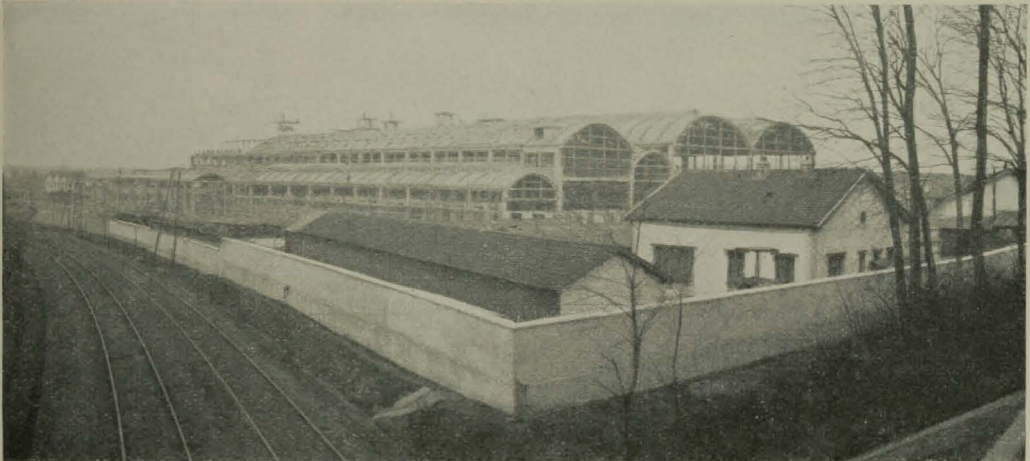


Chapter IX

THE SERVICES OF SUPPLY

IN rear of the area actually occupied by the fighting elements of a modern army, a great organization is required to keep the combat units constantly supplied with the men and means necessary for operations against the enemy. Replacements of men and animals, great quantities of rations, ammunition, weapons, equipment and supplies of all kinds must be obtained and delivered to

The building up of this organization was one of the most difficult problems which faced the Commander-in-Chief of the A.E.F. upon his arrival in France. It was imperative that the essential supply services be ready to operate when the first combat troops arrived and that their facilities be expanded progressively to supply the needs of the vast forces soon to come. In spite of the handicaps of



Locomotive Repair Shop at Nevers Under Construction by American Engineers
Nevers was an important railroad and storage center

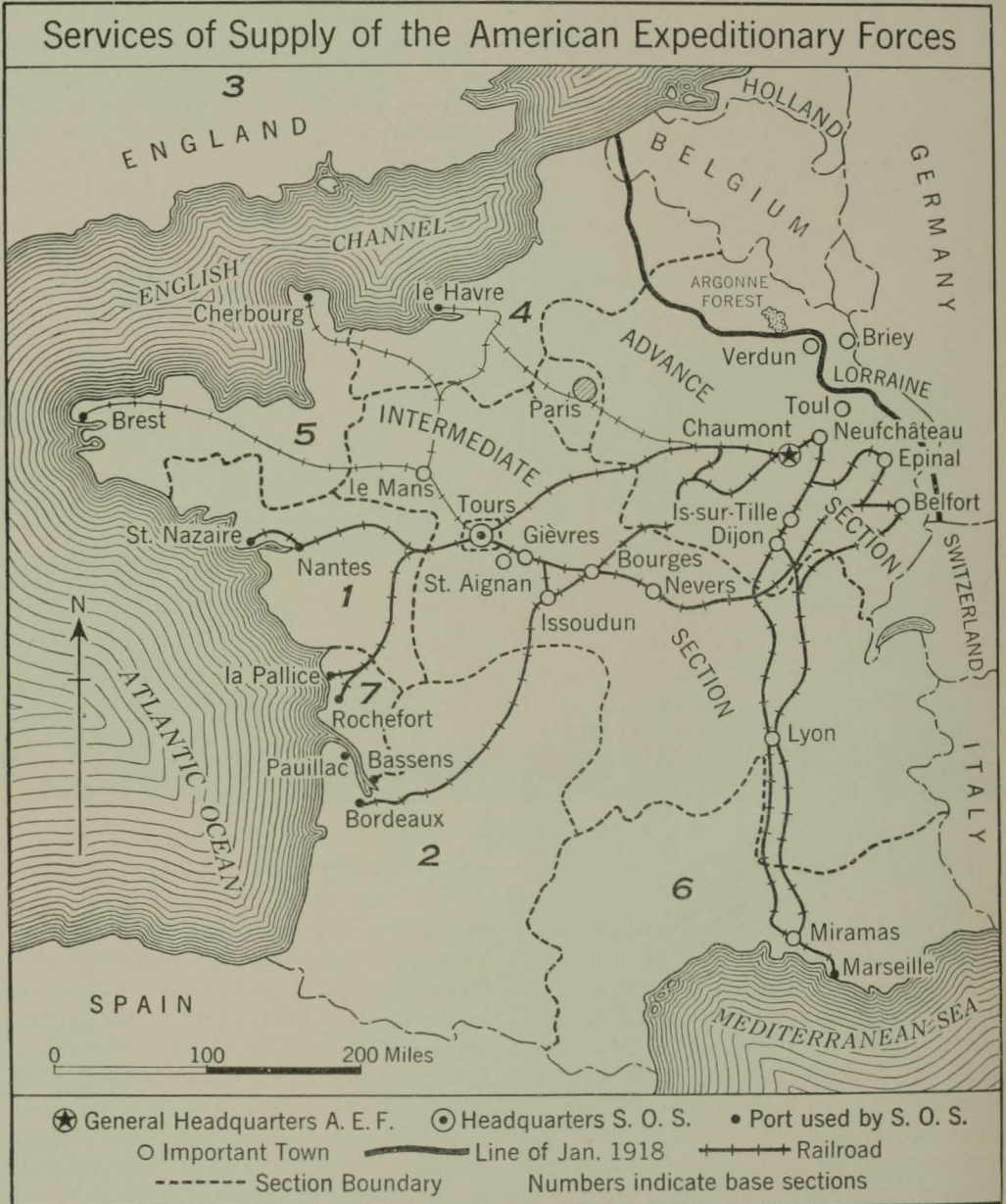
the front. To accomplish this, complete transportation facilities must be provided, and these must not only be adequate to handle the enormous volumes of freight but also to move organizations from one point to another and to evacuate the wounded to the rear. In the A.E.F. these and other tasks, which involved the construction and operation of transportation systems, telephone and telegraph lines, hospitals, depots, docks, mills, repair shops and factories of various kinds, were performed by an organization known successively as the "Line of Communications", the "Service of the Rear" and the "Services of Supply" or briefly "S.O.S."

emergency pressure, the great distance from America, a foreign language and foreign customs, and an already overburdened railroad system in France, the organization was developed steadily so that when the crisis came at the time of the Meuse-Argonne offensive it was able to handle with great success the enormous demands made by the First Army upon it.

The "Line of Communications" was formed on July 5, 1917, shortly after General Pershing arrived in France. At that time it was given no definite boundaries but consisted mainly of the port of St. Nazaire and the city of Nevers, the latter being the Headquarters of the Advance

Section. Its active area was gradually extended, however, and on February 16, 1918, the "Line of Communications" was reorganized and called the "Service of the Rear". This designation was changed

communication began within the United States and extended across the sea to France. They entered France mainly at ports along its western coast from Brest southward, as those farther north were



on March 13, 1918, and throughout the remainder of its existence the organization was known as the "Services of Supply" or more generally as the "S.O.S." The American lines of supply and

already heavily burdened with British and French traffic. The railway lines which ran northeastward from these southern ports to the main areas of American operations were selected for the use

of the A.E.F., thus avoiding the congested region near Paris where the greater part of the French war factories and large supply depots were located.

For purposes of administration the S.O.S. was divided into several base sections, located around the ports of debarkation, and one intermediate and one advance section located progressively nearer the front lines. Eventually there were nine base sections, including one in England, one in Italy and one comprising Antwerp and Rotterdam. The extent of the S.O.S. and its territorial organization at the time of the Armistice are shown on the preceding sketch.

The Commanding General of the S.O.S. was responsible directly to the Commander-in-Chief of the A.E.F. He was in charge of all activities of the Services of Supply and of all personnel and matériel from the moment they arrived at the ports until they reached points in the forward areas designated by G.H.Q. He coordinated the work of the different supply branches, such as the quartermaster, engineer, ordnance, signal, transportation, aviation, chemical warfare and

medical, and so planned that, as far as possible, there would be on hand at all times sufficient supplies to meet every requirement of the forces at the front.

The scarcity of vessels made it imperative that as many articles as possible be purchased in Europe, so an agency of the S.O.S., called the General Purchasing

Board, was created to supervise and coordinate such purchases. The efficiency of this agency as well as its great value is illustrated by the fact that from June 1917 to December 1918 approximately 10,193,000 ship tons of material were acquired in Europe for the use of the American Army, while shipments from the United States to the A.E.F. during that same period amounted to approximately 7,675,000 ship tons.

A further saving in tonnage was made by the formation of a salvage service, which collected, repaired and reissued discarded shoes, hats, clothing and other articles of equipment. This service, besides saving much raw material, reclaimed for use supplies valued at \$126,367,322.

The construction of the many establishments and facilities necessary to the proper functioning of the supply service was performed chiefly by American engineer troops. Nearly 1,000 miles of standard-gauge railway tracks; 4 docks, with 23 berths, including the necessary equipment for unloading ships; about 25,000,000 square feet of covered storage space; 16,000 barracks, which, if

placed end to end, would have reached 303 miles, or from Washington, D. C., to Albany, New York; bakeries; several enormous hospitals; refrigeration plants; and many other structures were built by the American Army in France. The base hospital center at Mars consisted of 700 buildings, with a floor space of 33 acres.



Major General James G. Harbord
Commanding General of the Services of
Supply from July 29, 1918,
to May 26, 1919

One of the refrigerating plants could store 6,500 tons of meat and produce 500 tons of ice per day; and one of the mechanical bakeries had a daily capacity of 800,000 pounds of bread, enough to fill about 50 standard American freight cars. Forestry operations, which produced more than 200,000,000 feet of lumber and about 4,000,000 railway ties, were carried on to assist in providing the materials needed in the construction program, the size of

motives and 56,000 cars for the Allies.

The supplies collected were stored at different points between the base ports and the combat zone. It was inadvisable to place large quantities too close to the front because of the enormous losses and consequent scarcity of supplies which would result if the Germans made a substantial advance. On the other hand, if stored near the base ports they would be too far from the battle front and an inter-



American Lumber Mill Near Eclaron
At the time of the Armistice 81 of these mills were in operation

which is indicated by the examples that have just been given in this paragraph.

The transportation of supplies required a great amount of rolling stock. As only a part of this could be procured from the French, assembly plants were erected in which more than 1,500 locomotives and 18,000 cars were constructed from parts received from the United States. American railroad repair shops in France also reconditioned approximately 2,000 loco-

ruption of the lines of communication would interfere with sending them forward and thus seriously embarrass the troops in contact with the enemy. Depots were therefore established in the base, intermediate and advance sections, those in the advance section containing relatively small reserves and being located as near to the combat areas as practicable. It was originally planned that sufficient reserve stocks should be kept in France



View of Yards at La Rochelle

Shows 80 cars, representing one day's assembling at this American plant

to supply the army for three months, thus providing an ample factor of safety in case ocean traffic were interrupted. In August 1918, however, it was considered safe to reduce this reserve requirement to 45 days. From the advance depots supplies were distributed regularly to the troops through great combination depots and railway yards known as regulating stations, which operated directly under General Headquarters, A.E.F.

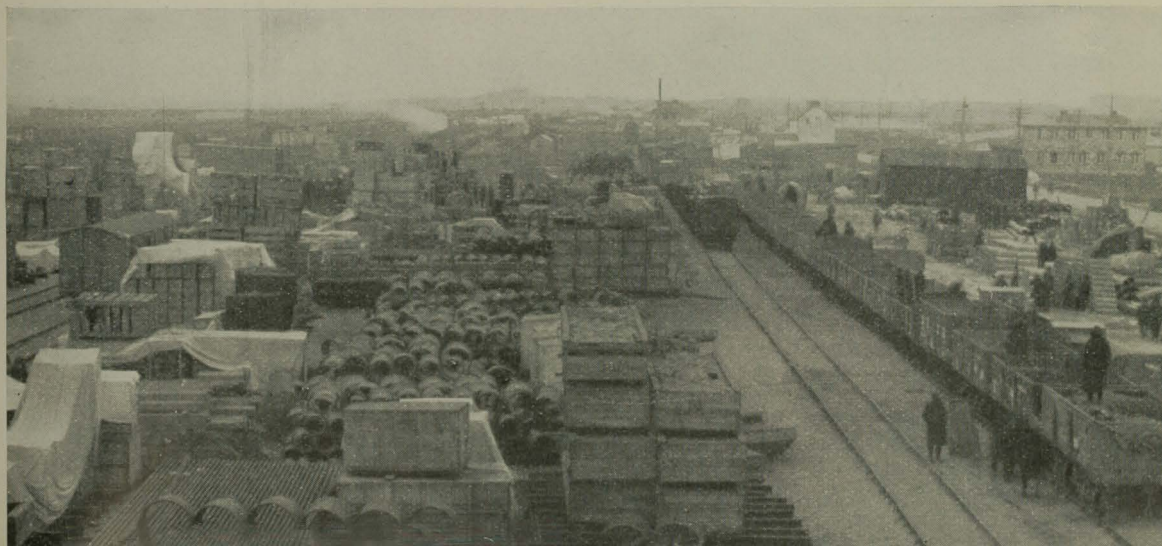
The growth and development of the Services of Supply, which kept pace with those of the combat forces, and the successful carrying out of its innumerable, important and complicated tasks form an outstanding achievement of the A.E.F. It actually supplied successfully an army of 2,000,000 men and, at the time of the Armistice, plans for the necessary expansion to care for the needs of an army of 4,000,000 men were well under way. By that date this huge organization had

reached a strength of 644,540 men, not including 23,772 civilian employees carried on its rolls, and comprised about one third of the American soldiers in Europe.

The vital importance of the S.O.S. and its value to the fighting troops are indicated by the following telegram which was sent on September 23, 1918, after the successful attack of the American First Army in the St. Mihiel region, to the Commanding General of the Services of Supply by the Commander-in-Chief of the A.E.F., who at the time was also directly in command of the First Army:

"I want the officers and men of the S.O.S., under your command, to know how much the First Army appreciates the prompt response made to every demand for men, equipment, supplies and transportation necessary to carry out the recent operations. Please extend to all our hearty congratulations and say that they share the success with us."

Supplies in Storage at Montoir



LOCATIONS IN FRANCE OF ACTIVITIES OF THE SERVICES OF SUPPLY

THE following list gives some of the places in France where establishments were created or operated by the Services of Supply. This list although incomplete will give an idea of the magnitude of the work performed by that organization.

HEADQUARTERS, S.O.S.

Tours. Also aviation instruction center and base depot; refrigeration plant.

A beautiful fountain at Tours erected by the United States Government commemorates the services of the S.O.S. It is located on the Quai d'Orléans at the southern end of the Pont Wilson. For a description of this memorial see page 479.

ADVANCE SECTION *

Bazoilles-sur-Meuse. Hospital center; salvage plant; storage depot; cold-storage and ice-making plant; medical school.

Beaune. A university, established here by the A.E.F. after the Armistice, was attended by about 9,000 Americans; hospital center; general storage depot.

Belfort. Motor transport repair shops.

Besançon. Location of a forestry district headquarters and remount depot.

Bourbonne-les-Bains. Remount depot and veterinary hospital; medical supply depot; advance motor transport center.

Châtillon-sur-Seine. Location of II Corps schools; air service school in gunnery and observation; gasoline storage depot; field and mechanical bakeries.

* See map, page 438, for location of these Sections.

Colombey-les-Belles. Air service depot for advance section of the S.O.S.

Commercy. Remount depot and veterinary hospital; motor transport center.

Contrexéville. Hospital center.

Corbeil. Coffee roasting plant.

Dijon. Advance quartermaster depot; motor transport shops; camouflage plant; air service depot; forestry district hdqrs.

Donjeux. Tractor artillery repair shops; motor transport service park.

Doulaincourt. Ordnance shops.

Eclaron. Location of a forestry district headquarters.

Epinal. Motor transport overhauling and repair shop; forestry district hdqrs.

Gondrecourt. I Corps schools.

Hanlon Field, 1 mile east of Chaumont. Location of A.E.F. gas defense school.

Haussimont. Artillery observation school; training center for railway artillery; ordnance training center and repair shop for artillery on railway mounts.

Is-sur-Tille. Headquarters of Advance Section of S.O.S., Sept. 17–Nov. 1, 1917; regulating station, from which more than 1,000,000 men were supplied at one time; largest bakery in the A.E.F.; ordnance school and shops; air service intermediate depot; artillery camp; important center of railroad construction in this area.

Jonchery. Advance quartermaster depot; advance ammunition storage depot; center of railroad construction; ordnance school; advance motor transport center.

New Cars and Trucks Assembled at Bassens, October 1, 1918





Horses for the American Forces Just Unloaded at Bordeaux

Langres. Army schools, which included 17 separate schools; motor transport repair and supply center; hospital center; Headquarters of the Advance Section, Services of Supply, during the period from January 20 to June 28, 1918.

Léonval. Advance miscellaneous storage depot; chemical warfare ammunition depot and repair shops.

Le Valdahon. Aerial observation school for artillery; field artillery school and training camp; ordnance repair shop; location of veterinary hospital.

Liffol-le-Grand. Regulating station; depot camp; railroad repair shop and engine terminal; mechanical bakery; scene of many large general activities.

Lux. Location of a remount depot and veterinary hospital.

Mailly. Heavy artillery school before removal to Angers; artillery camp.

Montiers-sur-Saulx. Location of a remount depot and veterinary hospital.

Nancy. Location of a remount depot.

Neufchâteau. Headquarters of the Advance Section, S.O.S., Nov. 1, 1917-Jan. 20 and after Oct. 23, 1918; motor transport overhaul park; veterinary hospital.

Nogent-en-Bassigny. Headquarters of the Advance Section, S.O.S., during the period, June 28 to October 23, 1918.

Rimaucourt. Hospital center.

St. Dizier. Regulating station.

Sampigny. Location of a large motor transport park and repair center.

Toul. Important hospital center; refrigeration plant; veterinary hospital.

Vaucouleurs. Advance storage depot.

Vitrey. Trench artillery school center.

Vitry-le-François. Motor transport repair center; important railroad junction.

INTERMEDIATE SECTION

Aix-les-Bains. Central point of the principal leave area for the A.E.F.

Allerey. Hospital center; storage depot; ice-making and cold-storage plant.

Autun. Military police school.

Blois. Reclassification camp for officers; concentration and reclassification point for enlisted casuals discharged from hospitals in the A.E.F.

Bourges. Location of the central records office for all personnel of the A.E.F.; ordnance school, shops and depot; forestry district headquarters; field bakery.



Sorting Salvaged Shoes

Châteauroux. Gas mask salvage depot; forestry district headquarters.

Chinon. Location of the Chemical Warfare Service training center.

Clamecy. III Corps schools.

Clermont-Ferrand. Training center for heavy tractor artillery; aviation instruction center; ordnance training center and repair shops; hospital center; quartermaster depot; location of a field bakery.

Decize. Motor transport school.

Gien. Heavy artillery tractor school; forestry district headquarters.

Gièvres. General intermediate storage depot, the largest depot in the A.E.F. It reached a strength of about 700 officers and 25,000 soldiers. Included in this depot were the largest refrigeration and ice-making plant in the A.E.F.; coffee roasting plant and field bakery; coal and gasoline storage; central baggage office; remount depot and veterinary hospital. Center of railroad construction.

Grenoble. One of the leave areas.

Issoudun. Aviation instruction center comprising 12 flying fields; intermediate quartermaster depot; ammunition storage

depot; site of prisoner of war enclosure.

La Cluze. Location of a forestry district headquarters.

Le Blanc. Field artillery motor training center and ordnance repair shop.

Le Mans. Replacement depot; rifle range with 775 targets; motor transport repair shop; chaplains' school. After the Armistice this was the principal area in which troops were assembled, inspected and equipped preparatory to embarking for the United States. Its maximum capacity was 230,000 men.

Le Puy. Forestry district headquarters.

Mars. Location of a hospital center.

Mehun-sur-Yèvre. Location of largest ordnance repair shop in A.E.F., where rifles, machine guns and cannon were re-conditioned; storage depot.

Mesves-sur-Loire. One of the largest hospital centers of the A.E.F.

Montierchaume. General intermediate storage depot, similar to the one at Gièvres but only half completed at the time the hostilities ceased.

Montlouis. Potato storage depot.

Neuvy-Pailloux. Tank center.

Nevers. Headquarters of the Advance Section, S.O.S., July 10-Sept. 17, 1917; Headquarters of the Intermediate Section, S.O.S., after Sept. 17, 1917; also an important railroad and storage center; principal locomotive repair shops of the Expeditionary Forces; veterinary hospital.

Drafting an Operation Map



Pont-de-Claix. Gas cylinder filling plant run by the Chemical Warfare Service.

Pouilly. Location of a supply depot.

Richelieu. Camp for officer prisoners of war, more than 800 being confined.

Romorantin. Aviation production center and base depot; motor transport repair shop and storage depot.

St. Aignan. Replacement depot. After the Armistice it became a clearing point for troops returning to the United States.

St. Pierre-des-Corps. Central camp for prisoners of war; supply depot; salvage plant; postal and statistical bureaus.

Selles-sur-Cher. Remount depot.

Sougy. Location of a remount depot and veterinary hospital.

Valbonne. Infantry school for officer candidates; location of a field bakery.

Verneuil. Motor transport reconstruction shop of the A.E.F.; motor transport supply depot; prisoner of war enclosure.

Vichy. Location of a hospital center.

DISTRICT OF PARIS

Arnouville-les-Gonesse. Artillery section of the Army anti-aircraft school.

Clichy-la-Garenne. Air base depot.

Le Bourget. Temporary regulating station which included Noisy-le-Sec and was used in conjunction with the French.

BASE SECTION NO. 1

Angers. Heavy artillery school; engineer training base; ordnance training center and repair shops; railroad transportation officers' school; hospital center; location of a cold-storage plant.

Baugé. Forestry district headquarters.

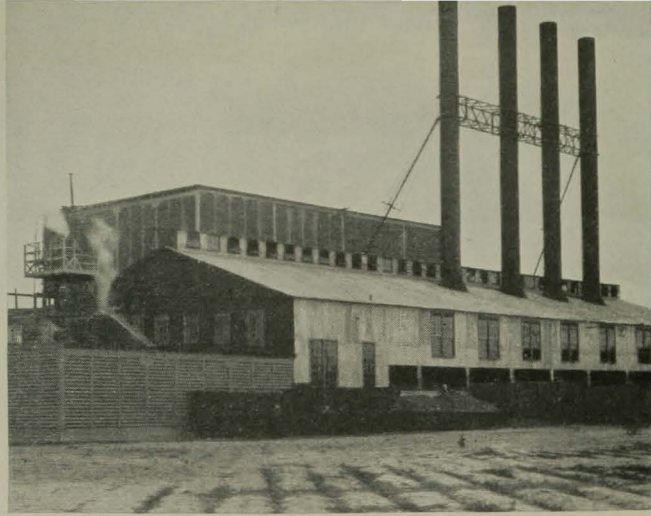
Coëtquidan. Artillery training camp; aerial observation school; veterinary hospital; ordnance repair shop; storage depot.

Donges. Ammunition depot.

Les Sables-d'Olonne. Secondary port of entry, principally used for coal.

Meucon. Field artillery training camp; artillery aerial observation school; ordnance repair shop for mobile artillery.

Montoir. Large storage depot and railroad yards; engine terminal and railroad repair shop; coal storage yards. A large new dock to accommodate eight ships



Ice Plant at Gièvres

Third largest in the world, constructed by A. E. F.

was unfinished at the time of the Armistice. This was the main depot for supplies received at the port of St. Nazaire.

Nantes. Port of entry; motor assembly and repair shop; hospital center.

St. Jean-de-Monts. Location of an aerial gunnery and an ordnance school.

St. Nazaire. Headquarters of Base Section No. 1; principal freight port, about 2,552,000 tons of freight were received here before May 1, 1919; remount depot and veterinary hospital; ice-making and refrigeration plant; center of railroad construction; locomotive erecting shops; camps.

Saumur. Artillery school for officers and candidates for commission; bakery.

Savenay. Hospital center for wounded being returned to the United States.

BASE SECTION NO. 2

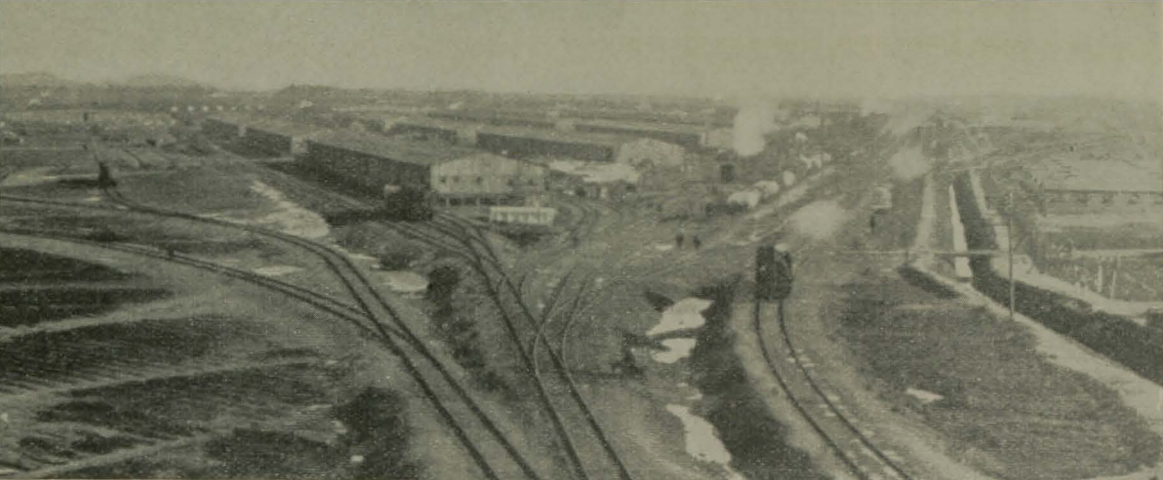
Angoulême. Ordnance training center and repair shops; training center for personnel of artillery ammunition trains.

Bassens. Large American docks; storage warehouses and cold-storage plant; machine repair shop for the transport service; engine terminal; center of railroad construction and many other activities.

Bayonne. One of the smaller ports used by the A.E.F.; remount depot.

Beau Désert. Hospital center; small storage depot; prisoner of war enclosure.

Bordeaux. Headquarters of Base Section No. 2. At the time of the Armistice this port was rapidly becoming the principal freight port of the A.E.F. and by May 1, 1919, it had received about 2,197,000



Railway Yards and Warehouses at St. Sulpice
Constructed by American Engineers

tons. In its vicinity were a large number of sawmills, hospitals and warehouses.

Carbon-Blanc. Location of a remount depot and veterinary hospital.

Cazaux. Aerial gunnery school.

Dax. Forestry district headquarters.

Hendaye. Remount depot.

Labrit. Forestry district headquarters.

La Courtine. Field artillery training camp; miscellaneous storage depot.

Le Courneau. Field artillery training camp; miscellaneous storage depot.

Libourne. Heavy tractor artillery training center; ordnance training center and shops; miscellaneous storage depot.

Limoges. Heavy tractor artillery training center; ordnance training center and shops; storage depot; hospital center.

Mérignac. Remount depot.

Mimizan. Location of a forestry district headquarters.

Pauillac. Naval air station; port of entry and port of embarkation for troops

Assembling an American Locomotive at the
St. Nazaire Shops of the S.O.S.



returning to the United States after hostilities had ceased; small storage yard.

Perigueux. Hospital center.

Pontenx-les-Forges. Forestry district headquarters; location of a field bakery.

St. Loubès. Large base depot; ordnance storage depot; oil storage tank; center of railroad construction.

St. Sulpice. Large storage depot; coffee-roasting plant; field bakery; coal storage yard; center of railroad construction.

Sougé-Champ-de-Tir. Artillery concentration and training camp; balloon, aerial gunnery and observation schools; ordnance repair shop and remount depot.

BASE SECTION NO. 4

Calais. One of the ports used by American troops arriving by way of England.

Le Havre. Headquarters of Base Section No. 4; auxiliary port for American shipping; most of the men trans-shipped from England landed here; storage depot; refrigeration plant; location of a motor transport service and reception parks.

Rouen. Port of entry for gasoline, coal and other supplies; motor transport shops.

BASE SECTION NO. 5

Brest. Headquarters of Base Section No. 5; principal port for debarkation and embarkation of troops. A lighterage wharf, warehouses and refrigeration plant were constructed by Americans there.

A beautiful monument to commemorate the achievements of the United States Navy during the World War has been erected by the American Govern-

ment on an old fortification wall overlooking the harbor. See page 475 for a general description of this memorial.

Cherbourg. Port of debarkation for troops arriving by way of England.

Granville. Port of entry for coal.

Pontanézen Barracks. Largest American camp in France; rest camp for troops debarking or embarking at Brest.

Rennes. Locomotive terminal; repair shop for railroad cars and locomotives.

Miramas. Storage depot for the port of Marseille; prisoner of war enclosure.

Nice. Main town in Riviera leave area.

BASE SECTION NO. 7

Aigrefeuille. Location of a base depot; classification yards and coal storage depot.

La Pallice. Headquarters of Base Section No. 7 for a time; port of entry for oil and other freight; gasoline storage depot; refrigeration plant and remount depot.



Loading Cars at Quartermaster Depot No. 1, Nevers
Note women laborers employed for this work

St. Malo. Leave center in Brittany; secondary port of entry, mainly for coal.

BASE SECTION NO. 6

Marseille. Headquarters of Base Section No. 6; motor reception park; remount depot. Due to submarine activities in the Mediterranean and the greater distance from America this port was not used extensively by the American Expeditionary Forces during the war. After the Armistice it was a secondary port of embarkation for troops returning to the United States.

La Rochelle. Headquarters of Base Section No. 7 after removal from La Pallice; operated as a port in conjunction with La Pallice; railroad car erection center; remount depot and veterinary hospital.

Marans. Location of a secondary coal port and coal storage depot.

Mortagne. Cement plant, leased from the French, was operated by the S.O.S.

Rochefort. Port for coal and general cargo; site of prisoner of war enclosure.

Tonnay-Charente. Coal port and coal storage depot, operating with Rochefort.



Convoy of Transports En Route to France, October 1918