

AMERICAN HIKE TO TRENCHES HISTORIC

Yankees' First Appearance on Battle Front Event of Big Significance.

ALL IN CHEERFUL SPIRITS

Correspondent With Troops Writes Graphic Description of Hard Five Days' Trip Over Difficult Road to Join in Big Fight.

BY LINCOLN EYRE.

Staff Correspondent at the World. Copyright, 1918, by The World, Inc. Published by agreement, The New York World.

AMERICAN FRONT, Feb. 14.—The full story may now be told of the little section of the great defensive structure built by the allies in France was taken over by the American troops.

They began going into the line northwest of Toul on January 19. The regiments which took over the trenches are now full-fledged soldiers, prepared to battle alongside their comrades in arms.

American infantry, artillery, engineers and aerial observers are participating in combatant activity which has been developing in the sector to which they have been assigned.

Each man wore his helmet, of course, and gas masks were carried at an alert position, for gas shells are generously employed in this sector.

From the village square a slightly winding road ran out northward to the dim region where lay the trenches.

By half platoons, 50 yards apart, the battalion moved back out along this road, which, at the end of three miles, is lost in the troubled earth of the battle zone.

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URGENT DEFICIENCY BILL BREAKS RECORD

Largest Measure of Its Kind Favorably Reported by Committee.

\$1,000,000,000 ASKED FOR Statements Made by War Department Heads Disclose Huge Scale on Which United States Has Embarked in War.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 14.—A billion-dollar urgency deficiency appropriation bill, the largest of its kind in the history of Congress, although cut a half billion from original estimates, was favorably reported to the House today by Chairman Snierley, of the appropriations committee.

The bill provides for the immediate needs of the War, Navy and other departments.

The principal items for the Army in the bill favorably include \$77,752,000 for bombs and airplanes, \$100,000,000 for quartermaster storage plants on the seaboard and at interior points, and \$41,000,000 for mountain field siege and other artillery in addition to the billion dollars already spent for ordnance and contract appropriations for \$50,000,000.

Bush Terminals to Be Enlarged.

In asking for an appropriation of \$100,000,000 for storage and shipping facilities with an authorization of \$50,000,000 more, Major-General Goetz, chief of the Quartermaster-General, disclosed the bill is proposing to spend \$20,000,000 to \$25,000,000 in enlarging the Bush terminals at Brooklyn.

New storage plants at Atlantic coast and interior points, the locations of which were not given, will cost \$50,000,000.

The bill also reveals that the Army Medical Corps contemplates an aggregate of 1,000,000 square feet for its storerooms at New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, St. Louis, San Francisco, Louisville, Washington, Watertown, San Antonio and Atlanta.

Large Ordnance Storage Projected.

The Ordnance Department contemplates storage at Newport News, Charleston, Baltimore, Chicago, Philadelphia, Paterson, Watertown, Springfield, Ill., Cleveland, Springfield, Mass., Rock Island, San Francisco and Boston, with storage for explosives on Haritan River, N. C.

The Signal Corps wants storage at Dayton, Cincinnati, Buffalo and Minneapolis.

The report of the appropriations committee discloses an agreement between the United States and French governments for France to take over after the war the electric power system which the United States Army is constructing in France.

The War Department has expended \$110,000 for materials for this system.

In discussing before the committee the work of the Engineers' Corps, Major-General Hoover explained the construction of the ports of debarkation in France is going forward as rapidly as the trans-shipment will permit, but "not as rapidly as he would like."

Buying for Allies Heavy.

In asking \$5,515,000 for the Food Administration, Food Administrator Hoover told the committee that his administration is directing the purchase of \$100,000,000 worth of foodstuffs a month for the allies alone, besides the work for home conservation and home economy.

Although the Navy Department asked for \$3,140,000 for improvement and equipment of Navy yards for ship construction, the bill allocates only \$1,570,000 in addition to \$10,000,000 heretofore appropriated for that purpose.

A total of half a billion was eliminated from the recommendations against what they termed "inefficient and unsafe" transportation service.

City Attorney Harston advised the City Council that he has the legal power under the public utilities act to take over the lines of the company.

Mayor Fawcett said the city will have to front up on bonds as the only way of raising sufficient money to negotiate the deal if the franchisees of the company are abrogated.

Committee members explained that if the deal failed to get a transfer exchange, the laboring men present stated that a street fare both in the city and in the suburbs would be a relief committee from the Commercial Union suggested to the city that street cars be passed into service until the double track is laid.

Linn Nesmith Sergeant-Major.

GLEN-BURNE, Md., Feb. 14.—(Special.)—Private Linn W. Nesmith, of Oregon, has been promoted to sergeant-major of the 23d Engineers, now stationed at this place, has been promoted to the rank of sergeant-major and assigned to duty at camp headquarters.

Nesmith is one of the few men in the camp with previous military experience, having served with the Third Department of the Army, Dickie was convicted of "willfully disobeying a lawful command," in refusing to participate in a boxing contest when commanded so to do by Second Lieutenant Thaddeus C. Knight.

General Blocks Court-Martial.

SAN FRANCISCO, Feb. 14.—Sentence of dishonorable discharge from service and one year's confinement at hard labor, with forfeiture of pay for the period, imposed by a court-martial on Private Roy Dickie, of an infantry company stationed at the Presidio here, was disapproved by Major-General Arthur Murray, commanding the Western Department of the Army. Dickie was convicted of "willfully disobeying a lawful command," in refusing to participate in a boxing contest when commanded so to do by Second Lieutenant Thaddeus C. Knight.

Every man, woman and child in the town of Prairie du Rocher, Ill., enrolled for the Christmas drive of the Red Cross.

COUNTY LACKS HARMONY

DOUGLAS COURT INVESTIGATED BY COMMITTEE.

Taxpayers' League Looks Into Complaints and Irregularities Are Alleged to Have Been Found.

ROSEBURG, Or., Feb. 14.—(Special.)—Lack of co-operation between the County Court of Douglas County and the taxpayers' league, in making final arrangements for entertainment of the great assemblage of Civil War veterans and killed bodies, must advance guarantees that expenses aggregating many thousands of dollars will be met.

From a strictly business standpoint the entertaining city is held to profit greatly from the visit, estimated at 4,000,000 to 6,000,000 visitors, the encampment brings, since they will spend an aggregate of approximately \$500,000.

Despite this, the matter of arranging the proper guarantees has been delayed until the railroad rate decision could be made.

Orlando A. Sommers, commander-in-chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, is expected to visit Portland within the next month, coming for the express purpose of signing up the usual guarantee contracts. From expressions of business men made yesterday there remains little doubt but that Portland will be ready to meet the requirements as they are made.

It is expected that the city will entertain next August the great conclave of veterans, relatives and friends.

Complaints and irregularities brought to the league's attention indicated the investigation and the following report was submitted by the committee appointed for the work.

To the Chairman of the Taxpayers' League of Douglas County, Oregon:

We, your committee appointed for the purpose of investigating into the affairs of the County Court of Douglas County, Oregon, beg leave to report that we have made an investigation and performed our duties and herewith submit our report as follows:

We find the disposition on the part of the County Court not to take the public into their confidence, and a lack of harmony and courtesy on the part of the court, which is not conducive to the best interests of our county.

We find from our investigation that the Court has manifested a disposition of extravagance in its general policy, whereas retrenchment should be practiced and the strictest economy in all departments should be followed, and all unnecessary expenditures should be eliminated during our present crisis.

In conclusion, we, your committee, wish to state that we have investigated all complaints and irregularities called to our attention by the taxpayers' league, and in some instances records; and while we would not transact our important private matters in the presence of witnesses, and we feel that the best interests of our county no real progress should be made against the court, but they be given an opportunity to correct some of the irregularities and profit in the future by their mistakes in the past.

And we hope that this investigation will at least serve one purpose; that is, to bring about a better understanding between the people of this county and the court, and that the court will take the public into their confidence and show greater respect for their wishes. Respectfully submitted: A. F. Wess, B. D. Banning, R. Fate, W. C. Edwards.

Official Report Declares That Yankees Give Effective Assistance to Offensive-Germans Admit Loss of Salient.

PARIS, Feb. 14.—American batteries took part in the artillery's bombardment in connection with the large French raid in the Champagne yesterday. It is announced officially. Effective assistance was given by the American gunners.

(This is the first mention of American batteries on the Champagne front.)

American gunners are trained by the French before going into active service on their own front. The American batteries referred to in the French official report evidently are some of those undergoing this instruction.

The official French statement of last night reported a large raid on a front of about 1200 meters in the Champagne near Butte du Mesnil, in which the French penetrated as far as the German main line. The American sector is in Lorraine, some distance to the east of this point.

BERLIN, via London, Feb. 14.—In their attack yesterday on the Champagne front near Thabure, the War Office announces, the French obtained footing in a salient of the German positions.

OTTAWA, Ont., Feb. 14.—The British line in Italy has been considerably lengthened to the east of Montello Ridge along the Piave River, according to a London dispatch to the Ottawa agency of Reuters' limited. The line now extends some miles east of Nerone.

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U. S. GUNNERS HELP American Artillery is Active When French Make Raid.

CHAMPAGNE FIGHT SCENE

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POOR SERVICE ALLEGED

TACOMA LABOR COUNCIL URGES CITY TO OPERATE CARLINES.

Attorney Advises Council City Has Legal Power Under Public Utilities Act to Take Over Properties.

TACOMA, Wash., Feb. 14.—(Special.)—Tactical plans to take over either in whole or in part the electric railway lines of the Tacoma Railway & Power Company, and devise a means for their operation, were discussed today by the City Council and a large gathering of Tacoma residents against what they termed "inefficient and unsafe" transportation service.

City Attorney Harston advised the City Council that he has the legal power under the public utilities act to take over the lines of the company.

Mayor Fawcett said the city will have to front up on bonds as the only way of raising sufficient money to negotiate the deal if the franchisees of the company are abrogated.

Committee members explained that if the deal failed to get a transfer exchange, the laboring men present stated that a street fare both in the city and in the suburbs would be a relief committee from the Commercial Union suggested to the city that street cars be passed into service until the double track is laid.

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U. S. FLYERS TO ENTER ACTION.

The training of these men, of course, is incomplete, but under the steady influence of their more experienced comrades they have been giving excellent account of themselves. Not only the National Guard, but the National Army is represented to a large extent among these newcomers. There are as many as 400 in a regiment. They include men drawn into the Army by conscription as recently as the end of last September. Scattered about among the seasoned units they are expected to learn the science of trench warfare a little quicker than back in the instruction camp.

All these replacement drafts have been under fire, several individuals have been wounded and a few have distinguished themselves by gallant conduct.

Participation of the United States air service in the American front is one of the most significant features among the events of the last fortnight.

For the moment aerial activity is restricted to the work of a small group of artillery officers attached to French squadrons as observers. Adjustment ranges for American bombers are being made by these observers by wireless daily, so that already an American aloft is directing the fire of American guns in position behind the American trenches.

The day is close at hand when our dependence upon French planes and pilots will cease and our own flyers carry out all necessary reconnaissance and photographic reconnaissances for the sector we occupy.

They have been privileged to witness every phase of the trench march, and occupation of the bit of front turned over to them, and I have visited them in their advanced trench positions. To say that they have been completed without a hitch or under as favorable conditions as possible would be inaccurate as well as unfair to the men who endured, without faltering, very considerable deprivations, hardships and dangers. But the capabilities of the majority outweighed the shortcomings of the few, and they were able to bring me back, on the whole, I believe, a great success.

When great distances are to be covered nowadays troops are conveyed in motor trucks. But one the proportional supply of motor trucks still falls far short of the lavish standard set by the French and British, so the American units hiked many scores of miles across country, over frozen roads every foot of the surface of which was solidly coated with ice.

Supply trains were stalled on slippery hills or wrecked in ditches alongside the highways. Rations for the men were at a low ebb and forage for the horses and mules sometimes failed to appear altogether. Many artillery horses died.

Roads in Bad Shape.

The first infantry detachment started five days before the night it was to enter the trenches, and the others followed in the course of the next 48 hours.

The temperature the first day was 4 below freezing at the outset, but the frightful condition of the roads was the principal difficulty.

At one place I saw an entire company come sliding from a steep incline and land in a confused mass at the bottom.

Motor trucks and horse-drawn wagons were alike unmanageable on many points. Chauffeurs and drivers just skidded along, bumping from side to side of the road, and prayed that the ditch in which they were doomed to drop was not too deep.

Yet on that appalling day—the natives said nothing like it had been experienced in the last 25 years—the regiment that began the march reeled off the first nine miles in two hours and a half and traversed six miles more before halting for the night. The troops were lodged in wooden barracks at resting points and rolling kitchens miraculously kept pace with them all the way, like good generals generally available even though not always plentiful.

The sick list was almost non-existent.

One regiment, during three days of the hike, had four cases of mumps—there had been a slight epidemic—and one rheumatism. In another the only trouble beyond sore feet was the suit-

side of a private who had been despondent for several weeks.

From a little shell-beaten village, just behind the lines, I watched the battalion selected by the high command as best qualified to head the movement march off to the trenches.

Dusk was ripening into mellow moonlight as the companies paraded in the village streets. It was a period of quiet at the front, so only an occasional faint throb, like the beating of a pulse, betrayed the proximity of the enemy's guns.

"Looks like this war was going to begin pretty soon after all," drawled a doughboy from the South as he fell in by his side.

Nobody chimed in with his attempt to open conversation. The men are not very talkative when they start toward no man's land.



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