

Chapter VI

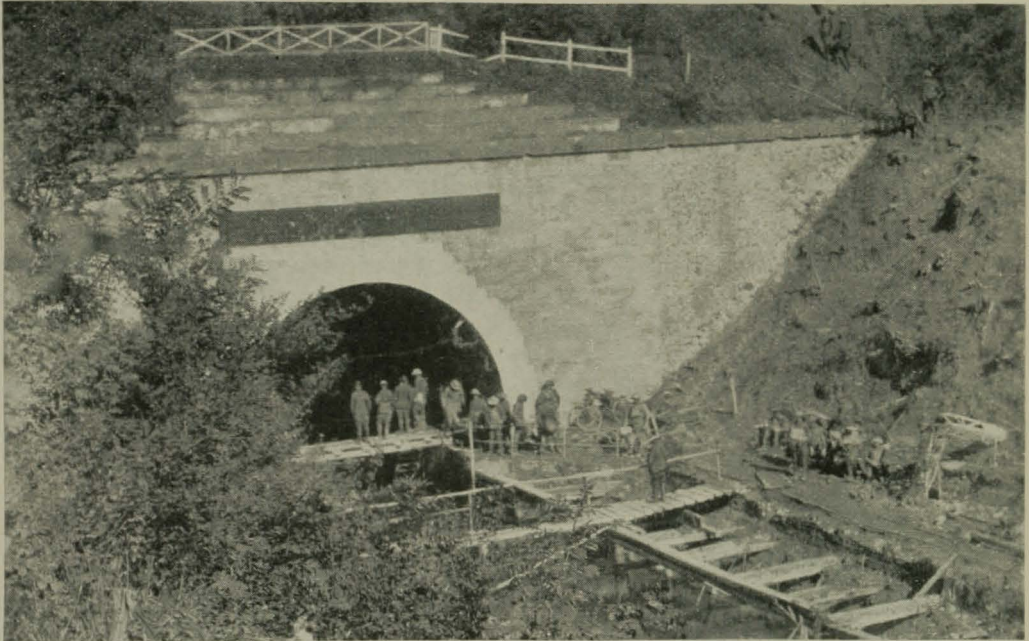
THE AMERICAN BATTLEFIELDS NORTH OF PARIS

THIS chapter gives brief accounts of all American fighting which occurred on the battle front north of Paris and complete information concerning the American military cemeteries and monuments in that general region. The military operations which are treated are those of the American 1st, 27th, 30th, 33d, 37th, 80th and 91st Divisions and the 6th and 11th Engineer Regiments.

Because of the great distances apart of

areas and to all of the American cemeteries and monuments. This route is recommended for those who desire to make an extended automobile tour in the region. Starting from Paris, it can be completely covered in four days, allowing plenty of time to stop on the way.

The accounts of the different operations and the descriptions of the American cemeteries and monuments are given in the order they are reached when following



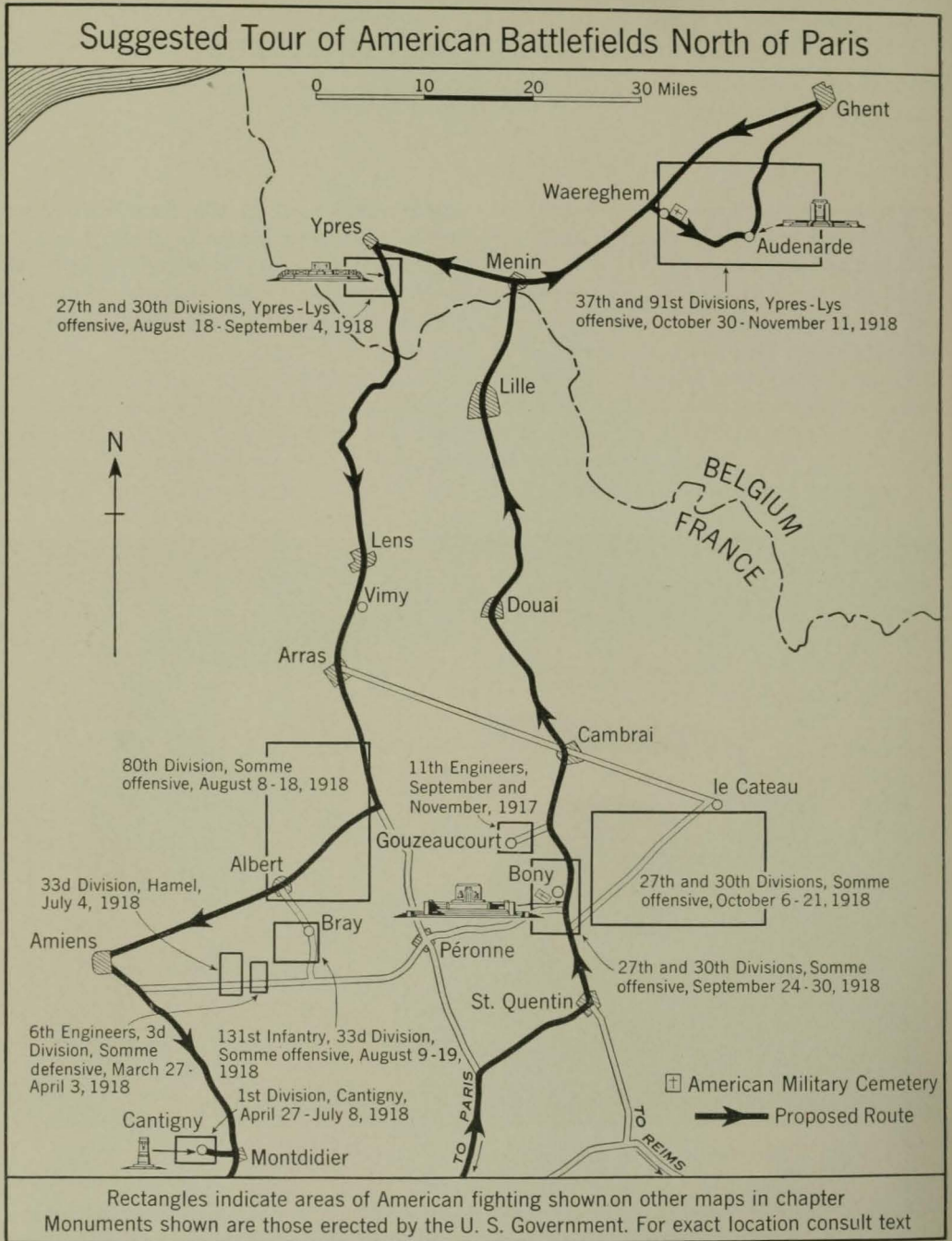
Southern Entrance to the St. Quentin Canal Tunnel, Near Bellicourt, October 1, 1918

the areas where this fighting occurred no itinerary is given. Every operation is described, however, by a brief account illustrated by a sketch. The account and sketch together give sufficient information to enable the tourist to plan a trip through any particular American combat area.

The general map on the next page indicates a route which takes the tourist either into or close to all of these combat

the suggested route. For this reason they do not appear in chronological order.

Many American units other than those mentioned in this chapter, such as aviation, tank, medical, engineer and infantry, served behind this part of the front. Their services have not been recorded, however, as the space limitations of this chapter required that it be limited to those American organizations which actually engaged



in physical combat with the enemy during which territory was either lost or gained. Numerous battles in which American troops took no part were fought north of Paris. No attempt has been made to describe these battles or to indicate on the maps in this chapter more than a few of

the important memorials which have been constructed to commemorate them. Those tourists who are interested in these or in the historical events which took place in the region prior to 1917 should provide themselves with the necessary additional guidebooks before starting on their tour.

27TH AND 30TH DIVISIONS IN THE SOMME OFFENSIVE

SEPTEMBER 23-30, 1918

THE 27th and 30th Divisions trained and served in line with the British Army in the summer of 1918, and took part in an operation near Ypres which ended early in September. After that engagement they were sent southward, entering the battle lines north of St. Quentin with the British Fourth Army.

The terrain in this region is open and rolling, with pronounced ridges and valleys and many sunken roads. There are practically no fences or hedges and but few trees and isolated houses. It is excellent terrain for defensive fighting.

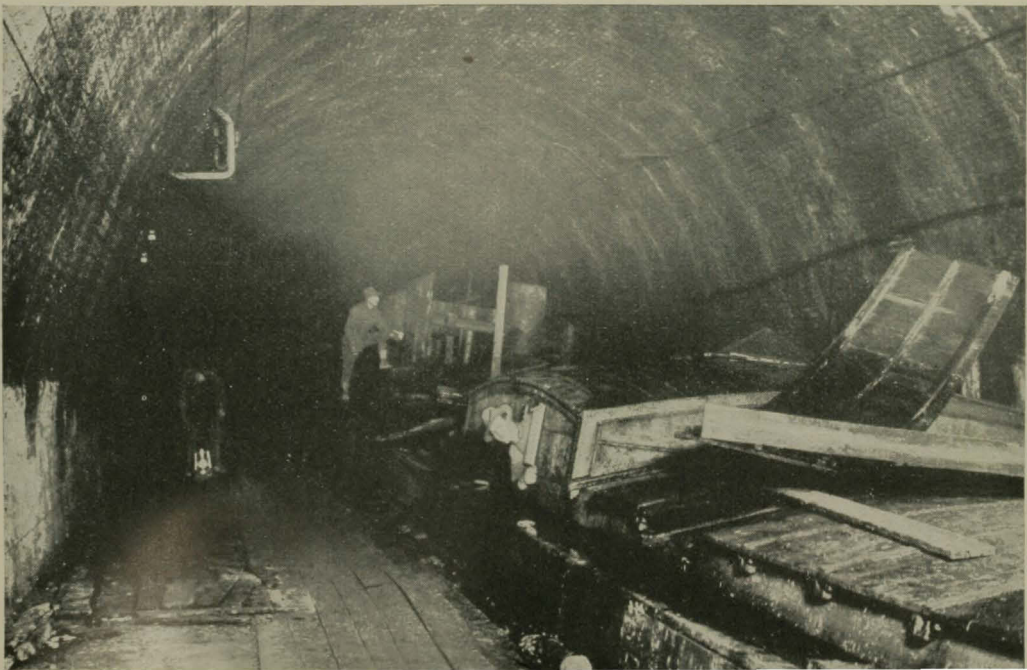
On this section of the front the Germans made use of the St. Quentin Canal as the primary feature of their formidable Hindenburg Line. Between Bellicourt and a point about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north of Bony, where the channel passed through a tunnel, they took advantage of this spacious underground passage, which was deep enough below ground to be safe from the heaviest bombardment, to install barracks, storehouses and other accommodations for their troops. Large chambers dug in the tunnel walls were equipped as kitchens, offices, dressing stations and stables, while barges, stranded in the dry channel, were used as

living quarters. The tunnel, nearly 4 miles long, was artificially ventilated, heated and electrically lighted; and there, close to the front line, the German troops lived safely and in comparative comfort.

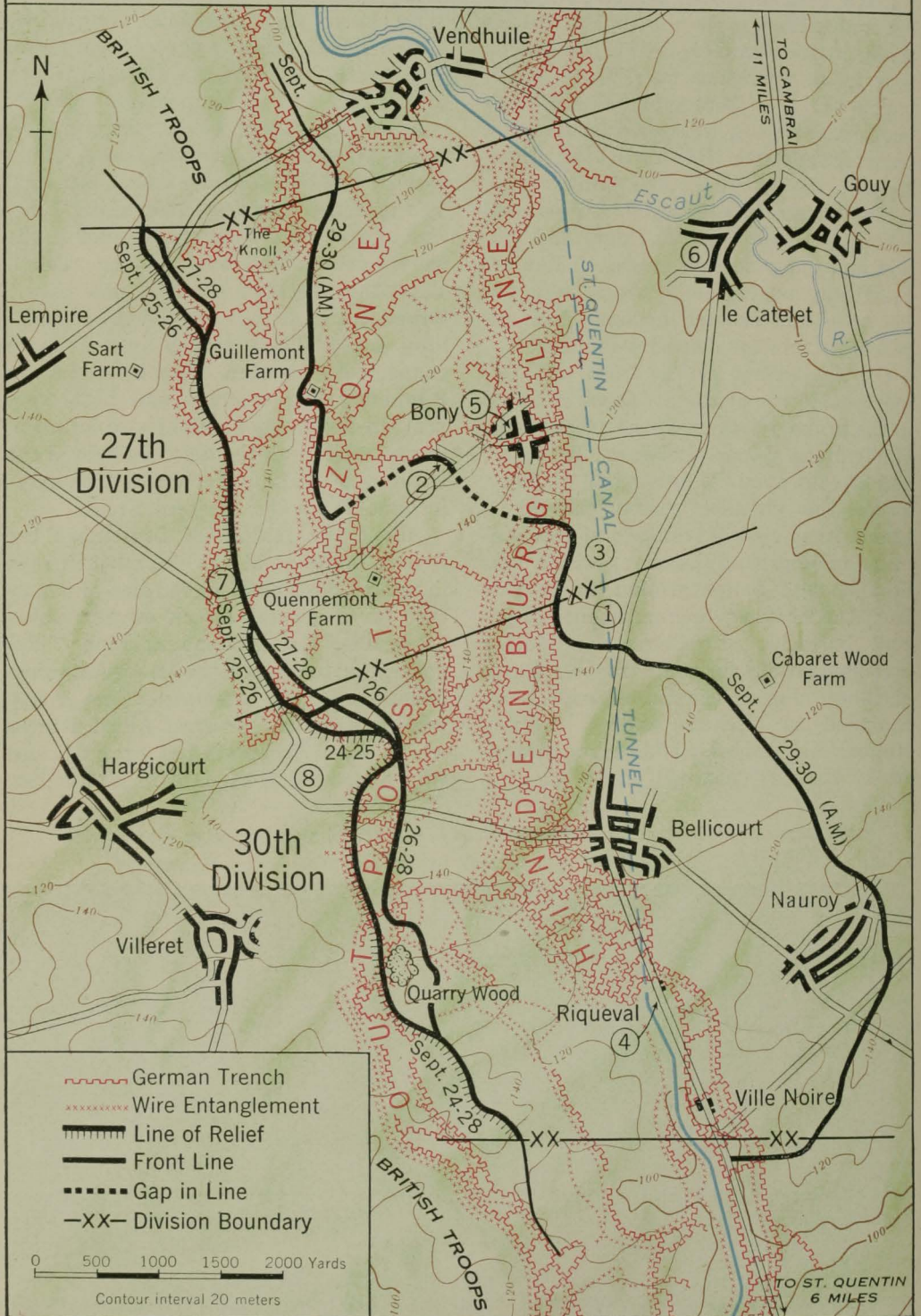
From the tunnel below, underground passages led to the defenses above, which consisted of two separate trench systems. The principal one, the Hindenburg Line, was located in a zone about 1,000 yards wide immediately west of the tunnel. The other, located about a mile away, served as the outpost zone for the Hindenburg Line. These trench systems were connected with each other by numerous communicating trenches and both were protected by many bands of wire entanglements. All in all the defenses here in the autumn of 1918 were among the most formidable on the Western Front.

About the middle of September the British began to attack the outpost zone in order to establish a good line of departure for a general attack on September 29 against the Hindenburg Line. This general attack and the Meuse-Argonne offensive of the American First Army were two of the four great Allied attacks which were either started or continued with increased force late in September.

Interior of St. Quentin Canal Tunnel Near Bellicourt, Showing a Barge Which Was Used as a Barrack by the Germans



27th and 30th Divisions in Somme Offensive September 24-30, 1918



The 30th and 27th Divisions went into the line in adjoining zones of action on September 24 and 25, respectively, as part of the American II Corps, although under the tactical control of the Australian Corps. They were supported by British artillery, as these two divisions did not have their own artillery brigades with them. The line taken over by the 30th Division was west of Bellicourt and that by the 27th Division was west of Bony.

The front was very active at the time and the 30th Division came under heavy

27 during a preliminary attack which the 27th Division had been ordered to make.

In the zone of action taken over by the 27th Division the British in several attempts had been unable to do much more than dent the German outpost position. The principal strong points of that position were Quennemont Farm, Guillemont Farm and The Knoll, which were near the crest of the reverse slope of a ridge and about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the American front line.

The 27th Division was ordered to take these strong points on September 27.



Road Near Guillemont Farm. © B

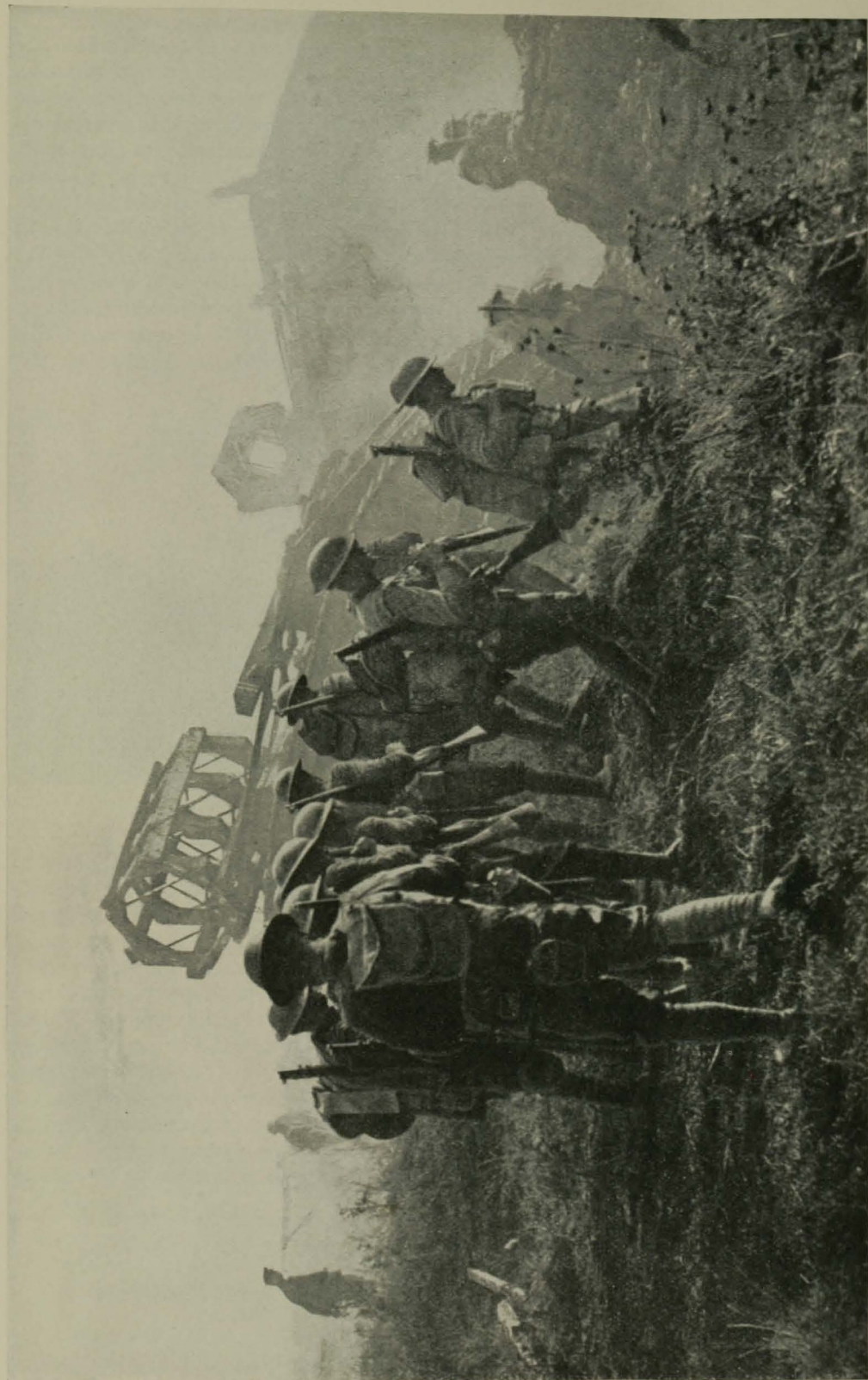
artillery fire while entering the line. It repulsed a raid on September 25 and on the afternoon of the 26th counterattacked and drove back a German raiding party.

In the 30th Division zone of action a large part of the German outpost position had been captured by the British. Most of the remainder was seized on the evening of September 26 when the 30th Division advanced about 300 yards and occupied Quarry Wood and a trench running to the north from it. The left flank of the division was heavily engaged on September

At 5:30 a. m. the regiment designated to make the attack jumped off in a carefully planned assault, supported by tanks and a heavy barrage. The attacking troops, following close behind the barrage, reached the general line of the objective and gained footholds around Quennemont Farm, Guillemont Farm and The Knoll. Severe resistance which developed at these places, together with machine-gun fire from the rear and flanks, and strong counterattacks from the valleys leading to the Hindenburg Line, made it impossible to consoli-

CIRCLED NUMERALS ON MAP INDICATE LOCATION OF THE FOLLOWING

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| ① Monument erected by U.S. Government | ⑤ Town Hall donated by Americans |
| ② Somme American Cemetery | ⑥ Ruins of old château |
| ③ St. Quentin Canal tunnel | ⑦ Good panorama of 27th Div. battlefield |
| ④ Monument to 30th Div. | ⑧ Excellent view of 30th Div. battlefield |



Americans Advancing for the Attack Against the Hindenburg Line Near Bellicourt. © B

date the ground gained. Parts of the attacking line were forced back and others withdrew, although small parties whose numbers were unknown remained isolated in shell holes on the ground advanced over. The close of the day showed practically no gains except on each flank, where the front line was advanced a few hundred yards. The casualties in this regiment were unusually heavy, all company officers except two being killed or wounded.

It was at The Knoll during this fighting that First Lieutenant William B. Turner, 27th Division, performed the heroic deeds for which he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Under terrific artillery and machine-gun fire he led a small group of men in the attack after they became separated in the darkness from their company. Singlehanded he rushed an enemy machine gun that suddenly opened fire on his group, and killed the crew with his pistol. He then pressed forward to another machine-gun nest, 25 yards away, and killed one gunner before his detachment arrived and put the gun out of action. With the utmost bravery and disregard for three wounds he had received, he continued to lead his men over three lines of hostile trenches, killing several of the enemy in hand-to-hand combat. After his pistol ammunition had been exhausted, this gallant officer seized the rifle of a dead soldier, bayoneted several members of a hostile machine gun crew, and shot the other. Upon reaching the fourth-line trench, which was his objective, Lieutenant Turner, with the nine men remaining in his group, captured it and resisted a hostile counterattack until he was finally killed.

Sergeant Reidar Waaler, 27th Division, also received the Congressional Medal of Honor for his fighting on September 27. In the face of heavy artillery and machine-gun fire near Ronssoy, he crawled forward to a burning British tank, in which some of the crew were imprisoned, and succeeded in rescuing two men. Although the tank was then burning fiercely and contained ammunition likely to explode, he returned to the tank and

made a search for other occupants, remaining until satisfied that there were no more living men in the vehicle.

On the night of September 27 the brigade designated to make the general assault took over all of the front line of the 27th Division. Its orders prohibited any organized attack on September 28 and the attempts of the brigade on that



Monument Erected by the State of Tennessee South of Bellicourt

day to push the front line farther forward by means of patrols were unsuccessful.

The failure of the preliminary operation had a grave effect upon the subsequent general attack because the British, whose artillery was supporting the 27th Division, made the error of starting the artillery barrage in front of the line which had been set as the objective of the preliminary operation instead of in front of the actual jump-off line. Consequently, when the attack was made, British artillery fire in the intervening zone, which was



German Prisoners Captured by the 27th and 30th Divisions
Near the St. Quentin Canal

about 1,100 yards in depth, was entirely lacking, thus placing upon the assault troops of the 27th Division the impossible task of capturing a strong position without the aid of close-in artillery support.¹ The reason given for this decision, which proved so extremely costly in American lives, was the probable presence of wounded and isolated groups of Americans stranded in the intervening zone.

Meanwhile, in preparation for the main attack, the British heavy artillery had been hammering away for two days at the strong points and other defenses of the Hindenburg Line in this vicinity.

This was the situation at 5:30 a. m. on September 29 when the 27th and 30th Divisions, on a battlefield enveloped by autumn mists and low-hanging clouds, jumped off for the main offensive.

Behind a heavy rolling barrage the 30th Division, accompanied by tanks,

¹ This attack illustrates the serious situations which would have resulted from any permanent amalgamation of American troops with the Allied Armies.

moved forward with great rapidity across the main German trench system. In spite of the fog the leading waves pushed on beyond the Hindenburg Line and the tunnel to near Nauroy, leaving in their wake many unseen and uncaptured strong points. The southern mouth of the tunnel was quickly blocked and Bellicourt was captured, but the enemy, who were able to reach their positions above ground by means of underground passages of which the Americans were unaware, desperately remanned machine-gun nests previously overrun by the 30th Division. From these and the strong points passed by in the fog the Germans opened fire on the American reserve units, wire details, runners and other groups which were following up the assaulting waves. This caused much confusion and many isolated combats continued throughout the morning over a large part of the zone of action. The dash of the American troops, however, finally prevailed and in the end all the German soldiers who had been found

in rear of the American front lines after the initial assault were killed or captured.

Illustrative of this fighting are the exploits of Sergeant Joseph B. Adkison and Sergeant Milo Lemert of the 30th Division for which they were awarded Congressional Medals of Honor.

When murderous machine-gun fire at a range of 50 yards made it impossible for his platoon to advance, and caused his men to take cover, Sergeant Adkison alone, with the greatest intrepidity, rushed across 50 yards of open ground directly in the face of the hostile machine gun, kicked the gun from the parapet into the enemy trench, and at the point of his bayonet captured the three men manning the gun. The gallantry and quick decision of this soldier enabled his platoon to resume its advance.

Sergeant Lemert, seeing the left of his company held up, located the enemy machine gun which had been causing numerous casualties. In spite of heavy fire he rushed it singlehanded, killing the entire crew with grenades. Continuing

along the enemy trench in advance of his company, he charged another machine gun, silencing it with grenades. A third machine gun opened fire upon him from the left and with similar skill and bravery he destroyed this also. Later, in company with another sergeant, he attacked a fourth machine-gun nest, being killed as he reached the parapet of the emplacement. The courageous action of Sergeant Lemert in destroying in turn four enemy machine-gun nests prevented many casualties in his company and materially aided it in achieving its objective.

The 27th Division, with tanks in the lead, left its trenches on schedule time and started across the wide expanse of level ground in the German outpost zone. The British artillery fire supporting the American attack came down beyond the powerful German positions at The Knoll, Guillemont Farm and Quennemont Farm, and their garrisons, unhampered by any Allied artillery bombardment, at once opened a withering machine-gun fire that swept the entire front of the 27th Division. The

After the Battle Near Nauroy

German prisoners are in the foreground, 30th Division troops are on road in rear





American Infantry Hurrying Forward Under Artillery Fire. © B

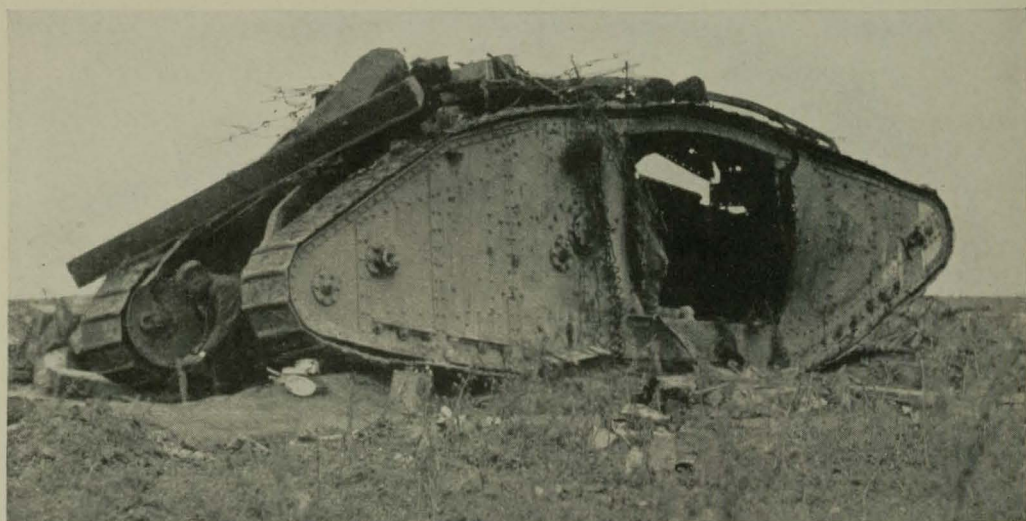
tanks were soon put out of action, throwing an additional burden on the infantry, which gallantly struggled forward in shattered waves. As the reserves moved forward they encountered the fire of machine-gun nests that the troops preceding them had passed by in the fog. Most of the divisional zone between the jump-off line and the tunnel thus became one vast maelstrom of violence. Around Guillemont Farm and The Knoll, the 107th Infantry Regiment of the 27th Division had 337 men killed and 658 wounded on September 29. No other American regiment suffered such a heavy loss in a single day during the war. In spite of all this, however, the troops attacked boldly and incessantly. By noon, Quennemont Farm, part of the elaborate trench system south of Bony, the ground now occupied by the American cemetery and The Knoll were in the hands of the 27th Division.

As previously planned, Australian troops passed through the American divisions in the early afternoon and continued the drive, many Americans joining the Australians in their attacks. By nightfall these troops had occupied all of Nauroy and from there a line that ran generally northwestward to a point about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile southwest of Vendhuile.

This fighting of the 27th Division was characterized by many individual feats of bravery among which were the exploits of Privates First Class Frank Gaffney and Michael Valente, both of whom were given the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Private Gaffney, an automatic rifleman, pushing forward alone with his gun after all the other members of his squad had been killed, discovered several Germans placing a machine gun in position. He killed the crew, captured the gun, bombed several dugouts and, after killing four

27th Division Tank Destroyed by a German Mine East of Ronssoy



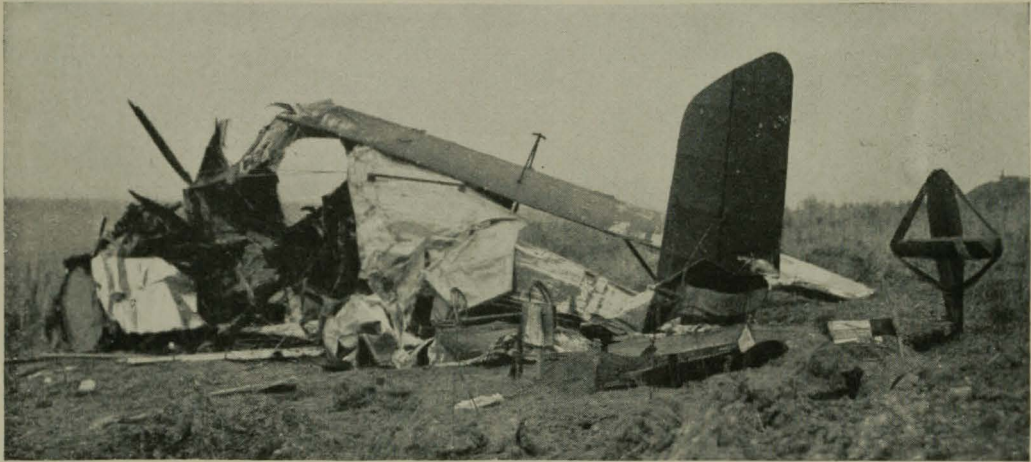
more of the enemy with his pistol, held the position until reinforcements came up, when 80 prisoners were captured.

Private Valente, finding the advance of his organization held up by withering enemy machine-gun fire, volunteered to go forward. With utter disregard of his own personal danger, accompanied by another soldier, Private Valente rushed forward through intense machine-gun fire directly upon the enemy nest, killing two and capturing five of the enemy and silencing that gun. Discovering another

continued their assaults and succeeded in breaking the Hindenburg Line, thus opening the way for additional advances.

Following this battle the 27th and 30th Divisions received many commendations for their heroic conduct. General Pershing and Marshal Haig, as well as the Commander of the Australian Corps, were warm in their praise of the splendid fighting qualities of the divisions and of the results they had achieved.

This battlefield may be visited by taking a train to the city of St. Quentin or



Wrecked British Airplane Near Bony, October 3, 1918

machine-gun nest close by, which was pouring a deadly fire on the American forces, preventing their advance, he and his companion charged this strong point, killing the gunner and putting the machine gun out of action. Without hesitation they jumped into the enemy's trench, killed two and captured 16 German soldiers. Private Valente was later wounded and sent to the rear. His companion, Private Joseph Mastine, was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

The American divisions were relieved early on September 30 but some elements of the 27th Division remained in line and continued to attack with the Australians during September 30 and October 1.

Although the casualties in this operation had been exceptionally heavy the American soldiers had persistently con-

tinued their assaults and succeeded in breaking the Hindenburg Line, thus opening the way for additional advances.

Locations of Headquarters

The locations of the principal headquarters of the American corps and divisions serving in this region were as follows:

II Corps:

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Sept. 26–Oct. 5 | Bois de Belloy, near Assevillers. |
| Oct. 5–12 | Bois de Buire. ¹ |
| Oct. 12–25 | Wiancourt. |

27th Division:

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Sept. 24–28 | Bois de Buire. ¹ |
| Sept. 28–Oct. 2 | In a quarry west of Ronssoy. |
| Oct. 13–21 | Busigny. |

30th Division:

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Sept. 22–28 | Bois de Buire. ¹ |
| Sept. 28–Oct. 1 | In a quarry southeast of Roisel. |
| Oct. 6–10 | In a quarry near Templeux-le-Guéard. |
| Oct. 10–22 | Montbrechain. |

¹ Located one mile northeast of Tincourt-Boucly.



American Memorial Near Bellicourt
Commemorates the American soldiers who served with the British Armies in France

THE AMERICAN MONUMENT NORTH OF BELLICOURT

A BEAUTIFUL and impressive memorial to commemorate all American units which served with the British Armies in France during the World War has been constructed by the United States Government north of Bellicourt.

This monument is conveniently located along the main highway running north from St. Quentin. It stands in the center of a small park area the landscaping of which frames in an admirable manner the graceful lines of the memorial.

The main decorative feature of the monument is an imposing sculptured group consisting of an American eagle resting on a pedestal of stars and stripes flanked by two allegorical figures representing Victory and Remembrance.

Below the sculptured group is the dedicatory inscription, carved with raised letters on a gilded background, and around the monument on a frieze are inscribed the names of places which were prominent in the American fighting commemorated by the memorial.

On the rear face of the monument is a map illustrating the American operations in the vicinity, and from the terrace near it a fine view of the battlefield fought over by the 27th and 30th Divisions can be obtained. A raised circular orientation table on the terrace indicates the directions and distances to the important places in the vicinity.

Included among the decorative features are the insignia and names of the II Corps, 27th, 30th, 33d and 80th Divisions, and 6th and 11th Engineers, all of whose combat operations with the British forces are commemorated here.

The monument is constructed directly over the St. Quentin Canal tunnel which was built by Napoleon between 1802 and 1810. The ridge upon which the monument stands was formed from the excavated earth hoisted up from below. The small, round, tower-like structures which are seen at regular intervals along the ridge are the ends of ventilating shafts that supply air to the tunnel below.

In excavating for the foundation of this monument several filled-in passages were found extending into the bank from the road side, in one case connecting with the canal tunnel below, and in others leading to underground rooms at different levels. These were the remains of some of the wartime field works which honeycombed the embankment of the canal tunnel throughout its entire length.

The battle operations of the 27th and 30th Divisions in this region are described on pages 373-381. The following will help to make that description clearer and to tie it in with the terrain visible from the terrace of the monument. (Consult the map which appears on page 374.)

Go to the center of the orientation table and face away from the monument. Most of the places mentioned in the following description can be identified by the direction arrows on the table.

Upon arriving at this front the 27th Division on September 25 took over a portion of the front line whose center was located about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the left of Guillemont Farm, the group of buildings plainly seen to the right front. The 30th Division took over a sector on September 24 about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile this side of Villeret, whose church steeple is plainly visible to the left front. The boundary line between the zones of action of the two divisions roughly paralleled the directional arrow pointing toward Hargicourt and passed about 300 yards to the right of this point.

All American attacks in this vicinity were from the general direction toward which the observer is now facing.

The strong German defensive position known as the Hindenburg Line was on the slopes immediately in front of this canal tunnel. It comprised a defensive zone about 1,000 yards wide, consisting of three lines of trenches heavily protected by thick masses of barbed-wire entanglements and defended by numerous machine guns and other weapons. The town of Bony, seen to the right, and the town of Bellicourt, seen to the left along the

tunnel, were included in it. Bony, which had been thoroughly prepared for all-around defense, was about in the center of the zone of action of the 27th Division, and Bellicourt, which was protected by an elaborate trench system, was close to the center of the zone of action that was assigned to the 30th Division.

The ground upon which is now located the Somme American Cemetery, whose flagpole can be seen in the distance to the right front just to the right of Guillemont Farm, was located between the Hindenburg Line and its outpost zone.

The outpost zone of the Hindenburg Line included strong points at The Knoll, the low bare hill which can be faintly seen to the right front on a clear day; Guillemont Farm; Quennemont Farm, invisible from here but just this side of the first wood whose tops are seen to the right of front; and ran just this side of Villeret.

Nauroy, to the left rear, was one of the objectives of the 30th Division in the main attack against the Hindenburg Line. Gouy, to the right rear, was one of the objectives of the 27th Division.

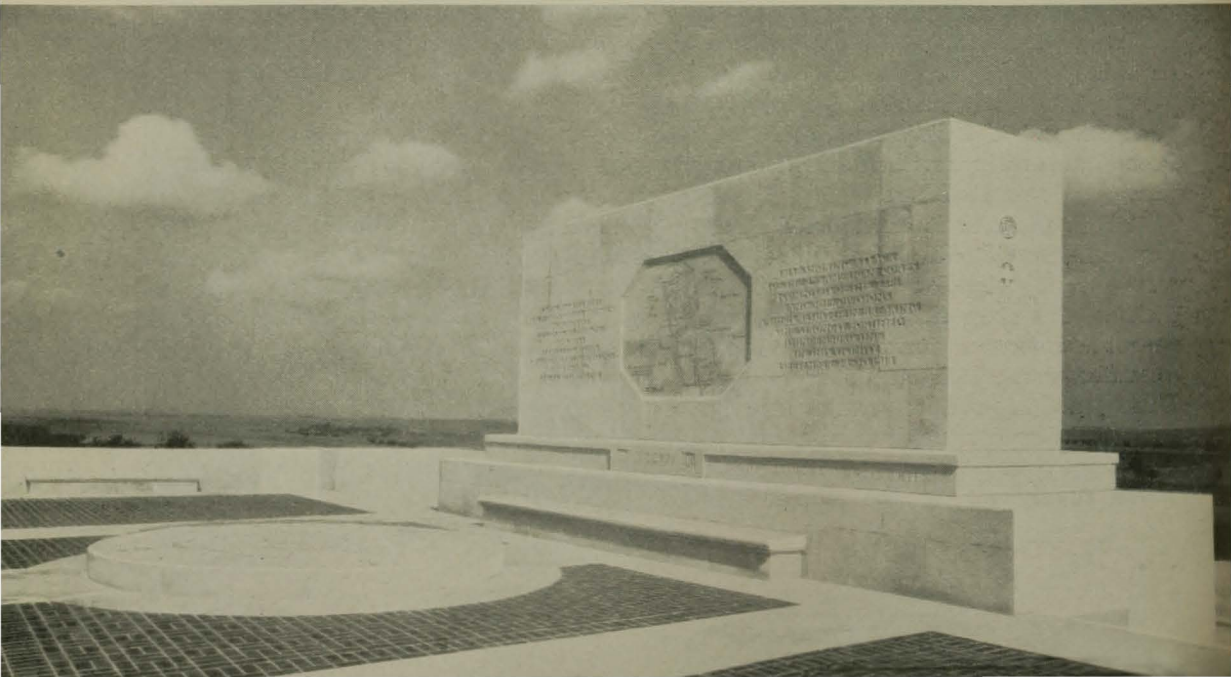
The American front line at the end of September 29, the day of the main attack, did not include the site of this monument, the Germans having held this ground throughout all the severe fighting of that day. It did, however, include Nauroy and

in this direction ran to just this side of Cabaret Wood Farm, which can be seen around the side of the monument by stepping to the left edge of the orientation table and looking to the rear. There it changed direction and passed about 200 yards to the left (south) of here. About 500 yards in front of this monument, just over the first ridge, it changed direction again and ran toward Bony; about half-way there it again changed direction and followed an irregular path passing to the observer's left of the town of Vendhuile which is close to the high smoke stack seen in the distance through the trees beyond the left edge of Bony.

Some of the high points of the fighting near here are the following: About $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the right front over the first ridge, about 200 men of the 27th Division early on September 29 captured a section of the Hindenburg Line after fierce hand-to-hand fighting. They consolidated their position in the German trenches after capturing many prisoners and four field guns. Attempts to enter Bony down the trenches of the Hindenburg Line were unsuccessful. Several German counterattacks launched from Bony against this group of American soldiers were repulsed.

Other units of the 27th Division reached the ground upon which the American cemetery now stands. These units held

West Face of American Memorial Near Bellicourt





30th Division Reserves Digging In Near Molain, October 18, 1918

their position during the day in spite of plunging fire from near Bony and the intense efforts of the Germans to dislodge them. Many American casualties were suffered at the site of the cemetery.

Aided by the fog a number of 27th Division soldiers on the morning of September 29 penetrated the German lines as far as the village of Gouy, seen to the right rear. These men were reported in that town by an Allied airplane but in the end were either killed or captured.

Near the exit of the canal tunnel beyond Bony, a British heavy tank manned by Americans was disabled by a direct hit of a German shell, which killed or wounded all of the crew. Sergeant John C. Latham and Corporals Alan L. Eggers and Thomas E. O'Shea, 27th Division, who had become separated from their platoon by a smoke barrage and had taken cover in a shell hole within the enemy lines, heard a call for help from the tank, whereupon they left their shelter and started toward the tank under heavy fire from German machine guns and trench mortars. In crossing the fire-swept area Corporal O'Shea was mortally wounded and died soon afterwards, but Sergeant Latham and Corporal Eggers, undeterred, continued on to the tank, rescued a wounded officer and assisted two wounded soldiers to a near-by trench. One of the wounded members of the tank crew, Sergeant Frank J. Williams, after having assisted his wounded officer, returned to the tank under heavy fire and continued to operate a 6-pounder against the enemy until driven out by armor-piercing shells. Sergeant

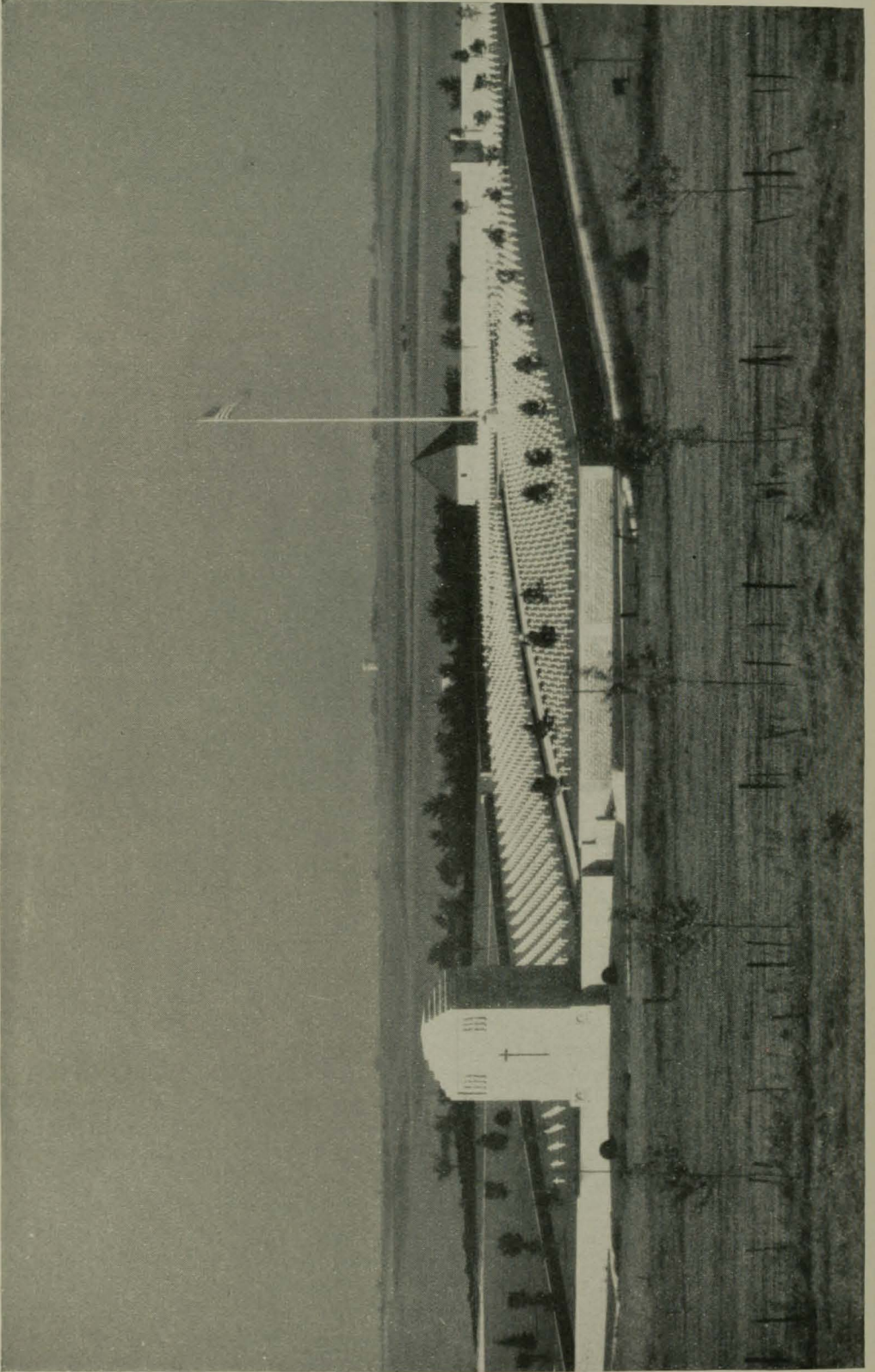
Latham and Corporal Eggers returned to the tank in the face of violent fire, dismounted a machine gun and took it back to where the wounded men were. With this weapon, and assisted by Sergeant Williams, they succeeded in keeping off the enemy all day and later under cover of darkness brought the machine gun and wounded men back to the American lines. Sergeant Latham and Corporals Eggers and O'Shea were awarded Congressional Medals of Honor. Sergeant Williams was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

The casualties of the 27th and 30th Divisions on this battlefield totaled more than 7,500 officers and men.

Upon being relieved from the front line in this vicinity, the 27th and 30th Divisions rested in rear areas until October 6, when the 30th Division as part of the American II Corps again entered the battle. Its new zone of action was near Montbrehain, the direction to which is indicated on the orientation table although invisible from this point.

The account, given on pages 389-393, of the operations of the 27th and 30th Divisions in this region after October 1, should be read at this time if the area of that fighting is not to be visited later.

Upon leaving this monument the tourist should visit the Somme American Cemetery which is 2.2 miles away by road. To go there, at exit from monument turn left on the main road and take the first road to the left. After passing through the town of Bony, stop on the road when the cemetery comes in full view and read pages 387-388.



Somme American Cemetery Near Bony

THE SOMME AMERICAN CEMETERY NEAR BONY

IN October 1918 a temporary American cemetery was established on the bare, shell-torn fields about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile southwest of the ruins of the small village of Bony. In that cemetery were buried the men of the 27th and 30th Divisions who lost their lives in the fighting near by for the possession of the Hindenburg Line.

The temporary cemetery with its wooden crosses painted white and arranged in regular rows made a deep impression upon the survivors of the American divisions who had fought in the region and they asked that a permanent cemetery be established there. No more fitting spot could have been found than that gentle slope where they and their fallen comrades had performed such deeds of valor and, in answer to their request, it became the site of a permanent military cemetery.

Among the 1,833 Americans who now sleep there, are soldiers not only from the 27th and 30th Divisions but those of the 1st Division who gave their lives at Cantigny, and of the 33d and 80th Divisions and 6th and 11th Engineers who fell while serving with the British.

By means of architectural features and of trees, flowers and shrubs especially appropriate to the region, this cemetery has been developed into a resting place of outstanding beauty. A splendid view of this American shrine can be obtained while approaching it from Bony.

The cemetery consists of a grave area enclosed by a low stone wall, and an adjoining area where the superintendent's quarters, including a reception room for the convenience of visitors, are located. Inquiries for the location of a particular grave or for other information should be made at the reception room.

A flagpole from which the American flag flies during daylight hours is located at the center of the grave area. The rear wall is high and joins two hangars used for service purposes. This wall is covered with ivy and will ultimately be shaded in rear by tall cedars of Lebanon. The

shorter axis of the cemetery is bordered by beds of red roses. The longer axis, flanked by small square-cut box hedges, leads to the chapel at its eastern end.

The chapel, of striking design, stands like a castle guarding the graves of these men who died for their country. Among its exterior decorations are sculptured



Interior of Chapel in American Cemetery
Near Bony

articles of military equipment, including a large field gun, shells, rifles and a tank.

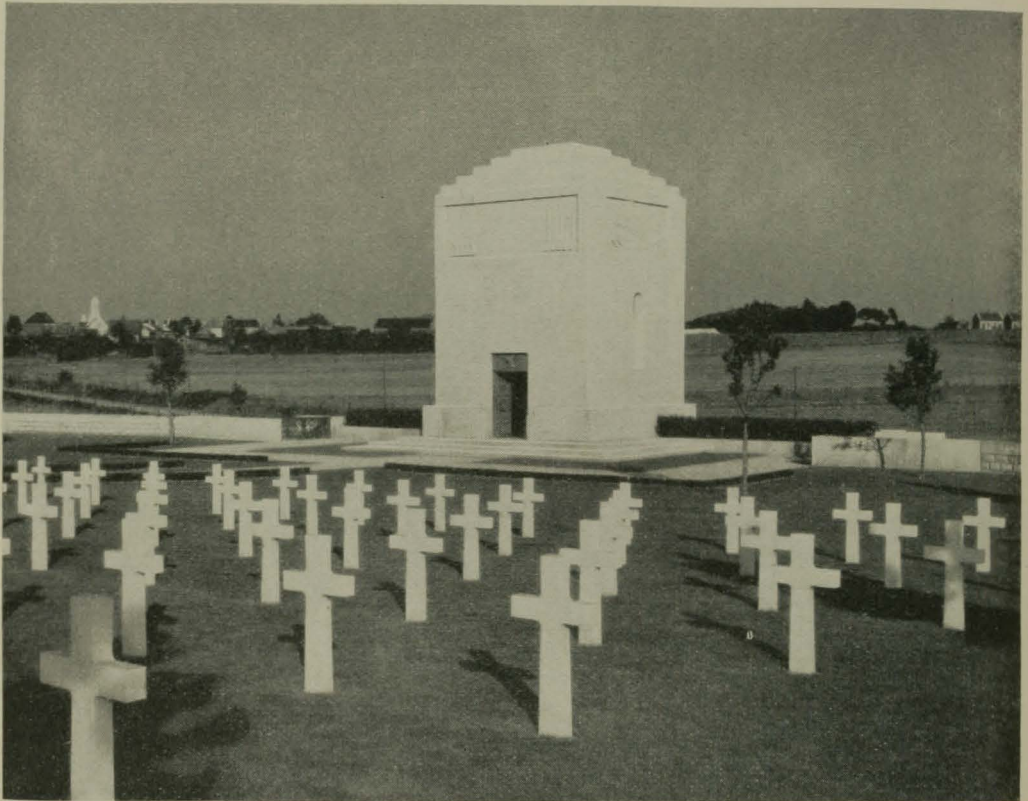
The interior of the chapel is entered through a bronze door, beautiful in its simplicity, and directly across from it, above the altar, is a cross-shaped window with panes of crystal glass. The effect of the sunlight through this window is deeply impressive. The small side windows are

purple in tone and include in their designs the insignia of the various divisions, corps and higher units which formed part of the American Expeditionary Forces.

On the interior walls are carved the names of those men who lost their lives in the American operations in France north of Paris and who now sleep in unknown graves. Above, on each side of the altar, are American flags, while opposite them, near the door, are flags of the infantry and field artillery, the combat

startling reality. This was due to a singular coincidence by which the carvers, fashioning the figure from a block of white stone, came upon a coal-black spot which turned out to be exactly the right position and of exactly the right size to form a lifelike ball for the eye. This spot has now faded to a great extent.

A walk through the peaceful atmosphere of this cemetery will bring to the American visitor a feeling of its fitness as a resting place for America's heroic dead.



Chapel at American Cemetery Near Bony

branches of the army which sustained the greatest number of casualties during the war. An American flag hangs above the entrance door. The bronze work of the chapel is unusually effective and all features of the interior combine to give an atmosphere of impressive dignity.

On the outside of the chapel, facing the road, are carved two American eagles. When the carving was done one of these, the one nearer Bony, had an eye of

This cemetery can be easily reached by taking a train to St. Quentin or Cambrai, the nearest large towns, and by hiring an automobile at either of those places.

The American monument to commemorate all American units which served with the British Armies in France is 1 mile away to the southeast. (See page 383.)

The accounts of the fighting of the 27th and 30th Divisions near here are given on pages 373-381 and pages 389-393.

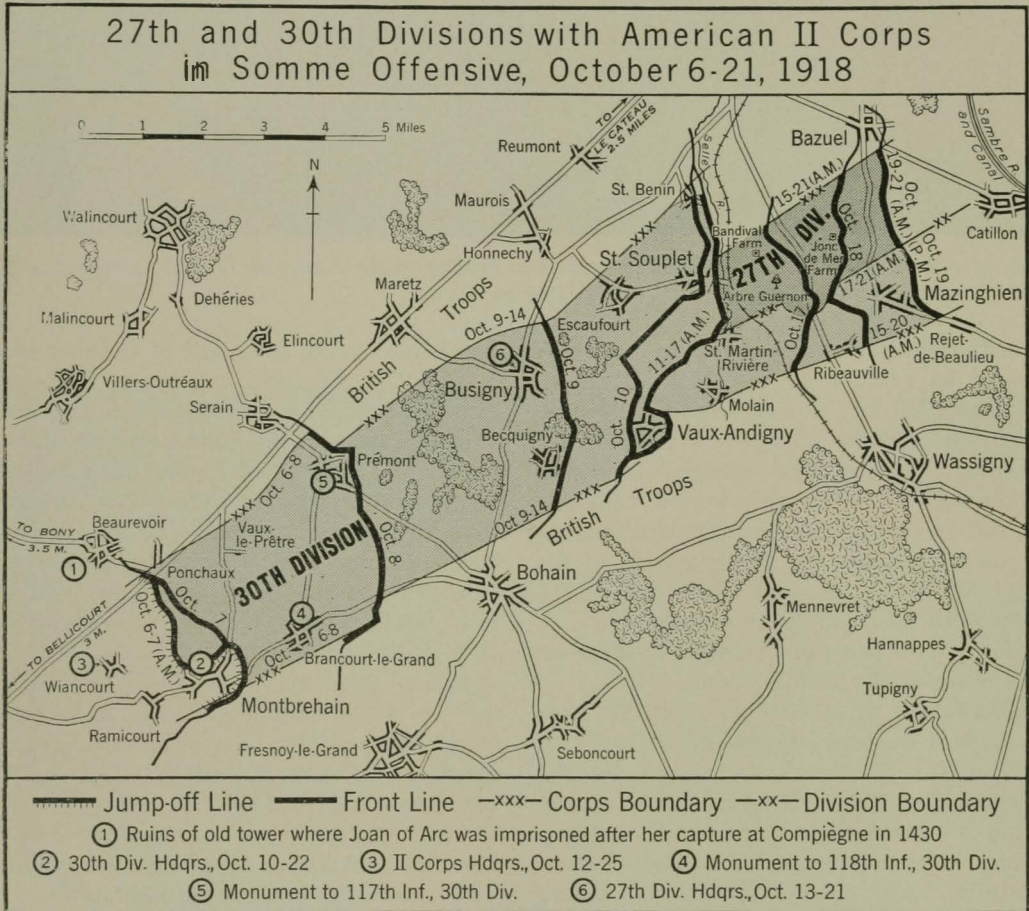
27TH AND 30TH DIVISIONS IN THE SOMME OFFENSIVE

OCTOBER 1-22, 1918

THE area where this operation occurred is not picturesque and practically no evidences of the fighting remain. The roads are (1937) generally narrow, winding and difficult to follow and many are sunken which makes it difficult to view the landscape.

After taking a prominent part in breaking the Hindenburg Line north of St.

On October 7 the 30th Division made a preliminary attack to straighten its line. This was partially successful but resulted in severe losses. On the 8th the division, participating in a general offensive of the British Fourth Army, attacked vigorously and captured the towns of Brancourt-le-Grand and Prémont. It gained all objec-



Quentin, the American II Corps was withdrawn from the front line on September 30 while the British continued the pressure against the retreating Germans. By October 5 the British had advanced about $3\frac{3}{4}$ miles, and the next morning the II Corps entered the line, taking command of a zone of action near Montbrechain with the 30th Division in line and the 27th in reserve. (Consult the sketch on this page.)

tives by early afternoon and ended the day well ahead of the divisions on its flanks. The assaults were energetically continued until the 11th, by which time the division had advanced about 10 miles, reaching the Selle River (known also as the Sourcele River) in the vicinity of St. Souplet. During this fighting the progress of the division was delayed considerably by flanking fire because the British troops



Congested Traffic at Montbrechain in Rear of the American Lines,
October 14, 1918

on its right flank were unable to move forward as rapidly as the 30th Division.

The 27th Division relieved the 30th on October 12 and held the II Corps front while a new general attack was being prepared. During this period constant house-to-house sniping and patrol fighting took place near the eastern edge of St. Souplet. On the night of October 15-16 the 30th Division again entered the line, taking over the right portion of the zone of action of the 27th Division.

At 5:20 a. m. on October 17 the II Corps attacked eastward across the Selle River in conjunction with an attack by the remainder of the British Fourth Army and the French First Army. In a heavy mist the troops waded the small stream, climbed the steep opposite bank and assailed the enemy's trenches on the heights beyond. Although its divisions were seriously depleted in strength as a result of their previous severe fighting, important advances were made.

The 30th Division captured Molain and St. Martin-Rivière in hard fighting on the 17th, making an advance of about 2 miles. The next day it took Ribeauville and on the 19th captured the village of Mazinghien. The division was relieved from the

front line during the night of October 19.

The 27th Division had severe fighting along the railway which crossed its zone of action beyond the Selle River, at Bandival Farm and in the hamlet near Arbre Guernon, all of which were taken on the 17th. The next day Jonc de Mer Farm was captured after a stiff fight and on the 19th the division advanced about 1 mile farther, where it was relieved by a British division on October 21.

When the 27th and 30th Divisions were relieved from the battle line they were approaching the Sambre River, about 19 miles northeast of where they had originally entered the line in September. In their operations after October 5 the 27th Division suffered more than 2,100 casualties and the 30th about 4,000.

During this fighting the Germans were retiring on this front because of the deep advance being made by the American First Army in the Meuse-Argonne region. Much of the combat, especially that of the 30th Division, was in overcoming the resistance of machine gun units left behind in commanding positions. Illustrative of this type of fighting are the brave exploits for which Sergeant Thomas Lee Hall, Sergeant Richmond H. Hilton and Corporal

James D. Heriot, all noncommissioned officers with the 30th Division, were awarded Congressional Medals of Honor.

On October 8, northwest of Brancourt-le-Grand, Sergeant Hall commanded a platoon which, after having by his skillful leadership overcome two machine-gun nests, was stopped by additional machine-gun fire of great intensity. Ordering his men to take cover in a sunken road, he advanced alone on the enemy machine-gun post, killed five members of the crew with his bayonet and thereby made possible a further advance. While attacking another machine-gun nest later in the day he was mortally wounded.

Sergeant Hilton's company on October 8, while advancing through the village of Brancourt-le-Grand, was held up by intense enfilade fire from a machine gun. Discovering that this fire came from a

machine-gun nest among shell holes at the edge of town, Sergeant Hilton, accompanied by a few other soldiers but well in advance of them, pressed on toward this position, firing with his rifle until his ammunition was exhausted and then with his pistol, killing six of the enemy and capturing ten. During the course of this daring exploit he received a wound from a bursting shell which resulted in the loss of an arm.

Corporal Heriot on October 11 at Vaux-Andigny with four other soldiers organized a combat group and attacked a German machine-gun nest which had been inflicting heavy casualties on his company. In advancing toward it, two of his men were killed, and because of the heavy fire from all sides the remaining two sought shelter. Unmindful of the hazard attached to his mission, Corporal

American Troops Awaiting Orders Behind the Front Line Near Prémont,
October 8, 1918. © B

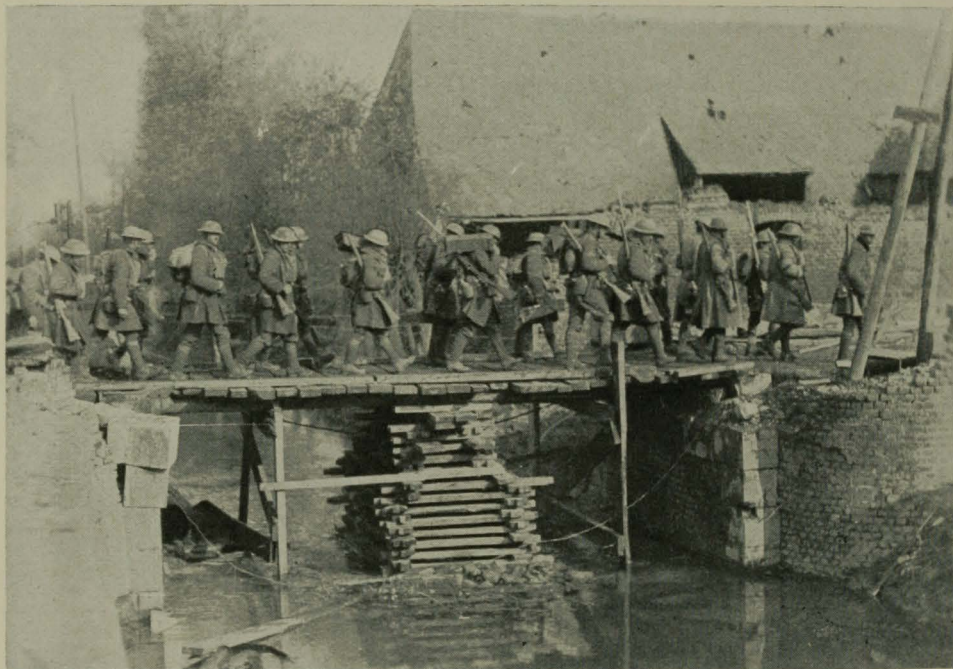


Heriot, with fixed bayonet, alone charged the machine gun, making his way through the fire for a distance of 30 yards and forcing the enemy to surrender. During this action he received several wounds in the arm, and later in the same day while charging another machine-gun nest this gallant soldier was mortally wounded.

In the operations after October 7, the 30th Division took about 2,400 prisoners, and the 27th Division 1,500. Among their captures were many field guns, machine guns, trench mortars, ammunition

the preceding narrative, the following members of the 27th and 30th Divisions were awarded Medals of Honor for their heroic actions during the advance to the Selle River and just east of it.

Private Edward R. Talley, 30th Division, seeing several comrades killed in attempting to silence a hostile machine-gun nest on October 7 near Ponchaux, attacked the position singlehanded. Armed only with a rifle, he rushed the nest in the face of intense enemy fire, killed or wounded at least six of the crew and put



27th Division Troops Crossing the Selle River on a Temporary Bridge at St. Souplet, October 19, 1918

dumps, much railroad rolling stock and military property of all kinds. This battle was the last operation of the war in which either the 27th Division or the 30th Division took an active part.

For the locations of headquarters of American corps and divisions while serving in this region turn to page 381.

This battlefield can be visited by going to Cambrai or St. Quentin by rail and from either of those places by automobile.

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In addition to the men whose Medal of Honor citations have been included in

the gun out of action. When the enemy attempted to bring forward another gun he drove them back with effective rifle fire.

First Lieutenant James C. Dozier, 30th Division, was painfully wounded near Montbrehain on October 8, but continued to lead his men, displaying the highest type of bravery and skill. When his command was held up by heavy machine-gun fire, he disposed his men in the best cover available and, aided by one soldier, continued forward to attack a machine-gun nest. Creeping up in the face of intense fire, he killed the entire crew with hand



Americans Receiving Coffee From Inhabitant of Bequigny
Soon After Capturing the Town

grenades and a pistol and later captured a number of Germans in a near-by dugout.

When his company was held up on October 8 near Montbrehain by violent machine-gun fire from a sunken road, Sergeant Gary Evans Foster, 30th Division, went forward with an officer to attack the hostile machine-gun nests. The officer was wounded, but Sergeant Foster continued on alone in the face of heavy fire and by the effective use of hand grenades and his pistol killed several of the enemy and captured 18.

When, during an advance on October 8, the company of the 30th Division to which Corporal James E. Karnes and Private Calvin John Ward belonged, was held up near Vaux-le-Prêtre by a machine-gun nest which was enfilading their line, these two soldiers advanced against it. They succeeded in silencing the nest by killing three of the crew and capturing the guns and seven of the enemy.

When Private Robert L. Blackwell's platoon of the 30th Division was almost

surrounded by the enemy near St. Souplet on October 11, and his platoon commander called for volunteers to carry a message requesting reinforcements, he volunteered for this mission, well knowing the extreme danger to which he would be exposed. While attempting to get through the heavy shell and machine-gun fire this gallant soldier was killed.

Corporal John C. Villepigue, 30th Division, having been sent out with two other soldiers on October 11 to scout through Vaux-Andigny, met with heavy enemy machine-gun fire which killed one of his men and wounded the other. Continuing his advance 500 yards in advance of his platoon he attacked and killed with a hand grenade four of the enemy in a dugout. Crawling forward to a point 150 yards in advance of his first encounter, he rushed a machine-gun nest, killing four and capturing six of the enemy and taking two light machine guns. After being joined by his platoon in this advanced position he was severely wounded in the arm.

Salvage Dump of the 30th Division at Montbrehain, October 14, 1918



11TH ENGINEERS AT THE BATTLE OF CAMBRAI

NOVEMBER 20—DECEMBER 3, 1917

THE 11th Engineers was one of nine regiments of engineers organized and sent to France at the request of the Allied Governments, soon after the United States entered the war, to help the Allied troops catch up on emergency railroad work.

From August 1917 until January 1918 the regiment, composed principally of railway specialists, was on duty with the British employed in building and repairing railroads near the front line. While so engaged two enlisted men of the regiment were wounded by shellfire near the village of Gouzeaucourt on September 5, 1917. These were the first American soldiers to be wounded while serving at the front with an American unit.

On November 20, 1917, the British Third Army launched a surprise attack toward Cambrai without the customary artillery preparation, the infantry advancing behind a screen of 380 tanks. These tactics were more successful than expected and the British succeeded in breaking through the Hindenburg Line, almost reaching the outskirts of Cambrai. German reserves were rushed to the area



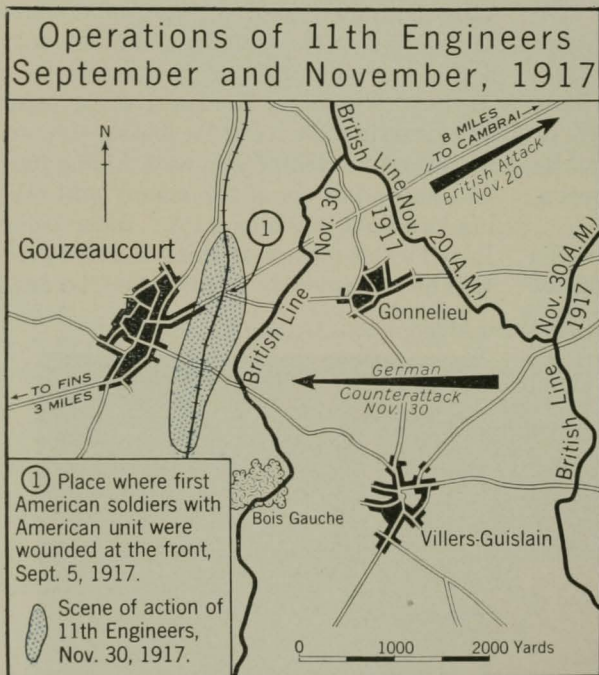
Explosion of a German Time Bomb in Cambrai at the Time of Its Capture, October 8, 1918

and on November 30 the enemy launched a counteroffensive which by its weight and suddenness surprised the British.

At this time the 11th Engineers was at work building a railroad yard near Gouzeaucourt, about 2 miles behind the battle line. The German assault units made rapid progress and soon reached the

area where the Americans, who were unarmed, were at work. Many of the Americans withdrew under fire, secured arms and assisted the British in organizing new defensive positions west of Gouzeaucourt. Others joined with the British and helped stop the attack, some of them having no weapons at the start except picks and shovels. A number of men were captured but many of these escaped when the enemy was suddenly counterattacked about noon by a British division, the Americans participating in this assault. The regiment had 18 casualties in the fighting on November 30.

This locality can be visited by taking a train to Cambrai or St. Quentin and hiring an automobile at one of those places.



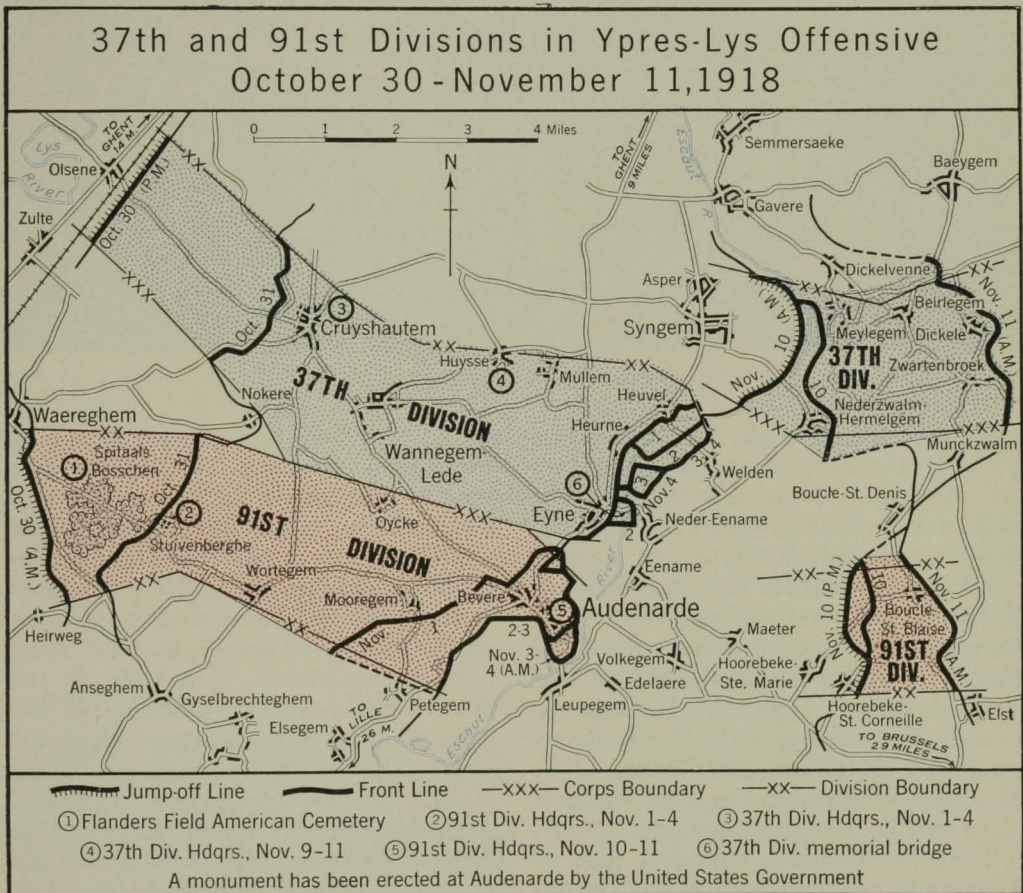
37TH AND 91ST DIVISIONS IN THE YPRES-LYS OFFENSIVE

OCTOBER 28—NOVEMBER 11, 1918

IN the middle of October, while the American First Army was heavily engaged in the Meuse-Argonne offensive, a request was received from the Allied Commander-in-Chief for two American divisions to be sent to Flanders to give impetus to an offensive there which had been going on since September 28. Urgent as was his own need for troops, the American Commander-in-Chief nevertheless designated two of his best divisions, the 37th and 91st, and these units reported within a few days to the French Army of Belgium, which was then part

30. The 37th Division was in the French XXX Corps and its zone of action was along the railroad northeast of Waereghem, close to the town of Olsene. The 91st was in the French VII Corps and its zone of action was just south of Waereghem. (See the sketch on this page.)

At that time this region, which had been well behind the German front line since the autumn of 1914, was little damaged and was still occupied by most of its civilian population. The terrain where these divisions fought was slightly rolling and broken by numerous houses, patches



of the Group of Armies of Flanders commanded by the King of the Belgians.

The two divisions, with a French division between them, went into the front lines near Waereghem on October

of trees, fenced-in small fields and ditches.

The 37th and 91st Divisions took part in a general attack which was launched eastward toward the Escaut River (also known as the Scheldt) at 5:30 a. m. on

October 31. The 37th Division advanced against hostile artillery and machine-gun fire about 2½ miles to the western outskirts of Cruyshautem where it dug in for the night. The 91st drove forward in spite of intense artillery and machine-gun fire and captured the Spitaals Bosschen, a large wooded area a short distance in front of its jump-off line. It

Sergeant Charles R. Reilley, Engineers, 91st Division, who voluntarily accompanied a patrol into the city on November 1, while it was still occupied by the enemy. He obtained important data regarding destroyed bridges and assisted in a fight with a strong enemy patrol. He also captured a German spy while the latter was attempting to escape, and drove a



Waereghem, Belgium, November 1, 1918

was then delayed as the French division on its right had been unable to keep up and this exposed the right flank of the 91st Division to severe hostile enfilade fire which was continued throughout the day.

When the attack was resumed on November 1 it became evident that the Germans were making a retirement and the 37th and 91st Divisions pushed forward rapidly. The 37th Division advanced about 5 miles to the Escaut River, reaching it near Eyne and Heurne. The 91st advanced about the same distance to a position close to Audenarde.

The 91st Division occupied part of Audenarde on November 2 and the remainder of it on the 3d. Before it was relieved on November 4 the division had made reconnaissances of the river and was preparing plans to force a crossing.

Among the first to enter Audenarde was

sniper to cover, thus saving the life of his captain who was about to be fired upon. For his gallant actions he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

Early on November 2 the 37th Division forced a crossing of the river southeast of Heurne under heavy fire, the infantry improvising a bridge from trees felled near the riverbank. The river at this point is canalized and is about 100 feet wide with steep banks about eight feet high. That night the engineers of the division erected footbridges at Heuvel and Eyne upon which more troops crossed. A German attack against the bridgehead position launched about 5:00 p. m. on November 4 was repulsed. The division was relieved from the front line during the night of November 4-5.

Both divisions then began preparations to take part in another general

offensive. These plans were hastened when the Allied Commander-in-Chief sent word on November 9 that the Germans were withdrawing in disorder along the entire front and directed that they be attacked vigorously. As a result both American divisions were ordered back into the line early on November 10 and directed again to drive forward.

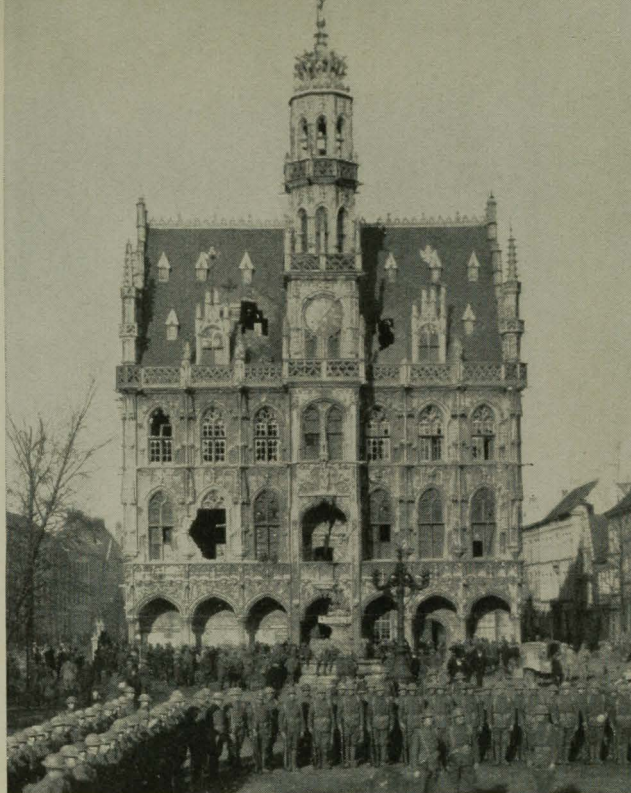
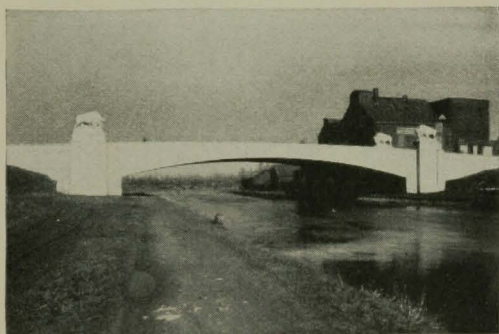
The 37th was assigned a zone of action along the west bank of the Escaut River, about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to the northeast of the one it had previously held, in the bend of the river east of Syngem. The division was under the orders of the French XXXIV Corps. The French divisions which were relieved by the 37th had attempted to cross the river unsuccessfully on the 9th.

When the 37th Division took over the sector it was found that the Germans had not withdrawn. The division, however, in spite of hostile shell and machine-gun fire forced a crossing of the river for a second time, the engineers building a foot-bridge just north of the destroyed Hermelegem-Syngem bridge. By the evening of that day the division was established firmly on the far bank.

The 91st Division relieved French troops in the French XXX Corps, about 4 miles east of Audenarde, on November 10.

During the night of November 10 the Germans on this front were badly disorganized and retiring rapidly, their retreat being due largely to the success of the American First Army in the Meuse-Argonne operation which on November 7 had severed, near Sedan, the main German lateral railroad along the Western Front.

37th Division Memorial Bridge at Eyne, Belgium



Troops of the 91st Division in Front of the Hôtel-de-Ville, Audenarde, Belgium, November 12, 1918

On November 11 both the 37th and 91st Divisions advanced practically unopposed. Patrols of the 37th were in the villages of Dickele and Zwartebroek while those of the 91st were near Elst and in Boucle-St. Blaise by 11:00 a. m. when the Armistice became effective.

During their operations in Flanders deep advances were made by the two American divisions. The total casualties of the 37th Division were almost 1,600 and those of the 91st were about 1,000.

This battlefield can be easily visited by traveling by train to Waereghem, Audenarde or Ghent and hiring an automobile.



Locations of Headquarters

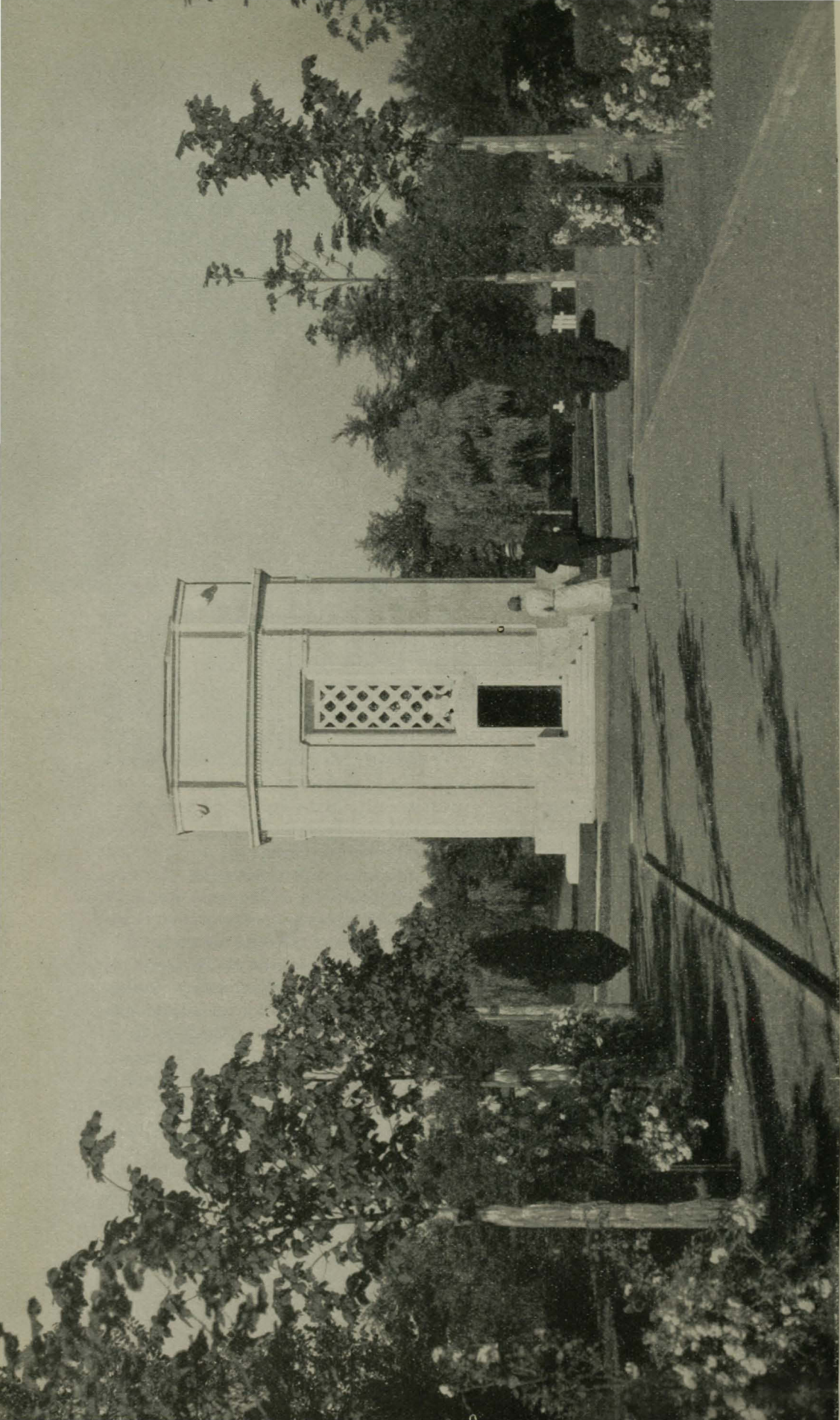
The principal American headquarters during these operations were as follows:

37th Division:

Oct. 29–Nov. 1..... Denterghem.
 Nov. 1–4..... Cruyshautem.
 Nov. 9–11..... Château de Huyse.

91st Division:

Oct. 30–Nov. 1..... Desselghem.
 Nov. 1–4..... Stuivenberghe Château.
 Nov. 10–11..... Audenarde.



Flanders Field American Cemetery Near Waereghem, Belgium

THE FLANDERS FIELD AMERICAN CEMETERY NEAR
WAEREGHEM, BELGIUM

THE Flanders Field Cemetery, the only American military cemetery in Belgium, has been developed by the United States Government into a beautiful and appropriate resting place for the soldiers who are buried there.

This cemetery is located near Waereghem, 43 miles west of Brussels, upon a battlefield of the 91st Division. It contains the graves of 368 Americans, most of whom are soldier dead from the 37th and 91st Divisions which operated in the vicinity and the 27th and 30th Divisions which served for a considerable time in the front line just south of Ypres.

The enclosing wall of the cemetery and the reception building near the entrance are of red brick. The impressive chapel, built of pure white stone, occupies the center of the cemetery grounds.

Above the entrance to the chapel the following inscription, "GREET THEM EVER WITH GRATEFUL HEARTS", reminds the visitor of the important service rendered the world by the dead buried here.

On its outer walls appears the following inscription in English, French and Flemish:

THIS CHAPEL HAS BEEN ERECTED
BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
IN MEMORY OF HER SOLDIERS
WHO FOUGHT AND DIED
IN BELGIUM
DURING THE WORLD WAR.
THESE GRAVES ARE THE
PERMANENT AND VISIBLE SYMBOL
OF THE HEROIC DEVOTION
WITH WHICH
THEY GAVE THEIR LIVES
TO THE
COMMON CAUSE OF HUMANITY

Below this inscription, in bas-relief, are small sculptured figures symbolizing Grief, Remembrance and History.

The altar inside the chapel is of black and white marble, upon which rest a cross and two vases for flowers. It bears the inscription: "I WILL RANSOM THEM FROM THE POWER OF THE GRAVE, I WILL REDEEM THEM FROM DEATH." Above, carved on a rose-tinted marble

panel, is a Crusader's sword outlined in gold. On each side of the altar are draped flags of the United States, Belgium, France, Great Britain and Italy. On the side walls of the chapel, on marble panels, are listed the names of the American soldiers who lost their lives in Belgium but have no known graves.

The quiet beauty of the interior is enhanced by a mosaic ceiling of striking design and a large ornamental window over the door which lights the room with a subdued yellow light.

The furniture of the chapel consists of four seats and kneeling benches, where those so inclined may rest for meditation and prayer. This furniture is of carved oak, stained a black color with the veining in white, and it harmonizes perfectly with the black and white marble which has been used for the altar.

Each of the four grave blocks is framed by a trimmed hedge and at three of the corners of the cemetery are circular nooks, ornamented by attractive urns, flanked by stone benches and closely surrounded by trees and hedges.

On the bases of the urns are the insignia of the 27th, 30th, 37th and 91st Divisions, the divisions to which belonged most of the men now buried here.

This little cemetery is dear to the hearts of the people of the neighborhood who visit it in large numbers on Sundays and holidays. On the Sunday nearest Memorial Day (May 30) a touching ceremony of praise and thanksgiving is held in memory of the American war dead.

The cemetery may be easily visited by taking a train to Waereghem, or to Ghent, 17 miles away, which is larger and contains much more of historical interest.

If the tourist has not already done so, the account of the operations of the 37th and 91st Divisions, which is given on the preceding pages, should be read.

The monument erected by the United States Government to commemorate the fighting of the American soldiers in this part of Belgium is located at Audenarde, 6½ miles to the east from this cemetery.



Interior of Chapel, American Cemetery Near Waereghem, Belgium

THE AMERICAN MONUMENT AT AUDENARDE, BELGIUM

UNDER the century-old trees of a public square near the west side of the city of Audenarde in Belgium, the United States Government has erected an attractive monument to commemorate the services of the 37th and 91st Divisions and the 53d Field Artillery Brigade of the American Army all of which fought in battle in this region.

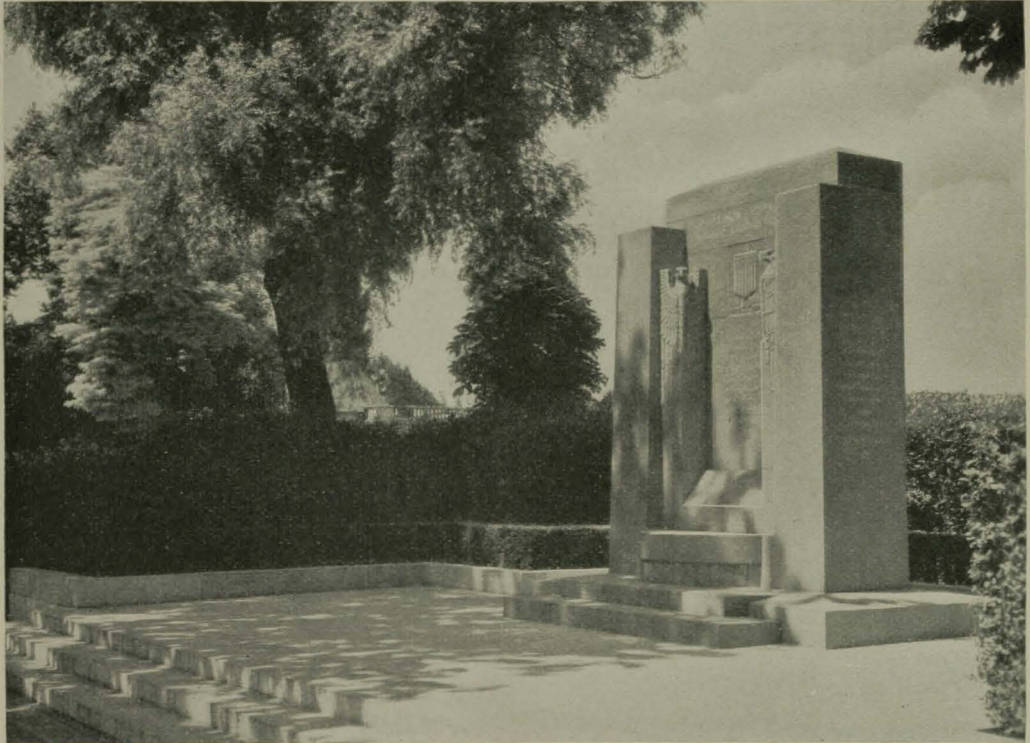
The monument stands at the end of a small park, which has been improved by the planting of hedges and shrubs and the

French and on the other side in Flemish.

The names of the units commemorated by the memorial are carved on its face above the shield of the United States.

In the center of a round place in the roadway near by is a Belgian monument erected in honor of the Belgian volunteer troops who served in Mexico from 1864 to 1867 and aided in establishing Maximilian on the throne of Mexico.

For an account of the operations of the 37th and 91st Divisions in the general



American Memorial at Audenarde, Belgium

addition of paths and benches. On the front of it, below a shield of the United States and flanked by two American eagles, is the dedicatory inscription which is in gilded letters and reads as follows:

ERECTED BY THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
TO COMMEMORATE THE
SERVICES OF AMERICAN TROOPS
WHO FOUGHT IN THIS VICINITY
OCT. 30—NOV. 11, 1918

This inscription is repeated on one side in

vicinity of Audenarde see pages 395-397.

The Flanders Field American Cemetery near the village of Waereghem is approximately 6 miles away to the west.

Audenarde may be easily reached by train and the American monument is not far from the railroad station. The city is on one of the main highways from the North Sea to Brussels and can be easily visited by automobile from Ghent, which is 17 miles to the north, and also from Brussels, which is about 37 miles to the east.

It was discovered on August 30 that the Germans were making a general withdrawal from the Lys salient for the purpose of shortening their front line. Consequently the 27th Division was ordered to reconnoiter the situation on its front that night and the 30th Division was directed to send out strong patrols the next morning. According to its instructions if no determined opposition was encountered by the patrols of the 30th Division it was to advance and occupy a new line which included Voormezele.

with considerable resistance on the morning of August 31 so the division did not attempt to advance during that day.

The 27th Division attacked at 7:00 a. m. on September 1 after a 3½-hour artillery bombardment. Machine-gun nests were overcome and all objectives were taken before noon. Shortly thereafter, having received new orders, the division attacked again but a German counter-attack combined with heavy machine-gun fire forced it to withdraw slightly.

Early on September 1 the 30th Division



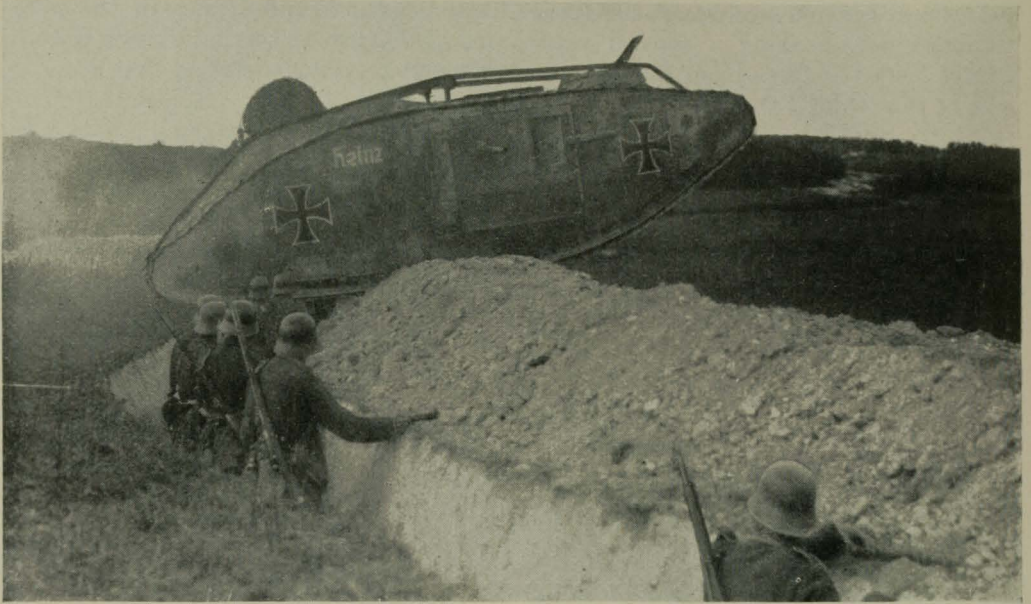
27th Division Wagon Train Near Cloth Hall, Ypres, Belgium

The 27th Division reconnoitered that night and encountered resistance. However, about 10:00 a. m. on August 31 information was received from the British XIX Corps that the enemy had retired from Mont Kemmel. The division was, therefore, ordered to move forward in conjunction with the British troops on its right. This movement was started promptly and the objectives, which included the village of Vierstraat, were reached about 4:00 o'clock in the afternoon.

The patrols of the 30th Division met

moved forward to beyond Voormezele and by 8:30 a. m. had reached the objectives prescribed by the British II Corps.

The 27th Division did not make a determined attack on September 2 because it was obvious from the stubborn fighting of the previous day that the Germans were no longer retiring but had taken up strong new positions which they were prepared to defend vigorously. The division, however, pushed its units forward until they had contact with the new German line along its entire length.



Captured British Tank Being Used by Germans, September 1918. © G



Cloth Hall of Ypres, Belgium, in 1935

During September 2 the 30th Division repulsed a small hostile attack in the area northeast of Lankhof Farm.

The 27th Division was relieved on September 3 and the 30th Division on September 4. The casualties of the 27th Division up to the time of its relief had totaled almost 1,300 officers and men, and those of the 30th about 800.

Both divisions reentered the line about three weeks later in the region north of St. Quentin and took part there in the fierce battle for the Hindenburg Line described on pages 373-381.

This battlefield near Ypres can be visited by taking a train to that city and traveling out from there by automobile.

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Locations of Headquarters

The headquarters of the American units during the operations here were:

II Corps:

Aug. 30-Sept. 3.- Houtkerque.

27th Division:

Aug. 23-Sept. 3.- Douglas Camp, north of Abeele.

30th Division:

Aug. 20-Sept. 4.- Vogeltje Convent, 2 miles to the northwest of Poperinghe.

THE AMERICAN MONUMENT NEAR VIERSTRAAT, BELGIUM

IMMEDIATELY alongside the road leading south from Ypres toward Mont Kemmel, near the little hamlet of Vierstraat, Belgium, is located a monument erected by the United States Government to commemorate the services of the American troops who fought in that general region during the World War.

This monument consists of a central block of white stone in front of which, carved out of stone, is an American helmet resting upon a wreath. The inscription which appears on the face of the monument above the helmet is flanked on each side by an American bayonet carved in relief. The inscription reads:

ERECTED BY THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
TO COMMEMORATE THE SERVICES
OF AMERICAN TROOPS
WHO FOUGHT IN THIS VICINITY
AUGUST 18-SEPTEMBER 4, 1918

This inscription is repeated in French and Flemish on the ends of the central block. On the rear face appear the insignia of the 27th and 30th Divisions, the American units whose fighting is commemorated by the memorial.

Surrounding the monument proper is a terrace enclosed by a railing. The account of the American operations in the vicinity, given on the preceding pages,

should be read from this terrace. By consulting the sketch and reading the following description with his back to the road, the tourist will obtain a good idea of the American fighting near here.

The group of houses seen to the left down the road is the town of Vierstraat.

Just to the right of Vierstraat the church steeple of Voormezele can be seen through the trees. That town was captured by the 30th Division on September 1.

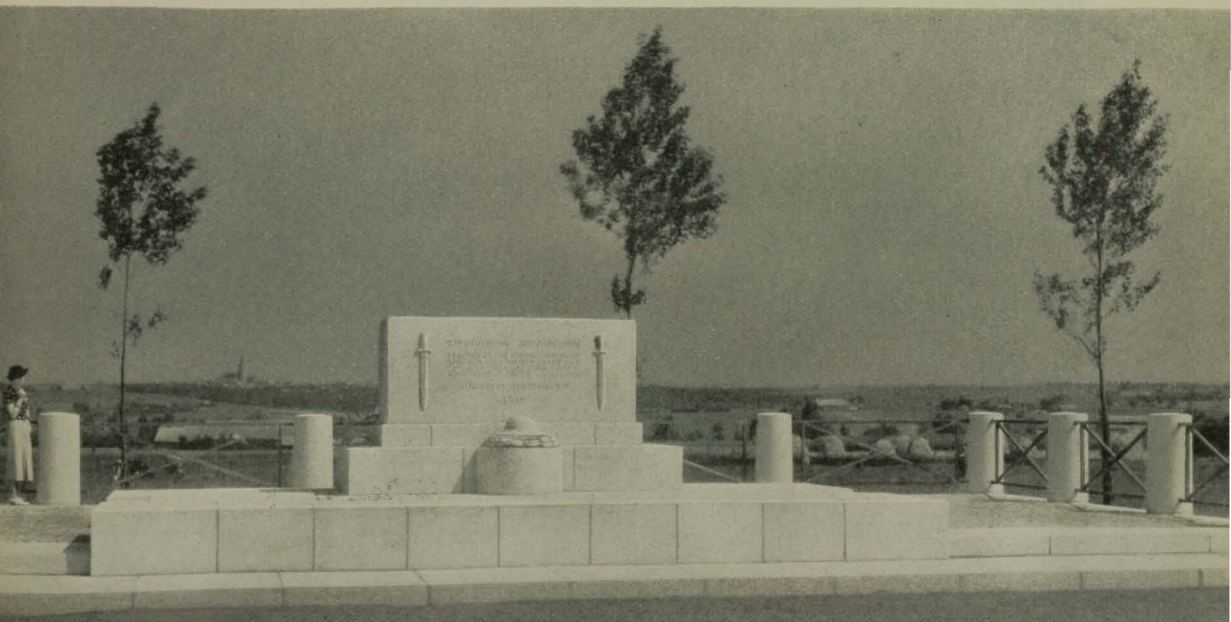
Mont Kemmel is the highest hill in the region and is seen to the right rear.

The jump-off line of the 27th Division on August 31 was about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile away, just over the ridge sloping up across the road from the monument. The division advanced in this direction on that day and reached a line which included the site of this monument and extended about a mile to the right and left from it, running roughly parallel to this road.

The line held by the 27th Division at the time of its relief on September 3 ran along the bottom of the small valley seen directly ahead. That valley can be traced by the patches of trees which grow on the banks of the small stream in it.

The large town on the sky line directly ahead is Wytschaete. In this particular vicinity the position to which the Germans retired ran along the lower slopes of the ridge upon which that village is located.

American Monument Near Vierstraat, Belgium





British Band Playing in Arras, April 30, 1917. © B

80TH DIVISION IN THE SOMME OFFENSIVE

AUGUST 8-18, 1918

UPON its arrival in France in June 1918 the 80th Division was assigned to the British First Army. It was under the administrative control of the American II Corps and later served with both the British Second and Third Armies.

On July 4 the division joined the Third Army and for training in the front line its regiments were distributed among the British V, IV and VI Corps. These corps were in line in that order from Albert to Arras. The 317th Infantry Regiment was with the IV Corps, the 318th with the V Corps and the 319th and 320th with the VI Corps. Parts of these American units first entered the front line on July 23.

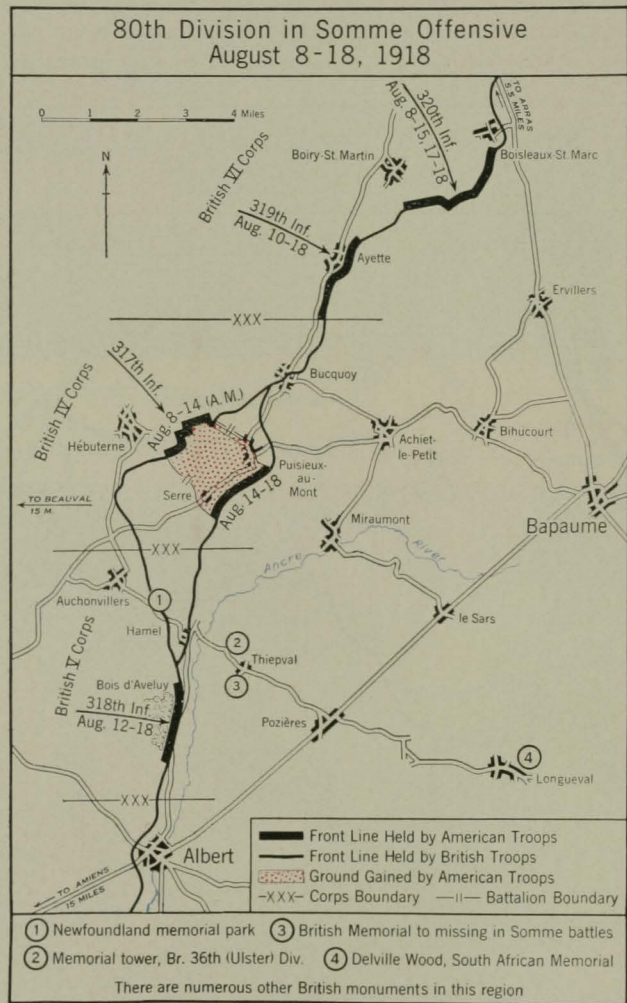
While elements of the 80th Division were occupying portions of the line, the British on August 8 launched the Somme offensive south of Albert. The initial assault made a deep penetration into the German lines and as a direct result the enemy was soon forced to give ground at other places.

A battalion of the 317th Infantry was holding a front-line sector with the New Zealand Division when the Germans began to retire in front of them. Meeting slight resistance, the American battalion advanced 1½ miles with the New Zealanders on August 14, and occupied the villages of Serre and Puisieux-au-Mont. Another battalion of the regiment repulsed a German raid which was made against its front lines during the night of August 17-18.

The other American regiments did not gain ground although the 320th Infantry successfully repulsed a German raid on August 4, southeast of Boiry-St. Martin, and again on the night of August 13-14

near the village of Boisieux-St. Marc.

The last units of the 80th Division were relieved from the front line during the night of August 18-19 and on the 19th the 80th Division was relieved from further duty with the British. It immediately started to move to the St. Mihiel region to join the American First Army.



While serving with the British the division had 274 casualties. Its headquarters during the period was at Beauval.

The area of this operation can be easily visited by taking a train to the city of Albert and hiring an automobile there.

33D DIVISION AT THE CAPTURE OF HAMEL, JULY 4, 1918
 AND
 IN THE SOMME OFFENSIVE, AUGUST 8-20, 1918

THE 33d Division upon its arrival in France during the latter part of May 1918 joined the British Fourth Army. Early in July it was serving with that Army near Amiens, its elements being divided for training between the British III Corps and the Australian Corps.

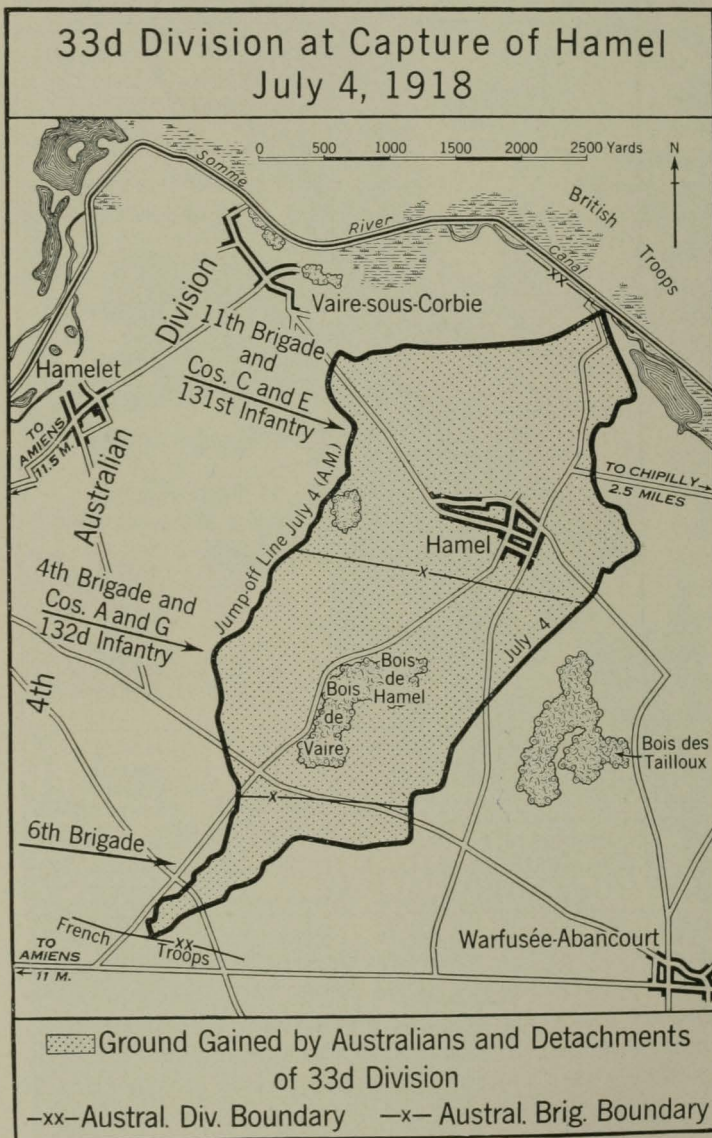
The Australian 4th Division was directed to attack on July 4 with the object of capturing the village of Hamel,

which is located at the center of a bare saucer-shaped valley just south of the Somme River and 11 miles east of Amiens. Companies C and E, 131st Infantry, and A and G, 132d Infantry, all of the 33d Division, were attached to the Australian 4th Division for the operation. The Americans, totaling about 1,000 men, advanced with the Australians and promptly secured their objectives. Two

of the American companies assisted in repulsing a German counterattack at dusk. Although the number of Americans engaged on this day was not great, their conduct was such as to receive high commendation from the British commanders.

It was during this fighting that Corporal Thomas A. Pope performed the heroic deed for which he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. His company was advancing when it was halted by hostile machine-gun fire. Going forward alone he rushed a machine-gun nest, killed several of the crew with his bayonet, and, standing astride the gun, held off the other members of the crew until reinforcements arrived and captured them.

The four companies were withdrawn during the night of July 5-6 and rejoined their division which was training in the rear areas.





Street Scene in Amiens, April 25, 1918. © B

American Troops Marching to the Music of a British Band. © B

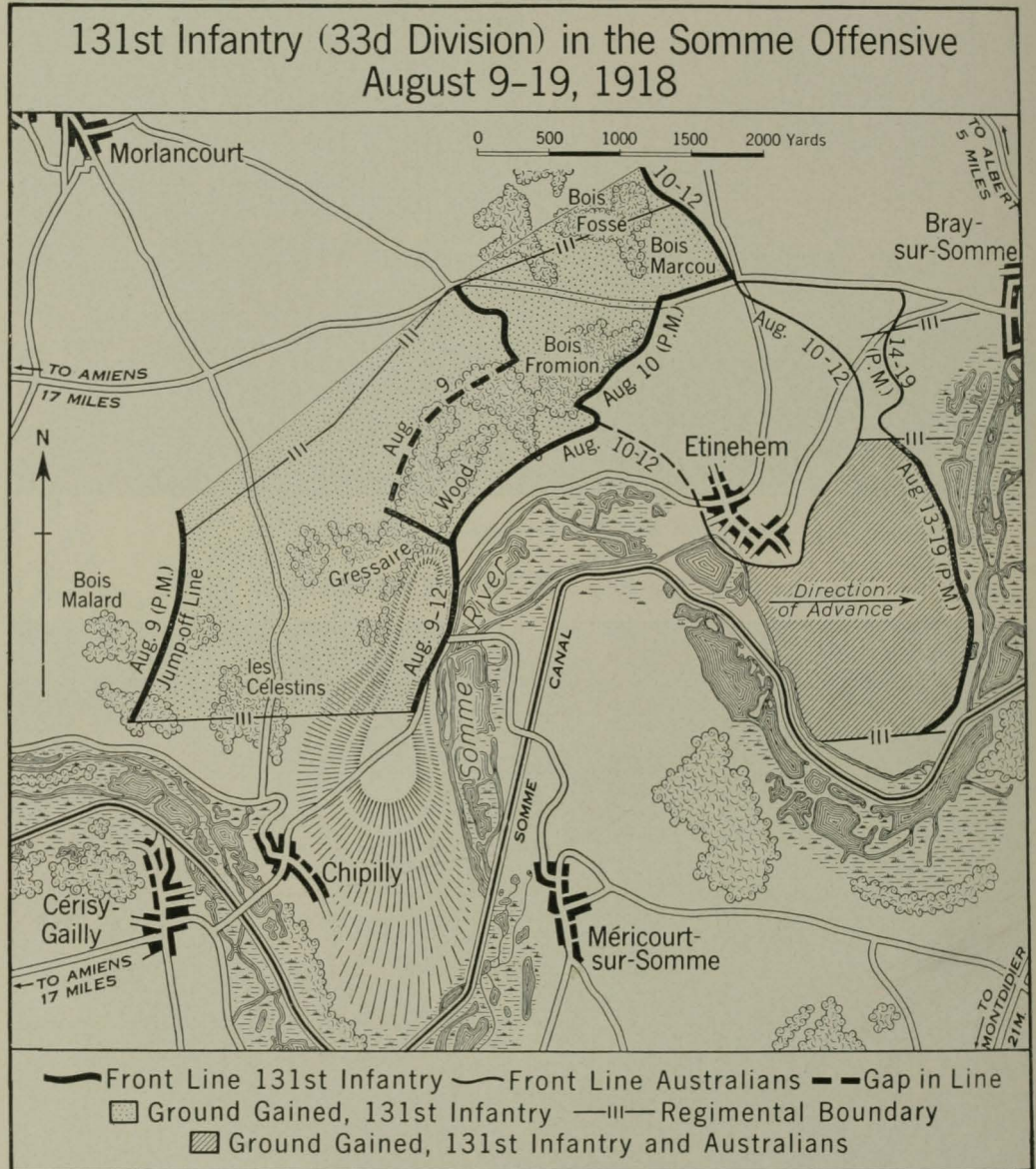


From July 17 to August 6 elements of the 33d Division trained in line with British units on the front south of Albert.

When the British launched their Somme offensive against the Amiens salient on August 8, the infantry units of the 33d Division were in reserve, attached to the

from the British 58th Division. From this ridge the German troops threatened the flank of the Australian Corps on the south bank. (See the sketch below.)

To retake this position the 131st Infantry, 33d Division, was directed to join the British 58th Division imme-



British III Corps. The offensive made great progress on the first day although Chipilly Ridge, a high bare ridge situated on the north bank of the Somme within a large horseshoe bend of the river, was in German hands, having been recaptured

diately. It moved forward and after a difficult night march took part during the afternoon of August 9 in an assault against Chipilly Ridge and Gressaire Wood.

The attack was made at 5:30 p. m., the American regiment double-timing

part of the last 4 miles to reach its jump-off line on time. It advanced under hurriedly issued orders with but little reconnaissance; and in spite of heavy machine-gun and artillery fire drove the hostile troops from the northern end of Chipilly Ridge and the southern part of Gressaire Wood. The Australian 4th Division launched an attack from across the river at the same time and as a result of the combined attacks the town of Chipilly and the southern end of Chipilly Ridge were also captured.

Illustrative of the gallant exploits of the American soldiers on this day are the deeds for which Corporal Jake Alex, 33d Division, was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. At a critical point when all the officers with his platoon had become casualties, Corporal Alex took command and led the platoon forward until its advance was stopped by fire from a machine-gun nest. He then advanced alone for about 30 yards in the face of intense fire and attacked the nest. With his bayonet he killed five of the enemy and when the bayonet broke he used the butt of his rifle and captured 15 prisoners.

On August 10 the Australian Corps was assigned the zone north of the river, and the 131st Infantry was placed under the Australian 4th Division. That day the regiment advanced and occupied the remainder of Gressaire Wood.

As a result of these two days of fighting the regiment had in its possession an important enemy position, 700 prisoners, 30 pieces of artillery, 1 airplane and more than 100 captured machine guns.

On the 13th the 131st Infantry joined the Australians in an attack which captured the ridge east of Etinehem. It stayed in the line until the night of August 19-20 taking part in local attacks and assisting the Australian troops in organizing the positions gained.

During this period other units of the 33d Division served in the front lines or as reserves for various British divisions.

The attack of August 9 and 10 won for the 33d Division the warm praise of the British commanders. On August 12 the



The King of England Decorating Men of the 33d Division, August 12, 1918

King of England visited the division headquarters at Molliens-au-Bois where he personally presented British decorations to the members of the 33d Division who had distinguished themselves in the fighting at Hamel on July 4.

These battlefields of the 33d Division can be visited by going to Amiens by rail and traveling from there by automobile.

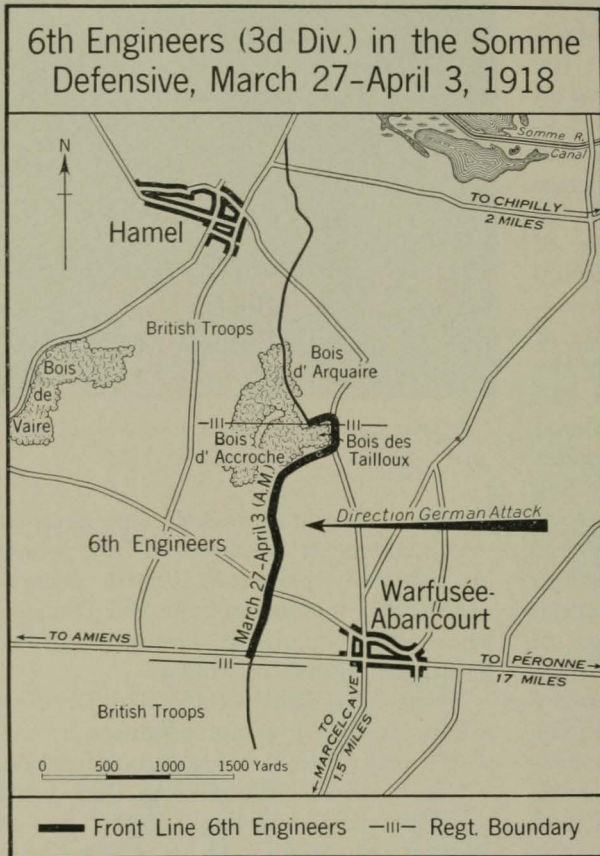
The division suffered more than 1,400 casualties while serving on the British Front. On August 23 it was relieved from this front and began its movement to the region of Verdun where it became part of the American First Army.

British, French and American Military Police in Amiens, May 1918. © B



6TH ENGINEERS IN THE SOMME DEFENSIVE

MARCH 21—APRIL 6, 1918



assistance. They were assigned to the British Fifth Army to aid in constructing bridges and other works essential for the defense of the front recently taken over by that Army from the French. These engineers were building heavy steel bridges near Péronne when the German March 21 offensive broke through the British lines in that vicinity. On March 22 this engineering work had to be discontinued due to enemy shellfire, and the American troops were ordered to move farther to the rear.

The German advance toward Amiens was so rapid and the troops opposing it so few in number that the British, as a measure almost of desperation, assembled every available man to occupy the old French trenches, known as the Amiens Defense Line, which extended approximately north and south about 10 miles east of that city. The detachments of troops which were hurriedly collected

EARLY in February 1918 the Headquarters and Companies B and D of the 6th Engineers, 3d Division, were detailed to the British Army in response to an urgent request of the British Commander-in-Chief for American engineer

and put in position, with orders to defend to the last man, included Companies B and D of the 6th Engineers. This combined force was popularly known as "Carey's Force" because of General Carey, the British general who commanded them.

German Artillery Moving Forward After the Break-Through East of Amiens in March 1918. © G





Amiens-St. Quentin Road. © B

This force, totaling about 2,200 men, held about 8 miles of trenches on the generally flat terrain in the vicinity of the main road leading to Amiens. It was composed of certain British army troops; tunneling, workshop and electrical companies; detachments from five different schools; and the units of the 6th Engineers. It was later reinforced by 300 convalescents from the hospitals and 400 Canadian railroad troops.

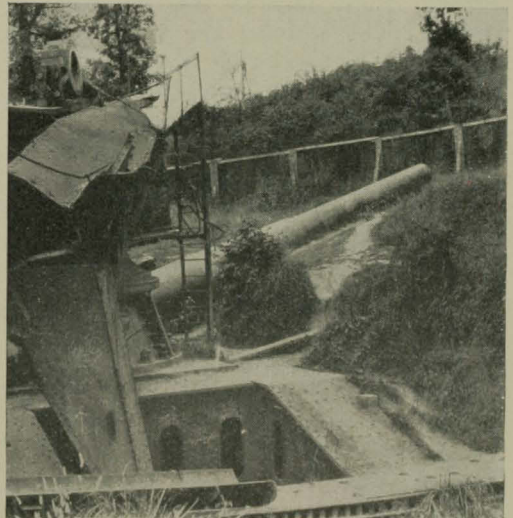
The American engineers occupied the right of the Amiens Defense Line, near Marcelcave, on March 26 but on the following day moved by truck to Bois des Tailloux, about 1 mile northwest of Warfusée-Abancourt. There it took over the defense of that wood and of the line as far south as the main Amiens road.

On March 27 the retreating British retired behind the Amiens Defense Line. Warfusée-Abancourt was captured by the Germans late in the evening and during that night patrols of the 6th Engineers were engaged with the enemy in town. Heavy fighting took place south of town on March 28, in which the 6th Engineers was not involved, but on both March 29 and 30 the American troops repulsed determined attacks against their position.

No further efforts to advance in force were made by the Germans until after the American detachment was relieved on April 3. On the 8th it resumed engineering work near Amiens and two months later rejoined its division near the village of Château-Thierry.

The area of this 6th Engineer fighting can be easily visited by taking a train to Amiens and hiring an automobile there.

Large German Gun Destroyed East of Chipilly, Near Chuignes



1ST DIVISION AT CANTIGNY

APRIL 27—JULY 8, 1918

DURING the emergency created by the German offensive of March 21, General Pershing placed all American combat troops then in Europe at the disposal of General Foch. Among these units was the 1st Division which on April 5 was moved to the region north of Paris, and on April 27 was given command of a sector west of Montdidier as part of the VI Corps of the French First Army. This marked the first entry into line of an

order to reduce the difficulties of holding the front line in the vicinity of that place.

The 28th Infantry of the 1st Division was selected to carry out the attack and for several days rehearsed its plans over similar terrain in the rear area. During the attack the regiment was supported by American and French artillery, machine gun, Stokes mortar, 37-mm. gun, tank, flame-throwing and engineer units and two companies from the 18th Infantry.



1st Division Infantry Going "Over the Top" at Cantigny, May 28, 1918

American division on an active battle front. (See Chapter I, page 27.)

At that time the Germans were in the midst of their series of great offensives and there was a possibility that the next attack might include the 1st Division sector. The activity and firing on this front were so great that it was only with difficulty that any semblance of a defensive position could be prepared.

The most prominent feature of the German lines facing the 1st Division was the high ground on which Cantigny is located. Not only did it furnish excellent positions from which the Germans could observe the American sector, but it also served as a screen for hostile movements and other activities in its rear.

Early in May the command of the division was transferred to the French X Corps and about the middle of the month it was decided to dislodge the Germans from their positions near Cantigny, in

The assault was launched at 6:45 a. m. on May 28 and in spite of heavy resistance mainly beyond the town and severe artillery and machine-gun fire from the left flank all objectives were soon gained. The construction of trenches, the laying of barbed wire and the preparation of strong points on the newly captured ground were promptly started by the American troops concerned.

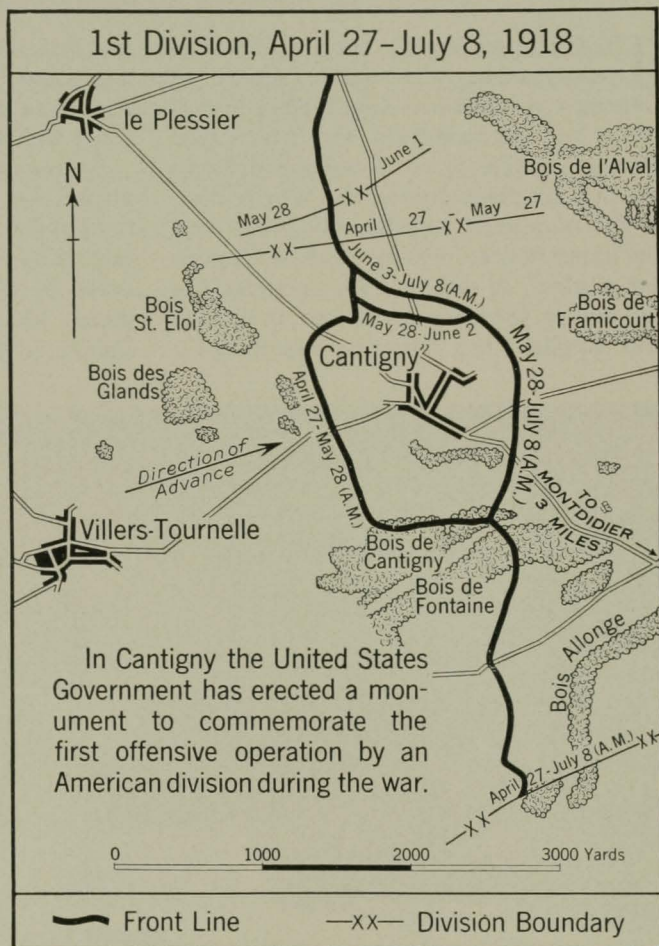
The German reaction was immediate and unusually violent, indicating a desire to shatter American morale. Counter-attack after counterattack was launched against the newly-won positions during the next two days, and starting about noon on May 28 the American lines around Cantigny were subjected to an intense 72-hour bombardment from hostile guns of all calibers. At the end of that time the Americans still held every inch of ground they had gained and the Germans were compelled to accept defeat.

During the defense against the German counter-attacks the two companies of the 18th Infantry in reserve and one company of the 26th Infantry were placed in the front lines.

The capture of Cantigny was the first large offensive operation by an American division. It was considered a brilliant exploit and was particularly gratifying to the Allies as it furnished a concrete example of the fighting ability of American troops, who were then beginning to arrive in France in large numbers. As this engagement occurred the day after the great German offensive of May 27 broke through the French lines at the Chemin des Dames, it was a very bright spot for the Allies in an otherwise gloomy situation.

The 1st Division on June 2 took over additional frontage in order to release French troops for service elsewhere. North of Cantigny the front line was advanced slightly on June 3 to a more advantageous location. During June 9 the division was subjected to a

Germans Leaving Dugout at Cantigny After Flame Thrower Had Been Used in it



severe artillery bombardment, as on that day the Germans launched their great offensive between Montdidier and Noyon, which was just east of the sector occupied by the troops of the 1st Division.

The division remained in line a total of 73 days and suffered almost 5,200 casualties. It was relieved on July 8, and ten days later played an outstanding rôle in the counteroffensive south of Soissons against the Aisne-Marne salient.

The Headquarters of the 1st Division was located at the village of Le Mesnil-St. Firmin, April 24-June 4, and at the village of Tartigny, June 4-July 8.

This battlefield of the 1st Division may be conveniently visited by automobile from Paris or by taking a train to Montdidier (54 miles from Paris) or to Amiens and hiring an automobile at either place.

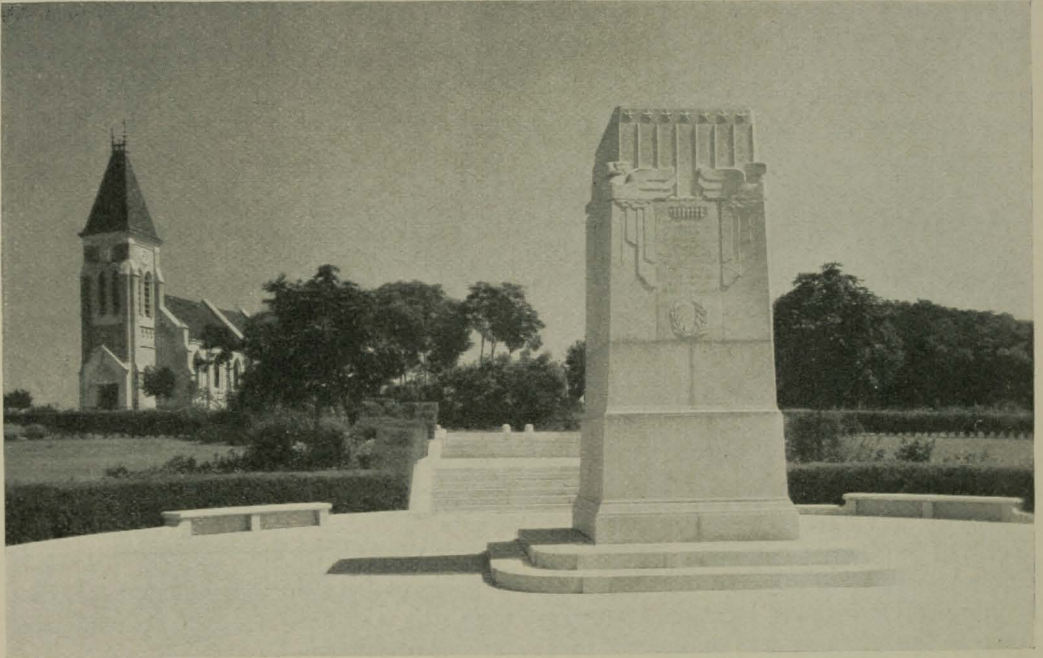
THE AMERICAN MONUMENT AT CANTIGNY

THE United States Government has constructed in a public square at Cantigny a small but appropriate monument to commemorate the first large offensive action by an American division which took place during the World War.

The monument consists of a shaft near the upper four corners of which are American eagles. A row of stars encircles the top and on the sides are carved, in French and English, the following inscriptions:

has been developed into a park which is landscaped in an attractive manner and the whole development has proved a welcome addition to the village life.

This monument may be conveniently visited by automobile from Paris which is 54 miles to the south or from Amiens, the nearest large city, which is 25 miles north of the site. For the tourist who desires the minimum auto trip the train should be taken to Montdidier, which is



THE FIRST DIVISION
UNITED STATES ARMY, OPERATING
UNDER THE X FRENCH CORPS,
CAPTURED THE TOWN OF CANTIGNY
ON MAY 28, 1918, AND HELD IT
AGAINST NUMEROUS COUNTERATTACKS

ERECTED BY THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
TO
COMMEMORATE THE FIRST ATTACK
BY AN AMERICAN DIVISION
IN THE WORLD WAR

Around the monument proper is a paved circular terrace from which a considerable portion of the ground over which the American troops advanced may be seen. Ornamental stone benches have been placed on this terrace and trimmed hedges enclose it. The surrounding area

3 miles away on the railroad and where taxicabs for a visit to Cantigny and the surrounding battlefields may be hired.

Before leaving the site of the monument the description on the preceding pages of the battle operations of the 1st Division in this vicinity should be read.

SUMMARY OF COMBAT SERVICE OF AMERICAN DIVISIONS
IN THE OPERATIONS NORTH OF PARIS

| <i>Name of Div.</i> | <i>Period of Service 1918</i> | <i>Character of Service</i> | <i>Location of Service General Vicinity of—</i> | <i>Army to Which Attached</i> ¹ | <i>Corps to Which Attached</i> ¹ | <i>Casualties</i> ² |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|---|--|---|--------------------------------|
| 1 | Apr. 27-June 8. | Sector..... | Cantigny..... | Fr. First..... | Fr. VI until May 5, then Fr. X. | 4,111 |
| | June 9-13..... | Battle..... | Cantigny..... | Fr. First..... | Fr. X..... | 567 |
| | June 14-July 8. | Sector..... | Cantigny..... | Fr. First..... | Fr. X..... | 485 |
| 3 (6th Engrs. only) | Mar. 27-Apr. 3. | Battle..... | Warfusée-Abancourt... | Fifth..... | None..... | 77 |
| 27 | July 25-Aug. 18. | Training in Line. | South of Ypres..... | Second..... | XIX..... | 417 |
| | Aug. 19-Sept. 3. | Battle..... | Vierstraat..... | Second..... | XIX..... | 862 |
| | Sept. 25-30..... | Battle..... | West of Bony..... | Fourth..... | Am. II..... | 4,508 |
| | Oct. 12-21..... | Battle..... | Southeast of Le Cateau. | Fourth..... | Am. II..... | 2,103 |
| 30 | July 16-Aug. 18. | Training in Line and Sector. | South of Ypres..... | Second..... | II..... | 298 |
| | Aug. 19-Sept. 4. | Battle..... | Voormezele..... | Second..... | II..... | 466 |
| | Sept. 24-30..... | Battle..... | Bellicourt..... | Fourth..... | Australian until Sept. 25, then Am. II. | 3,018 |
| | Oct. 6-12..... | Battle..... | Brancourt-le-Grand and St. Souplet. | Fourth..... | Am. II..... | 2,480 |
| | Oct. 16-19..... | Battle..... | Mazinghien..... | Fourth..... | Am. II..... | 1,491 |
| 33 | June 23..... | Training in Line. | East of Amiens..... | Fourth..... | III..... | 1 |
| | July 2-6..... | Training in Line. | Hamel..... | Fourth..... | III..... | 214 |
| | July 17-Aug. 6. | Training in Line. | West and southwest of Albert. | Fourth..... | III and Australian. | 237 |
| | Aug. 9-20..... | Battle..... | Chipilly Ridge..... | Fourth..... | III until Aug. 10, then III and Australian. | 982 |
| 37 | Oct. 30-Nov. 4. | Battle..... | Cruyshautem and Eyne. | Fr. Sixth..... | Fr. XXX..... | 1,455 |
| | Nov. 10-11..... | Battle..... | Dickele..... | Fr. Sixth..... | Fr. XXXIV..... | 117 |
| 80 | July 23-Aug. 7. | Training in Line. | North of Albert..... | Third..... | IV, V and VI..... | 129 |
| | Aug. 8-18..... | Battle..... | North of Albert..... | Third..... | IV, V and VI..... | 145 |
| 91 | Oct. 30-Nov. 4. | Battle..... | Southeast of Waereghem and Audenarde. | Fr. Sixth..... | Fr. VII..... | 963 (54) |
| | Nov. 10-11..... | Battle..... | Boucle-St. Blaise..... | Fr. Sixth..... | Fr. XXX..... | 3 (1) |

¹ All armies and corps are British unless otherwise indicated. In this table Fr.=French.

² Casualties are for period in line only. Figures in parentheses give casualties for units temporarily attached. Add figure in parentheses to the one above in order to obtain the total casualties during the entire operation.



Typical Scene in the Vosges Mountains