

My Experiences In the World War

(Continued from page 3)

ward amalgamation of our troops with the British he gave me his support in later conferences. When we saw the British representatives for further talks at Versailles January 29, 1918, all their arguments were met frankly and squarely. After they had presented their case Prime Minister Lloyd George asked Bilss for his views, to which he replied:

"Pershing will speak for us and whatever he says with regard to the disposition of the American troops will have my approval."

An agreement was then signed by Mr. Lloyd George, General Maurice and myself as set forth in the following copy of the memorandum submitted and later cabled to Washington:

"In order to meet the situation as presented by Sir William Robertson and hasten the arrival and training of troops, it is proposed that the British government use the available sea transportation in question for bringing over the personnel of entire divisions under the following conditions:

"1. That the infantry and auxiliary troops of these divisions be trained with British divisions by battalions, under such plan as may be agreed upon.

"2. That the artillery be trained under American direction in the use of French material as at present.

"3. That the higher commanders and staff officers be assigned for training and experience with corresponding units of the British army.

"4. That when sufficiently trained, these battalions be reformed into regiments and that when the artillery is fully trained all the units comprising each division be united under their own officers for service.

"5. That the above plan be carried out without interference with the plans now in operation for bringing over American forces.

"6. That question of supply be arranged by agreement between the British and American commanders in chief.

"7. That question of arms and equipment be settled in similar manner."

War Council Meets Again.

The supreme war council began its third session January 30. At the opening session Mr. Lloyd George made a statement in some detail of the situation on the allied fronts. He then spoke of the large number of casualties the allies had suffered during 1917 and in a very pointed manner declared that the costly offensives had produced no tangible results. But instead, he said, the allies now found themselves short of man power at a critical period of the war. His sharp criticism was evidently directed at Sir Douglas Haig and General Robertson, but neither was given an opportunity to reply.

The military representatives presented a joint note with reference to military policy, as directed at the December meeting, and the opinion given was identical with that of the conference at Compiègne January 24 and also in August at the meeting in Paris, except that the campaign under General Allenby, then in progress in Palestine, should continue. It will be recalled that these two informal conferences of commanders in chief had concluded that the allies should remain on

The danger on the western front lay in the continuous increase of the German forces and in their ability to concentrate in turn against the French and British, and as neither had sufficient reserves of their own it was clear that unless some arrangement could be made between them for better co-ordination and support the war might easily be lost before the Americans should arrive.

Plan Allied Reserve.
The study of this problem by the military representatives led to another joint note which proposed a plan for the organization of a general allied reserve. It provided that the British, French and Italian armies should each set apart a certain number of divisions to constitute this reserve, which would be called into action only in a great emergency. The discussion of this question became acrimonious. Haig and Petain both pointed out that they would be short of divisions very soon in case of severe fighting and presented figures on the subject that were very disturbing.

But the council's scheme was cut and dried. The recommendations set forth in the note were adopted then and there by the council. The general reserve was created and its control was placed under an executive war board to consist of Generals Foch, representing the French, chairman; Bilss, the Americans; Cadorna, the Italians, and a British general officer to be named.

At this meeting Mr. Lloyd George designated Gen. Sir Henry Wilson as the British representative, to the very evident disappointment of General Robertson, who was present at the session. The selection of Wilson was regarded by the British high command and the war office as open disapproval of their conduct of the war.

Winter of 1917-18 Most Severe.
It has been said that the winter of 1917-18 was the most severe of the war. The cold was at times so intense as to make the generally unheated houses, barns and lofts used as billets nearly uninhabitable. The gloom of short days and long nights in the isolated and largely depopulated French villages can hardly be described.

Then, as we have seen, there was also a shortage of heavy winter clothing, although frequent cables early in the fall had called attention to the probability of a deficiency. No doubt the demands were greater than the quartermaster department could meet, but the relatively small number of troops in France going through the winter under actual war conditions should have been given first consideration.

Much of the clothing that we received for our troops looked to be shoddy, and, being light and thin, of course offered insufficient protection. The deficiencies were met in part by purchases from the British, although our men did not take kindly to the idea of wearing the uniform of another nation, and it was with considerable protest and chagrin that they did so until our own could be supplied.

To the credit of our officers and men it is said that they generally ignored adverse conditions, and, barring some irritation at French methods and occasionally at our own, they kept at their tasks with commendable determination. Looking back over the different phases of the war I regard that winter, with its difficulties, anxieties and apprehension for the future, as the most trying period of them all.

materials remained haphazard and not at all in the proportions needed. It continued apparent that my recommendations were not accepted in an altogether unhesitating spirit of helpfulness and that the serious need for executive leadership back home had not been met.

Months had elapsed since our entry into the war and that we were just barely ready with one division of 25,000 men.

My diary shows the following notations:

Chaumont, Wednesday, March 6, 1918.—Heavy German raid repulsed by First division Friday morning. The enemy also raided the Twenty-sixth division lines and were driven off.

Went to Ligny-en-Barrois Sunday to meet M. Clemenceau, who came to congratulate the First division on success repulsing raid. Met General Debeney, who was enthusiastic over conduct of our men. Spent the night at First division headquarters.

Motored to Langres with Harbor Monday to speak at opening of second session of general staff college. Germans made raid on Forty-second division that morning.

Upon conclusion of this inspection of the First division I considered it ready to take the offensive at any time. It had been eight months in France, with varied experiences in training, had occupied an independent position in the St. Mihiel sector and had made several successful trench raids. Generals Duncan and Buck had their infantry brigades in efficient shape and Summerall had carried the training of the artillery brigade to a high degree.

Finds Wounded Cheerful.
The front occupied by the One Hundred Sixty-eighth regiment, near Badonvillers, had been under a severe artillery attack on the fourth and a trench mortar platoon had been almost completely destroyed. The French army commander congratulated General Menober on the way in which our troops repulsed this raid. After an inspection of the different regiments of the division and a visit to the scene of this action, I went to the hospital to see the wounded.

They were all very cheerful, especially a young officer, Lieut. A. W. Terrel, Fifty-first artillery regiment, who had lost a leg. He said that he wanted to stay through to the end of the war, and hoped he could find something to do as a clerk. All these first contacts with the enemy were relatively small affairs, of course, but they furnished many examples of what we could expect of the American soldier:

My diary notes this: Paris, Sunday, March 10, 1918.—Spent Thursday morning with Kernan, Langft and Atterbury and made adjustments in port and railway construction and management. Visited Camp de Malilly, where seacoast artillery is having splendid training under General Coe.

On Friday visited Edwards' Twenty-sixth division serving on Chemin des Dames under General Maud'huy, the French corps commander. Arrived in Paris late at night during airplane attack. Branch of judge advocate general's office established at my

as to interest himself in the preparation of their food by detailing French cooks to teach ours the art. When I expressed my appreciation of his action, he said: "You know, we are a nation of cooks and we delight in preparing good things to eat." After their instruction the cooks in these units did better, thanks to the initiative of this fine old French general.

Many of the cooks of the old army became experts and the men in early days in the West fared better as a rule than our men in France, where the cooks lacked experience. Personal supervision by officers and the establishment of cooking schools brought improvement in due course. However, there is little doubt that much of the intestinal trouble in our divisions during the early part of their service abroad was caused by poorly cooked food.

Secretary Baker Arrives.
Secretary Baker arrived at Brest March 10, as my diary showed, and I met him and his party in Paris the next morning. The secretary's party consisted of Maj. Gen. W. M. Black, chief of engineers; Lieut. Col. M. L. Brett, Commander R. D. White of the navy, and Ralph Hayes, his secretary. It was essential that the secretary receive every opportunity to inspect our whole layout, from the front areas to the services of supply, that he might become familiar with plans, observe the progress made toward their completion, and obtain first-hand information of our requirements, all of which he was especially anxious to do. Leaving Paris March 12 we inspected our most important ports, depots, hospitals, regulating stations, motor parks

My diary notes the following: Chaumont, Monday, February 18, 1918.—General Foch and Major General Weygand visited headquarters Thursday, had luncheon with us and examined the general staff organization. Captain Todd, director of naval construction, came to confer regarding wireless stations at Bourdeaux.

Left Friday, spent Saturday and Sunday visiting First division in Ansaerville sector; inspected infantry in front-line trenches and the artillery. Called on General Debeney, French First army.

Returned this morning, stopping at aviation park, Colombey-les-Belles, Maj. Arthur Page commanding. Camouflage work exceptionally well done. Passed through Miracourt to see General de Castelneau, who speaks highly of our troops.

Foch Cold to U. S. Problems.
As General Foch, then chief of the French general staff, had shown some surprise when at the allied meeting at Compiègne in January I told of the delays and difficulties we were having at the ports and in the operation of railways, I invited him to make a visit to my headquarters, hoping to put him in touch with our activities.

We had already reached a state of development that confirmed the soundness of our organization and could forecast its ability to meet all requirements. I went with him to the various sections of the general staff and while he expressed no opinion about what he saw, his aide and spokesman, General Weygand, a staff officer of experience, was very complimentary.

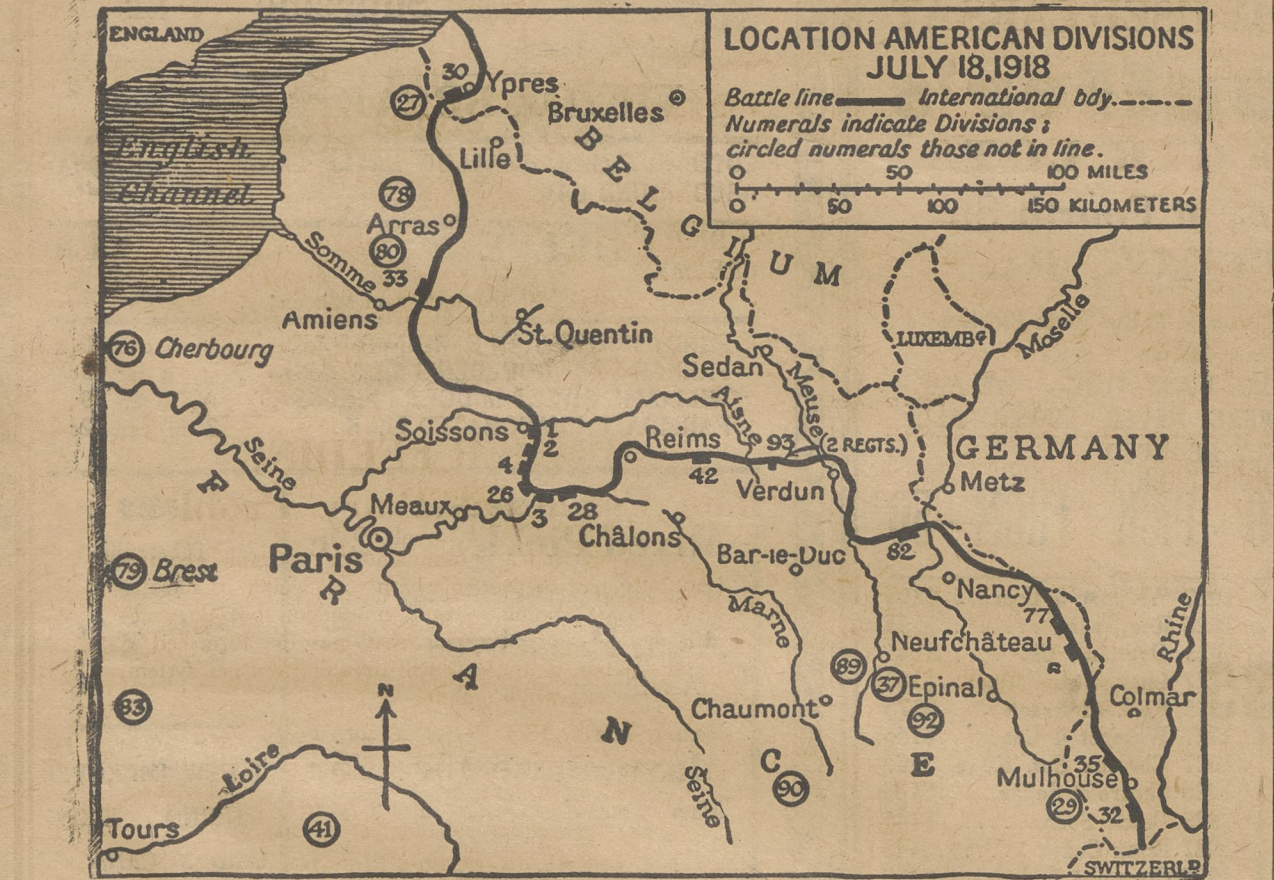
Foch never seemed interested when I talked with him of our problems and I doubt whether he ever thought, knew or cared much about organization or questions of transportation and supply. He was essentially a student and a teacher of history and strategy.

"Treated Like Mendicants."
There continued to be considerable cause to find fault with the attitude and methods of French bureau officials.

As the experience of many of our officers, I recall that one of the most efficient on duty at a very important port once said to me: "General, the trouble is that these subordinate French officials in immediate charge are either so hide-bound or else so conceited that it would be as easy to convince a Greek statue as to make one of them understand. How

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the defensive on all fronts until the Americans should arrive in sufficient force to warrant the offensive. See No End of War Until 1919. The joint note was approved as the decision of the council, with the understanding, as suggested by the French, that no white troops should be sent from France to Palestine. It was decidedly the opinion of M. Clemenceau and of all others present who expressed themselves that the war could not be ended until 1919, when the American army, it was thought, would reach its maximum strength. The allied forces at the moment were superior in all active fronts, except in the Balkans, but the Greek mobilization, when completed, would add sufficient strength to give the allies the advantage there also. The American strength was then negligible, but the prospect was that we should have a few divisions ready for service by June, and by September possibly seventeen or the equivalent of thirty-four French divisions.

CHAPTER XXIX
At the ports in France the amount of freight discharged in January, 1918, was more encouraging, being about two-fifths as much as during the preceding seven months. The rate of discharge was accelerated to some extent by the better distribution of our transports by the navy. More construction material was being delivered where it was needed for port works and the future was somewhat clarified in this respect by the arrival of additional logging machinery. During the month there was also an increase in troop shipments, including some elements of the Thirty-second (Haan's) division, with 20,000 men for the service of supply. By the end of January approximately 120,000 combat troops, 34,000 engineer troops and 61,000 others for the service of supply were in France. Although promising, this was only the merest start, as we were still far behind our schedule. It might be added, however, that the increase in the arrivals of men and

headquarters. Upon Colonel Bradley's report of thirty-day medical supplies on hand, sent urgent cable requesting immediate shipments. Cabled disapproval of suggestion by Mr. Paderewski for organization of division of men with Polish antecedents. Secretary of War Baker landed at Brest today. French Train U. S. Cooks. Major General Maud'huy spoke with considerable enthusiasm of the men and of the officers of the Twenty-sixth division, below regimental commanders, and especially praised their conduct of trench raids. He complimented General Traub, one of the brigade commanders, but was of the opinion that the higher officers, generally, needed more experience to make them efficient. American troops that served with General Maud'huy held him in high esteem. He was scrupulous regarding their instruction, to which he gave special attention. He was very solicitous of the welfare of our troops, even going so far



Pershing in Tin Hat.
In the world it happens, sir, that we do so well I do not see. "Here we have come 3,000 miles to help them and yet we are treated like mendicants on the street corner holding a tin cup for passing pennies. "I know, sir, that co-operation is necessary if we hope to win the war but it requires an excessive effort on our part, with more failures than otherwise to our credit." This was harsh comment, but there were times in the experience of most officers when it seemed to fit the case fairly well. (Continued Next Week)

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