite a set back when he "partees" to civilian life. In France he has been a social success; he is popular with the young people. Smith was for some time officer's mess orderly and a great favorite of Captain Morrison's. Smith stands well with the fellows; he kids them a good deal but they realize that his humorous thrusts are kindly meant and carry no sting.

In 1913 Cyril Augustus Smith bade farewell to the white cliffs of Albion, and sailed for America with his brother, now musical director of the public schools at Fort Smith, Arkansas. Perhaps he thought "Farewell England, much as we adore thee, courage, true the arts shall bear us on our way, hope goes before and shows the bright tomorrow, let us forget the sorrows of today." Smith's tomorrow was indeed bright; like all success, his was attained by hard toil and economy. Smith deserves as much or more credit for his success before the war and his fine qualities of citizenship, as for his participation in the war. Smith lived in the Y. M. C. A., saved his money and studied electrical engineering. He knows a great deal more

than one would imagine, and his upward progress reflects favorably on himself, and even more on the teachings of his excellent mother. In the army Smith developed a mania for road repair work and he would dig with dogged determination. At the same time he applied himself to the study of the French language and solar observation, also the study of natural philosophy or something. Smith was so "Dad-blamed studious" that we had to separate him from his literature at times and call his attention to our important engagements with the Allied governments. But Smith is an excellent worker, and of blameless life. He expects to spend a few months with relatives in England, where his mother still lives and a brother is manager of a large industry, after which he will resume his career in the states.

Halvor Stensland interrupted his education to join the army but his education has continued. In order to inform his family intelligently of the places of historic interest and social conditions in France, Stensland made a careful personal survey of every accessible individual and place of importance. His researches may appear in book form under the title "Detours in France." His youth, activity and neatness induced the officers to select Stensland as their personal attendant. It has been a splendid thing for Stensland, at this formative period in his life, to have had the benefit of their example and conversation. He is now attending the A. E. F. university, and probably investigating the principal products of the Department of the Cote D'or.

W. L. Thompson is from southern California. A region of constant rain and mud is not his natural habitat, yet few men in the A. E. F. have hurled themselves into the strife with such utter enthusiasm and abandonment as Thompson; usually rather quiet his spirits seemed to rise with danger. At the beginning of the Argonne-Meuse battle, the military qualities of this man stood in strong relief. He was gay almost to the point of jubilancy, always ready to press on, and never willing to retreat. During much of his service in France he has driven one of our trucks. At the front this occupation was extremely dangerous as the German fire was concentrated on the roads, and truck drivers went where "Angels feared to tread." Thompson is an excellent automobile mechanic and pursues his various occupations without cessation or rest.

Ulm is a draftsman by occupation, even in the coarsest construction. Ulm's work was always distinguishable by its precision and delicacy of touch. Ulm's is a nature, the complexities of which are not at once apparent. One may live with him for months without fully understanding his talent and resources. Naturally modest and taciturn the unfathomed abysses of his character give up their riches and intellect and originality only at the importunity of some emergency. In conduct or manner his conduct is without blemish. His many processes are original, his ideas deep, and widely inclusive. He is skilled in repartee and possesses a dry mordant humor which shallower minds cannot comprehend.

Van Oflen has labored under the disadvantage of youth. Many of our younger men, whose education and qualities have been sufficient to entitle them to a commission, have remained in the ranks because they were deemed too young for great advancement. When another war takes place time will have eliminated this artificial distinction in Van Oflen's case, and with the experience he has gained in this war he will undoubtedly be assured of the proper place. Many of the minor elements in his nature, the by-products as it were are interesting; if Van Oflen wants anything he never turns from his objective until he obtains it. We learned to regard him as an unusual man when laboring in the supply tent. Van Oflen wanted a pair of breeches approximating the size he habitually wore. Breeches of any size were difficult to procure, in fact, one was lucky to have any breeches. Van Oflen visited us six times a day—at first, and fixed our attention with a baleful glare. "Got my breeches?" he would ask. "Not yet" we would respond. Later he increased the quantity of his visits, called at our squad tent, intercepted us on our way to the latrine, spoke about it at mess, and always with a look that forbade refusal. Our mind began to give away at that time and we procured the garments. The same formidable eye and determination have extorted concessions enough from the army to keep this young soldier fairly comfortable.

Max P. Wind was formerly in the National Guard in the state of Texas. Like Lincoln and Jackson he had risen from comparative obscurity to an imminent elevation in his profession. Thoroughly learning the trade of cabinet maker, Wind took a course in architecture, extending over several years, in the meantime advancing

his general education by night study. A couple of years before his enlistment he began in a modest way as a contractor and builder, working at that time with his employees. His business was assuming large proportions when he abandoned it to enter the service. With the exception of some excellent work on the approaches to the Petite Caserne, his work in the army has been restricted to the hard grinding toil of the navy. He has done this uncomplainingly.

C. Wilson accrued to us from Montana. If this glorious state plays as important a part in the future of our country as she has in winning the war her miners, ranchers, and cattlemen may furnish as brilliant a galaxy of statesmen and orators to our National Conventions and Assemblies as did Virginia in the ante-bellum days. Among so many excellent men it is difficult to distinguish one for special commendations. The Montana men are all good men, industrious in peace and gallant in war. Veritable Caladdins. Wilson has some fine manly qualities that we admire. He is honest and intelligent, and friendship with him does not stop when self interest is threatened. He is just as willing to fight for a friend as he is to travel with him in undisturbed enjoyment. The writer personally would sooner have C. Wilson behind him if a dispute was on than any other man in the company; he is one of the few men in Wagon 5 who thinks of himself last.

Lewis Edward Wilson is better known in the A. E. F. as "Tex." Far younger than he looks, his life has been very adventurous, sufficiently so to satisfy the imagination of the juvenile hero worshiper. Tex has been a principal part in most of the adventures of Wagon 5 in the United States and France. As a rider he could qualify for a circus. He balks at nothing in the shape of a horse and is an expert long line skinner. When Wagon 5 enters or departs from a place, Tex is usually the most conspicuous object in the Wagon Train. He has a voice tuned to the vast expanses of the prairie and wit as subtle and original as Artemus Ward.

Wilber Downing, a member of the Veterinary Corps, has been attached to this company for several months, working in conjunction with Lieutenant Roberts and Sergeant Nevius in the care of horses and sanitation of the stables. He has also acted as driver for Lieutenant Roberts. He has been treated with exceptional

kindness, and has been given many opportunities to visit the formerly German occupied section of Lorraine. Downing can be trusted to keep his business to himself, and he is equally careful to preserve his knowledge of the affairs of others. He has been very obliging to all the boys, and is faultless in the discharge of his military duties.

James D. Holohean is an ideal looking soldier. He is one of the group whom General Pershing remarked for their soldierly bearing when he inspected us at Le Mans. Holohean has worked so hard, and carried such heavy burdens, that those who know him well often wonder how he is able to stand so erect and march off so briskly. His friends should see that he has several months of complete rest. We know that he worked, because General Pershing said so; he mentioned publicly that he had seen the group in which Holohean and Curran were standing working on the road. We will not dispute the C in C's word. Holohean would have been a splendid infantryman; he is fearless enough to argue with God. No one in the company executes drill movements more correctly, and he can go through the manual of arms like a marine. It is up to Kingston to give this active young man a job on the police force or a situation on the fire department.

Hughbaert, as we mentioned elsewhere, is a Belgian; his family and friends were sufferers in the great war. The boys joked a good deal with Hughbaert, who is always ready with some good natured and often witty response. He had lived in several French cities and is, of course, familiar with the language and customs of the people. During our long stay in France, we have had occasion to revise our opinions of many of our men; we have found Hughbaert patient and uncomplaining, at least the equal in intelligence of many men who speak better English, thorough and systematic in all his work, and as loyal an American as any in the company.

George P. Garrity returned to us at Le Mans. When we left Nevers, he was stationed at the Petite Casserne. Several of our men were on detached service. Garrity's employment kept him at Nevers during nearly the whole of our stay in France. His immediate military employers became so attached to him that they would not let him go, and before we left Nevers, he had won the friendship of many civilians. In another chapter, we have men-

tioned his pugilistic ability. Nevers is one of our large military centers, and Garrity became a star attraction at the boxing matches arranged for the soldier's entertainment, pulling down enough purses to render him quite independent of his army income. If there are any soldiers left in France to fight before this company sails for America Garrity will win new laurels for Wagon 5 against anything of his weight.

The Return of Tolleson

They called him "Old Tolly." Every organization that had come in contact with us remembered at least one man in Wagon 5 and meeting any of us months after, anywhere in the zone of action, they would ask, "How is Old Tolly?" Only a corporal, yet his personality was as distinct as the pyramids on the plains of Egypt. Except to the student few men are interesting. There are finer personalities than Tolleson's, and worse, but some way he impressed one as a blending of Colonel Carter of Cartersville and Micawber; in their optimistic moods. "He will ne'er lack a friend or a bottle to give him." He has all of Carter's gracious courtesy, indifference to material things and a nature that rides above the coarse and debasing elements in his environment. Careless and uncritical, thinking kindly and trustfully of every one, apart from the striving for place and position, which vanity inspires in company life, gay to the verge of recklessness, he is yet personally clean and honorable.

We can easily imagine him with his super-added western training, booming a piece of arid real estate or a newly patented complicated printing press, blissfully unconscious of its inner working, with an enthusiasm that would bear down all doubts, if a friend owned them. He is a natural "boomer," but he booms instinctively because he sees everything at its best. He will never employ this great talent speculatively or for any mere gain. If he is convinced, like mulberry sellers, that there are millions in it, he will venture his last cent and preach it to others as a beneficent gospel. No reverse will discourage him. Wherever this soldier paused, he distributed cheerfulness and smiles. Long after the last American has left Sorcy le Gare, the French will talk of "le petite Caporal," "le ol' Tolly," and the trés jole music of his jazz band. Tolleson will never need a pull; even Tournier would not have the heart to give him a disagreeable task. Had Pershing met him personally

he would have given him a roving commission, to keep the troops contented in the embarkation areas. In the army men are detached from their companies to perform various duties and are soon forgotten, but Tolleson was often referred to. He spent many months in the office of the chief of staff of G 4, and undoubtedly made that statistical cometary a cozy, joyous place. He had the pneumonia and the "flu" and gladdened a hospital for a few weeks. When he joined us at Le Mans he at once resumed his old place in the company life.