

GENERAL PERSHING'S OWN STORY OF OPERATIONS OF AMERICAN TROOPS DURING THE WORLD WAR

Commander in Chief of Expeditionary Forces Submits Special Report to Secretary Baker—Fate of Central Powers Decided by Work of the United States Army.

FOCH ADMITTED ALLIES WERE FACING DEFEAT

First and Second Divisions, in Company With French Moroccan Troops, Attacked on July 18 Without Preliminary Bombardment, Smashed Through the German Lines, Overwhelmed Both Infantry and Artillery, and Cut the Enemy's Communications, Compelling a General Retreat From the Marne and Starting the Military Collapse Which Forced Germany to Sue for Peace.

(Continued from January 1)

In order to hinder the enemy's conquest of Russia and, if possible, prevent a German attack on Italy, or in the Near East, the allies sought to maintain the offensive on the western front as far as their diminished strength and morale would permit.

Notwithstanding these allied attacks on the western front, the immense gains by the German armies in the east, culminating at Riga on Sept. 3, precipitated the collapse of Russia. The following months, the Austrians—with German assistance—surprised the Italians and broke through the lines at Caporetto, driving the Italian armies back to the Piave river, inflicting a loss of 300,000 men, 600,000 rifles, 3,000 guns, and enormous stores. This serious crisis compelled the withdrawal of ten French and British divisions from the western front to Italy. The German situation on all other theaters was so favorable that as early as November they began the movement of divisions toward the western front. If needed, her divisions could be withdrawn from the Italian front before the French and British dared recall their divisions.

At first the allies could hardly hope for a large American army. Marshal Joffre during his visit to America had made special request that a combat division be sent at once to Europe as visual evidence of our purpose to participate actively in the war, and also asked for engineer regiments and other special service units.

The arrival of the first division and the parade of certain of its elements in Paris on July 4 caused great enthusiasm, and for the time being French morale was stimulated. Still, allied apprehension was deep-seated and material assistance was imperative.

Outlook Dark for 1918.

A review of the situation showed that with Russia out of the war the central powers would be able to release a large number of divisions for service elsewhere, and that during the spring and summer of 1918, without interfering with the status quo at Saloniki, they could concentrate on the western front a force much stronger than that of the allies. In view of this it was represented to the war department in December as of the utmost importance that the allied preparations be expedited.

My conclusion was that, although the morale of the German people and of the armies was better than it had been for two years, only an untoward combination of circumstances could give the enemy a decisive victory before American support as recommended could be made effective, provided the allies secured unity of action. However, a situation might arise which would necessitate the temporary use of all American troops in the units of our allies for the defensive, but nothing in the situation justified the relinquishment of our firm purpose to form our own army under our own flag.

While the Germans were practicing for open warfare and concentrating their most aggressive personnel in shock divisions, the training of the allies was still limited to trench warfare. As our troops were being trained for open warfare, there was every reason why we could not allow them to be scattered among our allies, even by divisions, much less as replacements, except by pressure of sheer necessity. Any sort of permanent amalgamation would irrevocably commit America's fortunes to the hands of the allies. Moreover, it was obvious that the lack of homogeneity would render these mixed divisions difficult to maneuver and almost certain to break up under stress of defeat, with the consequent mutual recrimination.

Again, there was no doubt that the realization by the German people that independent American divisions, corps, or armies were in the field with determined purpose would be a severe blow to German morale and prestige. It was also certain that an early appearance of the larger American units on the front would be most beneficial to the morale of the allies themselves.

Accordingly, the first division, on Jan. 10, 1918, took over a sector north of Toul; the twenty-sixth division went to the Soissons front early in February; the first-division entered

the line near Luneville, Feb. 21, and the second division near Verdun, March 18. Meanwhile, the first army corps headquarters, Major Gen. Hunter Liggett commanding, was organized at Neufchateau on Jan. 20, and the plan to create an independent American sector on the Lorraine front was taking shape.

This was the situation when the great German offensive was launched on March 21, 1918.

Figured on 21 Divisions.

The war department planned as early as July, 1917, to send to France by June 15, 1918, twenty-one divisions of the then strength of 20,000 men each, together with auxiliary and replacement troops, making a total of some 650,000 men. While the numbers fell short of my recommendation of July 6, 1917, which contemplated at least 1,000,000 men by May, 1918, it should be borne in mind that the main factor in the problem was the amount of shipping to become available for military purposes, in which must be included tonnage required to supply the allies with steel, coal and food.

On Dec. 2, 1917, an estimate of the situation was cabled to the war department with the following recommendation:

"In view of these conditions, it is of the utmost importance to the allied cause that we move swiftly. The minimum number of troops we should plan to have in France by the end of June is four army corps of twenty-four divisions, in addition to troops for service of the rear. This figure is given as the lowest we should think of and is placed no higher because the limit of available transportation would not seem to warrant it.

"A study of transportation facilities shows sufficient American tonnage to bring over this number of troops, but to do so there must be a reduction in the tonnage allotted to other than army needs. The use of shipping for commercial purposes must be curtailed as much as possible. The allies are very weak and we must come to their relief this year, 1918. The year after may be too late. It is very doubtful if they can hold on until 1919 unless we give them a lot of support this year. It is therefore strongly recommended that a complete readjustment of transportation be made and that the needs of the war department as set forth above be regarded as immediate."

In the latter part of January joint note No. 12, presented by the military representatives with the supreme war council, was approved by the council. This note concluded that France would be safe during 1918 only under certain conditions, namely:

"That the strength of the British and French troops in France are continuously kept up to their present total strength and that they receive the expected re-enforcements of not less than two American divisions per month."

The first German offensive of 1918, beginning March 21, overran all resistance during the initial period of the attack. The offensive made such inroads upon French and British reserves that defeat stared them in the face unless the new American troops should prove more immediately available than even the most optimistic had dared to hope. On March 27 the military representatives with the supreme war council prepared their joint note No. 18. This note repeated the previously quoted statement from joint note No. 12, and continued:

"The battle which is developing at the present moment in France, and which can extend to the other theaters of operations, may very quickly place the allied armies in a serious situation from the point of view of effectiveness.

"The military representatives are of the opinion that it is highly desirable that the American government should assist the allied armies as soon as possible by permitting in principle the temporary service of American units in allied army corps and divisions. Such re-enforcements must, however, be obtained from other units than those American divisions which are now operating with the French, and the units so temporarily employed must eventually be returned to the Ameri-

"The military representatives are of the opinion that from the present time, in execution of the foregoing, and until otherwise directed by the supreme war council, only American infantry and machine gun units, organized as that government may decide, be brought to France, and that all agreements or conventions hitherto made in conflict with this decision be modified accordingly."

Planned an American Army.

The secretary of war, who was in France at the time; General Bliss, the American military representative with the supreme war council, and I at once conferred on the terms of this note, with the result that the secretary recommended to the president that joint note No. 18 be approved in the following sense:

"The purpose of the American government is to render the fullest cooperation and aid, and therefore the recommendation of the military representatives with regard to the preferential transportation of American infantry and machine gun units in the present emergency is approved. Such units, when transported, will be under the direction of the commander in chief of the American expeditionary forces, and will be assigned for training and use by him in his discretion. He will use these and all other military forces of the United States under his command in such manner as to render the greatest military assistance, keeping in mind always the determination of this government to have its varied military forces collected as speedily as their training and the military situation permits. Into an independent American army, acting in concert with the armies of Great Britain and France, and all arrangements made by him for their temporary training and service will be made with that end in view."

British Losses Heavy.

The battle line in the vicinity of Amiens had hardly stabilized when, on April 9, the Germans made another successful attack against the British lines on a front of some 40 kilometers in the vicinity of Arras and along the Lys river. As a result of its being included in a salient formed by the German advance, Passchendaele ridge, the capture of which had cost so dearly in 1917, was evacuated by the British on April 17.

The losses had been heavy and the British were unable to replace them entirely. They were, therefore, making extraordinary efforts to increase the shipping available for our troops. On April 21, I went to London to clear up certain questions concerning the rate of shipment and to reach the further agreement provided for in the April 7 conference. The result of this London agreement was cabled to Washington April 24, as follows:

"That only the infantry, machine guns, engineers and signal troops of American divisions and brigades be sent over in British and American shipping during May for training and service with the British army in France, up to six divisions and that any shipping in excess of that required for these troops be utilized to transport troops necessary to make these divisions complete."

"That the American personnel of the artillery of these divisions and such corps troops as may be required to build up American corps organizations follow immediately thereafter, and that American artillery personnel be trained with French material and join its proper divisions as soon as thoroughly trained."

"That it is contemplated American divisions and corps when trained and organized shall be utilized under the American commander in chief in an American group."

"That the American commander in chief shall allot American troops to the French or British for training or to train them with American units of his discretion, with the understanding that troops already transported by British shipping or included in the six divisions mentioned are to be trained with the British army."

At a meeting of the supreme war council held at Abbeville May 1 and 2, an urgent appeal came from both French and Italian representatives for American replacements or units to serve with their armies. The following agreement was reached, committing the council to an independent American army and providing for the immediate shipment of certain troops:

Under American Flag.

"It is the opinion of the supreme war council that, in order to carry the war to a successful conclusion, an American army should be formed as early as possible under its own flag. In order to meet the present emergency it is agreed that American troops should be brought to France as rapidly as allied transportation facilities will permit, and that, as far as consistent with the necessity of building up an American army, preference will be given to infantry and machine-gun units for training and service with French and British armies."

The next offensive of the enemy was made between the Oise and Berry-aubac against the French instead of against the British, as was generally expected, and it came as a complete surprise. The initial Aisne attack, covering a front of thirty-five kilometers, met with remarkable success, as the German armies advanced no less than fifty kilometers in four days. On reaching the Marne that river was used as a defensive flank and the German advance was directed towards Paris. During the first days of June something akin to a panic seized the city, and it was estimated that 1,000,000 people left during the spring of 1918.

Such extensive priority had already

been granted to American troops, and the troops of those categories which had received even partial training in the United States were practically exhausted. Moreover, the strain on our services of supply made it essential that early relief be afforded by increasing its personnel. The final agreement was signed by the war department on June 5, as follows:

"The following recommendations are made on the assumption that at least 250,000 men can be transported in such of the months of June and July by the employment of combined British and American tonnage. We recommend:

"For the month of June: Absolute priority shall be given to the transportation of 170,000 combatant troops, 25,400 men for the service of the railways, the balance to be troops of categories to be determined by the commander-in-chief, American expeditionary forces.

"For the month of July: Absolute priority for the shipment of 140,000 combatant troops, the balance to consist of troops to be designated by the commander-in-chief, American expeditionary forces.

"We recognize that the combatant troops to be dispatched in July may have to include troops which have had insufficient training, but we consider the present emergency is such as to justify a temporary and exceptional departure by the United States from sound principles of training, especially as a similar course is being followed by France and Great Britain."

"Signed FOCH.

"MILNER.

"PERSHING."

Raised Delicate Questions.

The various proposals during these conferences regarding priority of shipment, often very insistent, raised questions that were not only most difficult but most delicate. On the one hand, there was a critical situation which must be met by immediate action, while, on the other hand, any priority accorded a particular arm necessarily postponed the formation of a distinctive American fighting force and the means to supply it. Such a force was, in my opinion, absolutely necessary to win the war. A few of the allied representatives became convinced that the American services of supply should not be neglected but should be developed in the common interest. The success of our divisions during May and June demonstrated fully that it was not necessary to draft Americans under foreign flags in order to utilize American manhood most effectively.

When, on March 21, 1918, the German army on the western front began its series of offensives, it was by far the most formidable force the world had ever seen. In fighting men and guns it had a great superiority, but this was of less importance than the advantage in morale, in experience, in training for mobile warfare, and in unity of command. Ever since the collapse of the Italian front in the fall of 1917, German armies were being assembled and trained for the great cam-

(To be Continued)

Among the unique occupations recently brought to light in London is that of a man who makes a specialty to tattooing dogs with their owners' names and crests.

SEDUCTION IS CHARGED

Alleged Common Law Wife of Navy Man Deserted Is Claim

SEATTLE—Charles E. Gilmur, Jr., 24, an ex-football star at the University of Washington, was arrested today on a charge of seduction preferred by Fern Cannon, 20, said to be his common law wife and the mother of his 2-year-old daughter.

Following the filing of an information in superior court by Prosecuting Attorney Brown, Gilmur was arrested at the home of his parents, Sheriffs Jarrett and Beebe. Gilmur was taken to the county jail, where he produced bond in the sum of \$1600 and was released.

Miss Cannon, formerly a resident of this city, has lived in Portland, where the child was born, for nearly two years. She came to Seattle recently and asked the prosecuting attorney's office for a complaint against Gilmur, who, she declared, had betrayed her when she was 17 years old. Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Claypool, after an investigation and an examination of documentary evidence, drew up the information.

The girl is said to have passed as Gilmur's wife before the war. She told the county authorities that she had represented to her parents that she was married to Gilmur and told the truth only after the birth of her child. According to letters in possession of Prosecutor Claypool, purporting to have been written by Gilmur, he promised repeatedly to marry her. During the war Gilmur served in the navy, but corresponded regularly with Miss Cannon.

Living microbes have been found in manuscripts hundreds of years old.

SOLDIERS GO BACK TO LAND

Down on the Farm Life Appeals to Boys, Vocational Board Says

According to a report just issued by the Vocational Summary it appears that the back to the farm movement has started in earnest.

The report states that 12,859 pupils over the country were enrolled in agricultural subjects in vocational schools during 1918 and 1919.

The report further states that this is an increase of 4,442 students being trained in this subject. This is only the second year in which practical instruction of this sort has been within reach of the average child of school age.

The Bureau of the Census approximates an increase of one million farms in the United States during the last ten years. This increase, together with the increase of scientifically trained men to operate them, has secured the future of agricultural America.

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