“SHERMAN WAS RIGHT”
THE EXPERIENCE OF AEF SOLDIERS IN THE GREAT WAR

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
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School of The Ohio State University

By

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* * * * *

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ABSTRACT

When the United States declared war in the spring of 1917, American men went to war with idyllic visions of warfare. This study explores the state of mind of the AEF soldier during the Great War, an issue that has challenged scholars in the field since the troops returned home. With the use of Military Service Records (MSRs or questionnaires) issued in 1919 from four states as its core source, this dissertation argues that the American cultural glorification of warfare created an impetuous doughboy, who believed war was a game and the path to manhood. Employing these neglected firsthand descriptions of the war in the uncensored words of veterans provides understanding of American military identity; it removes the uniform and studies the individual – whether it is an aristocratic New Englander who hungered to prove his masculinity or an African American blacksmith fighting for his equality. Cultural differences aside, the naïveté of the doughboy was overwhelming; he believed the war would be an enjoyable adventure, but learned General Sherman was right – war is hell.
Dedicated to my mother and my adviser Professor Geoffrey Parker
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have engaged in this project for almost a decade and have incurred a number of debts to many amiable scholars, archivists and librarians. Any work, such as this one, is only possible with the knowledge, expertise and time of the following people to whom I owe many thanks. For their patience and understanding, thank you to Joby Abernathy of the Ohio State University History Department and Beth Russell of the Mershon Center for International Security Studies. The research for this dissertation would not have been possible without the generous support of the George C. Marshall/Baruch Foundation and the Mershon Center for International Security Studies; a Retrieving the American Past Grant from the Ohio State University History Department and fellowships from the United States Army Center of Military History and the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation enabled me to concentrate on the intensive writing phase of the project.

While traveling throughout the country, a host of archivists and librarians provided me with a great deal of their time and insight into locating forgotten materials. I am grateful to the librarians and archivists at the following institutions: the Connecticut State Library, especially LeAnn Power, Mark Jones and Bruce Stark; the Library of Virginia, in particular Roger Christman; the Minnesota Historical Society, chiefly Steve Nielsen; the Utah State Archives, above all Tony Castro; the United States Army Military History Institute in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, mainly David A. Keough; and the National
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INTRODUCTION

THE SOURCE

They were victorious; the great majority of the soldiers from the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) returned home from Europe in 1919 to the admiration of hundreds of thousands who honored the returning soldiers with parades or festivals. Some states, however, did more. Upon returning home, the majority of veterans around the country found something extra in their mailboxes: some discovered a simple card or sheet of paper asking for basic data concerning the soldier’s background and in which unit he served, but four states in particular decided to remember the veteran in a unique way.

Each veteran of Utah and Minnesota received a four-page questionnaire, asking for additional information concerning his family, his time in the service and the types of wounds or citations he had received. The veterans (which included all branches of the service, nurses and stenographers) of Connecticut and Virginia received the most complex of all: a four-page questionnaire entitled the Military Service Record (MSR), similar to those of Utah and Minnesota, but with a series of additional subjective questions on the last page that asked the soldier to describe his experience and the war’s
impact upon his or her character.¹ From these two states, 1192 veterans fully completed their questionnaire – they answered every question on each page in detail. Below is the last page of the questionnaires filled out by a Hartford soldier named Samuel B. Yaffo and by James P. Spencer, an African American Baptist from Charlotte, Virginia. Their responses speak for the value of this source. Both men participated in major engagements with the AEF; Yaffo lost several close friends in combat, including his brother Max and Spencer received a machine gun wound to his hand during a firefight. The questionnaire also requested veterans to send in two photographs – one as a civilian and one taken while in service. The photographs Yaffo and Spencer provided follow their questionnaires.

¹ Minnesota also titled their questionnaire the Military Service Record, but it deviates from the template of Connecticut and Virginia (for a closer look at each form, see the end of Appendix A for copies of the three states’ questionnaires).
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

What was your attitude toward military service in general and toward your call in particular? I have always favored and advocated military service. For young men, it was a duty to which they had

What were the effects of camp experiences in the United States upon yourself—mental and physical?

What were the effects upon yourself of your overseas experience, either in the army or navy or in camp in France or in England?

If you took part in the fighting, what impressions were made upon you by this experience?

What has been the effect of all these experiences as contrasted with your state of mind before the war?

Photographs—If possible, enclose one taken before entering the service and one taken afterwards in uniform, both signed and dated.

Additional data:

Signed at

The information contained in this record, unless otherwise indicated, was obtained from the following persons or sources:

Figure 1: Page four of Samuel B. Yaffo’s MSR.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

What was your attitude toward military service in general and toward your call in particular?

I felt that it was my patriotic duty to serve my country at this most critical time in its history. Though my race had not been given the proper rights

What were the effects of camp experience in the United States upon yourself—mental and physical?

Made me mentally more alert to the political social problems of the day, made me physically stronger to perform the great task of standing the enemy face to face.

What were the effects upon yourself of your overseas experience?

Developed some bodily strength, gained by hardships.

What effect, if any, did your experience have on your religious belief?

That God favored the Great War in order that mankind might be regenerated, that the war might be shown to the world, etc.

If you took part in the fighting, what impressions were made upon you by this experience?

The experience at the front impressed me with the idea that God seems to be the only licensor for man’s wars, the power of all time everlasting.

What has been the effect of all these experiences as contrasted with your state of mind before the war?

That most wars are fought for a selfish viewpoint; fought for one economic viewpoint, that the Great War was fought only for the belligerent desire to exploit all other races and lands, and made us instead of England and other countries.

Photographs—If possible enclose one taken before entering the service and one taken afterwards in uniform, both signed and dated.

Additional data

Are you more about to graduate from a Normal and Industrial Institute?

Signed at (place) on (date)

Jame Spencer (full name) 4th Infantry (rank)

The information contained in this record, unless otherwise indicated, was obtained from the following persons or sources:

James P. Spencer

Figure 2: Page four of James P. Spencer’s MSR.
Figure 3: Photograph of Samuel B. Yaffo, France, 1918.

Figure 4: Photograph of James P. Spencer, France 1918.
Unlike Yaffo and Spencer, many veterans refused to answer these questionnaires. Some felt the record too tedious and intrusive to fill out or thought the form might be the government asking them to reenlist, but the 27,847 men and women from Connecticut and Virginia who did fill out these questionnaires have left a unique and previously unused resource of primary evidence about the doughboy and his participation in the Great War.²

The importance of collecting information, especially subjective information, as close to an event as possible is made clear by the example of a French veteran of the Great War, author Maurice Genevoix. He entered the conflict in 1914 at age twenty-four and served until he was wounded in 1915. During the battle of the Marne, on 10 September 1914, Genevoix encountered German soldiers and he later described the event: “I came across three isolated German soldiers, each running behind the other at the same pace. I fired a bullet from my revolver into the head or back of each of them. Each one collapsed, with the same strangled cry.” Throughout the course of six decades, Genevoix recalled this experience several times; in each recollection, he changed the details of the event. When Genevoix reflected on the incident in 1950, he felt, “It was kill or be killed,” and the event “Made an ineffaceable imprint on my memory.”³ In 1961, Genevoix retold the experience as an epic struggle, filled with romanticism and meticulous detail, he discussed the weather conditions, described the German soldiers’ uniforms and their cries. This time, two Germans were going to engage him, rather than three running away in a straight line. Genevoix recalled, “He was going to turn around,

² The figure of 27,847 combines the total number of questionnaires from Connecticut and Virginia that the libraries received back from veterans; if Minnesota’s questionnaires are included, the total number of returns equals 107,847.
turn around…Understanding this, I raised the weapon in my right hand and fired.” Near the end of his life, in 1977, he filled his recollection with self-doubt and he lamented, “I very much hope I did not kill them.”

The story of Maurice Genevoix illustrates how human memory fades and alters with the passage of time. Memoirs written years after the Great War distort the views of the veterans who recorded their memories and feelings in 1919, when their experience remained untainted by age or cultural norms, just as Genevoix’s story had changed. In the midst of a major conflict, society understood if a soldier shot a fleeing enemy, after all, it was war. But as the years passed, the enemy was no longer the enemy, Genevoix changed the story because of societal viewpoints or because he had forgotten the facts – either way it is not the truth. As William L. Langer wrote in 1965 regarding his memoir Gas and Flame, written in 1919, “I find its immediacy rather appealing. It has nothing of the sophisticated rationalization that invariably creeps into reminiscences recorded long after the event.”

The majority of men filled out their questionnaires in 1919, when their memories of the Western Front were still vivid, most of the rest did so in 1920 or 1921, and the remainder in 1923, the year the last AEF soldiers returned from Germany. This makes the MSRs distinct from the United States Army Military History Institute’s (USAMHI) World War I questionnaires first issued in 1975, but almost all completed during the 1980s. In 1975, the USAMHI in Carlisle, Pennsylvania began a World War I survey based on previous models for earlier wars created by Don Rickey Jr.; these questionnaires went out to every known serviceman still living. These former soldiers and sailors,

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4 Smith, Embattled Self, 99.
ranging in age from their late seventies to early nineties, each completed an eleven-page
survey covering topics dealing with training camps, duty overseas and combat
experience.

The Institute at Carlisle holds approximately 7000 responses from these veterans
and in recent years, several historians have made great use of them, most notably Gary
Mead in *The Doughboys* (2000) and Jennifer D. Keene in *Doughboys, the Great War and
the Remaking of America* (2001). The weakness of the USAMHI questionnaires is
evident – the lapse of time. How long do memories stay fresh and accurate? At no
specific age does memory begin to fade, but a memory decrement with time is normal; at
the very least, veterans completed the Carlisle questionnaires while in their seventies.\(^6\) In
addition, since Carlisle administered the forms over sixty years after the fact, only the
youngest doughboys could participate.

To compensate for the limitations of the Carlisle questionnaires, various
historians have used diaries, memoirs, letters, interviews and official armed service
reports; but no one, with the exception of Christopher M. Sterba, has used the series of
Americans*, Sterba used only a dozen Connecticut questionnaires – specifically New
Haven Italians; in addition, Sterba makes no connection to other states’ questionnaires.\(^7\)

Why have scholars never used these records before? Perhaps the answer lies in the

\(^6\) For an in-depth study of memory, see Frederic C. Bartlett, *Remembering: A Study in Experimental and
Social Psychology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932), especially chapter 5, which discusses
his famous experiment, *The War of the Ghosts*. In this experiment, Bartlett told a Native American story to a
test group and asked people to recount the tale minutes, days and even years later, as time progressed, the
recollection of the story become more opaque.

\(^7\) Before his book, Sterba published an article focusing on Italian machine gunners, which used the same
few MSRs he would again use for his book two years later, see Christopher M. Sterba, “‘Your Country
Quarterly* 74, no. 2 (June 2001): 179-209 and *Good Americans: Italian and Jewish immigrants during the
strange origin of the MSRs and in the war history commissions that issued the forms to veterans.

Following the armistice, historians and veterans of the war began writing about the AEF’s role in the conflict. The great majority of publications in 1919 and the 1920s consisted of unit histories and personal memoirs (e.g. Frank P. Sibley, *With the Yankee Division in France*, 1919 and Hervey Allen, *Toward the Flame*, 1925). Not until Edward M. Coffman’s *The War to End All Wars* (1968) did a historian study all aspects of America’s role during the war, including the infantryman’s experience. He used several interviews to detail the role of the common soldier, making it one of the first texts to discuss the AEF soldiers’ experience in decades. Coffman also used a variety of sources from the National Archives and state collections; his use of personal accounts enriched the narrative. The strength of his work is the discussion of individuals and divisions. It is wide in scope. This, however, is also the book’s limitation: it touches on the experience of infantrymen, but does not explore the horror the men felt or the war’s effect on them.

Recent studies such as Byron Farwell’s *Over There* (1999), John S. D. Eisenhower’s *Yanks* (2001) and Mark E. Grotelueschen’s *The AEF Way of War* (2007) update Coffman’s work with new research. While Farwell does use memoirs, diaries and letters to give the AEF infantryman a voice, his book, like those of Eisenhower and Grotelueschen, is a top-down study of American battlefield performance, generals and the contribution of the AEF to Allied victory. Similar to Coffman in scope, *The Doughboys* (2000) by Gary Mead covers Western and home fronts, and makes great use of the USAMHI’s archives at Carlisle; Jennifer D. Keene’s *Doughboys, the Great War*
and the Remaking of America (2001) also mined the resources at Carlisle. Similar to Coffman, Mead’s work only touches on who the soldier was and how the war changed him mentally and physically. Keene, on the other hand, focuses on the importance of the Bonus Bill and the veterans’ struggle to obtain money promised to them by the government.

These records, as well as the diaries, letters, memoirs and other official papers from Carlisle enable both authors to portray the experience of the soldier, but only to a certain degree. The MSRs from 1919 asked the soldiers difficult questions. It pushed veterans to reflect on their experience – an experience still fresh in their minds. While still making full use of the classic sources (memoirs and unit histories) and the sources from Carlisle and the National Archives, this dissertation will utilize, as its core source, something previously neglected by others in the field – the 1919 MSRs of Connecticut and Virginia. While it would create a fascinating parallel to contrast the questionnaires of a veteran from 1919 and 1975, none with substantial responses exists. Cross-referencing the names from all three archives, reveals that a dozen men did fill out both questionnaires, but they left scant responses to one, or sometimes both questionnaires. A doughboy might exist who did fill out both questionnaires; however, since spelling of surnames varies widely from what is contained within the archive citation to how each soldier wrote his own name, it is easy to overlook matches.

Comparison of responses made in 1919 to those made in 1975 would furnish further insight into the sociological aspect of military history. Did decades of reflection alter the opinions of any veterans? Two strong differences can be noted. The Carlisle questionnaires contain bitter responses aimed at a different enemy than the Germans. As
the veterans’ passion from 1919 toward the enemy waned, their wrath found a new target. In 1975, many veterans expressed their anger toward the United States government; they felt cheated out of a future, which the G.I. Bill provided for World War II veterans. This is especially noted in Part IV, questions 41-42 of the Carlisle questionnaire, which ask, “If the Army sent you to school, please recount your experience there” and “What were your expectations of civilian life upon leaving service (post-war America, G-I benefits, educational and career opportunities).” Most veterans responded to these questions with answers such as, “G.I. benefits were in WWII!” and “WWI veterans did not have any benefits!” or as Sergeant Aaron Coplin, emphasized, “None – things were so different then – 60-61 years ago – No modern convenience – we got ‘nothing’ then – or now.”

The other change is the level of respect rather than disdain for the Germans. Veterans filled the MSRs of 1919 with celebratory remarks as to how “the Huns” could not contend with the military might of the United States. Decades later, in the pages of the Carlisle questionnaire, the doughboys wrote with deference for the superiority of the German soldier. In response to question 34, in Part III of the form, which read, “Did you and your comrades consider the enemy good fighters? Better trained? Better equipped?” – Sergeant Paul J. McMahon, answered, “Yes Germans were best, even better than us.” Louis C. Ciccone, believed, “They were the same as everyone else fighting for their country.”

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8 Aaron Coplin, World War I Veterans Survey, 29th Division, United States Army Military History Institute, Carlisle, PA (hereafter Carlisle). When quoting primary sources (e.g. the words of veterans), I cite each person verbatim with all original spelling, and do not use sic. When a * appears next to a veteran’s name in the footnote, the first time he or she is mentioned, they appear in the biography section of Appendix B.

9 Paul J. McMahon, 29th Division, Carlisle.

10 Louis C. Ciccone, 29th Division, Carlisle.
This project will make possible a work surveying men’s reactions to every facet of the war: prewar emotion, trench life intensity and reflective return. The MSRs enable a new type of study, one on a personal level, but covering the experience on both sides of the Atlantic and using other primary sources, such as diaries and letters from other state’s collections. It will develop the knowledge of the American soldier – not only of his time on the front, but his identity throughout the war. Edward Coffman wrote, “It is impossible to reproduce the state of mind of the men who waged war in 1917 and 1918.”

This project seeks to change this statement. The Connecticut and Virginia questionnaires are unique, not only for the AEF, but for World War I. Such things may exist undiscovered on some dusty archive shelf, but a search of the secondary literature has shown nothing comparable.

Not all men filled out the Connecticut and Virginia MSR forms completely. In particular, many left the fourth page blank or only partially answered some questions. Yet this fourth page, entitled Additional Information, is the most interesting and produces the richest information – the soldier’s personal impressions of the First World War. When completed, this page reveals his feelings, attitudes and insights. Many men did not want to share memories of their service, especially memories of combat experience; numerous soldiers did not answer questions regarding the action in which they participated. Almost 400 men gave a taut three-word answer: “Sherman was right.” The men who left this response referred to General William Tecumseh Sherman’s famous words from a speech he delivered at a veteran’s reunion in Columbus, Ohio, on 11 August 1880: “There is many a boy here today who looks on war as all glory, but, boys,
it is all hell.” Others wrote bitter responses such as “Are you kidding,” “Impossible to answer” or “cannot explain.”

The majority of the men who left short answers such as these participated in a great deal of combat and usually suffered serious injuries from machine gun or other small arms fire, grenade fragmentations, artillery shrapnel or poison gas attacks. Other men who also engaged in heavy combat wrote more, such as Private First Class Finlan D. Cuddy of New Haven, Connecticut who stated, “I took part in the fighting in the Argonne forests its an experience I never will forget. I’ll say war is worse the Hell.” “I did not realize what war really was. No one can know who hasn’t been there. It is worse than hell and may this be the end of war,” stressed Corporal Egbert B. Inman of Hartford.

Second Lieutenant Roy D. Hitchcock, Machine Gun Company, 111th Infantry, from East Hampton, Connecticut, commented, “That war was much worse than the famous remark of General Sherman.” Marine Corps Private Jerry M. Davis of Hartford remarked, “When I first went into action at Cheteau Thierry sector I did not seem to relize what war was untill 600 fell in action in my Bn it made me feel as Sherman expressed it, WAR IS HELL.” New Haven resident, Medical Corps Private Jack F. Molloy concluded that combat, “Verified to me Gen Shermans opinion of war. It sure

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13 Finlan D. Cuddy, 3 July 1919, Box 30, Military Service Questionnaires, 1920-1930, War Records Department, Record Group 12, State Archives, Connecticut State Library (hereafter CSL). Date after veteran’s name indicates when he or she filled out the form; dates always provided unless “Signed at” section on page 4 of questionnaire was left blank by the veteran.
14 Egbert B. Inman, 7 August 1919, Box 9, CSL.
15 Roy D. Hitchcock, 20 September 1921, Box 8, CSL.
16 Jerry M. Davis, 8 September 1919, Box CH02, CSL.
was Hell.”¹⁷ “Little change except to know now that war is H-l-I instead of having to believe what Sherman said,” stressed First Lieutenant Edgar H. Dowson of New Haven.¹⁸

The Value of the Project

The almost 13,000 Connecticut respondents and almost 15,000 Virginia respondents provide a crucial new source for evaluating the experience of the American soldier. Soldiers from Connecticut and Virginia came from the 26th and 29th Divisions. Existing National Guard units created these two divisions, both of which saw heavy combat, which included frontline sectors in the Aisne, Champagne, Marne, Meuse-Argonne, Lorraine and St. Mihiel areas. In addition, the 76th and 80th Divisions included draftees from Connecticut and Virginia. These divisions saw some action as well on several fronts: Lorraine, Meuse-Argonne, Picardy and St. Mihiel. These four units sustained 4579 men killed in action and 20,710 wounded.¹⁹ In addition, each of these divisions spent 85 days in active sectors.²⁰ The untapped records from these two states in combination with other memoirs, letters, diaries, published and unpublished, will provide new insight to the experience of the AEF soldier during the Great War. This dissertation will follow the doughboy from his ethnic and religious origins, training in the states and abroad, life on the front and most importantly the psychological effect left by the war after he returned home.

¹⁷ Jack F. Molloy, 18 July 1919, Box 34, CSL.
¹⁸ Edgar H. Dowson, 22 December 1920, Box 31, CSL.
Chapter 1, *The Great Adventure*, discusses the similarity of the doughboys to their European brethren in 1914; American men became intoxicated with excitement at their country’s declaration of war on 6 April 1917, just as their European counterparts did three years before. The horrors of Verdun and the Somme did not sway romantic visions of what these young and naïve Americans thought would be a great adventure – a semester abroad for some. The milieu in America fostered a sense of exhilaration and no danger; the propaganda machine of the British and the cultural glorification of warfare in the United States augmented the Victorian image of glorious war. The men felt they had everything to gain and nothing to lose.

Chapter 2, *Gimme da Gun*, answers key social and cultural questions. Who were these men? What factors shaped the AEF soldier? Did a Russian Jew have different beliefs concerning the war than an Italian Roman Catholic? Did a man educated at Yale University have a different opinion of the war than a Virginian coalminer who left school in the sixth grade? How did an African American Baptist farmer or a New England factory worker feel about Germans? How did a German-American or an Austro-Hungarian American feel about going to war against the country of his birth? Each man’s experience depended on his ethnic, religious and educational background. Some men felt they had less to prove while others felt war would make them into men and hungered to prove their masculinity. They all, however, felt it was their duty to fight.

Chapter 3, *Brooms instead of Rifles* examines how the men, whether at Camp Devens, Lewis, Lee, Upton or one of the other training camps constructed around the country, had strong feelings of respect or hatred for their military education in America. Regardless of location, most men did not have live-fire exercises and trained with brooms.
instead of rifles. This inadequate training proved fatal to many inexperienced doughboys and helped maintain a false sense of combat prowess, which American men believed they already had thanks to America’s quick victory against Spain at the turn of the century.

Chapter 4, *Across the Pond* discusses the veterans’ experience as they crossed the Atlantic with the threat of German U-boats and influenza, and that after the month-long journey, most received additional training in England or in quiet sectors of France. The majority of men benefited from their time in England and France while receiving more military training or exploring a foreign city. Thus far, with the exception of the flu and a distant U-boat during the crossing, the illusion of merriment continued. Not for long.

Chapter 5, *Sherman was Right* analyzes the doughboys in combat. Finally, the true test came; after all, the war was all about defeating the enemy by going over the top on the glorious Western Front. So they thought. The trenches, mud, rats, constant shelling and death shocked the doughboys. This was not why they enlisted. Where was the glory? Combat broke the men down; it showed them the true nature of war. With the remarkable exception of Italians from Connecticut and African American soldiers from Virginia, the majority of veterans hated the front. They hated the killing. It was not what they expected; General Sherman was right, “War is hell.”

Chapter 6, *Damned Dull, Damned Dirty and Damned Dangerous*, discusses the effect the war had on these men after their great adventure ended. With hindsight, would doughboys enlist with the same enthusiasm? Most veterans said they would think twice about signing up again and would wait for the government to draft them; a minority of others felt they would be ready to go a second round. Regardless of patriotism, could they return to their old job at the factory if dismembered or shell-shocked? Some men
physically could not perform their former occupations, while others became too restless and needed something else to get through the day.

The Conclusion, *A Bloody, Horrible, Useless Game* answers what was the identity of the doughboy and what the MSRs from 1919 tell us that we did not already know. Using the questionnaires of 1919, along with diaries, memoirs and letters from the men and women who served provides new evidence about the effect of the Great War on AEF soldiers, each MSR from 1919 is the equivalent of an exit interview with a soldier fresh from the front; it reveals the state of mind of the doughboy. Throughout history, men have marched into war oblivious to the warnings of prior generations, seeking adventure and glory, proof of masculinity and an opportunity for heroism, soldiers brush off tales of horror and destruction and enter the fray. There was little difference between the doughboys of 1917 and the soldiers who came before them, or the soldiers from the other Allied armies. Encouraged by the American cultural glorification of war, young men were eager to fight on the Western Front, but it was not until they returned that these soldiers understood the brutality of war – they would now become the same warning voices from their youth…voices they had ignored.
CHAPTER 1

THE GREAT ADVENTURE

The war had been raging on the continent of Europe for almost three and a half years before the doughboys came to France – brave, eager and extremely naïve. Garnett D. Claman was curious about the world outside his farm in Bristol, Virginia; at the age of nineteen on 28 July 1917, he entered the service stating, “I wished to go to France that I might have the knowledge of travel, of association with different nationalities, and I wanted to know what war meant.”¹ Henry A. Isleib of Marlborough, Connecticut, a farmer and lumberman, joined the Infantry on 29 March 1918, “spurred on by my country’s needs and my own patriotic thoughts.”² Joseph J. O’Connell, of Manchester, Connecticut, enlisted for duty in the war due to a sense of “patriotism and a desire for adventure.”³ James P. Spencer, an African American student at Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute from Petersburg, Virginia, was thirty years old when he entered the infantry on 26 October 1917. Spencer had no misgivings about his military service and

¹ Garnett D. Claman, 6 August 1921, Box 11, World War I History Commission, Series I: Individual Service Records (Questionnaires), 1919-1924, Library of Virginia, Richmond (hereafter LVA).
² Henry A. Isleib, 27 September 1919, Box 19, CSL.
³ Joseph J. O’Connell, 26 September 1919, Box 17, CSL.
remarked, “I felt that it was my patriotic duty to serve my country at the most critical hour in the Nation’s history, though my race had not been given the proper rights.”4

Niels A. W. Johnson, a Manchester, Connecticut resident who served with the 102nd Infantry expressed the feelings of many by saying he enlisted, “To fight for the United States and Democracy.”5 Another Manchester man, Harold J. Dougan, served as a Sergeant in the Infantry, and referred to himself as “a man knowing that his country’s honor was at stake, that he, a very small factor, was needed to do his little part, I went willingly.”6 Infantryman James O. McKarney, a farmer from Washington County, Virginia, commented, “I thought it was our duty to go and help win the war before I was drafted. I am glad to know that I was able to help win the war.”7

“When I received my call, I thought it over, and considered it an honor as well as a great privilege to go and fight or die for my country,” reflected Thomas M. Clary, an African American blacksmith and farmer from White Plains, Virginia.8 “At the time I was called I was employed in the US Navy yard and was urged to claim exemption on same grounds, but my thoughts were that someone else would have to go if I did not. I was young and was willing to do my share,” commented Paul T. Wysocki of Norfolk, Virginia. Wysocki, the son of Polish immigrants, entered the Machine Gun Company, 318th Infantry, 80th Division on 22 September 1917, three months before his twenty-second birthday.9

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4 *James P. Spencer, 25 April 1921, Box 3, LVA.  
5 *Niels A. W. Johnson, 15 August 1919, Box 16, CSL.  
6 Harold J. Dougan, 9 August 1919, Box 15, CSL.  
7 *James O. McKarney, Box 11, LVA.  
8 *Thomas M. Clary, Box 2, LVA.  
9 *Paul T. Wysocki, 25 August 1919, Box 8, LVA.
“Well I did not know anything about the military, I had as much patriotism as anybody. And I made sure that I got the first uniform on of boys that night,” stated twenty-six year old Arthur F. Lundin, a sheet metal worker and farmer from Oxford, Connecticut. 10 William W. Parker employed as a welder and sheriff in Norfolk, Virginia, enlisted in the infantry on 9 June 1917 at the age of twenty-four. Parker said, “My attitude towards military service is of the highest that any man can have, and I felt it was necessary that I do my duty for I am an American and fight for her principles.”11

“When men first began to be drafted I thought to myself that if others were to go, I might as well go along too, and when my call came I was ready for it,” observed African American John S. Fields, a twenty-two year old teamster from Church Roads, Virginia.12 Arthur A. Grove, a merchant from Luray, Virginia and a member of the National Guard reflected, “I believed then and I believe now that it is the duty of every man to serve his country in time of need. I was over the age for the first Draft but would not have felt right if I had not gone into the Army, especially as I had a good many year’s service in the Virginia National Guard.”13

The soldiers of the AEF answered President Wilson’s call that “the world must be made safe for democracy.”14 “The man who was unwilling to fight for this country at such a critical period has no right to protection under its flag. I was ready and willing to go when called,” remarked Emory P. Barrow of Alberta, Virginia regarding his attitude toward military service.15 Barrow, inducted on 10 May 1918, five days after his twenty-

10 Arthur F. Lundin, 26 September 1920, Box 38, CSL.
11 *William W. Parker, 22 August 1919, Box 22, Series II, LVA.
12 John S. Fields, 8 December 1919, Box 4, LVA.
13 *Arthur A. Grove, 18 November 1920, Box 9, LVA.
14 Day, Wilson’s Own Story, 247.
15 *Emory P. Barrow, 11 November 1921, Box 2, LVA.
seventh birthday, was a student before the war. “I think that if a country is good enough
to live in its good enough to fight for,” stated Theodore Elmore of Richmond, Virginia.
Elmore joined the Marine Corps at the age of sixteen on 30 June 1916 as a drummer and
trumpeter in the Infantry.16 Edgar C. Outten, a twenty-six year old clerk and private
secretary from Hampton, Virginia remarked, “Military Service beneficial to all who
serve. A Very essential part of our Gov’t. A means by which we may learn the
obligation and privilege of citizenship.” Outten continued, “Belonged to National Guard
when war was declared. Glad to be of service to my country.”17

The doughboys were thus young men who entered the military with preconceived
notions of what the war would be like; the American cultural glorification of warfare
created an impetuous doughboy, who believed war was a game and the path to manhood.
The average AEF soldier did not know and did not care to know what the war was about
or how it had started. The June 1914 assassination of Francis Ferdinand, heir to the
throne of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, enveloped all of Europe in a massive conflict
that would cause ten million military deaths. After the battle of the Marne in September
1914, which halted the German Army’s plan to crush France, both the Allied and German
forces dug in, and a series of trenches formed from the North Sea down to the border of
neutral Switzerland. While England, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia and
their allies engaged in brutal trench warfare – across the Atlantic, which for Americans
seemed a world away, young men watched and waited to see if the United States would
enter the fray.

16 *Theodore Elmore, 15 March 1922, Box 21, Series II, LVA.
17 *Edgar C. Outten, 8 November 1919, LVA.
The next four years would spawn some of the bloodiest combat the world has ever seen, resulting in an unequaled waste of human life. The conflicts at Verdun and the Somme in 1916 would become legendary; 19,240 British troops lost their lives in the first day of the battle of the Somme. Americans read about these disasters of war in newspapers around the country. In the early twentieth century, the United States still clung to its isolationism, a traditional American policy since President George Washington had warned the young country in his Farewell Address of 1796 to concentrate their efforts on improving the United States, while isolating the country from the politics of Europe and the world. President James Monroe would further strengthen Washington’s original message when he issued the Monroe Doctrine in 1823, stating that Europe, especially Great Britain, should stay out of America, and vowing that America would refrain from involvement in the affairs of Europe.

Through the nineteenth century, while the countries of Europe vied for global domination, the United States remained preoccupied with its own expansion. The venture into Cuba, Guam, the Philippines and Puerto Rico beginning in 1898 marked the first major attempt by the United States to expand its rule overseas. Up to this point, America busied itself with westward expansion in the continental United States, but with the Indian Wars over, the country sought a new outlet of enterprise. After the short, four-month war against Spain, America began its own style of imperialism against Spain’s former colonies, but still distanced itself from European international affairs.

The United States held true to Washington’s recommendation when the country elected President Woodrow Wilson for a second term in 1916. During Wilson’s re-

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18 Hew Strachan, *The First World War* (New York: Viking, 2003), 192. This number varies widely from source to source, as does the total number of casualties (57,470), which includes British soldiers wounded, captured or missing at the end of the first day.
election campaign, Americans praised him for his promise to keep the United States out of the war; this neutral stance helped him defeat Republican candidate Charles Hughes. Despite the isolationist sentiments of America, Wilson felt a sense of foreboding. Though most Americans did not want any part of the horrors of Europe, many people had already taken sides, some for the Allies and some for the Central Powers. Many Americans, especially in the northeast, were foreign born, and had strong family ties to Germany, Italy, France or Britain. Figure 5 shows Connecticut’s diverse population during the war years. The following chapter discusses how these various backgrounds influenced the soldier’s opinion of the war.

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<th>Country of Birth</th>
<th>Hartford Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Bridgeport Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>New Haven Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Waterbury Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>New Britain Number</th>
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<td>131</td>
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<td>0.7</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>2,102</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total Foreign Born | 40,667 | 29.4 | 46,414 | 32.3 | 45,686 | 28.1 | 29,899 | 32.6 | 21,230 | 35.8 |
| Total Population  | 138,036 | 143,555 | 162,537 | 91,715 | 59,316 |

Figure 5: Distribution of foreign-born in Connecticut’s five largest cities, 1920.

As 1915 and 1916 passed, the United States crept towards war: British propaganda, the sinking of the Lusitania on 7 May 1915 and the infamous Zimmermann

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note all tipped America into the conflict. As Gary Mead discusses in The Doughboys, France and especially Britain waged a “propaganda campaign” in the United States well before 6 April 1917. The Allies made the most of German atrocity stories in order to persuade Americans to enter the war. 20 Although American journalists were in France to cover the war and report objectively on events taking place, the French did not permit them to travel near the front lines; the information they received was from the British. Moreover, the British could execute as a spy any journalist who attempted to cover war stories from the German point of view. The majority of the accounts of the war therefore originated in Britain and were cabled to American newspapers. The British wanted to sway the opinion of United States citizens to their side, and to convince Americans to join them in war against Germany. As Jay M. Winter wrote, “The Great War spawned the most spectacular advertising campaign to date. Its product was justification of war.” 21

The final and decisive political factor came when Germany resumed its policy of unrestricted submarine warfare in February 1917. President Wilson, who just months earlier won re-election for his firm stance on American neutrality, went to Congress on the night of 2 April 1917 and asked for a declaration of war. In a voice that grew more passionate with each paragraph of his address, Wilson declared there was no other course of action; the United States must enter the conflict and fight for democracy. He concluded, “To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are and everything that we have, with the pride of those who know that the day has come

when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other.”

His words met with thunderous applause. Later that evening, Wilson said to his secretary, Joseph P. Tumulty, “Think what it was they were applauding. My message today was a message of death for our young men. How strange it seems to applaud that.”

Four days later, on 6 April 1917, America went to war.

An Ill-equipped Ally

America was unprepared to enter World War I. A United States Army expeditionary force, led by General John J. Pershing, had just spent the prior year in the Punitive Expedition (March 1916-February 1917), which resulted in a humiliatingly unsuccessful attempt to hunt down the elusive Pancho Villa in northern México. The Punitive Expedition devoured supplies, leaving insufficient matériel for the AEF. Pershing did train his troops in some modern warfare tactics, such as trench warfare, but the army forgot those short lessons while the soldiers busied themselves in a campaign of cat and mouse across the vast terrain of Chihuahua, México. More importantly, the expedition occupied the army’s attention in México rather than preparation for possible intervention in Europe; homeland defense and open field battle remained the hallmarks of army doctrine.

Total army strength consisted of fewer than 200,000 men. The Navy, though the third largest in the world behind England and Germany, consisted of many

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outdated battleships, and was ill prepared to face the German U-boat menace or, more importantly, to transport soldiers across the Atlantic. In the air, America was far behind; the United States Air Service (USAS) possessed a little over fifty planes, almost all of which were outdated.\textsuperscript{25}

The National Defense Act of 1916 had cut the general staff of the army to the bare minimum, leaving a nation that appeared incapable of coming to the aid of the Allies. Although Congress established the Council of National Defense as part of the National Defense Act and sought to prepare America for war, it actually worked against preparedness. The Council, comprised of engineers, academics and industrialists, attempted to make American industry ready for war with the creation of an advisory network that operated throughout each state; this type of state and national organization, however, proved to be unwieldy. In addition, the Council of National Defense limited itself to finding data and taking inventory of the resources necessary for wartime.

The United States Army in 1916 was an inefficient operation with limited funds; Congress was not generous in providing resources to the army to ensure its growth, and in general, the populace did not support militarism. Therefore, the National Defense Act of 1916 did nothing to enhance the army. Secretary of War Newton D. Baker favored decentralization of government, as did the rest of Wilson’s administration, and Baker disregarded the army officials, who warned that the military lacked staff and supplies.

\textsuperscript{25} By 1915, the airplane had become a necessity on the Western Front for several reasons, mostly in the realm of reconnaissance and artillery spotting. In a short time, Europe realized the true power of the airplane as its modern military role of fighter and bomber materialized. As in many areas of warfare, the AEF would depend on the Allies to provide them with the sinews of war. The area most lacking was that of airplanes; not one fully built US model ever flew over the Western Front. Leading United States ace Eddie Rickenbacker and every other American pilot would depend on French and British airplanes. The airplanes most used were French: the SPAD 13 and Nieuport 28. John Ellis and Michael Cox, \textit{The World War I Databook} (London: Aurum Press, 2001), 293. Besides being short on planes, the army only had 26 pilots. Roger G. Miller, \textit{A Preliminary to War: The 1st Aero Squadron and the Mexican Punitive Expedition of 1916} (Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2005), 53.
This situation continued even after the United States declared war. Troops went without uniforms; weapons and supplies of every sort were scarce. Only when Congress questioned Baker in January 1918 did Wilson’s administration react to the lack of military supplies. North Carolina Senator Lee S. Overman sponsored the Overman Act, passed by Congress on 20 May 1918, which enabled Wilson to consolidate six agencies into one and gave him greater power to spend money for wartime purposes.

The Regular Army was small, the National Guard was limited in size and both forces were sorely under-equipped: they had no tanks, no gas masks, only 742 field pieces, a mere 43 heavy guns, and 2000 antiquated machine guns.26 There was also an inadequate supply of ammunition. As will be discussed later, during their training on Governor’s Island and other camps, new soldiers drilled with broomsticks instead of guns. General Johnson Hagood, Chief of Staff of the Services of Supply, lamented the lack of preparation by the War Department prior to the United States’ entrance in the war: “The fourteen years, 1903 to 1917, during which the General staff had been in existence had not been spent in making plans for war, the purpose for which it was created, but in squabbling over the control of the routine peace-time administration and supply of the Regular Army and in attempts to place the blame for unpreparedness upon Congress.” Hagood also felt that during the years from 1914 to 1917 the War Department did not anticipate the country’s entrance into the war and failed to plan, commenting, “Hindsight is better than foresight, and I, like all the rest, did not have the brains – or the genius – to see preparedness in its true light.”27

Many returning veterans also lamented the lack of preparation for war. A Captain in the Infantry, George W. Cheney of Manchester, Connecticut stated, “My experience was that the American Army never did reach the point of being completely equipped and organized as had been contemplated in War Department plans. This goes to show that we were woefully unprepared in spite of repeated warnings, and the fact that we entered the war three years after it started. We should have a standing army of 500,000 and compulsory military training for one year for each boy reaching age 18.”

“I am a strong advocate of preparedness. If the U.S. Army had had the proper equipment and some trained officers our losses would have been less and the Army better managed,” said Infantry Sergeant, Mancel W. Rice of New Haven; he continued, “We should keep a large well-trained National Guard and fair-sized regular army. The volunteer is the better soldier. We should develop a strong air service so that in future wars our infantry will not suffer for lack of eyes.” When African American Second Lieutenant John M. Ross returned home to New Haven after the war, he concluded with “A hope that our United States will never again be caught unprepared and that our military program will be adequate for its full protection, both on land and on the sea.”

Yet in spite of its many deficiencies, the United States was able to mobilize and prepare a large fighting force in a remarkably short time. The strong industrial foundation of America, and its vast population, quickly enabled the country to create a formidable military force. The 69th Division of New York had no lack of volunteers in spite of their recruiting slogan: “If you don’t want to be amongst the first to go to France,

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28 George W. Cheney, 10 July 1919, Box 15, CSL.
29 Marcel W. Rice, 21 July 1919, Box 35, CSL.
30 John M. Ross, 6 October 1919, Box 35, CSL.
don’t join the 69th.”

Francis P. Duffy, a Roman Catholic chaplain for the 165th Infantry, 69th Division, New York, described the enthusiasm of the mostly Irish troops mustered at the Regiment Armory to welcome volunteers on 18 August 1917: “Our 2,000 lined the walls and many perched themselves on the iron beams overhead. They cheered and cheered and cheered till the blare of the bands was unheard in the joyous din – till hearts beat so full and fast that they seemed too big for the ribs that confined them, till tears of emotion came, and something mystical was born in every breast – the soul of a Regiment. Heaven be good to the enemy when these cheering lads go forward together in battle.”

The Marines seemed ready for war. Brigadier General Albertus W. Catlin stated, “When the United States declared war on Germany, a thrill went through the Marine Corps, for we were fighting men all and we learned that Marines were to be rushed over to France to take their stand on the Frontier of Liberty beside the battle-scarred veterans of France and Great Britain.”

By the end of 1918, four million men were combat ready, and America sent two million of these soldiers overseas to the front. The majority of men went willingly as volunteers; only a few went unwillingly as disgruntled draftees like Wilbur T. Brownley of Norfolk, Virginia, whose thoughts on military service were succinct: “What can’t be cured, must be endured.” Brownley composed the minority.

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32 Duffy, *Father Duffy’s Story*, 18.
34 Wilbur T. Brownley, 18 August 1919, Box 13, LVA.
For the Glory

At the time of the war, Americans still embraced romantic notions of combat. Many men were eager to go because they did not know the taste of battle; grand ideas of honor, heroism and patriotism burned in their hearts. Many of these men had dreams of engaging in courageous acts of bravery that would make them heroes, and indeed, they found these dreams fulfilled, although not necessarily in the idealistic manner they had imagined. Memories of stories they heard glamorizing the Civil War impressed the youthful troops; they were ready to fight. Thirty-one year old Herman R. Furr of Norfolk, Virginia enlisted in the National Army on 15 May 1917 and said he “believed in preparedness, not a big standing army but a trained reserve.” Furr added, “My father was a Confederate soldier, and have always believed it was my duty to get into military service at once in case of war.” Edward G. Pobuda, a resident of Willington, Connecticut who enlisted in the National Guard on 23 August 1917, his twenty-third birthday, said, “as soon as war was declared I resigned my position and joined the ranks for a just cause against a common enemy.”

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35 Herman R. Furr, 14 October 1919, Series II, Box 21, LVA.
36 Edward G. Pobuda, 22 May 1919, Box 64, CSL.
“I was not called, being a volunteer three days after declaration of war. Was glad to go and will go again if necessity arises,” commented Joseph Ryan, a student from Putnam, Connecticut who enlisted on 9 April 1917 at the age of nineteen.\textsuperscript{37} Private Stephen J. Weston of Waterbury, Connecticut enlisted five months before his eighteenth birthday, on 6 June 1917. Weston entered military service with the zeal expressed by other young men: “Military service builds strong bodies, and sound minds. With military service one acquires confidence and poise. Being young and adventurous, I chose the Infantry. After all, when positions must be taken it is the Infantryman that takes them. When ground must be held, it is the Infantryman’s job to hold it.”\textsuperscript{38}

\textsuperscript{37} Joseph Ryan, 30 November 1919, Box 58, CSL.
\textsuperscript{38} Stephen J. Weston, 8 November 1933, Box 39, CSL.
Douglas C. France, a lawyer from Charlottesville, Virginia, said he “always found military life to be attractive and considered it my duty to volunteer when war was declared.” France entered the Army Ambulance service on 28 May 1917 at the age of twenty-three. Twenty-seven year old Millard C. Life, a college educated shipping clerk from McGaheysville, Virginia entered the service on 18 September 1917 and affirmed he “was ready to go at any time that I might be called.” Life added, “Made no effort to be exempted.”

“My enlistment was brought about by the realization that manpower only could stop a tremendous slaughter. My country’s need and the ‘Great Adventure’ were also compelling items,” said Theodore E. Whitney, Machine Gun Corporal and Hartford native, another man drawn to combat for the excitement it offered.

Thomas B. McDermott, twenty-seven years old when he enlisted in the Infantry on 28 April 1917, felt so strongly about helping his country that he left his wife and two children at home in Hartford when he began his training in Plattsburgh, New York. McDermott “had no definite attitude except the firm conviction that his country would take impudence from NO ONE.” Alvin C. York, of Pall Mall, Tennessee, reported to his local draft board on 14 November 1917. In his diary entry three days later he wrote, “I didn’t want to go and fight and kill. But I had to answer the call of my country, and I did. And I believed it was right. I have got no hatred toward the Germans and I never had.” At the age of seventeen, Martin J. Hogan of New York enlisted in the 69th Division of the National Guard. Recalling his enthusiasm for answering the recruitment

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39 Douglas C. France, 16 November 1920, Box 12, LVA.
40 Millard C. Life, 7 January 1920, Box 9, LVA.
41 Theodore E. Whitney, 16 February 1927, Box 14, CSL.
42 Thomas B. McDermott, 24 March 1920, Box 11, CSL.
call, Hogan stated, “I felt that I looked old enough to pass a recruiting sergeant and that the call for men was urgent enough to justify my camouflaging my age by one year. Anyhow, I thought I can go to France and grow up with the war.”  

As visions of chivalry and courage raced through their thoughts, pro-war propaganda and literature also encouraged these would-be heroes to rise to the challenge of military training. English poets Rudyard Kipling and Rupert Brooke contributed to the mental images of war held by the young soldiers who read English literature widely in the United States. Kipling’s *For All We Have and Are*, written in 1914, remains a prime example of the type of romantic works that inspired the doughboys to enlist and fight:

For all we have and are  
For all our children’s fate,  
Stand up and take the war.  
The Hun is at the gate!

Equally important to the mindset of the doughboy was the influence wielded by veterans; soldiers of past American wars helped shape the aggressive, sometimes idealistic mentality of the doughboys. Theodore Roosevelt with his charismatic personality, colored by his famous charge up San Juan Hill during the Spanish American War on 3 July 1898, made fighting battles with the enemy appear to be no more than a hazardous sport. Others continued to characterize war as a glorious adventure, and a way of escaping a dull or unchallenging way of life.

Younger educated men especially in the northeastern United States pushed for military training and American participation in the war. Editors and publishers of newspapers and magazines and college presidents supported the entrance of America into

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the Great War. With the written and spoken word, men with influential positions not
only perpetuated the heroic myth of war, they also pushed for it. John G. Hibben, who
succeeded Woodrow Wilson as President of Princeton University, as early as 1914 had
begun advocating America’s entrance into the conflict in Europe. As David M. Kennedy
noted, Hibben spoke of “the chastening and purifying effect of armed conflict.”

Colleges and preparatory schools sent hundreds of volunteers for military service.
Ivy-league universities such as Princeton and Yale, steeped in the conventional teachings
of war as a noble cause, sent their young students off to fight the Germans. Albertus W.
Catlin of the Marine Corps noted, “Unquestionably, the intelligent, educated man makes,
in the long run, the best soldier. There is no place for the mere brute in modern warfare.
It is a contest of brains as well as of brawn, and the best brains win. The American
colleges doubtless supposed that they were turning men into scholars; when the test came
they found they had been training soldiers.” Catlin remarked that in the 6th Regiment
60 percent of the soldiers were college men and that two thirds of one entire company
came from the University of Minnesota. Twenty-four year old Washington and Lee
University student William B. Yancey of Harrisonburg, Virginia stated, “I was not called,
and as to my attitude it was not mine to question, and being a firm believer in that old but
apt saying, ‘May America in all her diplomatic relations be right but America right or
wrong,’ I went with full confidence of victory and we came home with the bacon.”

Joseph B. Bowen, of Pawtucket, Rhode Island, was a forestry student at Yale
when the United States declared war. In a letter home, Bowen wrote, “I shall enlist at the

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University Press, 2004), 179. Kennedy stresses the strong support of the upper class favoring the war as a
way to reinvigorate male honor.
48 *William B. Yancey, 9 October 1919, Box 12, LVA.*
first opportunity. It is true that the aviator’s job is dangerous, but death has never held any dread for me; in fact, I think I have a philosopher’s point of view, and I can look on it as an interesting experience that will come sooner or later. I shall hope and pray that I may be killed outright rather than come back maimed, but God’s will be done.”

The American poet Alan Seeger graduated from Harvard in 1910, and joined the French Foreign Legion four years later. Seeger recorded his experiences in France during World War I in his poetry, letters and diaries. In a letter to his mother dated 3 July 1915, Seegar wrote, “Had I the choice I would be nowhere else in the world than where I am. Even had I the chance to be liberated, I would not take it. Do not be sorrowful then. It is the shirkers and slackers alone in this war who are to be lamented.” When he died in action in 1916, war romanticists and journalists made him an American hero, propelling more young men towards the European conflict. The poet and historian, Joyce Kilmer, served with the 69th Division of New York. When Chaplain Francis Duffy met Kilmer at training camp on 5 August 1917 he remarked that Kilmer “sees what he considers a plain duty, and he is going ahead to perform it, calm and clear eyed and without the slightest regard to what the consequences may be.”

New Jersey born writer Arthur G. Empey joined British forces after the sinking of the Lusitania. Empey’s autobiographical books, Over the Top and First Call told the story of his own experiences in the trenches with the English troops. Over the Top, published in 1917, became an instant success. A year later, it was made into a motion picture, which starred the author. Empey, who was wounded three times in combat,

50 Alan Seeger, Letters and Diary of Alan Seeger (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1917), 126.
51 Duffy, Father Duffy’s Story, 16. Kilmer served as a Sergeant in HQ Company of the 69th Division, and died in battle.
became a popular speaker who told of his personal adventures in the war as if it were one long heroic undertaking filled with camaraderie and thrills. In *First Call*, Empey makes an impassioned plea urging young men to enlist by recounting the following story:

A friend the other day made a remark that was very helpful to me and may be helpful to you. He is a shade under forty, healthy and vigorous, but he has a large family and many responsibilities and cannot go – and oh! how he wants to!

As he watched a few of the men in the office saying “Good-bye” the day before they were to leave for the training camps, he said: “No matter what we men who are left behind may do – those fellows will have it all over us.”

Wasn’t he right?...Men may become rich or famous in other walks of life – but no matter what their achievements, they can be no greater than yours. You will have it “all over them.” To have taken part in this great war, on the side of Right, to have been one of the struggling soldiers who have helped to bring back to the earth Freedom and all that makes life precious, is well worth while. The sacrifice may be great, but it will not have been in vain.”

As they enlisted and left for training the soldiers had been exposed to many images of what lay ahead of them. Their minds filled with thoughts of doing their part for freedom, and serving their country became their inspiration; the atrocities of war and fear of dying were thoughts that did not enter into the heads of many young soldiers.

Miletus B. Jarman, a twenty-six year old high school principal from Elkton, Virginia stated he “had no definite attitude toward military service in general – until U. S. entered the war. Was then eager to serve in any capacity in which Gov’t. could use me. I felt that I wanted to do my own fighting – asked for assignment to infantry when called upon to express a preference.”

Twenty-six year old Culpepper, Virginia native John W. Covington said he thought it was “my duty or any American to obey the call of the country regardless for

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52 Arthur G. Empey, *First Call* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1918), 319-320. After the war, not all civilians looked upon the veterans’ sacrifice as worthwhile; see the end of chapter 6, especially Carl Noble’s anecdote.

53 *Miletus B. Jarman, 7 January 1920, Box 9, LVA.*
what purpose. A man who cannot serve a country where he was born and raised or
nationalized is not a good specimen of citizen and if he cannot fight for it he does not
deserve the right to live under the protection of that flag.”54 Arthur G. Empey, in First
Call, expressed the same sentiments when he wrote, “The flag flying from the front of
your home is your flag, our flag; our fathers shed their blood to put it there; now it is up
to every man and woman of us to shed our blood, if need be, to keep it there. If you will
not do this, you are not an American and America does not want you. Go over where you
belong, under the German flag of murder, rapine, dishonor and treachery.”55

Curry P. Hutchison, age twenty-three, a farmer from Newport, Virginia recalled,
“While in my school life I had often felt a longing for to wear my country’s uniform as a
soldier never dreaming that my call was to come so suddenly. I answered my call with
no feeling of remorse or regret and felt thankful that God gave me power and strength to
serve my country and my people in a cause as just.”56

Almost 95 percent of the 27,847 Connecticut and Virginian veterans asked for
their opinion in 1919, supported the military going into the war, including almost all men
who saw heavy combat in the closing months of the war. When they left the service and
returned home, the majority of soldiers still supported the military, but not as vigorously
as before their service. The replies on the state questionnaires show the enthusiasm and
sense of anticipation the soldiers carried with them into war. “I did, and do believe that
every man from 18 to 40 years of age should have at least one solid year of military

54 *John W. Covington, 24 September 1920, Series II, Box 20, LVA.
55 Empey, First Call, 4.
56 *Curry P. Hutchison, 15 December 1919, Box 5, LVA.
service, not only to prepare him for emergencies but for the personal benefits derived therefrom,” recommended William P. Nye of Radford, Virginia.57

**Proud to Volunteer**

The first American troops arrived in France in November 1917, eight months after the country declared war. This seemed like an eternity to the impatient Allies. There was a great difference in mobilization speed of European armies versus American armies: after the assassination of Francis Ferdinand on 28 June 1914, Austria-Hungary mobilized a month later on 28 July, Germany invaded Belgium on 4 August and France clashed with Germany ten days afterward. Even with the first few arrivals of American troops in November, it would not be until March 1918 that America’s presence on the Western Front became important in battle. Yet, it was summer before substantial numbers of American troops were engaged in combat.

General Pershing believed that the AEF could end the stalemate on the front. The infantryman, Pershing believed, was still the backbone of an army, and the armed forces of the United States could show the armies of Europe how war was supposed to be waged. Pershing and the AEF would soon learn the hard truth. The trenches of the front were the champions, and infantrymen alone could not win the war; it would take more than the old-fashioned élan of battle to capture victory in Europe, but the doughboys’ élan cost them dearly and contributed to more than 100,000 casualties for the United States.58

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57 William P. Nye, 14 February 1921, Series II, Box 22, LVA.
58 This number, like all casualty numbers from World War I, varies widely. This number refers to the amount of KIA (killed in action) losses. If the number includes those wounded, missing, accidental death and death by disease, mainly influenza and pneumonia, the mean is about 300,000.
The doughboys were not prepared for the horrors they would soon face on the Western Front: even what they had been reading about the first three years of the war left most of the doughboys oblivious to the realities of the conflict. As stated before, the illusions of war had played a key role in the manipulation of the tens of thousands of young Americans who enlisted as the echoes of applause from President Wilson’s speech could still be heard. Though there were draft-dodgers, especially in larger cities like New York, many AEF men proudly stated they did not wait to be drafted, they volunteered.

Raliegh A. Bagley, a twenty-six year old unmarried physician from Norfolk, Virginia, enlisted on 6 June 1917, and remarked, “I enlisted as soon as possible after the declaration of war, and thought every man without disqualifying diseases or dependents should do likewise.” 59 Twenty-year old Fairfield H. Hodges, a single assistant rate clerk from Portsmouth, Virginia enlisted in the 1st Virginia Ambulance Company of the National Guard on 1 June 1917, and served as a Sergeant with the 104th Sanitary Train, 29th Division. Hodges recalled his desire to enter military service, “When we first went in the war I tried to enlist the second day after the declaration but owing to the fact that my eyesight was poor could not get in the artillery my favorite branch of the service, but managed after much trying to enlist in the ambulance service by June 1st, 1917.” 60 Channing W. Daniel, a twenty-seven year old teacher and salesman with a BA from the University of Virginia, enlisted in the military on 28 August 1917. Daniel stated he was “Satisfied to go as volunteer, glad of opportunity for a great experience, and not inclined to consider probability of death.” 61

59 *Raleigh A. Bagley, 1 September 1919, Box 13, LVA.
60 *Fairfield H. Hodges, 25 February 1920, Box 15, LVA.
61 *Channing W. Daniel, 10 March 1921, Box 16, LVA.
Hugh F. Brown, a single bank clerk from Norfolk, Virginia, volunteered for military service on 24 April 1917, and described his attitude regarding his enlistment, “In general, I volunteered believing every patriotic, able-bodied man should enthusiastically answer the call of his country if necessary. 1st, unmarried men under 25 years old; 2nd, unmarried men under 35 years old; 3rd, married men under 35 years old, without children; etc. I have always been opposed to a large standing army, but should have one, between 4 and 5 hundred thousand men.”\footnote{Hugh E. Brown, Box 13, LVA.}

Twenty-five year old contractor James F. Bonham of Sugar Grove, Virginia enlisted in military service on 4 August 1917, and served as a Private First Class with the 108th Aero Squadron. Bonham remarked, “I was never CALLED and I felt it my duty to Enlist in the army and do my BIT, so I did.”\footnote{James F. Bonham, 26 September 1920, Box 10, LVA.}

Chaplain Duffy remembered the enthusiasm of the men of the 69th as he recalled an incident that occurred at camp during September 1917:

A soldier of Company K came to my tent one afternoon last week and stood at the entrance fumbling his hat in his hand like an Irish tenant of the old days that had not the rent to pay the landlord. “What’s the matter, Tom?” “I took a dhrop too much, and Captain Hurley got very mad about it and brought me up before Major Moynahan. I wouldn’t mind if they’d fine me and be through with it for I know I deserve it. But the Major and the Captain say that they’re not going to stand anything like this, and that they won’t lave me go to the war. And sure, Father Duffy, if I couldn’t go to the war it’d kill me.” The smile that came to my lips at this very Irish way of putting it was suppressed when I thought of the number of men born in the country who were worried sick lest the Draft should catch them and send them to the war.\footnote{Duffy, Father Duffy’s Story, 20.}

America, especially the men who hungered for battle did not realize the barbarity of the front, but even with hindsight following the Armistice, they supported their initial patriotic enthusiasm for the war, the draft and enlisting. The horrors of Verdun and the Somme did not sway romantic visions of what these young and naïve Americans thought...
would be a great adventure – a semester abroad for some. The milieu in the United States fostered a sense of exhilaration and no danger; the propaganda machine of the British and American governments augmented the Victorian image of glorious war. The men felt they had everything to gain and nothing to lose. The major problem, however, was their country was not well-prepared to train, equip or send them to the front, and throughout the war, American forces would be dependent on the Allies for almost all of their heavy artillery, machine guns and other supplies. Nonetheless, American soldiers went headlong into the trenches of Europe, but who exactly were these men?
CHAPTER 2

GIMME DA GUN

Do individual predispositions shape a soldier’s experience? What factors shaped the AEF soldier? Did a Russian Jew have different beliefs concerning the war than an Italian Roman Catholic; did a man educated at Harvard University have a different opinion of the war than a Virginian coalminer who left school in the sixth grade; how did an African American Baptist farmer or a New England factory worker feel about Germans; how did a German-American or an Austro-Hungarian American feel about going to war against the country of his birth? Each man’s experience depended on his ethnic, religious and educational background. Some men felt they had less to prove while others felt war would make them into men and hungered to prove their masculinity.

The doughboys were young men. Many were barely eighteen years old when they enlisted, or the army drafted them into service; the majority of these soldiers were citizens of the United States, even though many were foreign-born, from Russia, Italy, Greece or other European countries.¹ They entered the army ready to do their bit, as so many stated shortly after the war. The doughboy left his civilian life behind, along with his family, in order to fight for what he believed a worthy cause. Although novels from

writers like Ernest Hemingway and John Dos Passos feature the experience of American soldiers of World War I, the voices of the actual soldiers are the voices that need to be heard – their statements, written with intense emotion, can be felt by reading their words.

The future historian William L. Langer, a young volunteer soldier in 1917, was as eager as many others to join in the fight at the front. He wrote “We and many thousands of others volunteered…We men, most of us young, were simply fascinated by the prospect of adventure and heroism. Most of us, I think, had the feeling that life, if we survived, would run in the familiar, routine channel. Here was our one great chance for excitement and risk. We could not afford to pass it up.” Langer’s words relate to the motivation of so many soldiers as they enlisted for military duty in the war, such as 1904 Yale University graduate Douglas B. Green, who wrote to his sister, “There isn’t anything that I would rather do than go over and fight the Germans. So whatever you may think about it, just remember that I’m doing what I want to do, and something that I wouldn’t give up my chance of doing for all the rest of my natural life.”

Even before men like Langer enlisted, some Americans served in France as volunteers with the Allies and their dedication influenced others. William Y. Stevenson of Philadelphia was with Section No. 1, American Ambulance Field Service volunteers for the French Army before America declared war. Stevenson remarked, “The Ambulance men, who had volunteered long before the United States had entered the war, were each and every one a small but vital factor in bringing America in. Every time a man volunteered, he carried with him the hopes and sympathies of all his relatives and

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3 Nettleton, *Yale in the World War*, vol. 1, 45.
friends; and as the Ambulance grew, so did the pro-Ally sentiment grow by leaps and bounds in the United States.\textsuperscript{4}

This sympathy for the Allies, coupled with preconceived romantic attitudes towards combat, inspired hundreds of thousands to enlist. Numerous young men sailed off to Europe with old-fashioned ideas regarding what war should be like, but the type of combat the doughboys thought they would wage was not at all what they faced on the front. AEF soldiers were no exception to this misconception; the majority of young men in Europe also celebrated the declaration of war in 1914. Their fête would not last long. Similar to the German soldier Paul Bäumer in \textit{All Quiet on the Western Front}, the doughboys celebrated the declaration of war. Bäumer’s enthusiasm for battle only diminished when he witnessed the horrors of war and realized the true nature of modern combat. Unlike the European belligerents, Americans had the opportunity for a taste of the war in the media prior to going into battle; yet, the doughboys did not pay heed to the headlines and photographs of newspapers, and felt ready to fight as soon as America entered the war.

Rather than seeing the words and pictures as a warning, readers viewed newspapers with a romantic lens: they saw mainly adventure. Thanks to the new rotogravure printing process, the \textit{New York Times} displayed a twelve page pictorial section every Sunday with several pages usually devoted to war images. These photographs demonstrated the destruction and wretchedness of modern combat: the ruins of Louvain (Leuven) present the power of artillery to turn a city into dust, or Polish

soldiers as they crawl through muddy rifle pits on the Eastern Front.\textsuperscript{5} Due to the cultural glorification of warfare that the country aggrandized throughout the decades since the Civil War, young men overlooked images such as the ones mentioned above and focused on others, which depicted more grandiose scenes with captions such as “Australian soldiers, sent to protect Egypt against the Turks, in camp at the foot of the pyramids.”\textsuperscript{6} It is interesting to note the unbiased tone of the pictorial captions and journalistic reports within the \textit{New York Times} and other newspapers before America declared war. Pictures of Germans, Turks and Austro-Hungarian forces, and of combat oriented photographs themselves, became rare – replaced with President Wilson, doughboys in training and patriotic parades.

The hot-blooded doughboys and the United States in general, however, were not prepared for war: the Regular Army consisted of 127,588 officers and men, while the National Guard’s numbers totaled 80,446 officers and men.\textsuperscript{7} These low numbers necessitated implementation of the Selective Service Act, or draft, which President Wilson signed into law on 19 May 1917. On 5 June 1917, 9,660,000 male citizens aged twenty-one to thirty registered with their local draft boards; men also voluntarily enlisted rather than wait for their numbers to be called. One such individual was Dan Edwards, a rancher from Taylor County, Texas, who recounted his enlistment day: “When the U. S. entered the World War I knew I would be called from reserve. But without waiting I reenlisted – in fact, I joined up that same day, April 6, 1917.” Edwards’ enthusiasm was contagious, he continued, “All of the men at the ranch wanted to go along with me. Half of them barely knew where the war was and didn’t give a damn. A few couldn’t possibly

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{5} Pictorial Section, \textit{New York Times}, 20 September 1914 and 22 November 1914.
\item \textsuperscript{6} Pictorial Section, \textit{New York Times}, 31 January 1915.
\item \textsuperscript{7} Donald Smythe, \textit{Pershing: General of the Armies} (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 8.
\end{itemize}
get into the service, on account of bad teeth, age, and other disabilities. So I persuaded these chaps to stay on the ranch and look after it. The rest of us saddled up and beat it for the railroad, thirty-five miles away, whooping it up as we went. We caught the train to Waco, and soon as we got there all of us, thirty-two strong, trotted right up to the recruiting office and took the oath. That was sure one happy crowd.”

Nineteen-year-old Harvey G. Callahan, born in Brooklyn, New York, enlisted in the army on 31 October 1914, and stated he “favored an early American participation in the War, and was of the opinion that the draft was a necessary measure after the declaration of hostilities,” and added, “My own case was voluntary.” When America entered the war, the Allies made it clear that they needed AEF soldiers to fight with the British and French. Former French commander in chief, Joseph Joffre, during his visit to the United States in April 1917, expressed the needs of France with his famous line: “We want men, men, men.” To meet the demand for troops, President Wilson elected to use conscription rather than rely on volunteerism. What had occurred in Great Britain at the start of the war influenced Wilson: at first Britain had depended on a volunteer army, but heavy casualties had greatly depleted the number of troops. In addition, volunteerism had taken many skilled workers away from important jobs in war-related industries. Wilson did not want this to happen in the United States. As President, he was aware of the fear of militarism many Americans had, and therefore, gave the responsibility for drafting men into service to the Selective Service boards in each state.

8 Lowell Thomas, This Side of Hell, Dan Edwards, Adventurer (New York: P. F. Collier and Son, 1932), 73.  
9 *Harvey G. Callahan, 23 September 1920, Box 12, LVA.
Wilson recommended draft legislation in order to increase the size of the new National Army, from which 77 percent of the wartime total of servicemen would come.\textsuperscript{10} After overcoming a few obstacles, such as Theodore Roosevelt’s proposal to command a volunteer force in France, Wilson was successful in obtaining a Draft Bill from Congress. Congress put the bill into law with the President’s signature on 18 May 1917, and Congress designated 5 June as draft registration day across the country.

The first draft called forward more than nine and a half million men aged from twenty-one to thirty who registered for the selective service process. On 20 July 1917, a blindfolded Newton D. Baker, Wilson’s Secretary of War, began the selection process. Baker drew the first number: 258, and each man who held number 258 at his local draft board reported for military service.\textsuperscript{11} Two other draft registration dates were set during the war, on 5 June 1918, men who attained the age of twenty-one after June 1917 were required to register. Three months later, on 12 September 1918, men aged eighteen to forty-five signed up for the selective service process. These additional draft registration dates were necessary due to Russia’s withdrawal, large British losses and the low morale of the French troops. In total, during the three stages of the draft the Selective Service System (SSS) inducted 2,810,296 men out of the 24,234,021 who registered with the 4,650 local draft boards across the country.\textsuperscript{12} The army obtained many soldiers from the National Guard, as is shown in Figure 7.\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{10} Kennedy, \textit{Over Here}, 149-150.
\textsuperscript{11} Coffman, \textit{War to End All Wars}, 28.
\textsuperscript{12} Ayres, \textit{War with Germany}, 17-19. According to the records of the SSS, the board drafted 2,810,296 men from September 1917 to November 1918 (516,212 in 1917 and 2,294,084 in 1918).
Source of Troops | Number of Troops | Percent of Total
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Size of army 6 April 1917 | 190,000 | 5.1
Number of voluntary enlistments (estimated) | 360,000 | 9.6
Number entered through National Guard (estimated) | 379,000 | 10.2
Number inducted through selective conscription | 2,801,000 | 75.1
Number in army 11 November 1918 | 3,665,000 | 100.0

Figure 7: Growth of the United States Army according to source.

The National Guard from each state created the backbone of the American Army until the massive wave of enlistees and volunteers would bolster the army to required combat strength. In Connecticut for example, the lineage of the Guard went back to the days of the colonial New England militia – the First Connecticut Infantry, which became part of the 102nd Infantry, was organized in 1689.\(^\text{14}\) Connecticut Governor Marcus H. Holcomb acknowledged this fact when he gave an address before the State Legislature in 1917: “Such has been the steadfast spirit of the sons of Connecticut in every hour of peril. Marching in company with the heroic past let us in this untoward hour of world agony, face unflinchingly the menacing tide of events.”\(^\text{15}\)

Governor Holcomb referred to the Connecticut militia, which began in colonial times in order to protect the settlers from often-hostile Native Americans. The Connecticut colony established a group of militiamen who would “beare armes” and watch over the settlements. In 1636, all men aged sixteen or older were trained under the direction of Captain Mason, the Public Military Officer; the militia met once a month for instruction and practice, and for ten days once a year. These were the roots of the Connecticut National Guard. In times of danger and need, the Connecticut militia

\(^\text{14}\) Frank P. Sibley, *With the Yankee Division in France* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1919), 16.  
responded, lending aid to surrounding settlements and, after 1783, to nearby states. When the call from President Woodrow Wilson came, the Connecticut National Guard answered and the 102nd Regiment of Connecticut prepared for war. The tradition of military service in the National Guard gave a community spirit to the doughboys as they combined forces with the Regular Army forming the well-known 26th or Yankee Division, which drew soldiers from the New England states.

While bonds between National Guardsman formed within the Regular Army, the link between fellow foreign citizens strengthened the National Army when the government created new divisions made up of drafted and enlisted men. These new divisions contained a diverse array of nationalities, especially from the multiethnic northeast and Great Lakes region; many soldiers had parents who were born in Greece, Russia, Sweden and Italy, to name but a few countries. There were men who were foreign-born themselves, but who viewed America as their home and were willing to fight and die for their new country. One such immigrant was Tony Monanco, “A diminutive Italian,” who appeared at his local Selective Service Office in Buffalo, New York one morning and when a clerk at the desk asked him, “What can I do for you?” responded, “Ma name Tony Monanco. In dees countra seex months. Gimme da gun.”

General William “Billy” Mitchell remarked, “It seemed strange how many Germans we had who distinguished themselves in our service, and what efficient officers and patriotic Americans they were.” One such AEF soldier of German origin Mitchell remembered well was General J. T. Dickman who spoke fluent German. Twenty-four

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16 Daniel J. Sweeney, ed., History of Buffalo and Erie County 1914-1919 (Buffalo, New York: Committee of One Hundred, 1919), 76.
year old railroad worker Joseph R. Cooke of Atlanta, Georgia, who entered the service on 11 May 1917 praised foreign-born soldiers of the AEF, “The so called ‘foreign element,’ when properly ‘educated’ (trained) will not only respond to the country’s call, but will equal the best of our fighters. (Particularly, Italians and Greeks).”

Norfolk, Virginia

Captain James W. Anderson, whose father was born in Scotland, had high admiration for foreign-born soldiers fighting with the AEF: “The foreign-born Americans obeyed orders better and were less complaining than the native-born Americans.”

Many veterans from Connecticut, especially Italian Americans, responded to the questionnaires in 1919 with difficulty, due to the language barrier; Private Nicola Andreozzi, a twenty-six year old baker, from New Haven, wrote his in Italian:

I am very ashamed to have to ask some to write this for me in English. For this reason I will write in Italian, but I promise that very soon I will learn to write in English. Now I will hurry to explain what I understood in the questionnaire, but I was not able to reply because I cannot write in English. Well, I joined military service with all my heart. In fact I was so eager to join that originally I volunteered, but my wife reported me. I therefore had to wait to be drafted. I was so eager to serve that I falsely declared that I had no one to support, when in reality I had a mother, wife, and sister. I was in one of the first training classes, and thirty days later I was on my way to France. When I reached the front, I was scared and had never seen such a terrible disaster. But, once I convinced myself we were fighting for liberty, nothing scared me anymore, not even the Devil, or death. I was always ready to fight the coward enemy. I am very proud I did my duty, and I learned and gained respect. May God bless our Flag and our Land of Liberty. Forgive me if I made a few mistakes. Thank you, Soldier Andreazzi

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18 *Joseph R. Cooke, 10 June 1922, Box 15, LVA.
19 *James W. Anderson, Box 12, LVA.
20 *Nicola Andreozzi, Box 29, CSL. Andreozzi’s letter translated from the Italian.
No matter what his circumstances before America’s entrance into the war each doughboy had a strong opinion regarding military service and the role of the AEF. Their words provide a closer understanding of what it was like to be an American soldier during the war. Regardless of their background or ethnicity, the AEF soldier was patriotic to the core. Francis P. Duffy, Chaplain, 156th Infantry, 69th Division declared: “I am a very Irish, very Catholic, very American person if anybody challenges my convictions. But normally, and let alone, I am just plain human. My appreciation of patriotism, or courage, or any other attractive human trait, is not limited in any degree by racial or religious or sectional prejudice. That was the spirit of our Army; may it always be the spirit of our Republic.”

For other doughboys, the motivation to fight did not concern religion or race, but familial bonds – if the SSS drafted a man or he enlisted, his brother would often follow.

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21 Duffy, *Father Duffy’s Story*, viii.
suit, as in the case of Ensworth M. Godard, age 25, and his brother Jewell W. Godard, age 24, of Hartford. Ensworth enlisted on 3 July 1917, at the State Armory in Hartford and was assigned to Company G, 102nd Regiment, 26th Division. He saw action at Chemin des Dames and the Marne and received a citation for bravery, for volunteering to carry sealed messages to a battalion two miles away. He fought in the front line trenches from 10 February to 16 March 1918, and again from 8 June until 10 July 1918. He suffered a fractured ankle and broken arches in his feet, and was gassed. Ensworth returned home partially disabled and disenchanted with war when he wrote about the effects of his wartime experience: “I am positive that the United States should avoid all entangling alliances. Washington was right.”

Ensworth’s younger brother, Jewell, left his job as an insurance clerk at Aetna Life Insurance Co., in Hartford, to enlist in the service on 23 August 1917. Jewell was assigned to the Sanitary Detachment, 101st Machine Gun Battalion, 26th Division. Jewell first saw action in Soissons, France in February 1918, and was later engaged in combat at Toul, Château-Thierry, St. Mihiel and Verdun. Jewell was more fortunate than his older brother and did not receive any wounds, although he was hospitalized in France for illness. In his response to the question regarding hospitalization, Jewell did not indicate the nature of the infirmity, which kept him in Camp Hospital #8 at Montigny-le-Roi from 14 January until 3 February 1919. Jewell may have suffered any number of illnesses that plagued doughboys during and after the war: influenza, typhoid or pneumonia, all of which could have caused his nearly three-week period of hospitalization. At any rate, Jewell Godard returned to civilian life and resumed his occupation as an insurance clerk after his discharge from service on 29 April 1919. Like his brother, army life did not...

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22 Ensworth M. Godard, 10 July 1919, Box 8, CSL.
impress Jewell. He did have, however, high praise for Major General Clarence R. Edwards of the Yankee Division, saying, “If all the officers were like General Edwards the army would have been something to be proud of.”

These men came from all lifestyles: they were farmers, store clerks, sales clerks, machinists, bank clerks, laborers, cigar makers, letter carriers, attorneys, college professors and self-employed workers. Many of these soldiers attended church from a variety of Christian faiths. There were also Jewish men, and several who listed no religion at all on their war records. Some, like Tennessee native Alvin C. York, 82nd Division, were men who thought about objecting to the war as a matter of conscience and religious belief. When York was ordered to report to his local board in Jamestown, Tennessee on 14 November 1917, he “prayed two whole days and a night out on the mountainside. And I received my assurance that it was all right, that I should go, and that I would come back without a scratch. I received this assurance direct from God. And I have always been led to believe that He always keeps his promise.”

Aside from religious affiliations, the AEF contained strong cultural diversities, as Alvin C. York described in another diary entry: “It sure was a mixed platoon, with the Greeks and Italians and New York Jews, and there were some Irish and one German. I sure did miss the mountain boys from Tennessee and Kentucky. But I got to like those other boys in my platoon.” York had more to say about the men he fought with: “My own platoon was made up of a gang of the toughest and most hard-boiled doughboys I ever heard tell of. There were bartenders, saloon bouncers, ice men, coal miners, dirt farmers, actors, mill hands and city boys who had growed up in the back alleys and

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23 Jewell W. Godard, 9 June 1919, Box 8, CSL.
24 Alvin C. York, 14 November 1917, Alvin C. York Institute Homepage.
25 Alvin C. York, 21 May 1918, Alvin C. York Institute Homepage.
learned to scrap ever since they were knee high to a duck. They were mixed up from
‘most every country. They could out-swear, out-drink and out-cuss any crowd of men I
have ever knowed…They were fighters and that’s all about it…A heap of them couldn’t
talk our own language at all, and any number of them couldn’t sign their own names.”

Colonel Frederick M. Wise, 59th Infantry, 4th Division also commented on the
diversity of the men in his command: “That regiment was an amazing jumble of races
and classes. My personal orderly was a French Canadian who had been a cornet player in
the orchestra at Keith’s in Boston. My horse orderly was a cow-puncher from
somewhere near Cody, Wyoming. My cook, George the Greek, who had ruined my
birthday pâté, came from a short order restaurant of which he was the proprietor, in
Denver. My sergeant major had been a court stenographer in Rochester, New York. My
chauffeur was a mechanic from the Packard factory in Detroit. Another orderly was a
farm boy from Iowa. He was only five feet tall, had tried to volunteer, had been turned
down on account of his short stature – and then had been drafted!”

In age the doughboys ranged from eighteen to their mid-forties, although most
were unmarried and in their early twenties. Physically, the average recruit was five feet
nine inches in height, weighed 141.5 pounds, wore a size seven hat, a size 9C shoe, had a
chest measurement of thirty-seven inches, a waist measurement of thirty-four inches and
a collar size of fifteen and one-half inches. They had one thing in common, however,
and that was their unanimous desire to serve their country; patriotism was high among the

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28 Byron Farwell, Over There (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1999), 51.
soldiers of World War I. From the 34,000 questionnaires surveyed, the dominant theme was the undying love of country that inspired the doughboys to enlist. Duty. Country. Patriotism. These words expressed the sentiments of the soldiers as they entered the war in Europe. “The thought of army life appealed to me as being exciting and of course a right good size spark of patriotism,” declared Curtis R. Davis, a typewriter repairman from South Richmond, Virginia. Davis, who enlisted five months before his eighteenth birthday, served as a Private First Class with the “42nd (Rainbow) Division from the time it was mobilized at Camp Mills, New York in August 1917 until it was demobilized at Camp Merritt, New Jersey in April 1919.”

Upon returning home in 1919, Walter C. Sage of Hartford wrote regarding his attitude toward military service in the war, “It was the finest thing in the world for any young man.” Seward H. Strickland, also of Hartford, echoed the sentiments of many others when he wrote that enlistment was “the best and only way to protect and uphold our American Flag and this Christian nation.” Twenty-seven year old Nelson C. Overton, an unmarried lawyer from Newport News, Virginia, enlisted in the service on 11 May 1917, and stated, “I chose to go before I was called. Would have been called perhaps, but did not care to wait. I was in favor of military service for every man who could lift the weight of a rifle without complete exhaustion.” Raymond J. Queenin of New Britain, Connecticut was twenty-two years old and a salesperson when he enlisted in the National Guard on 25 January 1915. He volunteered because “I was anxious to go.

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29 *Curtis R. Davis, 5 September 1921, Box 20, Series II, LVA.
30 Walter C. Sage, 23 June 1919, Box 13, CSL.
31 Seward H. Strickland, 5 September 1919, Box 13, CSL.
32 *Nelson C. Overton, 7 November 1919, Box 13, LVA.
Wanted to see what war was like (and did) I would have been ashamed to have been drafted. I saw the need and didn’t believe in waiting for a ‘personal invitation.’”

Even among those that were drafted, the prevailing attitude was one of determination to do their part to help America. Many soldiers stated that they had attempted to enlist, but had not been accepted at first; these men waited until their draft number was called and then gladly went to war. Men who had no National Guard training were just as willing to enter the war as those who had military experience. Joseph R. Schadel of Hartford was twenty-two years old when the United States entered the war, and was inducted into the service on 28 March 1918. A clerk at the First National Bank, Private Schadel stated, “I felt that if my country was in need of military support I should respond as soon as I possibly could.”

Albert M. Simons, a Hartford city assessor whose parents were both born in Austria, had a definite viewpoint on entering the army. Thirty-six years of age, married, and the father of two children, Simons volunteered for service a month after the United States entered the war. Simons was a candidate for commission since he served in the Connecticut National Guard, and stated he was “convinced that the United States is the best country in the world.” Simons became a Second Lieutenant and later a First Lieutenant during his service in France.

The AEF soldier wanted to do his “part for America.” In fact, page two of the Military Service Record from 1919, reads: “Inducted into service or enlisted on…” many men crossed out the words “Inducted into service or…” leaving only “enlisted on” and then wrote in their enlistment date. The doughboys of Connecticut and Virginia were

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33 *Raymond J. Queenin, 26 August 1919, Box 20, CSL.*
34 *Joseph R. Schadel, 2 August 1919, Box 13, CSL.*
35 *Albert M. Simons, 8 August 1919, Box 13, CSL.*
anxious to defend democracy. Private First Class Alexander J. Flynn, who enlisted in the Connecticut National Guard on 22 June 1916, wrote that he volunteered “as a duty to my country.”36 A New Haven native, Flynn entered the army just before his twenty-second birthday, leaving his job as a clerk for the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad Company.

Private Frederick J. Burke, also of New Haven volunteered because, “I felt like doing my duty toward my country and took a chance and enlisted for the duration of the war and am alive to tell the tale.”37 Another New Haven soldier, Arthur L. Cartier, who served in the Infantry as a Second Lieutenant, spoke of enlistment in military service as “A debt I owed the country I make my living in and was born in.”38 Just twenty-one years old, John M. Jacobs, of Morrison, Virginia, son of an Irish immigrant, enlisted in the Infantry on 26 September 1917, and stated it was “A sacrifice.” Jacobs added, “Please note: I enlisted from a sense of duty, not because I would have been drafted or because the Army had any attraction for me.”39

Sergeant Joseph Cosenzo, 102nd Machine Gun Company enlisted with great enthusiasm: “I always loved the army and when my call came I was almost first to be at the Armory. Will go again if U.S. should ever be in danger of another war.” Cosenzo, who engaged in combat, continued, saying he wanted to “get over there as soon as possible to prevent them from coming over here.”40 “Each man who was called owed to his country and his honor to respond. I was, and am glad that I was physically able to take my place so that no other fellow would have to take it,” explained John D. Kinzer, a
twenty-three year old farmer from Bedford, Virginia, who entered the service on 10 May 1918. 41

“I entered the military service solely from a sense of duty to my country without any thought or hope of personal aggrandizement or gain. Neither the spirit of adventure nor the love of the military lured me,” observed Thomas B. Taliaferro of Caret, Virginia. 42 A twenty-four year old student with a BA degree from the University of Richmond, Taliaferro entered the service on 13 May 1917 and attended the Reserve Officer’s Training Camp emerging as a First Lieutenant.

“I thought every male person physically fit, should serve his country in time of war,” 43 explained Raymond E. Landmesser, Sergeant in the Artillery, and a Hartford native, who echoed the sentiments of many World War I veterans. Machine Gun Sergeant Byron P. Graff of Hartford was a “firm believer in universal training” and “simply did what I thought every American would do – enlist when the Country asked for men.” 44 Twenty-eight year old Thomas N. Williams, a clerk from Berryville, Virginia entered the service on 14 May 1917 and received his commission as a Second Lieutenant in the Infantry on 15 August 1917. Williams responded, “I believe that military service will prove a great benefit to all who served. I took it as a matter of fact that as the country was at war I must go.” 45

“Military Service, I think every young man should have some experience about it. I believe that I was doing right when I answered the call at once,” observed Harry E. Curry, an African American student from Hampton, Virginia. Curry entered the National

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41 *John D. Kinzer, 12 July 1920, Box 2, LVA.
42 *Thomas B. Taliaferro, 26 September 1922, Box 4, LVA.
43 Raymond E. Landmesser, 29 May 1919, Box 10, CSL.
44 Byron P. Graff, Box 8, 22 November 1920, CSL.
45 *Thomas N. Williams, 3 October 1919, Box 3, LVA.
Guard on 23 May 1915, four months prior to his sixteenth birthday.\textsuperscript{46} He was one of about five thousand African Americans who served in the National Guard at the time of the First World War.\textsuperscript{47}

“I saw that the United States would need men, after she broke Diplomatic Relations with Germany, so I enlisted before she called. Otherwise I should have considered myself a slacker,”\textsuperscript{48} declared Clifford R. Haskins, who served with the 26\textsuperscript{th} Division. Whether young, older, educated, uneducated, married or single, the men who answered the call to duty and served in the AEF were willing and anxious to participate in the war. For many, combat changed their perspective; others remained just as determined and patriotic upon their return from the war. Hugh H. Bishop, of Marion, Ohio, a silk-weaver with an eighth grade education, enlisted in the Coast Artillery Corps on 13 February 1917 at the age of eighteen, and recounted his feelings regarding service:

“As far as my attitude was toward military service, it is all right for a young person to enlist in it, but if I had to go over the same experiences again I would try my best to get out of it.”\textsuperscript{49} Perhaps his experiences in combat convinced Bishop of the futility of war.

“I always cared for military service and was more than glad to have been able to answer my call,” offered Willis B. Godwin, an African American student from Smithfield, Virginia, who entered the service on 28 October 1917 at the age of twenty-two.\textsuperscript{50} Their words, thoughts and opinions convey what the front was like, what it meant

\textsuperscript{46} *Harry E. Curry, Box 4, LVA.
\textsuperscript{47} African Americans represented less than three percent of the National Guard – most served with the 8\textsuperscript{th} Illinois or the 15\textsuperscript{th} New York, companies of a hundred men came from Massachusetts, Maryland, Ohio, Tennessee and Washington DC. Michael Lee Lanning, \textit{The African-American Soldier: From Crispus Attucks to Colin Powell}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} ed. (New York: Citadel Press, 2004), 102.
\textsuperscript{48} Clifford R. Haskins, 13 November 1919, Box 8, CSL.
\textsuperscript{49} *Hugh H. Bishop, 19 March 1921, Box 16, LVA.
\textsuperscript{50} *Willis B. Godwin, 27 February 1929, Box 4, LVA.
to be serving in the AEF, and most importantly, their words tell the world what was in the hearts of the doughboys.

“I was quite pleased when I was called in ’17 it meant business…I was very anxious to get in to action,” explained Private Nelson F. Waters, Company D, 2nd Connecticut Infantry, National Guard, who was barely eighteen years old when he entered his training. Prior to his role in World War I, Waters was employed as a salesman at the New Haven Shoe Company. Wounded in his arm, hand and leg at Seicheprey on 20 April 1918, Waters became a prisoner of war and Germany did not release him until 9 December 1918. While a prisoner in Germany, Waters contracted typhoid fever in May 1918 and influenza in November 1918. In spite of all that he endured, Waters, who was promoted to Bugler, kept his spirit saying, “I believed in the War before I fought and much more after.”

Infantry Sergeant First Class, George L. Ayotte of Waterbury, Connecticut said, “When President Wilson called for volunteers I felt it my duty as an American citizen and a soldier to enlist at once.”

There were even men who so badly wanted to serve that they attempted to enlist despite physical disabilities. James J. Marooney, Sergeant in the Infantry, from New Haven, stressed, “Had five rejection slips, including two from Plattsburg for physical disability before being accepted for the National Army.” Sergeant Marooney went on to say that his “physical condition improved under training.”

Twenty-three year old Bridgeport, Connecticut resident Charles S. Pemburn Jr. entered the National Army on 3 October 1917 and emphasized, “Afraid the war would

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51 Nelson F. Waters, 15 July 1919, Box 37, CSL.
52 George L. Ayotte, 4 April 1923, Box 39, CSL.
53 James J. Marooney, 17 July 1919, Box 34, CSL.
end before I could get in and across. Was put on reserve from 71st Inf. on account of broken arm but took plaster caste off and got by draft board. It was easy.\textsuperscript{54}

Young men who hungered for excitement believed serving their country would fulfill their need for adventure. Arlie I. Day, twenty-seven, of Linville Depot, Virginia, entered the Regular Army on 24 October 1917. Employed as a general laborer, Day stressed he “could not wait until I got over there to kill every Durn Hun that was in Germany.”\textsuperscript{55} African American Private Moses Randolph, Company C, 369th Infantry, a nineteen year old section hand for the Norfolk and Western Railroad with seven or eight years of education from Farmville, Virginia, entered the army on 27 October 1917 and explained, “Did not mind going except that it left my aged mother alone.”\textsuperscript{56} Wylie R. Cooke, a wholesale lumber secretary from Norfolk, Virginia, entered the service on 25 August 1917 at the age of twenty-seven. Cooke held a BA degree from the University of Virginia and stated, “Got no use for military service in any form but it is only way know of to fight a war. Went into this fight because wanted to help clean up the hun, and see a little excitement at the same time.”\textsuperscript{57}

Men who were older than the recommended ages for soldiers enlisted too. “On account of being 43 years old, I had to get a special dispensation from the War Department to re-enlist,” reported Corporal Robert W. Marshall of New Haven.\textsuperscript{58} Infantry Private, Zoil A. Beaudoin was, “…glad to fight for U.S. and enlisted at age of 38 years.” Beaudoin spoke French and served as an interpreter for American officers in

\textsuperscript{54} Charles S. Pemburn Jr., Box 51, CSL.
\textsuperscript{55} Arlie I. Day, 14 January 1920, Box 9, LVA.
\textsuperscript{56} Moses Randolph, 17 July 1919, Box 4, LVA.
\textsuperscript{57} Wylie R. Cooke, 21 August 1919, Box 13, LVA.
\textsuperscript{58} Robert W. Marshall, 8 July 1919, Box 34, CSL.
France; when he returned home, Beaudoin continued to “dream about war at night and still had horrors of the war.”

Alden Bell, fifty-three year old veteran of the Spanish American War, was a lawyer and judge in Culpepper, Virginia when he volunteered for service. Bell declared, “I thought when I volunteered that all male citizens should stand in the ranks of one’s country, and bear his bosom to the front in its defense.” Despite his age and poor eyesight, Bell persisted in his quest, entered the service on 16 November 1917, and stated, “I am the third case on record, on file at the War Dept. at Wash. D. C. where the War Dept. has removed both the age limit and defective vision for volunteering in the ‘world’s war.’”

Other men entered the military more resigned than excited. New Haven native, Louis J. Popolizio, who served as a Corporal in the 102\textsuperscript{nd} Infantry, remarked, “When America entered the war I knew if I didn’t go they would get me so I enlisted right away. May 8, 1917. With my whole heart and soul. And I was going to travel the world at the government’s expense.” Travel he did, all the way to the frontlines in France. Drafted at the age of twenty-three, African American farmer with a grade-school education, Hezekiah E. Lofland of Melfa, Virginia, felt “fear of not returning home again. It seemed too much to be drafted for another Country.”

There was also a sense of romanticism found in going to war accompanied by the lure of following in the path of previous soldiers. Albert S. Voight, of Norfolk, Virginia, enlisted on 12 June 1917, one month before his twentieth birthday, and commented,

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59 Zoil A. Beaudoin, 9 April 1919, Box 38, CSL.
60 *Alden Bell, 15 September 1920, Box 3, LVA.
61 Louis J. Popolizio, 8 May 1919, Box 35, CSL.
62 *Hezekiah E. Lofland, Box 1, LVA.
\end{footnotes}
“Being an American citizen, I felt it my duty to fight for my country as my mother and father brought me up in that manner from childhood.”—Joseph R. Cooke of Atlanta, Georgia emphasized, “My childhood reading was of the accomplishments of my forefathers during war times and my ambition to fight for my country during a time of need was accomplished.”

An incident which took place on 19 September 1918 at the Court House Green in Goochland County, Virginia, when twenty-three drafted men left for Camp Lee illustrates the persistence of romantic notions of war. The event was described by Mrs. O. B. Taylor of Goochland County:

“A hoary headed veteran of the War between the States, inspired by the occasion again felt the fire of youth coursing through his veins and asked for the privilege of saying a few words. Borne on the swift wings of memory, he lived for a time in the past, recalling how fifty-six years ago he with his comrades (many of whom were relatives of the drafted men) in the same place and manner answered the roll call and went forth to serve their country for a noble cause. As Goochland men had always met their duties bravely, he felt that these soon to be veterans would also acquit themselves in such manner as to bring added honor and glory to ‘old Goochland.’ In conclusion, he asked that they bear in mind the words of General Lee who said that ‘duty’ was the most sublime word in the English language and to adopt for their watchword ‘Go Forward! Go Forward!’”

This strong feeling in Virginia was not an anomaly. Romanticism for the Civil War was found in every corner of the country. When that war ended in 1865, it had claimed 620,000 soldiers’ lives and devastated the country, yet, as seen above, the doughboys seemed to forget the reality and cling to the splendor of war. The doughboys themselves were not an unusual generation, but a typical one, as Eric T. Dean Jr. stresses, “Young men were often anxious to prove themselves and feared that hostilities would end before they had a chance to participate in the glory, but these same young men could

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63 *Albert S. Voight, 21 August 1920, Box 14, LVA.*
64 *Joseph R. Cooke, 10 June 1922, Box 15, LVA.*
65 “Incident connected with the draft of Goochland,” Box 5, LVA.
react with fear and horror to their first actual experience with battle.”

The Civil War dead united the nation. The people memorialized the war, and then, as it became memory, glorified it; this glorification aggrandized the fever of the doughboys in 1917.

These young men sought to emulate what their relatives did fifty years ago. As Drew Gilpin Faust explains, “The war’s staggering human cost demanded a new sense of national destiny, one designed to ensure that lives had been sacrificed for appropriately lofty ends.”

Swept up within this zeitgeist, in addition to their own human nature and masculinity, almost 500,000 immigrant doughboys from forty-six countries, which added up to over 18 percent of the AEF’s total strength, charged forward with their American born compatriots. Whether Russian Jew, Italian Roman Catholic, African American Baptist or fourth generation New Englander – each man believed he would earn his honor on the Western Front.

As a whole, the men of the AEF, whether they belonged to the Regular Army, enlisted or waited to be drafted, were ready to serve the United States to attain their manhood. Some soldiers were anxious to enter the fray; a small few were less enthusiastic. As they prepared to depart for Europe, the doughboys reported to various training camps in the country. As the men traveled to the camps, their thoughts of romantic warfare continued…there they thought they would get everything they needed to fight the Hun, as men like James E. Chenault of Richmond, Virginia believed, “Intensive training meant nothing me as I was to anxious to get a crack at those

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68 Ford, *Americans All*, 3, also see Ford’s footnote on pages, 147-148 in *Americans All*. 

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tretcherious Huns! The doughboys wanted the army to “gimme da gun,” but the army had few guns to give.

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69 *James E. Chenault, 26 May 1919, Box 16, LVA.
CHAPTER 3

BROOMS INSTEAD OF RIFLES

After signing up for duty the doughboys began their military training. For many of these young men life in an army camp was a new experience. Others, with National Guard service, or those who had previously served in the military, knew what to expect when they arrived at their respective camps. To train enlisted men the army established thirty-two camps, located for the most part in the eastern and southern states of the country, each named after a famous American commander; there were additional camps for officers, marines and aviators.\(^1\) Where a man went to camp depended on his location. The majority of Connecticut soldiers for example, received training at Camp Devens in Ayer, Massachusetts, while most officers trained in Plattsburgh, New York. Almost all Virginians trained in Camp Lee, Petersburg, Virginia. Several states also had additional smaller camps for specific troops such as engineers or aviators; for example, some Connecticut soldiers went to Camp Greene in North Carolina, and others to camps in Texas, such as Camp Bowie in Fort Worth. In Connecticut, there was also Camp Yale, or Yale Field, in New Haven and a training camp in Niantic as well.

\(^1\) Frank M. McMurry, *The Geography of the Great War* (New York: Macmillan, 1919), 26-27, provides an excellent map of the United States that shows the layout of every camp from the war.
Across the country, men enlisted or waited for the draft. The typical new American soldier fit a basic description: he was white, in his early twenties, had a minimum education, no military experience and was ready to do his “bit” for the United States. For the most part, these men were factory workers, laborers and farmers. Students and professional men, quickly trained as officers, were often as ill prepared as the troops they were to command.

Although the army intended the camp training to prepare the doughboys for combat, it lacked equipment and soldiers trained without adequate supplies. Many doughboys went overseas never having handled a rifle because there were not enough rifles at most training camps, if no rifles were available, the army used wooden rifle replicas or even brooms. The psychological effect this had on the men would prove disastrous on the front since most enlisted men did not have adequate training for the type of combat they were going to endure. While most camps did provide lessons in going over the top, grenade throwing and bayonet practice, many soldiers did not experience live fire exercises. “As regards preparation for meeting the enemy, I consider the training at Camp McClellan below par. We were only trained in discipline and in Civil War tactics. Very few of our men saw an automatic rifle, live grenade or had any idea of formations for a modern attack,” emphasized Captain Charles T. Holtzman Jr., 29th Division, concerning his training in Alabama.² A resident of Huntington, West Virginia Holtzman was twenty-four years old when he began his training.

² Charles T. Holtzman Jr., 25 June 1921, Box 8, LVA. The French army issued the first automatic rifle, the 8mm M1915 CSRG (Chauchat), called the “Show-Show” by doughboys. Holtzman might refer to the Chauchat or the .30 cal M1918 Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR), which did not appear on the battlefield until September 1918. Although the BAR arrived with only several weeks left in the war, the army made extensive use of this weapon until the late 1960s.
Signal Corps Sergeant Philip W. Higgins was eighteen years old when he enlisted on 14 May 1917. Raised in Clinton, Connecticut, he was a student at Harvard University before entering the service. Higgins spent nine months at Camp Devens and commented, “Developed a feeling of disgust at seeing so much time wasted in obsolete training methods. Saw many men lose all interest and enthusiasm for the same reason.”

Corporal Jacklin M. Holmes, a farmer from Fauquier, Virginia, in the 80th Division, described Camp Lee as “great mental and physical training if you get the proper amount of it – about 8-12 months. But I was unfortunate enough to get only about 7 weeks in camp – about 10 hours a day.” This brief time spent in training would prove costly once the AEF reached the trenches.

While the army insured their soldiers would be physically strong, they did not harden their minds to the new age horrors the front had in store for them. These men did not hear the sounds of a Maxim machine gun or the rumble the earth made while being shelled by artillery. This deepened the fallacy already established by the American youths’ perception of romantic warfare. The inadequate training did not worry the soldiers; they were too eager to cross the Atlantic and win the war. Many doughboys believed the Germans were inept brutes and easy to defeat.

Before a new recruit learned military fundamentals, the army shipped him off to France. This was basic training at its most basic. “I only had six weeks of it, mentally I was tired of it and wanted to get away as soon as possible,” offered Medical Corps Private Richard H. Baker Jr. of Norfolk, Virginia. Baker was twenty years old and a student at the University of Virginia when he enlisted; he trained at Allentown,

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3 Philip W. Higgins, Box 60, CSL.
4 Jacklin M. Holmes, 17 July 1920, Box 4, LVA.
5 Richard H. Baker Jr., 15 September 1919, Box 20, Series II, LVA.
Pennsylvania. Like Baker, twenty-six year old Virginian Corporal Emory P. Barrow, 6th Division, grew restless and “after a month at Camp Wadsworth I craved the front line trenches, for I knew the rains and cooties of France couldn’t be any worse than the heat and flies of South Carolina.” Twenty-seven year old Private First Class Arlie I. Day, from Rockingham, Virginia declared, “I was a regular pack mule, a doughboy, did anything that was to do,” he later added, “I had good health and liked it fin in camp.”

Thirty-eight year old Samuel L. Alexander of Leeds, Utah wrote in a letter from Camp Meade, Maryland to his mother: “We have the finest officers here. They could not be nicer and everyone is treated fine here. I love the Army, anyone who doesn’t is slacker. I’ll spill lots of German Sourkraut. Tell Ed the 27th Engineers are busy knitting a Barbed wire sweater for Kiser bill and we intend to make Kiser a nice soft pillow out of catclaws...we are going to show Kiser the time of his life because his life will be short when the Yankees get a hold of him. The army is the only life on earth and I shall always belong to it, even after it is over. I will work for US somewhere I never enjoyed anything better. It has such a grand system.” There was no doubt the doughboys had the spirit to fight, but were there enough officers to properly train them?

When the United States declared war on 6 April 1917, the number of officers and men in the Regular Army and National Guard was low. Even the General Staff only had 41 officers. While conscription and volunteers met the shortage of troops, the deficiency of experienced commissioned officers presented a problem to the AEF. Prior to World War I, General Leonard Wood initiated the Military Training Camps Association, also

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6 Emory P. Barrow, 11 November 1921, Box 2, LVA.
7 Arlie I. Day, 14 January 1920, Box 9, LVA.
8 Samuel L. Alexander, 27 April 1918, Box 1, World War I Service Questionnaires, 1914-1918, Series 85298, Utah State Archives (hereafter USA).
9 Smythe, Pershing, 8.
known as the Plattsburgh training camps; these camps attracted aspiring young officers, most often from upper middle class families, for a month of training. When the United States declared war, the Plattsburgh camps served as models for officer training camps established across the country. For a period of ninety days potential commissioned officers trained, and then, in most cases, joined military units. These officers, often called ninety-day wonders by the soldiers they commanded, were not always ready for the realities of combat.

Many doughboys complained about these new officers, criticizing their ability to lead. Sergeant Major Ralph P. Howard, a thirty-year old banker from Fairfield, Connecticut, trained at Fort Terry, New York for eight months before embarking for France in March 1918. He stated, “large numbers of men were commissioned officers who had no ability to handle large companies of men in the field, technical ability they had, but so many of them were arrogant, boorish and impractical, that most of the enlisted men were happy when they received their discharge.”

Twenty-four year old artillery private Harold T. Lyons, a chauffeur from Kent, Connecticut, who enlisted on 24 October 1917, spent barely one month in training at Fort Meyers, Virginia, before embarking for France on 9 January 1918. Lyons observed, “The older Regular Army officers were fine officers and knew what they were doing. I was disgusted with the conduct of the 90-day officers.”

Twenty-year old Private Brack M. Osborne from Grayson, Virginia stated, “I improved physically but cannot say that I gained mentally at Camp Lee. The officers were perfectly unfair.” Regardless of their

10 Ralph P. Howard, Box 57, CSL.
11 Harold T. Lyons, Box 59, CSL.
12 Brack M. Osborne, 27 February 1922, Box 6, LVA.
quality, more than half of the Regular Army’s officers did not go overseas to face the enemy; instead, they remained in the United States to continue instructing new officers.

General John J. Pershing, commander of the AEF, requested that American troops receive six months of training in the United States, and two additional months upon their arrival in France, followed by a month in a quiet sector before they would take part in combat. In this way, Pershing believed his United States force would be ready to make a positive contribution to the war effort. In reality, the army threw many soldiers drafted in July 1917 into the front by November. The average American soldier had only four months of inadequate training. Many men had only a few weeks. The army gave men who never handled a rifle ten days of instruction when they arrived in France. Pershing himself ignored his own request for a longer training period since the Allies pressed America for troops; he called for a large American force to arrive at the front as quickly as possible, which eliminated the necessary training time for the soldiers of the AEF.13

Camp Living Unequaled

In spite of inadequate training, other soldiers felt positive about their camp experiences in the United States. Private Ensworth M. Godard spent several weeks at Camp Yale (1 August to 15 September 1917) and another month at Fort Totten, Long Island (26 September to 27 October 1917). Godard felt his camp experience was “Beneficial. I believe in a short period of compulsory military training between ages 17 and 21 under military discipline. But I do not believe in a large standing army.”14 Godard’s younger brother Jewell W. Godard did his training in Niantic, Connecticut from

13 Kennedy, Over Here, 198-199
14 Ensworth M. Godard, 10 July 1919, Box 8, CSL.
23 August to 9 October 1917. Godard the younger reported, “Improved physically, but mentally indifferent.”

Albert M. Simons, of Hartford, received his military training at Plattsburgh, New York, where he spent nearly three months, (12 May to 15 August 1917). Simon commented, “I am convinced that mentally camp broadens a man giving him a better view of the world at large, and men in particular. Physically it is splendid.” Second Lieutenant Simons left for the front on 5 September 1917. Private First Class Afanariy Boyko, 153rd Machine Gun Company, also from New Haven, echoed these sentiments. Boyko observed, “Went into the Service a raw recruit and emerged from same a well qualified Soldier fit for any duty both mentally and physically.”

“Could not expect better living conditions for soldiering. Mentally and physically I benefited a great deal,” stated First Lieutenant John W. Covington, a twenty-six year old from Culpeper, Virginia. Covington trained at Camp Funston in Kansas and after two months became an instructor of new officers there.

Some soldiers made lasting friendships and kept them, even after the war’s conclusion. This camaraderie bolstered their spirits and helped each man make great gains in health and fitness. Thomas J. Bannigan, of Hartford said, “The experience was one that money could not buy, nor could it be obtained in books…met the finest type of American manhood in associations with brother officers from all over the United States.” Medical Corps First Lieutenant Max Climon, of Hartford, remarked, “Camp experiences in the United States were a great stimulus for the reason that it brought me

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15 Jewell W. Godard, 9 June 1919, Box 8, CSL.
16 Albert M. Simons, 8 August 1919, Box 13, CSL.
17 Afanariy Boyko, 15 July 1919, Box 29, CSL.
18 John W. Covington, 24 September 1920, Box 20, LVA.
19 Thomas J. Bannigan, Box 5, CSL.
into intimate contact with the great men of my profession. Physically I was improved by outdoor living and exercise.”

“Since my childhood I always wanted to be a Soldier boy and my dreams came true. I am satisfied now,” commented Corporal Stanley W. Elovetsky of Wallingford, Connecticut. The infantryman added of his camp training, “I think I was in the best college in the world.”

Twenty-two year old Corporal Curry P. Hutchison, an unmarried farmer from Newport, Virginia, trained at Camp Lee in Petersburg from 10 October 1917 to 25 May 1918 before embarking for France. Hutchison noted, “I was much improved physically and mentally. Trained to think and act without hesitation. I met with men from every walk of life therefore having an opportunity to study life and men as I had never before.”

Doughboys enjoyed the camaraderie of training in America; the closeness the men developed would be crucial to survival on the front.

**Camp Construction and Daily Life**

There were problems the United States Army had to solve in order to get a large force ready for war. Housing for the new soldiers had to be constructed in a hurry; both wooden barracks and tents, along with roads and sewer systems, had to be in place to provide shelter for the recruits. The army constructed these temporary quarters rapidly during the summer of 1917, which eschewed the slow pace usually taken by the federal government in building encampments. There was no time for the army officials to solicit bids for the construction since the Allies needed soldiers at the front immediately; due to this, the army set up new camps and expanded older camps to accommodate the growing

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20 Max Climon, 30 June 1919, Box 6, CSL.
21 Stanley W. Elovetsky, 2 August 1920, Box 38, CSL.
22 Curry P. Hutchison, 15 December 1919, Box 5, LVA.
number of troops. Camp construction in the southern states did not take into account the possibility of cold winter weather and men assigned to these quarters suffered the effects. Born to Austrian-Hungarian parents, First Lieutenant Albert J. Engelberg stated, “Camp Austin wasn’t as agreeable a place as one would like, but was the best the government could give during the crisis and although very muddy my battalion and I were in excellent condition when we arrived at the port of embarkation at Newport News.”

Since the entry of the United States into the war placed a strain on the military facilities in America, camps appeared almost overnight to meet the demand for training sites. One such camp was in Ayer, Massachusetts, named after General Charles Devens, a Civil War officer from Worcester County, Massachusetts; here numerous New Englanders received their military training before embarking on their journey overseas. Before the army authorities descended on Ayer, it was a quiet town of around two or three hundred cottages with barren landscape. After a brief visit to the site, the army decided to build the new training camp and on 18 June 1917, the construction of the future Camp Devens began. The army chose Ayer for its wide-open space. It took a mere ten weeks to transform nine thousand acres of backwoods and marshes into a training camp. Five thousand workers constructed the 1400 buildings, twenty miles of road, 2200 showers, 400 miles of electric wires, 60 miles of heating pipes and 3,320,000 cubic feet of lumber to produce the military quarters.

When the contractors pronounced Camp Devens ready for occupancy on 1 September 1917, five months after the declaration of war, New England became the first section of the country to start training at a new facility. While waiting for completion of

23 Albert J. Engelberg, 3 November 1919, Box 4, LVA.
24 Roger Batchelder, *Camp Devens* (Boston: Small, Maynard & Company, 1917), 8-9. Lumber figure calculated from forty million board feet (40,000,000 board feet x 0.083 = cubic feet).
new camps, training took place at parks, armories and college campuses; for example, by 
15 July 1917, many Connecticut infantrymen arrived at Camp Yale to begin their 
training. The camp contained no barracks; the men slept in canvas tents and spent their 
days drilling in the hot summer sun. Fifty-two officers and 1750 enlisted men made up 
Camp Yale, under the command of Colonel Ernest L. Isbell of New Haven, with new 
recruits coming in, the regiment expanded to 4000.25 In September 1917, Company D of 
Camp Yale took a steamer to New York, where they boarded the Adriatic, bound for 
Liverpool, England, and then for Le Havre, France. Throughout the rest of September 
and into October, the remaining soldiers from Camp Yale made the same journey. 

Along with men from other New England states, recruits for the 304th Infantry 
and Machine Gun Battalions from Connecticut were the first to arrive at Camp Devens. 
Similar to other training camps, Devens paralleled a small city, with anywhere from 
30,000 to 48,000 men living there during 1917 and 1918.26 The following two 
photographs illustrate the quality of the buildings constructed at the camp.27

25 Strickland, Connecticut Fights, 60. 
26 Batchelder, Camp Devens, 10. 
27 Photographs of Camp Devens, Box 131, Historical Data File, CSL.
Figure 9: A good view showing the well-constructed barracks of Camp Devens.

Figure 10: Soldiers relax, read and play table tennis in the Army Red Cross building.
On the other side of the country in American Lake, Washington, construction began for another training camp named after Captain Meriwether Lewis of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Camp Lewis, the largest training camp in the country at the time, opened for new recruits on 5 September 1917 and the 91st Infantry Division trained there. Upon arrival at their respective camps, the newly inducted soldiers went through medical exams, received uniforms and supplies and located their barracks. The men at Devens were fortunate because they slept in wood barracks – in other military camps, such as Camp Wadsworth, South Carolina, as well as other camps in southern states, the army used tents to house the troops.

Army life consisted of exercise drills, rifle instruction, bayonet training, grenade practice and instruction in trench warfare; soldiers dug actual trenches in which to train. The army provided time for organized recreation activities and religious services. Every morning before breakfast and right after roll call, each company carried out calisthenics, which the army intended to build the soldiers’ muscles. “The calisthenics, hikes and regular habits were essential for the endurance which followed,” stated twenty-nine year old attorney, Private Charles R. Goddard of Hartford. Twenty-three year old Sergeant Hamilton Du Trienille Jr. of New Haven remarked, “The daily drill and exercise made me much stronger than heretofore. It also made me alert to all things.” Sergeant Dennis F. Flynn, also from New Haven, served with Company C, 102nd Infantry and

28 Construction took ninety days and 10,000 men built 1757 buildings and 422 other structures. Camp Lewis cost the least amount of money to build compared to other AEF training camps. http://www.lewis.army.mil/lewis-camp.asp
29 *Charles R. Goddard, 28 August 1919, Box 8, CSL.
30 *Hamilton Du Trienille Jr., 10 September 1919, Box 31, CSL.
declared, “My experience of camp life in the U.S. were the drills and exercises while not laborious were good for the development the body and muscles.”\textsuperscript{31}

When the men mastered setting-up exercises, they learned another series of exercises using rifles…if available. An important part of this training included bayonet practice; each man was to master the bayonet both offensively and defensively prior to leaving for the front. Grenade throwing was another aspect of warfare the doughboys learned at their training camps, along with methods of signaling; men learned the semaphore code using flags or merely their arms. In addition, there was artillery drill and most of the time the army resorted to using large wooden imitations in place of the guns in short supply. Due to the thousands of men inhabiting a camp, trash accumulation could undermine the appearance and atmosphere, so policing the grounds was a necessary daily activity carried out by soldiers.

As men arrived at Devens, their commanders assigned them to the various organizations of the camp until each received its quota; there were four regiments of infantry: the 301\textsuperscript{st}, 302\textsuperscript{nd}, 303\textsuperscript{rd} and the 304\textsuperscript{th}. A depot brigade of thirteen battalions was formed, as well as three regiments of field artillery, three machine-gun battalions, the Headquarters Train, the Engineers’ Train and the Sanitary Train. Figure 11 shows the assignments according to the areas from which the soldiers originated.\textsuperscript{32}

\textsuperscript{31} Dennis F. Flynn, 15 July 1919, Box 31, CSL.
\textsuperscript{32} Batchelder, \textit{Camp Devens}, 9-10.
The 304th Infantry was comprised of Connecticut troops commanded by Colonel Samuel J. Herron. The majority of the 304th Infantry were former factory workers from Hartford, Bridgeport and Waterbury. Many were immigrants who could not speak English. Some could not write. Well aware of this fact, the army established schools at Camp Devens to teach English and writing; this schooling resulted in soldiers who could understand instructions, grateful for the opportunity the army had offered them. Private Mifflin T. Gibbs of Ansonia, Connecticut did not serve overseas, but felt, “I received from my experience in the camp valuable training which has contributed to my success since returning from camp. I am much stronger physically and better prepare to meet life struggles.”

Howard J. Dunn, of New Haven, a mechanic in the air service stated, “Increased in weight and felt better physically in general. Also learned considerable in my civil occupation.” These factory workers learned vital skills, often while living better than they had as civilians. It is understandable they would commend their experiences at Camp Devens.

33 Mifflin T. Gibbs, 8 August 1919, Box 32, CSL.
34 Howard J. Dunn, 6 July 1919, Box 31, CSL.
Fit for Duty

The majority of the enlisted men who the army sent to training camps left with high admiration of their time there. Soldiers put on weight and gained strength. Many men claimed they gained ten, twenty and even thirty pounds of muscle. “Weighed 156 pounds when examined in July 1917 – weighed 190 lbs. when discharged July 1919 – Wore shoe size 8½ July 1917 – wore shoe size 10, July 1919. General health improved very much during the two years service,” stated Miletus B. Jarman, twenty-six, of Elkton, Virginia.35

A thirty-one year old freight handler from Norfolk, Virginia, African American Private Charles L. Hogue, concluded, “Camp experience was very severe. But it was very necessary. My mental capacity was broadened in many forms. Gained excellent knowledge physically.”36 Artilleryman and Bugler Leo J. Hill of East Haven, Connecticut commented, “Didn’t note any great mental improvement but gained weight and strength which came in handy later at the front.”37 Twenty-two year old African American Private, of Cumberland, Virginia, Ulysses S. G. Mayo, explained, “The association of men, condition and the Study of different types of men increased my mental power 100%. The recreation exercises that I had caused me to gain 15 lbs.”38

Machine gun battalion Sergeant Byron P. Graff, a Hartford native, gave specific figures about his military training: “Weighed 141 pounds when examined for service. Weighed 175 pounds in service. Present weight about 165. Figures tell the story.”39 Graff represents the majority of doughboys, who noted their increase in muscle and

35 Miletus B. Jarman, 7 January 1920, Box 9, LVA.
36 Charles L. Hogue, Box 15, LVA.
37 Leo J. Hill, 29 September 1919, Box 32, CSL.
38 Ulysses S. G. Mayo, Box 4, LVA.
39 Byron P. Graff, 22 November 1920, Box 8, CSL.
strength, proud to indicate their weight gain in positive terms – more weight meant better health. Seward H. Strickland, of Hartford, declared, “I had only a short experience in American camp but find the mental atmosphere uplifting and physical conditions and living unequalled.”

Infantry Private Frederick J. Burke, of New Haven, Connecticut, commented, “A man couldn’t want any better place for building up his health.” “My camp experience was very pleasing and I got a lot out of it. Physically I was of the best,” said Infantry Bugler Nelson F. Waters of New Haven. He trained at Camp Yale from 28 February until 9 August 1917, when he boarded the Adriatic in Hoboken. Twenty-four year old Private James O. McKarney, of Washington County, Virginia, reiterated, “I believe that camp life helped to build a man up and make him stronger than any other kind of life.”

African American Sergeant Harry E. Curry of Hampton, Virginia reflected, “I experienced a great deal in camp. I learned that out-door-life was best for my health. I did not know that at first.” The growth in physical prowess enhanced most young Americans’ hunger for the front.

**Mental Effects of Training**

Physically, the army prepared the doughboy for war. Mentally, however, it was a different story. While a great number of soldiers agreed the benefits of camp life were both mental and physical, some did complain of intellectual stagnation. Medical Corps Captain James R. Miller of Hartford, offered, “Physically I was greatly benefited by my

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[40] Seward H. Strickland, 5 September 1919, Box 13, CSL.
[41] Frederick J. Burke, 14 July 1919, Box 30, CSL.
[42] Nelson F. Waters, 15 July 1919, Box 37, CSL.
[43] James O. McKarney, Box 11, LVA.
[44] Harry E. Curry, Box 4, LVA.
training camp experience. Mentally I was greatly depressed by having to learn many things that I knew at the time, and found out later, to be not only useless, but incorrect."

Virginian Private Jack M. Bowen, 80th Division agreed: “I improved slightly, physically, but I cannot see where the army improves any one mentally – unless he is an absolute blockhead to begin with.”

Another Virginian from Portsmouth, Second Lieutenant Marshall W. Butt had similar negative thoughts: “No physical change of note, mentally I was disgusted with the methods used in the United States.”

Artillery Private Frederick E. Benjamin of New Haven stated, “Detrimental, absolutely, to mental faculties; improved somewhat physically.”

Whether a doughboy’s opinion of his training was positive or negative, time at camp would guarantee each soldier would have the strength to go over the top and charge across No Man’s Land, but lacked instruction in trench warfare and how to counterattack on the Western Front. The army did not prepare the soldiers that landed in France for the psychological aspects of combat. The high command believed the infantry alone, in classic pitched battles on open fields could win the war – a fatal error the European commanders committed during the previous three years. This time combat was different. The Allies’ adjustment to trench warfare continued even as the American troops arrived in November 1917.

45 James R. Miller, 30 April 1919, Box 11, CSL.
46 Jack M. Bowen, 23 August 1919, Box 13, LVA.
47 Marshall W. Butt, 24 August 1919, Box 15, LVA.
48 Frederick E. Benjamin, Box 29, CSL.
Supplies for the AEF were yet another problematic area. The doughboys needed uniforms, weapons, medical supplies, field glasses, helmets, ammunition, mess kits, horses’ equipment…the list went on. There was little surplus of supplies due to the 1916-1917 mission of American troops into México and the lack of industrial preparation for war. Demand for uniforms, ammunition and food was high. Due to this lack of resources, the army relied on advice from American businessmen on where to obtain the best quality for their money. To supply such a vast number of soldiers in such a short time took a great deal of effort by the various bureaus of the army. The Quartermaster Corps alone supplied the army with 17,000,000 woolen trousers and breeches, 22,198,000 flannel shirts and 26,423,000 shoes.\footnote{Coffman, War to End All Wars, 35.} Once again, soldiers who trained at Camp Devens were fortunate. They received a straw mattress and as many blankets as they needed to place on an iron cot equipped with springs; the Quartermaster Corps, however, did not provide pillows. The army purchased food for camps without a great deal of difficulty, but there were not enough trained cooks and bakers to prepare it. This led to civilian chefs cooking for the troops at the camps while the army schooled new cooks and bakers.

The great rush to set up and equip the training facilities did not discourage many soldiers. Army chaplain, First Lieutenant Dryden L. Phelps, a New Haven resident, described his camp experience as, “Most beneficial…We received first class food; barracks in good condition; the highest type of mental and physical training.”\footnote{Dryden L. Phelps, 9 October 1919, Box 35, CSL.} English born Private Wilson H. Whitehouse, lived in Wallingford when he enlisted in the army on
5 May 1917 at the age of nineteen, and observed, “They were of the best as far as mental and physical conditions were concerned. But they might have been more lenient with their passes.”

Doughboys were often crowded together due to the lack of barracks or tents available to house them, and since uniforms were in short supply, soldiers had to report for drill dressed in military attire and civilian clothing at the same time. Men without previous military experience quickly learned the army ran on discipline and drill; seventeen-hour days were typical and filled with marching, calisthenics, classes and practice. “Camp experience was of the best. I could get up with the bugle at 4:30 where now an alarm clock has a hard job awakening me at 7:30,” said Second Lieutenant Francis P. Pallotti of Hartford.

There was time for three army-style meals a day. The troops may not have appreciated all the items on the menu or the way in which their food was prepared, but there was a lot of it. The army’s daily ration was 4761 calories. The entrees differed each day, but a typical daily selection from the menu of Fort Riley, Kansas, in the summer of 1917 included a breakfast of cantaloupes, corn flakes, sugar and milk, fried liver, bacon and onions, toast, bread and coffee; a lunch of beef à la mode, boiled potatoes, creamed cauliflower, pickles, tapioca pudding, vanilla sauce, iced tea and bread; and for dinner, chili con carne, hot biscuits, stewed peaches and iced tea. The army’s heavy calorie and exercise regimen enabled doughboys to pack on pounds of muscle.

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51 *Wilson H. Whitehouse, 7 June 1920, Box 38, CSL.
52 Francis P. Pallotti, 1 March 1920, Box 12, CSL.
53 This amount of calories a day is not a great deal more than what today’s recruits at basic training receive. The Military Dietary Reference Intakes (MDRIs) per day for men involved in heavy activity is 3950 calories and for exceptionally heavy activity is 4600 calories. Table 2-1, *Army Regulation 40-25* (Washington, DC 15 June 2001), 5.
54 Coffman, *War to End All Wars*, 65.
Private Harvey E. Braxton, an African American farmer from Accomack, Virginia felt, “Plenty of exercise, pure air, pure food enabled me to think quick, act and be ready for service.”

Eighteen-year-old field artillery Private Humbert F. Cofrancesco of New Haven remarked, “The most pronounced effect on me was physical. The human body was a living engine in the army. With painstaking care, every precaution was taken to safeguard the men’s health, especially during the influenza epidemic. Every man was upon his discharge, healthier-stronger and stouter. All weaknesses and feebleness were eliminated. Backs were straightened; round shoulders disappeared.” Cofrancesco added, “Military training was beneficial mentally, as well as physically. One had to be alert, energetic, attentive and responsive to any duty. The drills in particular demanded a steady concentrated mental effort. Military topography taught the man to be keen, observant, appreciative of details under unusual, and sometimes, discomforting circumstances.”

55 Harvey E. Braxton, 19 December 1922, Box 1, LVA.
56 Humbert F. Cofrancesco, 23 July 1919, Box 30, CSL.
In spite of physical improvements, before the army deployed them overseas, numerous American soldiers became afflicted with disease. Many men died from influenza or pneumonia they contracted at their training camps and others became sick for weeks with various other ailments: measles, mumps, chicken pox, meningitis, typhoid, small pox and tuberculosis. Army medical officers kept the camps in the United States sanitary, and the Public Health Service kept nearby towns as clean as possible. Nonetheless, the close quarters in which the men lived contributed to the spread of the various illnesses.

Thirty-four year old Nurse Nora B. Sanford of Roanoke, Virginia worked at Camp Jackson’s hospital in Columbia, South Carolina. She recalled, “My first duty was with colored pneumonia patients, there being thirty-six at most, most of whom were seriously ill…The work was of course very heavy, but one enjoyed it as the patients were mostly Southern darkies and very humble and grateful – and pitiful. From there I went to
a measles ward – where the greater number of boys were from the country and so genuine and unselfish. But to my regret I didn’t stay with them long.”

Sergeant William A. Bergen, Company G, 102nd Infantry, a native of Waterbury, suffered “chest pains, deafness, respiratory problems, and anxiety” while in camp in the United States, saying he felt “nervous, irritable, and shifty.”

The Spanish Influenza was the worst disease to attack the men. Influenza was a global epidemic that raged from March 1918 until August 1919, which affected soldiers of the Allies and Central Powers. More than 25 percent of the army contracted influenza during the duration of the war. In September 1918, 25,000 French troops and 37,000 doughboys contracted the flu. Civilians suffered from the rapid spread of the flu as well, and the epidemic caused businesses and schools to close. Pneumonia, a complication of the flu, contributed to the number of soldiers’ deaths. Soldiers in training camps or those stationed in the rear were more susceptible to the disease due to crowded conditions and lack of food and rest.

The 1918 influenza pandemic attacked people of all ages; however, unlike other strains of the disease, young adults between the ages of 25-34 suffered the highest mortality rate. Approximately 50 percent of those who died due to influenza were men and women in their twenties. Draft calls and military training ceased for nearly a month during October 1918, when four of every thousand soldiers died from influenza in

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57 *Nora B. Sanford, Box 9, LVA.
58 William A. Bergen, 20 May 1931, Box 39, CSL.
61 Jeffrey K. Taubenberger, “Genetic Characterization of the 1918 ‘Spanish’ Influenza Virus,” in Phillips, *Spanish Influenza*, 41, see Figure 2.2 Influenza and pneumonia mortality by age, United States. Since the Spanish Flu originated in America (i.e. Fort Riley, Kansas), the mortality rate was higher than that of Western Europe.
American military camps. The War Department even curtailed the deployment of doughboys to France until the flu epidemic subsided. After the war, the United States Army reported 46,992 deaths due to influenza and pneumonia. This number of deaths was only 3500 fewer than the total number of men who died in battle over the course of World War I.

At some camps, soldiers escaped influenza due to wide-open spaces, well-constructed housing and trees planted throughout the facilities, all of which contributed to the health of the troops. For example, the sanitary officer at Camp Devens ordered men to hang all mattresses and blankets outside the barracks’s windows and all windows to remain open during the hours in which morning drill took place to prevent the spread of viruses. In addition, companies in which men had developed illnesses, such as measles or influenza, were subject to quarantine until the infected soldiers recovered.

Influenza was not the only fear that worried the army. President Wilson and Secretary of War Newton D. Baker took steps to protect the troops from the vices of liquor and prostitution – Woodrow Wilson wanted the AEF to be a more sober and more moral army than had previously served in the United States. During the mobilization of troops on the Mexican border, the problems of drunkenness and prostitution had been rampant. To combat these temptations, Baker established a Commission on Training Camp Activities. He then appointed Raymond B. Fosdick, a lawyer and social worker, as the director of the newly formed commission. Fosdick, a Princeton University graduate, was committed to public service and to eradicating corruption and immorality in city government. He served on a commission under John D. Rockefeller Jr. and established a

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62 Ayres, War with Germany, 126.
63 Coffman, War to End All Wars, 84.
64 Batchelder, Camp Devens, 58.
reputation as a foe of prostitution and graft. It became Fosdick’s duty to advise the army on providing recreational facilities at the training camps.

The areas around the camps were to be free of saloons and brothels, and the commission prohibited the sale of liquor to service men in uniform. The army provided instruction on venereal diseases in the form of lectures, movies, pamphlets and posters. Since Sir Alexander Fleming did not discover penicillin until 1928, there was no effective treatment and venereal disease was a problem that disabled thousands of soldiers. America was well aware that the British and French armies lost too many troops to syphilis and gonorrhea: the United States was not willing to waste valuable manpower in this manner – but education was the chief weapon the army chose to enable soldiers to defend themselves against venereal diseases.

The Commission on Training Camp Activities supervised the work of organizations such as the YMCA, Jewish Welfare Board, Salvation Army and Red Cross, which were of great support and aid to the doughboys. These groups worked with the commission to improve camp life. Libraries, theatre productions and sports activities provided the soldiers with a less spartan camp life. Fosdick also introduced group singing to the military men; this took more convincing than the other recreational activities, but when singing caught on the soldiers became enthusiastic, and sang while they worked. Songs such as Over There and We’ll Hang Kaiser Bill to a Sour-apple Tree became army favorites. At most training camps, the army made sports a top priority and provided the equipment and fields for football, tennis, baseball, soccer and the most popular sport – boxing. College coaches even formed and supervised intramural teams. Soldiers had half a day on Saturday and all day Sunday to take a break from training.
In spite of the army’s efforts to make camp agreeable, not all soldiers exited with a positive experience. Private David Fransen, an artilleryman from Hartford, stated, “Made me hate an Army Officer but it taught me to do as I was told.” Private Frederick E. Benjamin of New Haven, said, “Accepted my duty and performed it to the best of my ability but think military service is the nearest vocation to barbarism possible – at least for an intelligent enlisted man who does the thinking for a lot of numbskulls.” Private Donald L. Jacobno of New Haven, who trained at Camp Upton in Yaphank, New York, and later at Camp Hancock in Augusta, Georgia, commented, “At Upton the barrenness and ugliness of the camp structures and surroundings were mentally depressing. So was the monotony of camp life; at Hancock they permitted a few trees to grow, so it was not so bad there.”

Private William J. B. Morris, a twenty-four year old traffic manager from Mappsville, Virginia, trained at Camp Wadsworth, South Carolina from 17 May to 28 June 1918. After this brief time in camp, Morris recounted, “Mentally I wasn’t living as everything was so new and different from what I was used to and we were kept on the jump all the time to such extent that I hadn’t time to think. I was learning to be a mechanical machine, never allowed to think for yourself just obey…physically, I nearly became a wreck until I got hardened to that type of life. I lost 20 pounds in 3 weeks.”

Army Medical Department Private Charles A. Cormier, of Ansonia, Connecticut said, “I had never been ill before enlisting but during my various illnesses received every

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65 David Fransen, 12 August 1919, Box 7, CSL.
66 Frederick E. Benjamin, Box 29, CSL.
67 Donald L. Jacobno, 11 November 1919, Box 33, CSL.
68 *William J. B. Morris, Box 1, LVA.
care. I am not as well physically as before and mentally I have aged about ten years."\(^{69}\) Private Donald L. Jacobno suffered from the flu during his military service as well, stating, “All physical improvement was offset by the effects of the Spanish Influenza."\(^{70}\)

When men died from influenza or pneumonia while en route to Europe, the army sent a letter to notify his family. Mrs. Mary Costello, of New Haven, received such a letter in October 1918, conveying the news her son Frank had died while sailing to England. Army chaplain, Lieutenant George F. Finnigan, wrote to Mrs. Costello regarding her son: “His death was not hard. The cold had settled on his lungs and the doctors could do no more for him than they did. We buried him at sea…The stars and stripes were around him.”\(^{71}\)

Other soldiers died in training camp, or on duty in America. First Lieutenant in the Quartermaster Department, William C. Brown Jr., of Manchester, Connecticut and later a Hartford resident, attended Harvard University and Harvard Law School, before he enlisted soon after the United States declared war. In a letter to his family, Brown voiced his excitement, “Right here in camp, 40,000 of the finest soldiers in the world are being put in shape.” Brown’s enthusiasm for military service did not carry him overseas, as he was assigned to the Admiralty Section of the Water Transport Branch of the Embarkation Service, in Washington, DC. Lieutenant Brown contracted influenza and died on 19 January 1919.\(^{72}\)

\(^{69}\) Charles A. Cormier, 12 September 1919, Box 30, CSL.
\(^{70}\) Donald L. Jacobno, 11 November 1919, Box 33, CSL.
\(^{71}\) Frank Costello Jr., Box 30, CSL.
\(^{72}\) War Service Records, World War I, 1914-1919, Ruth Wyllys Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, Connecticut Chapter, No. 3., Box 132, Historical Data File, CSL. On 14 May 1917, the army appointed Brown to the Reserve Officers’ Training Camp at Fort Myer, Virginia and later transferred him to Camp Lee, Virginia.
Edgar O. Shirley, a twenty-three year old Hartford resident, was notified to appear before his local draft board, No. 3, at the Old Hall of Records on 1 September 1918. On that day, Shirley was “taken ill…and removed to Hartford Hospital, where he died 5 September, with bronchial pneumonia, being the first to die in Hartford with the ‘flu.”’\textsuperscript{73}

Shirley tried to enlist prior to his draft call but the examining physician rejected him. Soon after his appointment, First Lieutenant Julian C. Warner, a 1916 Yale graduate, became stricken with a “fatal malady” and died before he had any opportunity to serve in the military.\textsuperscript{74} Utahan volunteer, Private Clarence Anderson fell ill with the Spanish Flu while training at Camp Lewis, Washington; he dictated his last letter home to a nurse before he died: “I am very sick and may not recover, but in case I should cross the Great Beyond I want you to all know that I am a Christian and am prepared to meet my maker. I did not like to drill at first, but I got so I liked it, and I love the army life. If I had a thousand lives to give I would give them all for the U.S.A.”\textsuperscript{75}

Were the doughboys prepared to fight? Physically they were ready; psychologically, they were not. Even if they experienced live-fire exercises and rough simulated trench conditions, it was not enough to erase the several decades of cultural glorification that solidified the doughboys’ perception of combat. Filled with enthusiasm, the doughboys eagerly anticipated their departure for the front. Nothing, it seemed, could stop them. Soldiers remained anxious to simply get into combat and win the war, one such man was John P. Dwyer, a machinist for Manville’s Machine in Waterbury. Dwyer enlisted on 17 June 1917, at age twenty-three, and the army assigned him to Company G, 102\textsuperscript{nd} Infantry in the National Guard, he declared, “I think the

\textsuperscript{73} Edgar O. Shirley, Box 13, CSL.
\textsuperscript{74} Julian C. Warner, Box 14, CSL.
\textsuperscript{75} Clarence Anderson, Box 1, USA.
training etc. done me good, but was more interested in getting across the pond than anything else.” The Western Front would put their inadequate camp training to the test, prepared or not – they were going.

76 *John P. Dwyer, 19 December 1921, Box 39, CSL.*
The Atlantic was U-boat territory and during the war, German submarines made the seas a dangerous battleground, above all for Allied merchant shipping; especially after 18 February 1915, when Germany allowed its U-boats to sink Allied merchant ships without warning. This tactic had devastating results. In 1915, the sinking of the *Lusitania* on 7 May and the *Arabic* on 19 August (both carrying American passengers) forced Wilhelm II to discontinue unrestricted submarine warfare for fear of American reprisal. As the war progressed, Allied shipping increased while the Allied naval blockade constricted the Central Powers; Germany then reinstated unrestricted submarine warfare on 1 February 1917.

Once again, their U-boats wreaked havoc on Allied shipping, this time, however, the Allies developed and employed the convoy system. Instead of travelling alone, destroyers would escort merchant ships to their destination. Fortune favored the doughboys – by the summer of 1917, the submarine threat decreased, but the waters were still not completely safe, as shown in the photograph below. Precautions taken to avoid submarines included following a zigzag course and keeping the transports unlit after dark. The men took turns keeping watch for submarines throughout each day, but still
were able to relax by playing card games, practicing their French or singing. Many doughboys from the Midwest experienced their first view of the ocean and spent time basking in the sun on deck wherever they could find room to stretch out.

Figure 13: Soldiers on the *Northern Pacific*, near the English Channel, watch shells being fired at a U-Boat. Photograph Collection, Box 131, Historical Data File, CSL.

There was a greater enemy than German U-boats: disease. The trip across the Atlantic took about two weeks; giving the Spanish Flu plenty of time to spread throughout a ship. Some soldiers became ill or died on the voyage. Ocean transportation was scarce, so American troops were packed like sardines. Such close quarters enabled influenza cases to swell, turning several of the transport ships into a floating virus. In October 1918, “The *Leviathan* alone arrived with 514 cases of ‘flu,’ 463 cases of pneumonia, and 68 dead.”

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1 Hagood, *Services of Supply*, 183.
Over Here

Whether influenza affected a soldier or not, men found that European camp life did not match the comforts of camps at home; thousands of soldiers arrived in Liverpool, and then traveled by train to a rest camp in Southampton, England before journeying on to France; the camp and others like it was anything but restful. General Peter E. Traub, the Commander of the 51st Infantry Brigade received a letter from Colonel Ernest L. Isbell, the Commanding Officer of the 102nd Infantry, 26th Division that described the situation: “At the rest camp the men were sheltered in tents. The place was wet and muddy; there was…an entire lack of organization, system or method. For the first day the entire subsistence provided was a piece of bread with some jam.” Thieves stole part of their baggage; shoes, shirts, socks and other articles of clothing were in short supply. Other groups of soldiers went through the same experiences as the 102nd had at English rest camps.

Private Stanley J. Herzog, a telephone operator of Battery F, 103rd Field Artillery, 26th Division, described the conditions at the English camp: “Here we were packed fourteen in a tent which could only accommodate seven men.” There was very little food, Herzog continued, “To make it worse, a very few of the boys had any money as we did not get paid before leaving good old U.S., so we could not buy any food…I sold a pair of gloves to an English soldier for a half crown, for which I bought a package of cigarettes and a little fruit.” After their brief stay of a few days in Southampton, the AEF went on to France growing more enthusiastic about meeting the enemy. Herzog

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2 Strickland, Connecticut Fights, 72.
recounted, “It was bright and early when we landed in Le Havre, France. I could hear the boys say: ‘show me the Hun and we will clean out all of the Kaiser’s army.’”

In spite of the inhospitable conditions and cramped quarters, most soldiers looked upon their trip to Europe as an opportunity to travel and see new sights. To some it seemed a semester abroad. Joseph J. O’Connell, an infantry Corporal from Manchester, Connecticut, said the training overseas was “hard work but the traveling which we did gave us an opportunity to see many things which we would not see otherwise.” O’Connell added he “learned a great deal due to these experiences.” Second Lieutenant George S. Crockett, a twenty-one year old student at the Virginia Military Institute (VMI), entered the Air Service of the National Army on 7 August 1917. Crockett, of Accomack, Virginia, viewed his time overseas as “an educational experience that could not be given any other way.” Others viewed their time in Europe as an occasion to broaden themselves intellectually; the army gave soldiers stationed near or visiting Paris a map of the city highlighting places of interest.

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3 Stanley J. Herzog, The Fightin’ Yanks (Stamford, CT: Cunningham Print, 1922), 32.
4 Joseph J. O’Connell, 26 September 1919, Box 17, CSL.
5 George S. Crockett, 3 April 1923, Box 1, LVA.
Ordnance Sergeant Maurice M. Condon of Hartford said, “I had the pleasure of mixing among strange people observing their habits and customs. I also saw most of the large cities of France, their different works of art, cathedrals, castles and châteaux.” At twenty-six years of age, First Lieutenant Miletus B. Jarman, a high school principal in Elkton, Virginia joined the army on 20 August 1917. Concerning his experience in Europe, Jarman wrote, “I have been broadened by meeting many men under unusual conditions, by travel in France, Luxembourg and Germany, and by just naturally growing mentally by virtue of being two years older than I was when I entered the service. Some illusions about France and the French, Germany and the Germans, were shattered.”

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6 Maurice M. Condon, 29 September 1919, Box 6, CSL.
7 Miletus B. Jarman, 7 January 1920, Box 9, LVA.
First Lieutenant Edgar C. Outten, twenty-six, of Hampton, Virginia, described his training overseas as “a wonderful and broadening experience, the value of which cannot be reckoned in terms of dollars and cents.”

Matthew M. Quinn, E Battery, 302nd Field Artillery wrote, “used my trip as a tour of sightseeing and travel.”

Quarter Master Corps Corporal Charles H. Henderling, also of New Haven said, “I gained considerably in my experiences overseas and will never forget what I have seen and learned by the trip.”

Thirty-four year old First Lieutenant Arthur A. Grove, 116th Infantry, 29th Division, a merchant from Luray, Virginia, believed his training overseas was “Very beneficial. It was a wonderful experience – one that I can look back upon with a great deal of satisfaction.”

Field artillery Second Lieutenant Leslie A. Tracy of Hartford did not train in the United States; he shipped out directly to France, and said his overseas training was “An experience never to be equaled. It was an opportunity to associate with men of every station in life.”

Pleased with his service, Paul T. Wysocki of Norfolk, Virginia, wrote, “My overseas experience broadened my mind and made me take notice of things I would not have noticed without my army experience.”

Captain Thomas B. McDermott, of Hartford, twenty-seven years old, formerly a statistician for the Rossia Insurance Company, married and the father of two children, said, “Had a chance to see France, Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg and Germany, and I am firmly convinced that 80% of them are a gang of “furriners,” the other 20% would undoubtedly do this country a lot of good

8 Edgar C. Outten, 8 November 1919, Box 4, LVA.
9 Matthew M. Quinn, 27 May 1919, Box 35, CSL.
10 Charles H. Henderling, 27 June 1919, Box 32, CSL.
11 Arthur A. Grove, 18 November 1920, Box 9, LVA.
12 Leslie A. Tracy, 10 November 1919, Box 9, CSL.
13 Paul T. Wysocki, 25 August 1919, Box 8, LVA.
if it had them.”

John E. Barnes, an eighteen-year-old shipping clerk from Norfolk, Virginia, recalled, “Overseas experience caused me to feel I had lived and gained more in a month than I ordinarily would in years.”

“I learned that America, though the greatest country in the world, can learn much from other countries,” said Leslie H. Patterson, twenty-three, of Bedford, Virginia.

Patterson and his fellow doughboys would begin their European education when they arrived at their training camps, such as Neufchâteau, in the Meuse River valley, Lorraine region, Vosges department of eastern France.

Figure 15: Major General Clarence R. Edwards inspecting the 101st Infantry, Neufchâteau, France, 1918. Photograph Collection, Box 150, Historical Data File, CSL.

14 Thomas B. McDermott, 24 March 1920, Box 11, CSL.
15 *John E. Barnes, 10 September 1919, Box 13, LVA.
16 *Leslie H. Patterson, 23 September 1920, Box 2, LVA.
17 Neufchâteau was about 33 miles northeast of General Pershing’s headquarters in Chaumont.
Conditions were not any better than they had been in England – France did not resemble the country the doughboys had imagined. The photographs the men had seen of the Eiffel Tower and the picturesque streets of Paris along the Seine River were quite different from the cold, rainy and muddy France in which they found themselves. The countryside the troops had come to was a collection of small farmhouses and tiny villages located along the roads crossing through Neufchâteau. As Daniel W. Strickland of New Haven remembered, the constant rain made “the ever present damnable mud all about…clinging to shoes, boots, and clothes so that a soldier worked, drilled or paraded with anywhere from one to five pounds of mud attached to each foot.”

Corporal Virginius L. Bland, 318th Regiment, 80th Division, a twenty-four year old farmer from Shanghai, Virginia remarked, “I found that France wasn’t like it had been said. It made me think, Look! The cooties.”

The doughboys believed the only foe they would face in Europe were Germans. They were wrong. The cold, damp climate, poor food, lack of supplies, coupled with mud, grime and the omnipresent louse, all combined to wear down the AEF even before they faced a human opponent. A louse, or cootie as the soldiers called it, was a tiny parasite that not only caused intense itching and discomfort, but also was one cause of trench fever that could incapacitate a soldier for days with a high temperature and general weakness. To combat cooties, the army sent a steam generator and tank truck around the camps. Doughboys undressed, threw their bundled clothes into the tank where steam would kill the lice. Of course, this relief lasted for only a short time since the cooties infested the hay upon which the troops slept.

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19 Virginius L. Bland, Box 6, LVA.
The AEF managed to keep their spirits up under the continuous assault of lice, as seen in the many poems and jokes found in the *Stars and Stripes*. In a 29 November 1918 letter to the editor, Jimmy Murrin of Headquarters Company, 112th Infantry remarked, “Machine gunners, who know how to sweep the enemy’s front with their rattle-tat-tat machines, have yet to learn the law of separation – for neither Hun, shrapnel nor changing weather conditions can subdue the same old cootie. He is there to the last.” Murrin finished his letter with a quote from a frontline soldier, “I have not seen a single cootie in France…They are all married and have large families.” Sergeant A. P. Bowen, RTO, wrote a poem entitled *If I Were a Cootie* for the 1 November 1918 issue, which began:

If I were a cootie (pro-Allied, of course),  
I’d hie me away on a Potsdam-bound horse,  
And I’d seek out the Kaiser (the war-maddened cuss),  
And I’d be a bum cootie if I didn’t muss  
His Imperial hide from his head to his toe!  
He might hide from the bombs, but I’d give him no show!  
If I were a cootie, I’d deem it my duty  
To thus treat the Kaiser,  
Ah, out!

At the time of the Armistice, lice infested 90 percent of all AEF divisions, but by the next spring, this figure dropped to 10 percent. This was due to the army’s aggressive delousing programs, which included better living and bathing conditions for

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20 The army’s most famous newspaper, *Stars and Stripes*, had its World War I run from 8 February 1918 to 13 June 1919. The army published the eight-page paper every Friday with the hopes of improving troop morale; it contained jokes, illustrations and articles all written by doughboys of various ranks, many pages in each issue also contained advertisements.

21 Jimmy Murrin, “Not a Single One,” *Stars and Stripes*, 29 November 1918, 4. Murrin also included his own ode to the cootie in the same column.

22 A. P. Bowen, “If I Were a Cootie,” *Stars and Stripes*, 1 November 1918, 4.

23 “Whole Cootie Clan Rapidly Dying Off,” *Stars and Stripes*, 4 April 1919, 3. In the spring of 1919, out of the 454,703 troops examined, only 8820 had lice.
the soldiers and more insistent policies instituted by the navy to rid the troop transports of lice.

Besides lice, the AEF found the weather conditions in England and France difficult to handle. Thirty years old and a veteran of the border service, Walker T. Spencer of Fort Mitchell, Virginia was stationed in Blazy, France from 21 April to 21 May 1918. A Supply Sergeant with the Machine Gun Company, 4th Infantry, Spencer commented his “health has never been good since exposure to weather” in France. The cold weather combined with the mud resulted in feet that were constantly wet, frozen and sore. Colonel Isbell issued a memorandum to the men of the 102nd Infantry on 31 October 1917, which included a list of suggestions to help the soldiers stay healthy under such adverse conditions:

- Thorough daily drying and greasing of shoes.
- Saving fat for shoe grease.
- Wearing cardboard insoles if shoes are bad.
- Frequent washing and rubbing the feet, with camphorated oil.
- Frequent changes of socks and wearing of several pairs at a time.
- Frequent washing and changing of underwear.
- Drying and airing of clothing.
- Use of papers, poncho, shelter tent half or rain coat with poncho underneath blankets and rain coat or shelter half on poncho over blankets to keep out cold.
- Drying and airing of bedding.
- Folding blankets to make a sort of sleeping bag.
- Cleaning billets and barracks.
- Stopping holes in barracks roofs and walls with paper, straw, etc.
- Bathing and personal cleanliness.
- Moderation in eating and drinking.
- Proper regulation of bowels.
- Temperance, avoidance of all excesses.
- Avoidance of inactivity, while wet, especially in draft or wind or when it’s cold.
- Avoiding commission of nuisances.
- Washing of hands after visiting latrines.
- Drinking no unboiled water save that treated by chlorated lime.

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24 *Walter T. Spencer, 1 December 1923, Box 7, LVA.*
Getting ample rest and sleep.  
Avoiding needless exposure to bad weather.  
Constructing drains.  
Constructing hardened paths.  
Constructing weather protected latrines.  

Besides trying to avoid sickness, the soldiers worked nearly nonstop under the guidance of French officers to learn the skills they would need at the front. A typical day for a doughboy went something akin to this: after sleeping in a hayloft, he was up at dawn, washed in cold water from a horse trough, and ate boiled salt pork and bread, and drank black coffee for breakfast. He worked and trained all day, ate supper after dark, slept and started again the following day. Doughboys learned the tactics of trench warfare and offensive combat from seasoned British and French soldiers, such as the 162nd French Infantry, commanded by Colonel Bertrand, who instructed the Americans at Neufchâteau. These French soldiers provided valuable lessons in trench warfare for American troops, and as Frank P. Sibley remembered, “Were remarkable examples of professional efficiency and teaching ability.”  

Allied officers instructed Americans in the use of gas masks, hand grenades, the Chauchat 8 mm machine gun (an unpopular French light machine gun used by the doughboys) and the Stokes mortar. Brigadier General Albertus W. Catlin recounted the constant drilling of the Marines 6th Regiment in camp at France regardless of weather conditions: “They were drilled constantly in trench organization, signal systems, and all the details of trench warfare as it existed at the front. And all this in addition to the routine drill of the Marines.”  

Another Marine, Colonel Frederic M. Wise, 5th Marines, described the training at camps in France located between the towns of Chenevier and Menaucourt during July

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26 Sibley, *With the Yankee Division*, 49.  
and August 1917. Wise explained the 1\textsuperscript{st} Division was also billeted in small towns and partook in similar training exercises. The men dug trenches and practiced bayonet fighting:

Long lines of straw-stuffed figures hanging from a crossbeam between two upright posts were set up. The men fixed bayonets and charged them. British instructors, who had arrived shortly after us, stood over them and urged them on. The men had to scramble in and out a series of trenches before they got to the swinging dummies. That was to improve their wind. When the dummies were reached, according to the British instructors, you must put on a fighting face, grunt and curse as you lunged and literally try to tear the dummy to pieces with the thrust. There was special instruction to bayonet them in the belly whenever possible. If you bayoneted a man you were chasing, you must get him through the kidneys and not in the rump. If your bayonet stuck, shoot it out.\textsuperscript{28}

The bayonet received a great deal of praise from the European belligerents during the war, especially the British; however, the bayonet was more a psychological weapon than a physical one. Due to the perceived negligible casualties from the bayonet, armies kept no statistics on their numbers, and included them in the 1.02 percent miscellaneous casualties and accidents.\textsuperscript{29}

In addition to practice sessions and drilling with weapons, soldiers dug latrines and trenches, cleaned up livestock manure piles and struggled with the gloomy mud and cold. “Certain camps in France were nothing more than death traps; no stoves, no wooden floors for tents; general disregard for enlisted men’s health by the officers in

\textsuperscript{28} Wise, \textit{A Marine Tells It}, 164.

\textsuperscript{29} This may seem to be an insignificant percentage, which Joanna Bourke stresses in \textit{An Intimate History of Killing} as only being “less than half a per cent,” \textit{An Intimate History of Killing: Face-to-Face Killing in Twentieth Century Warfare} (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 39. But if this figure is applied to some of the staggering casualty figures of the war, as Rob Engen does for British and German casualties, then the bayonet killed and wounded tens of thousands of men, “Steel against Fire: The Bayonet in the First World War,” \textit{Journal of Military and Strategic Studies} 8, no. 3 (spring 2006), 14. Taken a step further, if the .32 percent bayonet casualty figure used by Engen is applied to the military deaths from both sides of the war: 9,450,000, then 30,240 men died from a bayonet wound. Total death figure from Niall Ferguson, \textit{The Pity of War} (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 295. Calculations made using sources given by Bourke, Engen and Ferguson.
command,” wrote Harold T. Lyons, a twenty-four year old chauffeur from Kent, Connecticut.  

As the soldiers continued their training in Europe, they also constructed barracks, hospitals and telephone lines; men cut firewood and kept the villages clean. Doughboys did all this in addition to the heavy training for combat. The first American arrivals in France spent the winter of 1917-1918 dealing with daily rain or snow in places such as Camp DeCoetquiden, dubbed by the AEF as “Camp Quityourkiddin.”

Since the French army did not have time to construct barracks for the arriving American troops, the soldiers became familiar with life in the French countryside. The Allies billeted many Americans in farmhouses while others stayed in barns alongside the French farmers’ cattle or in haylofts. No heat, no electricity, inability to communicate with the local people due to the language barrier and problems figuring out the French currency all added to the soldiers’ anxiety. It took time, but some Americans were able to become friends with the French citizens, particularly the children with whom they played games and shared candy. Two months before his twentieth birthday, Sergeant Fairfield H. Hodges, 104th Sanitary Train, 29th Division, an assistant rate clerk from Portsmouth, Virginia enlisted in the National Guard on 1 June 1917, felt, “I learned much. The countries I visited were strange and interesting and the people I shall never forget. The French treating me in every instance fine.”

The majority of AEF soldiers enjoyed overseas camp experiences despite the hardships they endured. Corporal Theodore E. Whitney, a machine gun infantryman and a Hartford resident, stated his overseas experience brought him “the realization that every...
man, no matter what his wealth, creed or nationality, was equally as good as myself.”

Corporal Hugh E. Brown, 166th Aero Squadron, a bank clerk from Norfolk, Virginia, arrived in Brest on 18 June 1918, remarked, “Physically, I lost some flesh, but I was generally well, and came home in good health. Mentally, I gained in knowledge of people and their customs and tempered my mind more to the sympathy of my fellow man in distress.”

Captain Nelson C. Overton, Company I, 325th Infantry, 82nd Division, commented it was “very difficult to describe” his training overseas, “I think that among the effects are these: more tolerant of other people’s opinions and less liable to judge them entirely upon what they may say.” Sergeant Philip W. Higgins, of Clinton, Connecticut served with the 301st Field Signal Corps and arrived in France on 4 August 1918 aboard the *Durham Castle* out of Montréal. His time overseas gave him “interest and deep admiration for the spirit of France…I became surer of my own ability, more assertive, learned to endure discomforts, and to make the best of any situation.”

There were men who felt the camps and training overseas were inferior to the ones in the United States. “The English camps made me feel bitter toward the arrangements my country has made for our welfare and when in France the feeling grew to open condemnation. But the experience is worth much,” said Private First Class Eugene M. Kelcy, Signal Corps, Photographic Division. The Hartford native did not like the training camps, but did enjoy his interaction with the people of France. Kelcy stated, “In Paris I had the chance to study the French people in an intimate way. I found them of

33 Theodore E. Whitney, 16 February 1927, Box 14, CSL.
34 Hugh E. Brown, Box 13, LVA.
35 Nelson C. Overton, 7 November 1919, Box 13, LVA.
36 Philip W. Higgins, Box 60, CSL.
high ideals and sympathetic, very hospitable and easily pleased. Intellectually they feel a
certain superiority to all other people.”  

Some soldiers expressed affection for France and dislike for England, perhaps due
to their brief time in England. In contrast, the soldiers’ stay in France was a good deal
longer and they grew acquainted with the French troops who trained them. Second
Lieutenant John M. Ross, an African American soldier in the Field Artillery Reserve
from New Haven, had “the feeling of love toward the French as a people, and a distrust
of England as a nation.” Russian born Jew Abraham Miskin was nearly twenty-seven
years old when he enlisted in Company K, 38th Infantry at Camp Stewart and left Halifax
bound for France at the end of March 1918. Miskin wrote:

I have been in England a short time, but in that very short time I have learned that
the people from England are more or less to themselves. I have noticed that when
we Americans were walking and they would pass us by, they would never greet
us. When we Americans first came, we thought that everybody would welcome
us. I was very much disappointed. The French people are very friendly; they like
to know everything about you and your family. Well, I can forgive everything,
but oh! Why are the villages in France so dirty, the richer the family, the more
dirt there was piled around the doors and windows. The manure piled up in front
of their windows, and you can imagine how we felt about that, and in general it
looked more like a fifteenth century instead of a twentieth century village.  

Bugler Leo J. Hill, a New Haven resident, said, “Didn’t see much of England and
don’t care to if the English crew on the transport is a sample. The French I like, and
would like to see more of.” Empathy for the French was an outcome of many soldiers’
training time overseas, and numerous men expressed compassion for the difficulties of
the citizens of Allied nations. Private Jacob Salovitz of New Haven, remarked, “Gave

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37 Eugene M. Kelcy, 11 August 1919, Box 9, CSL.
38 John M. Ross, 6 October 1919, Box 35, CSL.
39 Abraham Miskin, 5 November 1919, Box 11, CSL.
40 Leo J. Hill, 29 September 1919, Box 32, CSL.
me a chance to see the sufferings of the people over there, and that alone made me proud to think that I could do a little to help those poor, suffering souls.”

Manchester, Connecticut native, Captain George W. Cheney said, “It was brought home to me very forcibly how little we had suffered in comparison with the French and British. They had stood the brunt of the fighting for four years whereas we were engaged less than a year.” New Haven resident, Sergeant Joseph Cosenzo, 102nd Machine Gun Company wrote, “My experience overseas was most wonderful, both in France an England. It showed me people of other nations, how they lived and how they suffered from the war…I found myself with more and better feelings towards mankind.”

Austrian-born Corporal Henry Evanier, resident of Hartford, enlisted in the National Guard on 14 April 1914 at the age of nineteen; for Evanier, his time spent in France, “Made my love for fellow men much more.” A clerk at Aetna Life Insurance Company in Hartford, Evanier had served with the border service in México prior to the war. After leaving his farm, Bedford, Virginia Private First Class John D. Kinzer, 8th Division Military Police, joined the service on his twenty-third birthday, 10 May 1918. Kinzer said his time in France, “Showed me distinctly how small one man really is in this world.” The doughboys developed empathy for the people of Europe, especially the French. This only occurred, however, with retrospection, only after the men served on the front.

41 Jacob Salovitz, 20 May 1919, Box 36, CSL.
42 George W. Cheney, 10 July 1919, Box 15, CSL.
43 Joseph Cosenzo, 14 May 1935, Box 30, CSL.
44 Henry Evanier, 3 August 1919, Box 11, CSL.
45 John D. Kinzer, 12 July 1920, Box 2, LVA.
Nostalgia

Travel to Europe increased the doughboys love of America. Although their overseas experiences enriched their lives, many felt home eclipsed anything offered in Europe. Private First Class Frank E. Murphy, Company C, 101st Machine Gun Battalion, a Hartford native, expressed the feelings of other servicemen when he said, “The chief effect of my eighteen months in France was that it brought out strongly the advantages of living in America and how little I had appreciated my home.”46 Through his overseas experience, twenty-seven year old physician Captain Thomas G. Hardy of Farmville, Virginia, “learned to love America better and to hate war more.”47

First Lieutenant Albert M. Simons, 104th Regiment, 26th Division, stated, “I am convinced the US is the best country in the world. We are far advanced in our method of living both in sanitation and methods. The French and English are very interesting people, but they are not as energetic as Americans.”48 Private John N. Dickerson, a cigar maker from New Haven, felt France “was good, a study of classes, or of nations, which I consider very important to a man’s education.”49 New Haven native Sergeant Horton J. Dorkendorff of Company D, 102nd Machine Gun Battalion believed, “I am sure that my overseas service has helped me to be more self-reliant, broadened my knowledge of this world and made me more appreciative of my own country.”50

“I love my country better, I know what a good home we have,” wrote twenty year old African American Corporal Thomas M. Clary, 15th Company, 369th Regiment, a

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46 Frank E. Murphy, 11 April 1920, Box 11, CSL.
47 *Thomas G. Hardy, 5 April 1920, Box 9, LVA.
48 Albert M. Simons, 8 August 1919, Box 13, CSL.
49 *John N. Dickerson, 9 July 1919, Box 31, CSL.
50 Horton J. Dorkendorff, 4 September 1919, Box 31, CSL.
native of White Plains, Virginia.\textsuperscript{51} A teacher and salesman from Richmond, Captain Channing W. Daniel said his “vision was broadened by travel and experience...increase of human sympathy, and greater appreciation of home materially and of France ethnically.”\textsuperscript{52}

Hartford native, Private William G. B. Augermann, 104\textsuperscript{th} Ambulance Company, 26\textsuperscript{th} Division, stressed, “I despise from the bottom of my soul a system as was practiced in Germany, but when I volunteered in the USA I could hardly await the call that would summon me to the cause. The more I saw of England and France, the better I liked the US which is a fact of truth with every soldier I ever met and mentioned the subject to.”\textsuperscript{53} Private Lawrence W. Porter, Company C, 316\textsuperscript{th} Infantry, of New Haven, believed, “If there is an army better than ours I want to see it. It is better drilled and better kept than any I have seen...the army will make a man out of you. I think that it has almost made one out of me. France may be a nice country to visit but a place to live give me the USA.”\textsuperscript{54} Longing for home increased in proportion to the hardships the men endured.

First Lieutenant John R. Castleman, Army Air Service, a twenty-two year old from Roanoke, Virginia, enlisted on 14 May 1917 during his sophomore year in college. After attending Wilbur Wright Aviation School in Ohio, Castleman embarked for France on 2 November 1917. His words illustrate the mindset of the majority of AEF soldiers as they arrived in France or England: “I wanted to do the duty of a soldier, and naturally there were many things we did not like to do, and even grumbled among ourselves about some things, but the spirit was very good.” Writing about how being overseas affected

\textsuperscript{51} Thomas M. Clary, Box 2, LVA.
\textsuperscript{52} Channing W. Daniel, 10 March 1921, Box 16, LVA.
\textsuperscript{53} William G. B. Augermann, 29 August 1919, Box 5, CSL.
\textsuperscript{54} Lawrence W. Porter, 5 July 1919, Box 35, CSL.
him personally, Castleman said, “It left me in the most restless sort of condition, the excitement which had key me to a high pitch, when taken away I did not want to do anything but dream and wander over the country.”

A Richmond native, thirty year old First Lieutenant Robert C. Duval Jr., was a practicing attorney when he enlisted as a candidate for officer in the National Army on 14 May 1917, noted, “The spirit of the AEF was very fine, and there was an inspiration and an uplifting of ideals that the after-war period can hardly efface.” Private William J. B. Morris of Mappsville, Virginia said overseas experience “proved to me that I was a man physically and mentally as nothing but a man could withstand the hardships.”

Captain Anson T. McCook, of Hartford, described his camp in France as, “Not so good. Exposure and exhaustion were often extreme, although the outdoor life counter balanced many hardships.” McCook felt indebted to the civilians who supported the war effort, and especially the groups that aided and comforted the doughboys overseas. McCook wrote, “I wish to record my gratitude to the men and women who backed us at home and above all to the Welfare Organizations, particularly their women workers, who made our work more efficient and our life more endurable.”

Auxiliaries

Three organizations that accompanied the AEF overseas were the YMCA, the Red Cross and the Salvation Army; the group most highly praised by American veterans was the Salvation Army. During the war, unselfish individuals, mostly women,  

55 John R. Castleman, 15 May 1922, Box 19, LVA.  
56 Robert C. Duval Jr., 23 July 1920, Box 16, LVA.  
57 William J. B. Morris, 13 January 1923, Box 1, LVA.  
58 Anson T. McCook, 27 March 1920, Box 11, CSL.
journeyed with the Salvation Army to England, France, and after the Armistice to Germany to lend support and add a small touch of home to the AEF. One woman was Lieutenant Florence Turkington, from Manchester, Connecticut. On the Metz front, Florence and twenty other Salvation Army “lassies,” as the doughboys called them, served coffee, sandwiches and doughnuts to soldiers. She remembered, “At night, you could hear the shells whistling through the air in the darkness, you knew they could land close to you. You didn’t think of that though. You thought only of those poor doughboys in the trenches only a few miles away, and what they were enduring. You prayed for them.”

The dedication and concern by the members of the Salvation Army remained constant as they toiled for the benefit of the doughboys at the front and elsewhere throughout Europe. The lassies also helped the soldiers by visiting the hospitals and writing letters for the wounded – in retrospect, there always seemed to be coffee brewing at the Salvation Army hut and sandwiches for the hungry troops.

Doris Kellogg of Buffalo, New York volunteered as a canteen girl with the Red Cross. In a letter home to her mother on 8 June 1918, Kellogg expressed her joy at being able to assist at the Vanderbilt Hospital in Neuilly: “I shall never be able to thank my stars enough for having been able to get over here just when I did and for the way things have turned out. If you could half realize what it means to these Sammies to have American girls here to comfort and cheer them you would be building special ships to send more and more overseas. Being here is a privilege for which I shall never cease to be grateful.”

Corporal Fred W. Chitty, from New Haven, was eternally grateful: “I was taken a prisoner at Seicheprey. For four long month I was in a prisoner hospital in

60 Sweeney, History of Buffalo, 182.
Germany with just enough to eat to keep myself alive. In September 1918 my Red Cross food boxes reached me.”  

Even with aid from organizations such as the Salvation Army or the Red Cross, not every soldier was excited to be overseas. There were men who disliked being there and could not withstand the rigors of military life on the front. Private Samuel Dunn, a twenty-four year old Russian, worked at G. Fox and Company department store in downtown Hartford before he entered the service. Dunn believed his time in France was “very poor, officers poor, mistreatment, hunger, and hell in general.” At the age of twenty-nine, Private Charles R. Goddard, a lawyer from Hartford, was inducted into the National Army on 19 September 1917. Concerning his training in France, Goddard said the “drills and marches were very strenuous; I was near the point of exhaustion many times.”

If doughboys wanted to express their bitter feelings in letters home, they had to be careful what they wrote; men had to deal with censorship when writing letters and postcards to their families and friends back home. What the doughboy wrote might not necessarily have been what he was thinking at the time. The soldiers varied their remarks and what they said depended on who was to receive the message, but above all, the doughboys attempted to remain upbeat in their discussions of the war.

Private Carl C. Senkbeil wrote a postcard to John Knoll of Manchester, Connecticut in June 1918. His words mask what Senkbeil’s actual task was overseas; he seemed to be a tourist: “Just a few lines to let you know I am well and happy and enjoying life over here. The country here is a fine sight and I like the conditions here

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61 Fred W. Chitty, 3 July 1919, Box 30, CSL.
62 *Samuel Dunn, 31 July 1919, Box 7, CSL.
63 Charles R. Goddard, 28 August 1919, Box 8, CSL.
better than I thought I would. We are at work at present but not at our own trade but expect to get it in the near future. Our trip across was a very quiet one and we enjoyed it. I went to the city of Bordeaux on a sight seeing trip and found it to be a very noted place.”

When he wrote this postcard, Senkbeil had yet to experience the front, still feeling a sense of wanderlust. Second Lieutenant Julius I. Twiss, of Hartford, spoke against the censorship, “The next war it might be advisable to let the soldiers keep in touch with the folks at home and not have all their letters chopped into hash. Then the US wouldn’t have to put out so much propaganda.”

**Cold, Rain and Mud**

There were soldiers who kept journals or diaries of their day-to-day experiences. If they did not have a notebook, men would number various pieces of paper to organize them into a journal; others numbered their letters home so that their loved ones would read them in proper sequence. Since keeping a diary during wartime was strictly against army regulations, many men did not write one. If a diary was to fall into the wrong hands, the enemy could learn a great deal about troop formations, unit strength and attack plans. Nonetheless, some men such as Solomon Wollman kept a diary. He kept his diary from 15 September 1917 until 4 July 1918; it offers glimpses of a doughboy’s life overseas and is valuable due to the army’s censorship policies.

Wollman did not have the opportunity to complete his diary; a friend buried him with military honors after Wollman was killed in action on 20 July 1918 at the battle of Château-Thierry. The question of whether or not Wollman received the proper training

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64 Postcard from Carl C. Senkbeil to John Knoll, Box 132, Historical Data File, CSL.
65 Julius I. Twiss, 2 August 1919, Box 14, CSL.
for combat is difficult to answer, but Wollman’s mother reflected, “Had only been at the
Range for training a few times. Had not done much shooting on the Range, but was in
action just the same.”66 Like so many of his fellow doughboys, Wollman did not receive
the appropriate rifle training he required, especially being a Northerner. Southern men
had a higher probability of being accustomed to firearms due to their upbringing and
country lifestyle. As Tennessean Alvin C. York boasted, “In our shooting matches at
home we shot at a turkey’s head. We tied the turkey behind a log, and every time it
bobbed up its head we let fly with those old muzzle loaders of ours…This way we learn
to shoot from about sixty yards. Or we would tie the turkey out in the open at 150
yards…I think we had just about the best shots that ever squinted down a barrel. Daniel
Boone and Davy Crockett used to shoot at these matches long ago.”67 Wollman left the
United States on 15 September 1917 and fired his rifle for the first time on 22 December.

The following excerpts from Wollman’s diary illustrate the conditions at training
camps for the AEF in France.

October 9.
After breakfast went out and carried stones all day on our shoulders to help build
a walk. It is raining now and we are full of mud. Went to bed at 6 PM.

October 13.
It rained all day and most all of the boys are disgusted with so much mud around.

October 14.
We are all disgusted with the food; we get stew for dinner and stew for supper
with hard tack. An American officer gave us a lecture at the YMCA. He had
been in the trenches and he gave us a little information. Some of the things he
told us were very discouraging but the boys all took it with a smile.

October 26.
We worked on detail all day digging around our barracks so that the water would
run down in the stream nearby.

66 Solomon Wollman, 11 June 1920 (killed in action, MSR filled out by mother), Box 14, CSL.
67 Alvin C. York, March 1918, Alvin C. York Institute Homepage.
October 27.
One of our boys died of pneumonia, which he got from the mud around here. It rained all that day and night too.

Wollman and his fellow soldiers spent most days digging, carrying rocks, bringing wood into camp and occasionally going into the nearby village, which was three miles from the camp.

November 9.
Got up at six and had breakfast; went out to drill at 7 a.m. and we had some drill. It rained all the time while we were drilling. We were shown the French style of trench warfare. It made all of us tired. After a hard morning drill we had a very poor dinner which consisted of hard-tack and a piece of cheese. After dinner we hiked back to camp and they gave us our new trench hats which weigh about five pounds.

November 16.
We had a lecture from General Edwards on a subject about the trenches and army discipline. He told us that in the trenches the mud is waist deep, yet the soldiers just smile and don’t complain.

December 22.
We went through some bayonet and rifle practice for about two hours. I shot my rifle for the first time since I received it and didn’t make any hits out of five shots.

There were times during that winter when the men drilled in snow up to their waists. Measles, spinal meningitis, pneumonia and colds were maladies the soldiers became afflicted with while in camp due to the cold, wet surroundings; Wollman writes in his diary of men standing around the stove for more than an hour at a time to keep warm.

January 21
Went out to drill with our packs on and got a lecture from our new Colonel telling us that we would be in the trenches within ten days. All the boys sure did cheer.

January 26
I shot my Springfield and a rifle grenade and smoke bombs. In the afternoon I started out to the gas chamber and stood around until 2:45 without going in the chamber.
February 8
After breakfast got ready to move and at 7:30 started out to hike for Chatenois, which is about 8 miles. Arrived at 12:20 and it sure was some hike. Got on the train after dinner and pulled out at 2:30. Rode all day in box cars; we had 48 men in our care and we couldn’t sleep because it was too crowded to move. We got coffee at 11:20 p.m. and then 8 of us moved to another car.

February 9
Woke up at 5:20. It was raining but it stopped about 8:30 then we opened up the doors. When we stopped I went in the other car and got rations for us all. We got off at 10:20, stood around the depot until after dinner when we hiked to a village about five miles. We found the place all shot. Slept in barracks for tonight.

On 10 February, Wollman and his fellow soldiers reached their destination, a village a few miles from the front. As Wollman illustrated the AEF soldiers had to adjust to the French climate; the bitter cold accompanied by rain, snow and inability to stay warm dampened the spirits of many soldiers. Corporal Fred W. Chitty from New Haven said, “The training in France during the winter of 1918 made me fit to stand the cold and hardships of the trenches when we took them over in 1918.”

Machine Gun Corporal Louis J. Popolizio, 102nd Infantry, of New Haven, like Solomon Wollman and so many others, found the French winter uncompromising: “The first few months in France were hard ones; cold winter nights. We couldn’t keep warm. Cold feet, lots of hard training. On the go all the time. That’s where I learned to swear.”

After four months in camp in France, White Stone, Virginia native, twenty-four year old Marine Corps Captain Charles T. Lawson, reflected, “The months spent in the mud, water, cold and no rest probably aged me as many years.”

68 Solomon Wollman, 11 June 1920 (killed in action, MSR filled out by mother), Box 14, CSL.
69 Fred W. Chitty, 3 July 1919, Box 30, CSL.
70 Louis J. Popolizio, 9 May 1919, Box 35, CSL.
71 *Charles T. Lawson, 26 February 1920, Box 6, LVA.
weighing 158 pounds, four months later I weighed 119,” wrote Sergeant Clarence H. Brinkley, Company K, 317th Regiment, 80th Division.72

“Every thing Over-seas, was very bad in many ways, for Instance FOOD was very Short, Caused by Mr. Hoover’s, SAVE FOOD and WIN the WAR,” wrote Private First Class James F. Bonham, 108th Aero Squadron.73 It is interesting to note why Bonham blames Herbert Hoover for the food shortage on the front. Woodrow Wilson appointed Hoover as chief of the United States Food Administration after the country declared war, Hoover then enacted policies on the home front to save food for the doughboys, such as Meatless Mondays, Wheatless Wednesdays and for Americans to grow their own fruits and vegetables in War Gardens. Bonham’s entire questionnaire contains a strong degree of disillusionment: he detested the entire experience, perhaps because like countless other doughboys – he expected a great adventure, but received a brutal struggle.

First Lieutenant Wylie R. Cooke, twenty-seven years old, a graduate of the University of Virginia and a Norfolk native, professed that through his experience abroad he, “learned to cuss a little more fluently and came out with a poorer opinion of the Military Service as exemplified by the U.S. Army.”74 Medical Corps Captain Herman R. White did not receive any training in the United States, and spent only three weeks training with the Royal Army Medical Corps at Blackpool, England, White remarked, “Physically improved. Learned to carry on even when hungry, thirsty, cold, tired, sleepy and even somewhat frightened.”75 Lynnhaven, Virginia native and twenty-nine year old

72 Clarence H. Brinkley, Box 11, LVA.
73 James F. Bonham, 20 September 1920, Box 10, LVA.
74 Wylie R. Cooke, 21 August 1919, Box 13, LVA.
75 Herman R. White, 3 July 1919, Box 37, CSL.
high school principal, Private First Class Walter B. Haislip explained the effects of his training in Europe were “many and complex, but the strongest perhaps the ingraining of hatred of war.” 76 Men like Private First Class Max L. Cohen, born in Orange, Connecticut and assigned to the US Base Hospital No. 1, experienced a close comradeship with his fellow soldiers. He wrote, “We might forget the terrors of the war, we might forgive and forget our wrongs in the service, but never forget the new friends we made and the new visions of life.” 77

Once they were in France, the doughboys were anxious to have their opportunity to defeat the Central Powers. “I have just completed my course at the Clermont School. I have enjoyed myself while here and have been interested in my work. I figure that I am better qualified to meet the hun,” remarked farmer Harlin Blair, of St. George, Utah in a letter from 15 September 1918 to his parents. 78 Corporal Emory P. Barrow, Company D, 1st Army, Military Police, of Alberta, Virginia, was anxious to get into action during his training, he declared, “Didn’t mind it as long as the fight was on, but became very impatient waiting so long for the command: westward march.” 79 Like so many others, Barrow received his wish.

76 Walter B. Haislip, 31 August 1920, Box 9, LVA.
77 Max L. Cohen, 16 September 1919, Box 37, CSL.
78 Harlin Blair, 15 September 1918, Box 2, USA.
79 Emory P. Barrow, 11 November 1921, Box 2, LVA.
The American soldiers went off to the front with enthusiasm and ready to do battle, but combat coupled with the dire conditions of life in the trenches was not what the men had envisioned. French officers taught the doughboys how to dig trenches and operate new weapons; they were schooled in the use of gasmasks, and had survived days of rain and mud. Nevertheless, nothing could prepare them for the filthy living conditions, the lack of food, the rats and the stench of death coming from the corpses of their comrades. They had imagined war as a great adventure, but the reality of the front was an experience of another kind. Combat changed the men. As Frank P. Sibley witnessed firsthand, “They no longer howled with ignorant enthusiasm for the chance to go against anything that might turn up. Nevertheless, they had a quiet confidence in their ability to handle anything the Boche might offer. And they had the steady look in their eyes of men who have seen their comrades killed and have felt death brush by them.”

For the doughboys that survived combat, General William Tecumseh Sherman’s words became a maxim: “There is many a boy here today who looks on war as all glory, but, boys, it is all hell.” The AEF engaged in heavy combat for about six months on the

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1 Sibley, *With the Yankee Division*, 92.
Western Front: from the start of the German offensives on 21 March to the Armistice on 11 November, doughboys also saw action in the Russian (Siberian) campaigns from September 1918 until April 1920. During that time, 53,402 men were killed in action and another 204,002 men were wounded in action. These figures show the expense of AEF enthusiasm.

By the time the AEF arrived at the Western Front, German morale slowly began to wane. With the cessation of the German offensives in the spring and summer of 1918, and the fresh supply of Allied troops from the United States, Germany realized a victory on the Western Front was hopeless. Even then, American casualties were high – imagine if German morale had been what it was in 1914? Captain Clarence M. Thompson of Hartford remarked, “That it was mighty fortunate we entered the war after the enemy was weary. The dash of the American carried him thru but at terrible expense for what was accomplished. What would it have cost if our untrained men had met that enemy two years earlier?” With only two years of reflection, Thompson drew important additional conclusions. He was one of the rare doughboys who acknowledged the quality of the German Army shortly after the war, the majority of AEF veterans acknowledged the superiority of the Germans only after decades of reflection.

From the Connecticut Military Service Records, 56 percent of respondents had an unfavorable attitude towards combat. Thirty-four percent of the soldiers viewed their experiences in a favorable light while the remaining ten percent had neutral opinions. As

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3 Casualty figures include army, navy, marines and air service. If battle death figures are broken down between the Western Front and the Russian campaigns, then 53,265 men were killed in action on the Western Front and 137 men died in combat during the Russian expeditions. For figures for total AEF casualties see “Table 1. Principal Wars in Which the United States Participated: U.S. Military Personnel Serving and Casualties” in Hannah Fischer, Kim Klarrman and Mari-Jana Oborocanu, *American War and Military Operations Casualties: Lists and Statistics*, (CRS Report for Congress, 14 May 2008), 2.
4 *Clarence M. Thompson, 26 April 1921, Box 14, CSL.*
for Virginia veterans, 62 percent of respondents had an unfavorable attitude towards combat, while 30 percent enjoyed their combat experience and 8 percent had neutral opinions. The main areas in which Connecticut and Virginia doughboys saw combat were Aisne-Marne, Apremont, Argonne Forest, Belleau Wood, Château-Thierry, Chemin des Dames, Marne, Metz, Meuse-Argonne, St. Mihiel, Sedan, Seicheprey, Soissons, Toul and Verdun.5

The first AEF combat deaths occurred in the trenches located northwest of Toul, on 3 November 1917 at approximately 3 AM. Sergeant Edgar Halyburton, 16th Infantry, 1st Division, described the German assault on his men: “I saw a wall of fire rear itself in the fog and darkness. Extending to right and left a couple of hundred yards, it moved upon us with a roar, above which I could not hear my own voice. The earth shuddered…sections of the trench began to give way. Then the explosives were falling all around me. The air was filled with mud, water, pieces of duckboard and shell splinters.”6 Halyburton was knocked unconscious for a time and when he regained consciousness, German soldiers atop the parapet were holding him prisoner. By that time he realized, “my men were no longer offering any resistance. I concluded that they had all been wounded or killed. I could hear some of them screaming in agony.”7

Some soldiers had difficulty putting their experiences into words, while others used blunt terms to capture the effects of combat. Brigadier-General William “Billy” Mitchell, who was instrumental in advancing the concept of air power during the war, observed, “During a war of this kind, one’s nerves, passions and whole physical and

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5 Connecticut soldier data based on “Battles Connecticut Soldiers Participated In,” Box 128, Historical Data File, CSL. Virginia soldier data based on the MSRs, LVA.
6 Edgar Halyburton, Shoot and be Damned (New York: Covici, Friede, 1932), 33.
7 Halyburton, Shoot and be Damned, 35.
mental make-up are tremendously overwrought and one’s outlook is somewhat different than it would be ordinarily.”

Mitchell speaks for the majority of the American soldiers who discussed how combat had changed them, their views on life and war. The Civil War stories from their youth, Roosevelt’s charge up San Juan Hill, the articles from their local papers and the remarkable rotogravure photographs they had only seen months ago began to turn a different color. As Brigadier General Albertus W. Catlin stated, “From the newspapers we learn how the battle goes; it is only from the individual soldier that we can learn how the war appears to the man who is doing the fighting.”

Before they entered the service or even if they were career soldiers, the doughboys believed the war in Europe would be a glorious escapade: with the Germans as easy targets, they would save the world from autocracy. The men who experienced heavy combat and intense shelling learned otherwise, as mentioned above, soldiers reflected on their combat experience by quoting General Sherman. Machine Gun Sergeant Byron P. Graff of Hartford was one of many men who referred to the Civil War commander: “I had often heard what Sherman said and I found out he didn’t exaggerate one bit.”

Private Carl J. Schultze, Company F, 103rd Engineers of Hartford, said, “I took part in the fighting and was exposed to shell fire five months steady so I agree with Gen. Sherman that War is ‘H.’ but I’m thankful I came out alive.” Leonard R. Bennett of Hartford, a Private in Battery A, 12th Field Artillery agreed: “War is all that Sherman said it was – and then some.” Twenty-seven year old Corporal Emory P. Barrow, a student from Alberta, Virginia, also invoked the Civil War general: “Sherman only half

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10 Byron P. Graff, 22 November 1920, Box 8, CSL.
11 Carl J. Schultze, 2 September 1919, Box 13, CSL.
12 Leonard R. Bennett, 18 August 1919, Box 5, CSL.
said it when he said, ‘War is Hell.’ Stay out of it until there is no other recourse, as was the case in this great conflict.”

Participation in combat, “gave one a love for excitement. Death was not taken serious. Sherman was right,” said Infantry Sergeant Marcel W. Rice, of New Haven, adding that combat gave him “the desire to do unto Germany as she had done unto France.” Hartford native, Captain James B. Moody Jr., Company C, 301st Supply Train, stressed, “What I saw in the Advance Section was sufficient for decision that Sherman did not realize how terrible war might be fought in the twentieth century when he said: ‘War is h---!’” Thirty-year old Walter T. Spencer, a native of Fort Mitchell, Virginia, declared, “Hell could not be a worse place than this.”

New Haven resident Alexander J. Flynn, a clerk for the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad Company, enlisted in the National Guard on 22 June 1916, “as a duty to my country.” Flynn summed up his combat experiences in a brief phrase: “That Sherman was right.” “I felt as though I had experienced the whole alphabet, while Sherman had scarcely experienced the first letter,” said Private First Class Garnett D. Claman, a nineteen-year old farmer from Bristol, Virginia. Twenty-six year old First Lieutenant Miletus B. Jarman, entered combat on 25 July 1918 at the second battle of the Marne and remarked, “War in general is more or less Hell.” The doughboys knew about the violence of the Civil War, they knew about General Sherman, and they knew about his famous warning, yet, the hubris of young American men caused them to

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13 Emory P. Barrow, 11 November 1921, Box 2, LVA.
14 Marcel W. Rice, 21 July 1919, Box 35, CSL.
15 James B. Moody Jr., 1 May 1919, Box 11, CSL.
16 Walter T. Spencer, 1 December 1923, Box 7, LVA.
17 Alexander J. Flynn, 10 August 1919, Box 31, CSL.
18 Garnett D. Claman, 6 August 1921, Box 11, LVA.
19 Miletus B. Jarman, 7 January 1920, Box 9, LVA.
disregard Sherman’s counsel. Instead, they focused on warrior ideals such as the stories of heroism in the Civil War and the majestic statues of famous generals constructed on their hometown’s green. The MSRs illustrate the cultural glorification of warfare, especially that of the Civil War. As Michael J. Salevouris wrote, “Each generation, seemingly, falls prey to the fantasy that war is a glamorous, heroic adventure, only to be disillusioned by the brutal realities of the battlefield. We suffer a recurring collective amnesia with respect to war.”

Hardships in the Trenches

Men were wounded, gassed or died in battle, but it was not only the German troops that killed the American soldiers. Scarlet fever, trench cave-ins, pneumonia, premature explosion of grenades, shrapnel wounds or trench fever contracted from lice, also killed many men. Clean, dry uniforms and socks were rare, food was sometimes spoiled, sleeping conditions were poor, all these things contributed to the misery the AEF soldiers endured. The winter of 1917-1918 in Europe was cold and cruel, especially for the doughboys – short on supplies and forced to endure rain, mud, snow and freezing temperatures.

Captain James T. Duane remembered, that if the soldiers removed their shoes at night, “the shoes would freeze and on several mornings when they could not get them on they were compelled to put a piece of paper in the shoes and set it on fire to melt the ice.

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They could then pour out the water and put them on.”

The American shoes issued to the AEF were inadequate in the severe French winter. Billy Mitchell, regarding the shoes, said: “The men called them ‘hen’s skins’ and ‘tango shoes.’ Marching on the roads with full packs tore them to pieces in a day. I saw a division go by… with the men practically barefooted, many leaving blood marks in the snow.”

Private John J. Sullivan, 151st Depot Brigade, from Hartford said, “Experiences of the life of a tramp sleeping in dirty and filthy barns at times and other times in holes of water,” and summed up his impressions: “As Sherman said, War is Hell.”

For Corporal Joseph J. O’Connell, of Manchester, Connecticut, combat caused “a nervousness which increases as the time draws near for an engagement which soon wears away to an indifference to any danger, upon getting tired out and lack of food with nothing but mud to sleep in. I have often prayed to get wounded and so reach a hospital where I could get rest and a good meal.”

The dirt and vermin in the trenches combined to make conditions nearly unlivable for the doughboys. There was little the men could do against the ever-present mud and the rats who grew fatter from gnawing on corpses. Colonel Frederick M. Wise, 6th Marines, 2nd Division, vividly described the rodent problem: “I never saw such rats. Some of them were a foot long, not counting the tail. They were fat, arrogant and full of fight. One of my men was bitten through the lips by a rat that started to make a meal off his face as the man slept.”

Corporal Wilson H. Whitehouse of Wallingford, Connecticut, who was born in England in 1898, served with Company K, 102nd Infantry,

24 John J. Sullivan, Box 13, CSL.
25 Joseph J. O’Connell, 26 September 1919, Box 17, CSL.
26th Division, recalled General Sherman, as did so many other veterans when asked about their impressions regarding combat, “That Sherman was more than right, but then he didn’t have so much mud & such large rats to contend with.”

Reactions to Violence

The French and British soldiers had endured the trenches far longer than the Americans; however, it did not take long for the AEF to realize the reality of warfare. Soldiers were frustrated because the enemy remained unseen, hidden in their own trenches, and bombardment from an invisible enemy made life at the front even more disheartening. When AEF soldiers fought Germans in hand-to-hand combat, the doughboys felt they were making a greater difference and accomplishing their goal, while at the same time it was extremely difficult to take the life of another human being, even if the other human being was an enemy who would not hesitate to kill. The sight of wounded and dead Americans spurred many soldiers on. As Sergeant Samuel B. Yaffo of Hartford asserted, “At first I could not get angry enough at the Huns to want to kill them, after I saw my pals fall in agony from their shells, I did the rest.”

“The impressions on me while fighting where the young American men who lay dead in a pool of there own blood on the Battlefields and that they who are responsible, be hung,” said Corporal John A. Rosner, a Hartford resident. Infantry Private James O. McKarney, a twenty-four year old farmer from Washington County, Virginia, who entered action on 20 June 1918, declared, “I saw some pretty bad things happen overseas. When we were fighting and my comrade was killed by my side, I would get so mad I

27 Wilson H. Whitehouse, 7 June 1920, Box 38, CSL.
28 *Samuel B. Yaffo, 8 November 1919, Box 15, CSL.
29 John A. Rosner, 23 July 1919, Box 12, CSL.
could have killed every German there was in Europe.”

Hartford Private Edward F. Plumridge, 102nd Infantry, related: “I found that when a man gets excited in the heat of battle he has no thought of getting hurt himself, all he wants to do is kill.”

United States Marine Corps Brigadier General Albertus W. Catlin, who led the attack on Belleau Wood on 6 June 1918, reflected, “You may be a perfect gentleman by inheritance and training, but the sight of a dead comrade’s upturned face makes you want to kill.”

Artillery Bugler from New Haven, Leo J. Hill commented, “What impressed me was how quickly an ordinary being like myself could get over being afraid and become bloodthirsty after being shot at.”

Sergeant John J. Eckels from Hartford spoke about the transformation necessary to make him take a man’s life: “In order to arrive at the point where you can stick a bayonet in another you have to slough off all civilization has built up since the Stone Age.”

Samuel C. McDaniel, a twenty-year old welder from Blackstone, Virginia, who went into combat on 5 August 1918 at Vorges, said, “I learned that war over there was not what they put in the papers, that a man, after he smells powder or blood is not a civilized person, he is a beast.”

“The experiences were unlike anything I had known before, though I believe that part of the time due to the excitement it is very hard to say what one’s feelings were. One seemed to act much by instinct. But the whole thing, one idea dominating was, get your opponent before he had the chance to get you. Chivalry died fifty years ago, neither did I

30 James O. McKarney, Box 11, LVA.
31 Edward F. Plumridge, 28 June 1923, Box 12, CSL.
33 Leo J. Hill, 29 September 1919, Box 32, CSL.
34 John J. Eckels, 18 May 1925, Box 7, CSL.
35 Samuel C. McDaniel, 19 June 1920, Box 8, LVA.
see any displayed during the fighting,” concluded John R. Castleman of Berrysville, Virginia.  

First Lieutenant Albert M. Simons, first saw action at Chemin des Dames on 1 February 1918, and engaged in combat at Château-Thierry, where he was wounded in the left leg on 21 July 1918, and then in the right hip and ankle at St. Mihiel on 12 September 1918. After sustaining these wounds, Simons spent a month at Base Hospital 25 in Allerey, France; he reflected, “It is human to fight for what one believes is right. Fighting becomes part of a day’s work. The animal nature predominates. A man goes back to the days of the cave man. Civilization is nothing more than a polish, which loses its luster when exposed to the elements. It is a matter of environment. It is a question of kill or be killed, and you do not hesitate to kill.”

Sergeant Edward Wilson, from Manchester, Connecticut, when asked if he took part in the fighting, replied, “‘If I took part in fighting,’ where do you get that ‘if’ stuff? I did take part in some fighting and it scared the hell out of me.” Wilson added, “Well, I’ll tell you, I will go through it again tomorrow for the same purposes, the same ideals and the same flag.” Ordnance Sergeant John E. Howell of Alexandria, Virginia was a salesman with a college degree when he entered the service at the age of twenty-five. Howell saw action on at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre and received gas wounds, which severely injured his eyesight. He remarked, “Going into battle for the first time at night with everything dark and the noise of continual gun fire and being with a French outfit instead

36 John R. Castleman, 15 May 1927, Box 19, LVA.
37 Albert M. Simons, 8 August 1919, Box 13, CSL.
38 Edward Wilson, 29 July 1919, Box 19, CSL.
of American I was very frightened, but after the first few hours everything became a matter of course and all fear left me.”

At twenty-two years of age, Ernest C. Porter of Norfolk, Virginia, was a cadet at Virginia Military Institute when he enlisted on 14 May 1917. Porter saw action beginning on 6 February 1918 and participated in engagements at Toul in April and June of 1918 and at Château-Thierry from July to August 1918. Porter said combat experience “Gave me courage and made me about fearless…look upon death as nothing to be feared, the dead seem as any inanimate object & nothing of the superstition ideas of spirits hovering over the dead.” He was cited for bravery in action when “two gun crews were blown to pieces, several men wounded, the Captain and myself remained through it all, called back to fire barrage and walked over dead comrades.”

Figure 16: Photograph of Ernest C. Porter on horseback.

39 *John E. Howell, 30 August 1920, Box 12, LVA.
40 *Ernest C. Porter, 24 August 1919, Box 14, LVA.
Private First Class Henry A. Isleib remarked, “Fighting is a terrible thing and after you did it for a few days you got hardened to the most horrible sights. When I was discharged from the Army I felt ten years older in thoughts than I did before entering it.” Cited for Conspicuous Bravery at St. Juvin, France during October 1918 for “fearlessly exposing myself as a stretcher bearer to carry off wounded until I myself was wounded,” Isleib was also gassed in the Argonne Forest that same month. Corporal Mark N. Holmes, mused, “That if a fellow ever died and went to H--L he certainly would be use to it. It seems almost impossible to get out of it alive, and I wonder many times why I am not pushing up daisys in France now.” Captain Thomas B. McDermott of Hartford said he was “lucky” not to have suffered any injuries during combat, although he was “scared to death most of the time and wished I was in Honolulu. When it was over I wanted to be in again and when in again scared again. Left with a profound regard for the wonderful bravery of all the rest of the American soldiers. They have no equals.” McDermott added, “Have become blasé as regards life in general; there are no more thrills.”

The stress of combat, coupled with the strain of living under tense and morbid conditions, affected the AEF soldiers in different ways. While many seemed resigned to their surroundings, others spoke out with aggression and bitterness. Maurice B. Fischman, Company D, 102nd Infantry, 26th Division of New Haven belonged to the National Guard since 12 March 1914. It was on 2 February 1918 that Fischman first saw action in the trenches near Chemin des Dames; his experiences in combat prompted him to comment, “That a man when going ‘over the top’ is temporarily insane.”

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41 Henry A. Isleib, 27 September 1919, Box 19, CSL.
42 Mark N. Holmes, 22 July 1919, Box 16, CSL.
43 Thomas B. McDermott, 24 March 1920, Box 11, CSL.
44 Maurice B. Fischman, 6 October 1919, Box 31, CSL.
Germans took Fischman prisoner at Seicheprey on 20 April 1918 and did not release him until after the Armistice, on 24 November 1918.

Niels A. W. Johnson of Manchester, Connecticut, saw heavy action while fighting with the AEF in France. Johnson had volunteered on 27 March 1917 and served temporarily as a cook in the 1st Connecticut National Guard. Reflecting on his combat experiences, Johnson said, “It made me Bloodthirsty & I feared nobody, not even death. It teaches you to take no back talk from anyone. It has given me one big lesson – I shall wait to be drafted – (volunteer) never again.”

Virginius L. Bland, twenty-four, unmarried and a Virginia farmer, said the fighting “taught me that man was an animal, that he could ignore the laws of mankind.” Bland engaged the Germans at the Meuse-Argonne and sustained gas injuries. “I had a real desire for action, it brought out the real caliber of a man as nothing else will,” said Private First Class Frank E. Murphy, of Hartford. He added, “I was scared many times but tried not to show it. I had great contempt for a coward. As the war continued I was disgusted with the horror, waste, and foolishness of it all.”

Stephen J. Weston of Waterbury, Connecticut, was in the British Merchant Marine Service before he enlisted in the Army on 6 June 1917, at the age of seventeen, undoubtedly lying about his age. When he enlisted, Weston probably knew little about what lay ahead of him, and how he would distinguish himself on the field of battle. On 16 July 1918, Weston went into action at the Marne; he also participated in combat at Vesle, Toul, St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne. Weston was awarded the Croix de Guerre, 5 August 1918, at St. Thibaut for evacuating French wounded while under heavy fire; he

45 Niels A. W. Johnson, 15 August 1919, Box 16, CSL.
46 Virginius L. Bland, Box 6, LVA.
47 Frank E. Murphy, 11 April 1920, Box 11, CSL.
again received a citation for bravery by General Mark Hersey, Commander of the 4th Division, on 8 August 1918 at St. Thibaut, for “leading a platoon of men with coolness and good judgment against a strong German position on the Vesle. This act was accomplished under terrific German shell and machine gun fire.”

A second citation from the army was awarded to Weston “for personally reconnoitering the German lines on 9 August 1918, and obtaining valuable information for the American Forces, which no doubt saved the lives of many men.” Weston also received the Distinguished Service Cross, awarded by General Pershing, for charging and capturing a machine gun and killing the gunner at Bois-de-Brieulles, on 28 September 1918. Weston refused hospital treatment after receiving a dose of phosgene gas at Bois-de-Brieulles on 15 October 1918.

When asked about his experiences during combat, Sergeant Weston remarked his emotions were, “Perhaps the same as thousands of other young men, broken in health and spirit. Disgusted with the slaughter and shambles of the battlefields. Disgusted also with the filth and vermin that one was forced to live in.” Weston expressed his impressions of combat: “(First) The lack of proper facilities for caring of the wounded at the Front. (Second) The devastation of homes; the pitiable plight of the wounded, and the loathsome stench of decomposed bodies. (Third) The nerve-racking tension of living hour to hour with always the danger of becoming one of these decomposed bodies. (Fourth) The valor of the American troops.”

Channing W. Daniel stressed, “The magnitude of the effort, the somber glory of battle, the thrill of the fight, the utter disinterestedness of the participants, the instinct of

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48 Stephen J. Weston, 8 November 1933, Box 39, CSL.
49 Stephen J. Weston, 8 November 1933, Box 39, CSL.
self-preservation reduced from feeling to automatic action, the beauty of sacrifice, the crime of slaughter and destruction.”

Educated at the University of Virginia, Daniel was a teacher and salesman before serving in the army.

A Yale University student, twenty-three year old First Lieutenant Clarke O. Kimberly, 12th Field Artillery, from Elizabeth City, Virginia, entered combat at Verdun on 15 March 1918, and participated in offensives at Aisne-Marne, St. Mihiel, Champagne and the Meuse-Argonne, commented, “One never knows what superb qualities a man may have until the supreme test comes. American soldiers went into battle as if they were going on a lark, realizing the horror of it all but with the determination that carried all before them.”

Postal clerk Herbert D. May of Culpepper, Virginia signed with the National Guard on 22 September 1908, two weeks after his sixteenth birthday. When America declared war, he “took the additional oath for foreign service as soon as could be arranged by the federal government.” May had two main impressions of combat: “First – that the American soldier as a whole is more willing to make sacrifices than the average American citizen believes. Second – that to do battle in defense of one’s country is an honor of the highest, and the duty every man owes. Nevertheless war is horrible and indescribable.”

May entered action on 26 July 1918; he was at Argonne, wounded by shell splinters, and a motor accident crushed his legs in France on 4 April 1919.

Polish American Michael Fydenkeuez of Hartford was an electrician at the Hartford Rubber Works who enlisted in the army on 22 May 1917, at twenty-three years of age, and went into action five months later in Lorraine. For him “fighting is about the

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50 Channing W. Daniel, 10 March 1921, Box 16, LVA.
51 *Clarke O. Kimberly, 10 May 1920, Box 22, LVA.
52 *Herbert D. May, 26 September 1921, Box 3, LVA.
hardest kind of business.” He added, “My overseas experience in the war has injured my health and I rate about twenty-five percent disability.” 53 Morris Goldstein, from New Haven, “realized much more how dear life was. At times wondered why we should be killing fellow human beings.” 54 Goldstein seemed to be wondering why the European problems could not have been settled peacefully, and perhaps the United States should not have intervened.

Corporal Harry S. Campbell, born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, was not a citizen of the United States when World War I broke out. Campbell worked as a salesman in Latin America for Colt’s Firearms Manufacturing of Hartford and was thirty-three when he joined the 101st Machine Gun Battalion, National Guard on 22 August 1917 as a Private. Campbell viewed combat as “a necessary evil. That there was neither honour nor glory in butchering someone you didn’t know and couldn’t hate…It has given me a greater love for humanity and has even taught me to sympathize with my enemies. That might, without right, has neither honour, glory nor flag.” 55

Campbell was not the only doughboy to feel this way about his wartime experiences. The soldiers’ responses reveal a wide range of emotions. Combat caused numerous soldiers to take more pride in their country while it increased their dislike of war; there were men who believed that combat brought out a deep courage that they had not known they possessed. The war led many other men to feel more empathy towards their fellow men and to become more humane themselves.

Along with praise and respect for their fellow soldiers, homesickness was apparent in the words of the doughboys. Private First Class Millard C. Life, a twenty-

53 *Michael Fydenkeuze, 11 December 1920, Box 7, CSL.
54 Morris Goldstein, 1919, Box 32, CSL.
55 *Harry S. Campbell, 30 April 1919, Box 6, CSL.
seven year old college educated shipping clerk from McGaheysville, Virginia entered the service on 18 September 1917; he commented, “War is awful. It kept us constantly thinking of loved ones at home and friends. The bravery, courage and grit of all the boys was great.”\textsuperscript{56} Life entered action on 23 July 1918 near Albert in the Artois sector and participated in the St. Mihiel drive, later he received burns from mustard gas at Meuse-Argonne on 3 October 1918.

Private John P. Dwyer, Company G, 102\textsuperscript{nd} Regiment, 26\textsuperscript{th} Division, born in Waterbury, Connecticut in December 1893, arrived at the front on 4 February 1918, and immediately went into action at Chemin des Dames, and later at the Toul sector, Château-Thierry, St. Mihiel and the Argonne Forest. At Toul, Dwyer received a recommendation for the Distinguished Service Cross for acts of bravery. He recalled, “In reference to the time I was recommended for the DSC Sergeant Singer of Ansonia was very dangerously wounded, and it was essential that he be moved from the front line to Beaumont, where they would better be able to take care of him. Another man named Tournard and myself undertook to do the job, it was on the 21\textsuperscript{st} of April about 11 in the morning, a nice bright day, and we had to carry him about \( \frac{1}{2} \) mile in plain sight of the Germans. Lieutenant Thomson, of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Battalion Snipers recommended us for the Medal but he did not have any luck or rather we didn’t. Well, Ce La Guerre.”\textsuperscript{57}

Dwyer, wounded in his left hand at Château-Thierry on 21 July 1918, underwent three unsuccessful surgeries after the Armistice, which left him with a disabled hand. He had received two promotions during his tour of duty overseas and left the National Guard as a Sergeant. Dwyer expressed “hatred of war as now I consider it both silly and

\textsuperscript{56} Millard C. Life, 7 January 1920, Box 9, LVA.
\textsuperscript{57} John P. Dwyer, 19 December 1921, Box 39, CSL.
inhuman and not a civilized way of settling anything.” Dwyer learned, “What a rotten thing war is. The first time I began to say that was when I saw three comrades about 18 years old blown to bits with a HE shell. Then I began to wonder just what it was all about.”

Earle T. W. Gronk of Pembroke, Virginia, enlisted in the National Army at the age of twenty-one on 10 October 1917. Since he held a BS in Electronic Engineering, Gronk, along with three other Virginians, was assigned to the 21st Engineering with the First Army, and entered the lines in February 1918. Gronk participated in the fighting at the Toul sector and at Meuse-Argonne from 17 March to 11 November 1918. During his eight months at the front, Gronk was “impressed by the magnitude of the government’s operations, the necessity of organization and training, the spirit of his comrades in arms, the excellent morale of the American soldiers and their desire to come through but win first.” Gronk was wounded and shell-shocked during his time at the front.

Robert C. Duval Jr., a Virginia lawyer, observed, “The small value placed on human life. The reckless disregard on the part of the American soldiers for their safety. The great waste of material in the battlefield.” Connecticut native and Harvard student Philip W. Higgins, who went into action on 24 September 1918 at St. Jean and fought at the Moselle offensive, described the conflict as a “needless waste of human material.”

“I was impressed with the enormity of affairs and unfeeling waste of human life. The value of a single life was lost in the large purposes. The spectacular part of the war I

58 John P. Dwyer, 19 December 1921, Box 39, CSL.
59 *Earle T. W. Gronk, 9 December 1919, Box 5, LVA.
60 Robert C. Duval Jr., 23 July 1920, Box 16, LVA.
61 Philip W. Higgins, 30 August 1919, Box 60, CSL.
shall never forget,” said First Lieutenant Douglas C. France of Charlottesville, Virginia, a twenty-four year old lawyer and graduate of the University of Virginia.62

Private Joseph R. Schadel, Company D, 103rd Engineers, 28th Division, said, “Being in the engineers, my company was subjected to many trying and nerve-racking experiences. However, the greater the danger grew the calmer I became. After witnessing the horrible sights and scenes that I have in France, it seems to me that a world without war would be worth living in.” On the eve of the Armistice in Lamarche, France, Schadel wrote a poem entitled, “Made for America.”

Steady tread and glitt’ring eye,  
True model of determination,  
Helmet cocked, a rifle, too;  
His object is emancipation.

In the stillness of the night,  
A sculptor’s model, standing  
Unabashed by shrapnel’s hiss,  
America’s good name commanding.

Victory at last is won;  
His mighty task with care is ended;  
O’er the foamy waves to home,  
By all the big wide world befriended.63

Often more violent, many African American doughboys who engaged in combat reacted in a different way: they enjoyed the fighting, especially the killing. Private John S. Fields, a twenty-two year old African American with a grammar school education and employed as a teamster, from Church Roads, Virginia, received his induction notice on 29 October 1917. He went into action with the 369th Infantry on 17 April 1918 at the Champagne front where he was gassed while serving in the trenches. Fields spoke matter-of-factly about his experiences at the front: “We knew the Huns would cut our

62 Douglas C. France, 16 November 1920, Box 12, LVA.  
63 Joseph R. Schadel, 2 August 1919, Box 13, CSL.
ears off, etc., if they caught us and so we killed them whenever we could. We hardly felt like they were people but more like some wild animal and did not mind killing them.” Of the French, he added, “They are grand soldiers and I don’t believe they are afraid of anything. Sometimes they would tell us to capture the Huns instead of killing them but we always killed them.”

African American Louis Scowffield echoed fellow Virginian Private Fields in his opinion of the Germans: “I knew if I didn’t kill them they would kill me and from what I had seen with my own eyes, I figured they just had a killing coming to them. They were not human no how…I had Germans laid out just like cutting down cornstalks.”

Sergeant Harry E. Curry, an African American from Hampton Virginia, emphasized, “War like fighting is a matter of life and death. The enemy fights you to keep you from killing him and you fight him to keep him from killing you.” Curry summarized, “I learned that every man was for himself.” African American Private William P. Jones, a laborer of Berkley, Virginia, declared, “I took part in fighting; this was great. I can tell more and even do more, for after seeing so many killed I am now preaching the Gospel.” He added, “I have always been a Christian, but I am stronger.”

“While in battle I felt no fear; men were falling on both sides of me, and I felt like fighting, too,” remarked twenty-year-old Corporal Thomas M. Clary, an African American farmer and blacksmith from White Plains, Virginia. Clary entered action at Champagne and spent six months in the trenches in France. African American Private James P. Spencer, of Petersburg, Virginia, twenty-nine and a high school graduate

64 John S. Fields, 8 December 1919, Box 4, LVA.
65 Louis Scowffield, Box 4, LVA.
66 Harry E. Curry, Box 4, LVA.
67 William P. Jones, 6 May 1920, Box 8, LVA.
68 Thomas M. Clary, Box 2, LVA.
entered the infantry on 26 October 1917; Spencer’s unit “held the line at Argonne Forest twice” in July 1918 and saw action throughout that summer; Spencer suffered a machine gun wound to his hand during Château-Thierry on 18 September 1918. He reflected, “My experience at the front impressed me with the idea that blood seems to be the only atonement for man’s sin, the price of all true sacrifice.”

An African American farmer with a year and a half of college education, Private First Class Waverly L. Crawford of Dendron, Virginia, enlisted on 10 January 1917. Crawford served as a telephone and telegraph operator in the Argonne, and emphasized, “No civilian could realize a soldier’s position and state of mind on the front.”

Field Artillery Second Lieutenant, John M. Ross, an African American from New Haven reflected on the effects of combat: “A terrible horror of war, but realizing that it was simply scientific murder. That all men are of the same clay, whether black or white, and that under fire, all color, race and creed is forgotten. That fear for self can be forgotten when others are in danger.” The exposure to violence altered each man in a different way, depending on his background, every soldier either embraced or attempted to deflect the killing, violence however, especially frontline combat, always leaves its scar.

Shattered and Traumatized

Chemical warfare was one of the most damaging weapons of World War I, and many AEF soldiers suffered the effects of gas while on the front; the doughboys drilled in the use of gas masks and learned how to avoid injury from the enemy’s noxious

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69 James P. Spencer, 20 April 1921, Box 7, LVA.
70 Waverly L. Crawford, 25 November 1919, Box 11, LVA.
71 John M. Ross, 6 October 1919, Box 35, CSL.
chemicals. The Germans first used poison gas in January 1915 against the Russians; then in April 1915, German soldiers opened 6000 cylinders of chlorine gas along the Western Front. At first, the Allied forces had no defense against this deadly weapon, but soon they developed gas masks to protect the troops. Lieutenant Hervey Allen, 111\textsuperscript{th} Infantry, 28\textsuperscript{th} Division recounted his experiences with gas at the front:

> The men had been taught to put the gas mask on and to give the alarm at the slightest indication or sniff. This, of course, was nonsense, as around the front one came into contact with and breathed more or less gas of one kind or another half the time, especially in the woods. Given a condition such as existed, however, with the men trained to believe that a light sniff might mean death, with nerves highly strung by being shelled more or less for a month or so, and the presence of not a few who really had been gassed – it is no wonder that a gas alarm went beyond all bounds. It was remarked as a joke that when someone yelled, “Gas!” everybody in France put on the mask. At any rate, the alarm often spread for miles.\textsuperscript{72}

The French, British and Germans all used gas artillery shells as the war progressed. A more dangerous gas called phosgene took the place of chlorine, and then mustard gas was developed. Mustard gas, if breathed in, burned the lungs and caused large blisters that were extremely painful; blindness sometimes resulted from exposure to mustard gas as well. On 17 July 1917, at Ypres, the German army first used this type of gas whose chemical name was dichloroethyl-sulfide; the Germans called it “yellow cross” due to the emblem inscribed on the shells. The French called it Ypertie, after Ypres, the area of its first use, and the British termed it mustard gas because of its odor.

> Masks could protect a soldier’s lungs from the searing effects of the chemicals, but a gas attack could badly burn the skin, so the doughboys carried a bar of soap with them in order to wash the skin as soon as possible if they were gassed during an attack.

\textsuperscript{72} Hervey Allen, \textit{Toward the Flame} (Lincoln, NE: Bison Books, 2003), 91.
The first treatment administered in the field hospital to affected soldiers consisted of showering to remove traces of chemicals on the skin.

Nurses and civilian workers who worked in the hospitals near the front witnessed firsthand the horrors of combat. Mary Borden was a nurse with the French Army from 1914 to 1918 and her hospital unit was located in *La Zone Interdite*, which she described as “the strip of land immediately behind the zone of fire.”73 Borden describes the war as a “conspiracy,” in which a steady stream of men flow from the front to the hospital and back out to the lines again. She observed:

> It is all carefully arranged. It is arranged that men should be broken and that they should be mended. Just as you send your clothes to the laundry and mend them when they come back, so we send our men to the trenches and mend them when they come back again. You send your socks and your shirts again and again to the laundry, and you sew up the tears and clip the raveled edges again and again just as many times as they will stand it. And then you throw them away. And we send our men to the war again and again, just as long as they will stand it; just until they are dead, and then we throw them back into the ground.74

Twenty-four year old civilian Bland S. Hobson of Richmond, Virginia, worked as a stenographer at Base Hospital 45 in Toul, France for six months beginning on 7 September 1918. She observed, “As I was stationed in a hospital 8 miles back from the firing line, I saw only the result upon the wounded boys brought in for attention, and they were always cheerful and plucky except in cases of shell shock which were pitiful in the depressing effect upon the minds of the boys.”75

Twenty-nine year old Nurse Verna M. Smith from Clifton Forge, Virginia recalled, “There we were only three miles behind the rear trenches and very often could

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73 Mary Borden, *The Forbidden Zone* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1929), i. Although her book was not published until 1929, Borden wrote the sketches, as she called her impressions, during the four years she worked with the French hospital unit.

74 Borden, *Forbidden Zone*, 124.

75 Bland S. Hobson, 16 July 1920, LVA.
not sleep for the sound of the guns. I don’t think I ever worked as hard and carried as much responsibility at the same time in my life…in the two weeks that we were there we took in and cared for over 200 wounded patients. We worked from six A.M. until 11 and 12 P.M.”

Another field hospital nurse Ellen N. LaMotte, also worked with the French a few miles behind the lines in Belgium during 1915 and 1916. Similar to Borden, LaMotte described her experience: “The bad days are those when the endless roar of the guns makes the little wooden *baraques* rock and rattle and when endless processions of ambulances drive in and deliver broken, ruined men, and then drive off again, to return loaded with more wrecks. The beds in the *Salle d’Attente* where the ambulances unload, are filled with heaps under blankets. Coarse, hobnailed boots stick out from the blankets, and sometimes the heaps, which are men, moan or are silent.”

Twenty-one year old Corporal Wayne H. Castle of Salt Lake City, Utah, wrote home from a hospital in France shortly after the Armistice: “I have been having some busy times dodging bullets and I haven’t been entirely successful. I shall probably be in the hospital for a couple of months. My next move will be for home, and the orders sending me there will surely be music to my ears.” Before he wrote this, Castle left the hospital on 10 November 1918 after he recovered from previous injuries, and returned to the front. At 2:30 AM, the following day, a German machine gunner hit him with several bullets in his left knee joint, which resulted in the amputation of his leg.

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76 *Verna M. Smith, letter to Mrs. Farrar, 8 February 1920, Box 12, LVA.
77 Ellen N. LaMotte, *The Backwash of War* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1934), 89-90. LaMotte first published her book in the autumn 1916, but the book was banned in England and France because its images were “damaging to the morale” of the troops; the book was sold in the United States until America entered the war. LaMotte republished her work in 1934. LaMotte, *Backwash of War*, v.
78 *Wayne H. Castle, Box 2, USA.*

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Private David Reed, a fisherman from Chincoteague, Virginia had a short but descriptive opinion of the front: “Everything bad – waste – dirt – wickedness – bloodshed, all manner of evil.” Reed fought at Verdun and in the Argonne Forest where his “left hand was partly shot away,” and added it was “awful that every nation had forgotten God and resorted to the sword instead of returning to prayer.”

Twenty-six year old First Lieutenant John W. Covington, a Culpepper, Virginia native, was cited for bravery, after he became shell-shocked and deaf in his left ear because of his participation at the front. Covington saw “no reason why disputes of any magnitude cannot be settled in other ways than by the sword with all its ghastly horrors.”

Hospital workers, especially those near the front, saw the devastating results of combat every day. For doughboys on the frontlines, the reality of war was even closer. The relationship between soldier and combat differed, and depended on each man’s cultural, social and demographic background, regardless, however, combat altered their psyche. In most cases, it sobered the intoxicated, but with some men, it awoke a demon. The dark side of human nature surfaces from the subconscious when exposed to an environment of inescapable violence and death, in the Great War men discovered their dark side in the trenches. As Joanna Bourke writes, “These men surrender to irrational although sincere moral outrage, embrace the idea of agency, find relief in agonizing guilt, and attempt to negotiate pleasure within a landscape of extreme violence.”

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79 David Reed, Box 1, LVA.
80 John W. Covington, 14 September 1920, Box 20, LVA.
Those Enlightened

A number of soldiers attempted to make combat a positive experience by focusing on completion of their mission and dedication to their fellow doughboys. “From what I saw of the fighting proves to me that the yanks stick together through thick and thin and leave nothing that is started unfinished,” said Seward H. Strickland of Hartford. He continued, “These experiences are absolutely good. I have more initiative and self confidence and hope to become a better citizen.”

The soldiers, for the most part, were negative about their combat experiences, but positive about their comradeship, as expressed by Percy P. Markham of Hartford, a Private in the United States Marine Corps: “That it is a great sacrifice for humans to make. It made me look to myself and at the same time help my buddy. I think it has helped me in more ways than it has harmed me.” During combat, many soldiers developed close ties with the men they fought with side by side; they looked after one another.

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82 Seward H. Strickland, 5 September 1919, Box 13, CSL.
83 Percy P. Markham, 28 November 1919, Box 10, CSL.
Figure 17: Sergeant E. F. O’Leary and his artillerymen, 102nd Field Artillery, Battery A, 26th Division in Beaumont, France on 30 April 1918. Photograph Collection, Box 150, Historical Data File, CSL.

Norfolk, Virginia physician First Lieutenant Raleigh A. Bagley enlisted in the service on 6 June 1917 at the age of twenty-six, spent almost two months in the trenches beginning on 25 July 1918 at the Vosges sector and was relieved of duty two months later when he sustained a fracture of his left leg. Bagley’s experience in the fighting left him with strong impressions: “I learned that every man in my command was a better man than I thought he was; and a normal, healthy man can work himself into a state of
absolute savagery in case of emergency and come back from this condition apparently normal in every way.”

William E. Mills, a college student from Portsmouth, Virginia, although “never subjected to small arms fire” was impressed with the bravery of his fellow soldiers: “It was marvelous, how much the human body can stand. I have hauled an ambulance full of men shot out of semblance to human beings, and not a one whimpered.” Sergeant Emile P. Ragna, from Hartford, stated, “It is surprising what a human being can put up with when he is forced to.” Ragna continued, “The greatest comradeship is in battle. After I was wounded, two of my men carried me and my equipment two miles to a first aid station amid a barrage of shrapnel and gas shells.”

Enlisted men never wanted to let their friend down, the man who remained right beside them during combat, but for officers, their entire command concerned them. The responsibilities of leadership affected the combat experience of AEF officers in a different way than it did for the enlisted soldier. Thoughts regarding his own state of mind and the safety of the soldiers he was to command prompted twenty-two year old Second Lieutenant Elliott M. Braxton Jr., of Newport News, Virginia, to write to his Uncle Will expressing his concerns about leading his men in combat:

At some critical instant will I flinch or hesitate? It’s a horrible thought. I don’t think I fear death by sea or land, but I do fear at some point where seconds mean life or death to lose control of myself for a minute, to scream and turn, to slink in the bottom of a trench, to fail, to lack the nerve to lead my men over the parapet when the supreme need comes. These worry me more than any possible wound…it’s the impulse of the moment; the lack of control that scares me.

The notes on warfare say that a second lieutenant or any platoon commander has almost life and death power over about thirty men. I know they look to him for

84 Raleigh A. Bagley, 31 May 1919, Box 13, LVA.
85 William E. Mills, 28 December 1921, Box 15, LVA.
86 Emile P. Ragna, 31 May 1919, Box 12, CSL.
everything. But I can’t get the feel of it. Other men will do these things, but it is not personal to me. It is like being in a glass cage when it is raining. You know it is raining and wet, but you are dry, there is only a faint barrier between you and the water, yet the moisture doesn’t affect you. I can think of it, but I can’t feel it. The actual life doesn’t touch me. What will it feel like to send a man to his death? What will it be like to cause the death of several men? What will their mothers think? Will everybody point at me and say there’s a man who made John die? I can’t feel that such things are possible. It is not a question of just knowing. I have to have a physical sensation to understand and realize. The thing is too big for me.

This sounds wild and is poorly expressed, but it mirrors my ideas. All is hazy. My duties, responsibilities, problems and successes are dim, nebulous, intangible, misty. One thing alone is clear. I want to play the game to the end without flinching. My first duty is to help mold two hundred and some odd, many very odd, men into a team, not a machine, for a machine is driven, but a team will follow me wherever I lead with absolute confidence.  

Braxton was killed in action on 11 October 1918 near the Cunel front, then on 15 May 1919, “for meritorious services and extraordinary gallantry in action,” Brigadier-General Brett cited Braxton: “When the Company had been cut in two by having the artillery barrage pass thru, Lieut. Braxton collected the scattered units left and took up the attack. As he led his command over the crest of the hill which led down into Cunel, his command came under annihilating machine gun fire. While attempting to lead his men forward under this he fell, mortally wounded, dying almost instantly. Lieut. Braxton by his coolness and courage stopped his panic-stricken men, leading them forward in the advance, and filling in the gap in the attacking lines.”

Those Who Wanted to Forget

Other soldiers had few words to say, and attempted to erase their experiences in battle. Sergeant Ralph W. Lee, from Hartford said, “I do not care to speak of the fighting
in France as it is as a dream.” Private Hyman Lipshetz of New Haven remarked, “It was as a dream to me and I did not realize my surroundings.” A Private in the Engineers, Francis H. Bragan of Hartford, gave his impressions: “my first time at the front I did not feel any of that fear that you read about. But did not relize what I whent through till after I came back and was thinking it over.” Corporal Thomas E. Carey, of New Britain, Connecticut, explained, “When in a battle it was impressed on my mind that if you didn’t get the enemy he would get you. So I made it my business to always get him.” Carey added, “All the experiences I have been through doesn’t effect my mind at all. I just think of it as a dream, and forget all about it.” These soldiers tried to dismiss their combat experiences, relegating them to cloudy memories. For the doughboys, their time at the front became the defining moment of their lives, which made it impossible to repress.

**Those Who Experienced Pleasure**

In great contrast to the majority, a few of the doughboys relished their moments in combat. Machine Gun Company Sergeant James Lewis of Orange, Connecticut remarked, “I like army life in France. I love to hear those big shells burst. I thought nothing of it for I like to use the Hotchkiss machine gun and I could use one, too, at least those Germans thought so.” Lewis recalled “I were in battle 9 day at the Champagne front. 5 days and nights without closing my eyes. 9 day with out a swallow of water

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89 Ralph W. Lee, 9 September 1921, Box 33, CSL.
90 Hyman Lipshetz, 1 October 1919, Box 33, CSL.
91 Francis H. Bragan, 28 July 1919, Box 5, CSL.
92 Thomas E. Carey, 13 May 1919, Box 19, CSL.
eating off of the dead.” Lewis declared, “I allway said if I had a chance I would go to
war for I love to handle a gun and now I am satified. I had plenty of it over there.”

Sergeant Fairfield H. Hodges, Portsmouth, Virginia native, and just twenty years
old, went into action on 4 October 1918 east of Verdun, and explained: “When in the
lines I never felt stronger in my life. It didn’t seem to have any bad effects upon my
nerve, except one time, but after a shot of medicine from the doctor, I braced up and
never again felt nervous or afraid. I can’t explain the cause of the steadiness because I
was constantly handling or seeing handled the thousands of wounded that passed through
an advanced ambulance dressing station.”

Italian Corporal Louis J. Popolizio, 102nd Infantry, 26th Division, of New Haven,
said he “Enlisted with intention to fight…The little fighting that I experienced was
sufficient proof to let anybody know when I got home there would never be any Job too
big for me to tackle.” He recounted, “Our Company was in the front lines in that famous
battle of Seicheprey ‘Toul sector’ April 20th 1918 some of my guns was firing over the
left of the town during the conflict. Lots of the Germans were hanging on the barbed
wire in the morning.” It is difficult to comprehend a soldier’s love for killing other
men. The brutality of the front unleashed emotions that expressed soldiers’ indifference
in killing or witnessing death – combat became a sport to them in which they experienced
the ultimate thrill. A thrill augmented by the war literature the doughboys read in their
youth…fiction and reality intertwined.

93 James Lewis, 19 December 1919, Box 37, CSL.
94 Fairfield H. Hodges, 25 February 1920, Box 15, LVA.
95 Louis J. Popolizio, 9 May 1919, Box 35, CSL.
96 This would not be the first or the last time, war literature entranced young men – after the Great War,
film aggrandized the effect of the printed word in the decades to come. In Vietnam, a new generation
would enjoy combat, believing themselves to be John Wayne or another movie war hero. African
American Specialist Harold Bryant remembers one of his fellow soldiers who died from machine gun fire
Those Who Became Fatalistic

Leaving their destiny in the hands of fate, several soldiers expressed their views in philosophical terms. Corporal Theodore E. Whitney, of Hartford, commented, “In actions, my reactions and impressions were varied: Fear giving way to amazement that anyone could continue to live under such conditions. Sometimes a great rage. All reactions resolving themselves into one, usually – To reach the source of danger and eliminate it. Great Pity.” Whitney concluded, “That under no circumstances are we ‘Captains of our destiny.’ Our lives are mapped out for us. In my own case it has been proved that no human hand can take life unless it is so ‘written.’”

Wounded by a gunshot in his right leg on 4 October 1918 at the battle of Blanc Mont Ridge on the Champagne front, United States Marine Corps Private Ralph M. Angell of Richmond, Virginia, said, “I saw a considerable lot of fighting in the short while I was there and it impressed on my mind that you do not know when your time has come to pass away, it might be any minute.”

Ethelbert T. Smith of Hartford, who served in the United States Army Ambulance Service, remarked that he “very soon assumed a fatalistic attitude, and that ended all worry as to personal safety. Seemed to get hardened to human suffering. Could not help considering that after all, a human life was a very little thing.”

“To tell the truth about it Praying to forget about them, and regretting that I couldn’t get the next boat to the good old USA…When I was in the fighting, the impression it made upon me is you would be

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Tobey C. Herzog, *Vietnam War Stories: Innocence Lost* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 16-23 discusses the John Wayne Syndrome that developed within a generation of men who went to war with images of reliving the conquests of John Wayne or Audie Murphy.

97 Theodore E. Whitney, 16 February 1927, Box 14, CSL.
98 Ralph M. Angell, 14 March 1921, Box 16, LVA.
99 Ethelbert T. Smith, 8 November 1919, Box 13, CSL.
thinking in your mind about the kind of death you would get and above all you would be thinking of your dear ones at home,” remarked Private First Class James P. Sheehan, of Hartford.100 Private Robert W. Marchant, from Hartford believed in, “Hope, and kidding yourself that you would not get hit helped a lot. That man does not amount to much when a H.E. hits him.”101

No matter how much combat an individual soldier endured, each man came home changed by it. The triviality of human life was one theme many veterans pondered, while others addressed the power of violence in altering their subconscious. “I did not expect a picnic and it was what I looked for. The glory of war is all on canvas, but therefore do not jump to the conclusion that there are not worse evils which only war can overcome,” said Captain Clarence M. Thompson.102 His first experience in action occurred on 1 March 1918 at Chemin des Dames, in defensive fighting, followed by combat in the Toul Sector, Seicheprey, Aisne-Marne and St. Mihiel. On 21 April 1918, Thompson’s Division Commander awarded him the Croix de Guerre.

Soldiers, surprised at their own reactions, described different emotions under different conditions. Taking part in action during the war affected the doughboys in varying ways; regardless, violence left its mark. Sergeant Flynn summed up what the majority of the soldiers had learned: “That the United States is a pretty good country to live in and my desire for the romance and glory of war is at an end.”103 It is interesting to note how so many men knew Sherman’s words, yet failed to believe them prior to

100 James P. Sheehan, 2 November 1920, Box 13, CSL.
101 Robert W. Marchant, 17 October 1919, Box 10, CSL.
102 Clarence M. Thompson, 28 October 1919, Box 14, CSL.
103 Alexander J. Flynn, 10 August 1919, Box 31, CSL.
combat. As in any aspect of life, it is one thing to receive advice, but another thing to believe it; only hindsight shows the truth.
DAMNED DULL, DAMNED DIRTY AND DAMNED DANGEROUS

Carl von Clausewitz wrote, “Everything in war is very simple, but the simplest thing is difficult.”¹ In war what could be simpler than returning home, after a soldier has endured months of rigorous training and vicious combat? It sounded simple – go home and return to your previous life. The Great War, however, had lasting effects on the men who had fought to help achieve victory; the soldiers did not come home and simply take up their lives where they had left off. Most doughboys could not simply erase the experiences of war by a return to civilian life; the war changed the men who fought in it, altering their character and perception of the military, of combat, of Europe and of themselves. The majority of AEF soldiers considered their participation in the war to be an extraordinary journey, with the greater portion of diaries, journals and memoirs expressing enthusiastic and positive outlooks. From the 27,847 Military Service Records of Connecticut and Virginia, 74 percent of the doughboys gave a positive opinion of their war experience: they believed they emerged from the conflict as better human beings. Seventeen percent of returning soldiers pronounced war a hellish and damaging

experience, and the remaining nine percent fall into a category in between, either unaffected or neutral in their opinions.

The doughboys’ optimistic attitude prevailed over the ‘Sherman was right’ minority because the AEF was not involved in the war long enough to have their spirits drained by unending years of trench warfare. Out of 34,000 questionnaires from all four states, approximately 400 men invoked Sherman, but their voices became silenced by homecoming parades to celebrate a quick victory.

Figure 18: The 102nd Infantry march under the Civil War Memorial Arch with “Stubby” the 102nd Infantry’s mascot, during the Welcome Home Parade, Hartford, 1919. Photograph Collection, Box 150, Historical Data File, CSL.
When compared to the European powers, the cost of the war in terms of lives lost is small for the AEF, but when considering the short time span they engaged in combat, the cost was still dear: 116,516 dead.\textsuperscript{2} There were 5077 casualties for the four states with questionnaires examined in this study, which equals 4.3 percent of the total casualty figure – detailed in Figure 19 below.\textsuperscript{3}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Killed in Action</th>
<th>Died of Wounds</th>
<th>Died of Disease</th>
<th>Died from Accident</th>
<th>Total Deaths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>1103</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>885</td>
<td>379</td>
<td>744</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>2103</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>1572</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 19: Casualties for states with MSRs.

Statistics, however, cannot document psychological change. It was more subtle – a transformation expressed in their words and attitude, and although the doughboys did not spend as much time as their Allied counterparts at the front (AEF units experienced heavy combat for scarcely two hundred days), the men who did see action changed forever. Their encounters with the German Army shook them to the core.

“We shall never forget what we have seen and taken part in ‘over here’…one cannot grasp the idea of the power that is let loose ‘over here,’ except by really seeing. Sherman, I think, were he alive, would make an apology to hell,” explained Cyril B. Mosher in his last letter home on 16 June 1918, two days before he was killed in action at

\textsuperscript{2} Fischer, \textit{Military Operations Casualties}, 2. This figure includes all deaths: combat, dying from wounds, disease and accidents.

Belleau Wood. Six days earlier, in his previous letter to his family, Mosher emphasized, “And while papers can publish, and articles be written, it won’t be until her men come home that the U.S. will really know.”

Most men, whether they suffered from battlefield trauma or not, were thrilled to be home. Corporal Carl Noble, 60th Infantry, 5th Division, expressed his thoughts, “There were 9000 soldiers on our ship. We made the crossing in five and one-half days. It was raining when we landed, and everyone got wet; but we were very glad to reach home. I felt a thrill as my feet trod American soil. I stopped and picked up a handful of dirt. It had been trampled by millions of feet, but it was part of our country. Someone asked me what I was doing. I said I was just shaking hands with America. Several of the men reached down and felt of the ground.”

The veterans made gradual adjustments as the army discharged them. Some men did not return to their previous occupations due to the injuries they received in combat, or due to the stress they suffered from the effects of their experience in France. Others seemed to slip back into their old lives without mentioning any attitude differences created by the war. In November 1918, only 26,000 of the more than two million American soldiers in France went home. Within two months after the Armistice, the army discharged 818,532 soldiers and by the end of June 1919, the army relieved 2,700,000 AEF soldiers of their duty. When he left the army the doughboy took with him his discharge papers, his uniform, a pair of shoes, a coat, and a sixty-dollar bonus; the

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5 Carl Noble, *Jugheads behind the Lines* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Printers, 1938), 204.
army also allowed those who had served overseas to keep their helmet and gas mask.⁷ About 240,000 soldiers remained in Europe as part of the occupation force, which remained in the American sector located around Coblenz in western Germany.⁸ Not until 1923 did the last AEF troops finally return home. Some men stayed in Europe to travel a bit; these doughboys would not have an opportunity to tour Europe again and many took advantage of the situation. Others, however, did not want to leave their Bier und Fräuleins.⁹ As David M. Kennedy wrote, “They were, first of all, as much tourists as soldiers.”¹⁰

Participation in the war had provided many doughboys with a respite from their everyday lives and when they returned to their homes in the states, some men missed the war. Kennedy makes a comparison between the Old West and World War I. On the frontier, as in the war, there was danger, adventure and male comradeship, as well as an uncivilized atmosphere; some soldiers missed this feeling of peril and risk when they returned to their previous lives.¹¹

In spite of months of hardship and danger, when 11 November 1918 arrived, the soldiers of the AEF found it hard to believe the war was over. Private John L. Barkley, 4⁰ Infantry, 3⁰ Division described his reaction when the news came:

We were all fixed up, ready to load on the trucks. We were sure this time we were headed for Metz. But the final orders to move didn’t come through…Down the street came a soldier. He was telling everybody the armistice had been signed. I said, ‘What’s an armistice?’ It sounded like some kind of machine to me. The other boys around there didn’t know what it meant either. When the official word

⁷ Coffman, *War to End All Wars*, 357.
⁸ Meigs, *Optimism at Armageddon*, 69.
⁹ Erika Kuhlman explores the relationship between the AEF soldiers who remained in Germany until 1923 and German women in her article “American Doughboys and German Fräuleins: Sexuality, Patriarchy and Privilege in the American-Occupied Rhineland, 1918-23,” *The Journal of Military History* 71, no. 4 (October 2007): 1077-1106.
¹⁰ Kennedy, *Over Here*, 205.
¹¹ Kennedy, *Over Here*, 217.
came through that it meant peace, we couldn’t believe it. Finally Jesse said, ‘Well Kid, I guess it really does mean the war is over.’ I said, ‘I just can’t believe it’s true.’ But it was.12

The returning doughboys faced many challenges. There were social changes in place by the time the last of the AEF came back in 1923: the president who sent them to war was no longer in the White House; the United States had not become a member of the League of Nations as Wilson had envisioned; prohibition was in force; women could vote; and jobs were unavailable to many veterans. For disabled doughboys, life back home was even more complicated: without limbs, eyesight or hearing, their former skills were no longer usable and their uncertain future might be spent in veterans’ hospitals.

The majority of returning soldiers attempted to re-enter their previous lives. The war made them stronger, more determined and gave them a desire to build a better future; they became independent business owners, politicians and family men. The American Legion, established by veterans, sought to maintain the comradeship developed during combat as well as protect soldiers’ interests. On 16 September 1919, the American Legion received congressional approval, through the efforts of Theodore Roosevelt Jr., one of its chief supporters. Originally formed as an organization to include those who served in the military from 5 April 1917 to 11 November 1918, the Legion expanded to include veterans from other wars. The legion remains today as an advocate for veterans’ benefits and as an association in which former soldiers can continue comradeship.

Doughboys sought the company of their wartime friends, complaining that civilians did not understand what the war had been like for them. Lieutenant Louis F. Ranlett, 23rd Infantry, 2nd Division remarked about civilian attitudes: ‘The boys won’t talk about the war.’ That is not true. But it is true that the boys do not talk about the war.

The reason is not because the war is something not to be thought of. The boys would talk if the questioners would listen. But the questioners do not. They at once interrupt with ‘It’s all too dreadful,’ or ‘Doesn’t it seem like a terrible dream?’ or, ‘How can you think of it?’ or, ‘I can’t imagine such things.’ That is as bad as telling a humorist you’ve heard that one before. It shuts the boys up.”¹³ When they had a sympathetic ear, many doughboys had much to say regarding their wartime experiences.

Humbert F. Cofrancesco, inducted into the army on 3 October 1918 at the age of eighteen, reflected:

My idea, or state of mind, before the war – and I feel certain I am voicing the sentiments of others who have seen service elsewhere – was very dissimilar to my actual experience. I used to think that army life was very dull and monotonous; lacking that stimulative, creative force, which we call spirit. But I found the army to be as human as – if not more so than – any other organization, institution, or association of people. By its heterogeneous character, it lacked no worldly element. It contained every variety of people – from the point of view of race, nationality, religion, political views, domestic and financial conditions, manners, thoughts, ambitions. Its diversity made it an attraction – a loveableness in itself. Its morale was high; it was enthusiastic, looking forward to some great accomplishment. This is, indeed, an amazingly novel thing to one who had a rather radically different pre-war conception of military life and experience.¹⁴

Before his induction into the army, Cofrancesco was a Yale University student and member of the Student Army Training Corps in New Haven, Connecticut. This gave him a sense of pride in military service. He observed, “I am of the opinion that all former soldiers have more respect and admiration for the army and military training than ever; and if ever there was a time for introducing a light system of military training – e.g. the Swiss system – it will now meet with hearty approval on the part of a very large majority

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¹⁴ Humbert F. Cofrancesco, 23 July 1919, Box 30, CSL.
of the people; for now is the psychological moment."\textsuperscript{15} The army discharged Cofrancesco on 19 December 1918 and he returned to Yale.

Others were not so happy. “Before the war I was enthused with the great adventure of it, and the great desire to see American arms successful, to see the German autocracy humiliated in defeat; but I thought little of the grimness of the actual battle, the terrible destruction of property and desolation of modern battle, all of which I now know, and I am for the League of Nations, or any other honorable means of preventing war,” said First Lieutenant Herman R. Furr, Company A, 314\textsuperscript{th} Machine Gun Battalion, 80\textsuperscript{th} Division, a thirty-one year old real estate broker from Norfolk, Virginia.\textsuperscript{16}

Artillery Bugler Leo J. Hill, from East Haven, Connecticut, toured France after the Armistice with a troupe of entertainers organized by himself and a friend. Hill spoke about his state of mind both prior to and after the war, “Before the war I was satisfied with things in general. Now it seems that something is wrong and the old order of things does not fit.”\textsuperscript{17} Hill, among other returning soldiers, expressed difficulty readjusting to civilian life. The war affected many men in ways they were unable to express. It seemed as though they felt something was wrong or missing in their lives but they could not put those feelings into words; some men searched for their identity. Others, having just experienced the trauma of war, found civilian life rather insignificant.

Joseph Ryan, of Putnam, Connecticut, a student at the Philadelphia Textile School of the Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Art, was nineteen years old when he enlisted in the Marine Corps on 9 April 1917. Wounded by shrapnel during combat in

\textsuperscript{15} Humbert F. Cofrancesco, 23 July 1919, Box 30, CSL.
\textsuperscript{16} Herman R. Furr, 14 October 1919, Box 21, Series II, LVA.
\textsuperscript{17} Leo J. Hill, 29 September 1919, Box 32, CSL.
Belgium, Ryan, when asked to describe the effects his wartime experiences had on his state of mind, remarked he would “Need a psychologist to answer this.”

Raymond A. Preston of Danielson, Connecticut, educated at Brown and Harvard Universities, was a twenty-four year old teacher when he enlisted on 7 June 1917. A Private First Class in the Army Ambulance Service, Preston had definite opinions concerning the military, which he expressed upon his return to civilian life:

That military service in time of peace is anomalous; in time of war, an unmitigated evil, though perhaps a necessary duty. That murder is a crime and a cardinal sin, and that the commission of it wholesale is only an aggravation of the offense. Demoralization, degradation, hypocritical conformity to a system that I knew to be foolish and believed to be wrong, full realization that an army cannot be a wholesome or a democratic thing, that it is inherently aristocratic, a survival of one of the worst institutions of mediaevalism. Hopelessness of justice under the present courts martial; complete recognition of the riotous wastefulness of property and human life; not only in war, but in the whole damnable military system. Compulsory military training would force some of these effects on any intelligent young man. Conscription, whether for military training or service is an unwarrantable curtailment of the human rights to liberty, equality and the pursuit of happiness.

Private First Class Frank E. Murphy, Company C, 101st Machine Gun Battalion, a twenty-one year old of Hartford, felt a vague difference in himself after his service, “I believe I returned more ambitious, less petty and less selfish. However, I am more restless and dissatisfied than formerly.” Murphy added, “I do not believe in military training. It undoubtedly develops a man physically and broadens his mind – if it would end there, but it doesn’t.” Perhaps Murphy believed in preparedness, but wished he did not need to put his military training to use in a war. Leslie H. Patterson, a student at Davidson College, lived in Bedford, Virginia, when he entered the service at age twenty-two on 29 September 1917. Upon his discharge, Patterson, who served with the Tank

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18 Joseph Ryan, 30 November 1919, Box 58, CSL.
19 Raymond A. Preston, 1 September 1919, Box 58, CSL.
20 Frank E. Murphy, 11 April 1920, Box 11, CSL.

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Corps, 301st Battalion, found himself, “A little more restless and dissatisfied to live quietly and take things as I find them.”

William E. Steven of Hartford, a Private First Class in the Artillery, expressed mixed emotions after his wartime service, saying he had, “Increased self-confidence, and satisfaction of knowing that you were ‘over there’ during the time of hostilities.” He had, however, a “tendency to be restless even after six months of civilian life again.”

Private Herman A. Jacot, from New Haven, Connecticut, observed, “That the world is more dishonest and unscrupulous than I previously thot. Had difficulty in settling down and have not yet wholly succeeded.”

Sergeant Philip W. Higgins of Clinton, Connecticut, became a farmer after his discharge from the AEF on 31 May 1919, and in August described his state of mind as more uneasy, saying, “Am now less content to stay in one place and live an ordinary and uneventful life. Am eager to be on the go, to enjoy any kind of excitement, and to move rather than to stand still.”

Combat made some soldiers adrenaline addicts. For these men, military life and combat left them bitter, disillusioned and disconcerted – not fitting into a society that had moved on and left them marginalized.

Some men, however, grasped a new and better understanding of the nature of humankind, with its unending history for bloodshed. These men realized war was inevitable and that in the future, the United States needed either to remain an isolationist or join an organization that would negotiate peace instead of wage war. Manchester, Connecticut resident, Medical Corps Captain Edward B. Allen said, “The chief lesson I

21 Leslie H. Patterson, 23 September 1920, Box 2, LVA.
22 William E. Steven, 7 November 1919, Box 13, CSL.
23 Herman A. Jacot, 9 September 1919, Box 33, CSL.
24 Philip W. Higgins, 30 August 1919, Box 60, CSL.
have learned from the war is that no nation can exist by itself alone, but that its interests are dependent upon and determined by its relations with its neighbors.” Allen enlisted on 7 January 1918 at age twenty-eight; when he left the service he said, “I believe now that never will treaties or any league of nations ever prevent war, but that strife is bound to continue as long as human nature exists.”

Second Lieutenant Julius I. Twiss, a Hartford resident, described the war as, “a bunch of damned foolishness with lives lost so some big head could have what his pig head wanted.” Twiss added a warning to America, “That the European powers will fight as long as there is material to fight with and that the U.S. had better pull in her neck and keep out of family scraps.” Twiss represents those doughboys who implored the United States to return to isolationism.

“After the Armistice, with the loss of a definite purpose, it was much harder to maintain health, spirits and morale generally,” observed Captain Anson T. McCook, from Hartford. He did not see action and remarked, “I was never so fortunate.” Nevertheless, he had a great deal to say about his military service. McCook listed convictions that the war had strengthened in him:

(1) my aversion to war; (2) my indignation at the needless loss of time, money and life caused by the Administration’s refusal to prepare, after war had long become inevitable; (3) my conviction that we must guard against future war – first by an international tribunal with full power to enforce its decisions, secondly, by universal training which alone provides reasonable defense without the dangers of militarism; (4) my regret that the war’s lessons should so soon be forgotten and our Allies left to bear its burdens rather than the aggressors; (5) my faith in and admiration for the American soldier.

After his discharge from the infantry on 11 February 1919, First Lieutenant

25 Edward B. Allen, 11 August 1919, Box 15, CSL.
26 Julius I. Twiss, 2 August 1919, Box 14, CSL.
27 Anson T. McCook, 27 March 1920, Box 11, CSL.
Albert M. Simons remarked, “I am fully convinced that the millennium has not yet arrived. There will continue to be war just as long as human nature exists. Aside from the fact that it has given me an opportunity to study man under extraordinary conditions, I have learned that a man can do most anything if he makes up his mind to accomplish a certain purpose.”

Born in Dublin, Ireland, First Lieutenant Kieran J. Harford, 54th Coast Artillery Corps, of Stamford, Connecticut, was twenty-five years old when he enlisted in the National Guard on 14 April 1917; he served with the AEF from 18 August 1918 until his discharge on 30 October 1919. Harford said his experiences in the war, “convinced me that the savage instinct is still in evidence in the human race and that it will be a great many years before wars will be looked upon as unnecessary.” Another soldier who looked upon war as inevitable was twenty-three year old Newport, Virginia clerk Corporal Curry P. Hutchison, 317th Infantry, 80th Division. Following his discharge on 12 June 1919, Hutchison expressed, “I like so many others before the war thought that such a thing as war only belonged in history and would never be again. Now I realize that so long as nations are as suspicious of each other as our European sisters and will not keep faith with each other there will be wars regardless of any agreement recorded on any parchment or paper.” These prophetic statements proved correct. As the guns fell silent on 11 November 1918, dissonant voices already rumbled for revenge.

Farwell Knapp of Hartford, a Regimental Supply Sergeant in the 302nd Field Artillery was twenty-four years old when he was inducted into the army. He reported military service “made me more self-confident and independent, thereby maturing

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28 Albert M. Simons, 8 August 1919, Box 13, CSL.  
29 Kieran J. Harford, 5 February 1921, Box 32, CSL.  
30 Curry P. Hutchison, 15 December 1919, Box 5, LVA.
me…probably toughened me morally.” Yet, Knapp noted little effect on his state of mind, “with one exception, very little change. The exception is that I ceased to see War with any glamour, and saw it as a sordid, disgusting, but chiefly futile business.”

Private First Class Eugene M. Kelcy, Photographic Division, Signal Corps, of Hartford, was inducted into the army on 19 August 1917 at the age of twenty-five. Kelcy served overseas from September 1917 until June 1919 and said, “I often had in mind during the fighting that if our side was as well organized as the German, we would have needed only one man to four of the enemy.” Kelcy concluded, “My heart has been changed like the map of the world. I love my mother worlds more than before. I am not half as selfish, my uppishness of manner has entirely disappeared. I am more a Man.”

For some doughboys, the war was a long frightening ordeal. “The nurses asked me while I was laying in the hospital, ‘when was you scared most?’ I said, ‘All the time.’ And that’s the truth,” reflected Corporal Joseph Rendinell, 6th Marines, 2nd Division. A Second Lieutenant in Company E, 102nd Infantry, Seth A. Beeker of New Haven, Connecticut, enlisted in the National Guard on 24 June 1916, at age nineteen. Beeker served with the AEF from September 1917 to December 1918. His commanding officer cited him for heroism in action, and he was wounded twice, in March and again in September 1918. Perhaps because of his combat experiences, Beeker spoke with an insight that belied his young age. He returned from the war impressed by “the folly of life in general and the cheapness of things we value so highly here. Nothing but a good meal, and a place to lay one’s head matter.” Beeker added, “I think most of us that have

31 Farwell Knapp, 18 February 1922, Box 9, CSL.
32 Eugene M. Kelcy, 11 August 1919, Box 9, CSL.
seen hard, real service, have lost to a certain extent their sense of proportions; and one might say a certain amount of mental stability in comparison to before.”

Private First Class Dexter A. Cargill, Company D, 103rd Machine Gun Battalion from New Haven, Connecticut, served overseas from October 1917 until February 1919. Cargill said during the war he “changed from a boy to a man, tho only 22. I sometimes feel like thirty-five, I have seen and know so much of life (not in a drawing room) but in the army where things happened quick.” The army discharged Bristol, Virginia native Private First Class Garnett D. Claman on 15 April 1919, just four months after his twenty-first birthday. When Claman returned home, he stated, “Before the war I was an innocent, ignorant child, while now I feel that I could easily go insane by permitting my mind to recall and dwell upon the horrors of my experience.” Claman suffered a “loss of general health” and an almost complete loss of his eyesight due to gas and shrapnel wounds, nonetheless, he returned to his previous occupation as a farmer after the war.

A Sergeant in the Medical Corps, twenty-year old Edward S. Webster from Hartford enlisted in the army on 12 November 1917. He suffered ill effects from the war, saying: “I seem to be awfully depressed often and lonesome, the bottom seems to have dropped out of things sometimes, and life seems shorter somehow, I can’t explain it.” Artillery First Sergeant Stephen J. Weston of Waterbury, Connecticut, discussed the effect the war had upon him, “My state of mind before the war was serene. After the war one sort of lacks faith with the class of people that would, without compunction, raze a nation or nations in a ruthless warfare.” Before his discharge on 1 August 1919, Weston

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34 Seth A. Beeker, 1919, Box 29, CSL.
35 Dexter A. Cargill, 30 November 1920, Box 30, CSL.
36 Garnett D. Claman, 6 August 1921, LVA.
37 Edward S. Webster, Box 14, CSL.

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served with the Army of Occupation, and stated his opinion of the soldiers’ morale after the Armistice: “Much was done in Germany to infuse in the men the zeal that was theirs upon entering the service. Baseball, football, track, and etc. But the men seemed indifferent, and I believed then that the zest for such things was sapped out of them by the war.” Due to neurosis, Weston was unable to work and underwent treatment at the United States Veterans’ Hospital in Newington, Connecticut. He reported he was readjusting to civilian life by “reading the classics,” painting, and doing “pen and ink drawings.”

Ratcliffe M. Hills, of Hartford, was a Private in the Machine Gun Company, 102nd Infantry. Hills said he “was opposed to the declaration of war against Germany, but volunteered to help end the war.” Upon his discharge from military service on 10 June 1919, Hills was “impressed with the utter needlessness, futility and unthinkable horror of modern warfare,” and was “more against war than before the War.” In spite of his strong feelings against warfare, Hills stated he “still believes in military preparedness for defense.” Hospitalized after Château-Thierry and again after Meuse-Argonne for neurasthenia, Hills suffered from anxiety, fatigue and weakness due to his seven months of duty at the front. Neurasthenia, a form of neurosis or psychoneurosis, is a result of emotional trauma and reaction to combat. Termed shell shock during the war and characterized by fatigue and depression, the belligerents defined shell shock as a psychological reaction to a soldier’s combat experience. Hills was one of many soldiers who suffered emotional problems associated with their service in the war. Upon their arrival back home, these men often found it difficult to express their feelings.

38 Stephen J. Weston, 8 November 1933, Box 39, CSL.
39 Ratcliffe M. Hills, 1 October 1935, Box 8, CSL.
After surviving combat many soldiers expressed a desire to end wars and work for peace. Edwin R. Carter, a Sergeant in the Medical Corps said, “I felt that war was absolutely the last thing to be used in bringing righteousness on earth. President Wilson to my mind had done his best to keep us out of it and it was only when no other course was open to us, that we entered. Therefore, I enlisted with the one ideal in mind of fighting for a righteous and everlasting peace for the world.” He observed that the war changed him: “They have made me hate war more than ever. I am entirely out of sympathy with the present method of conducting our army. I agree with the Washington official who declared it was a relic of ancient Feudalism of Lord and peasant. I believe the military system breaks more men than it makes. War should be used only when all else has failed.”

First Lieutenant Arthur A. Grove, thirty-four, a graduate of Roanoke College remarked, “I went into the war from a sense of duty. It seemed that the war had to come and I wanted to do my duty. Did not look forward to any ‘fun’ and I was not disappointed. War is even worse that I had ever imagined. I believe in keeping out of war as long as we can do so honorably but I am not a peace at any price man. I believe, infact I know, that I have been greatly benefited in every way. I could do it again if necessary but hope it will not be necessary.” Subsequent to his discharge on 29 May 1919, Grove returned to his home in Luray and to his occupation as a merchant.

Czechoslovakian Edward G. Pobuda, of South Willington, Connecticut participated in combat for three months, commented, “The war has taught me a great lesson, morally, socially, physically, mentally, politically, and otherwise. It has been a

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40 Edwin R. Carter, 29 July 1919, Box 6, CSL.
41 Arthur A. Grove, 18 November 1920, Box 9, LVA.
great experience. I never realized the deep seriousness of war until I got into the fray and now I pledge myself to fight again, but in a fight for a lasting World Peace."42

Despite the negative feelings of some of their fellow doughboys, the majority of soldiers reported positive opinions after the war. New Haven, Connecticut resident, Private Edwin B. J. Priest, Company E, 102nd Infantry, was one such soldier. “At first I was sorry that I had ever joined the Army, but after being through what I have gone through, and seeing what I did I am very glad that I got the chance that quite a number did not get,” remarked Priest.43 Even though Priest sustained severe wounds two days before the Armistice, he still would not have missed the opportunity to serve in the AEF. Many soldiers shared Priest’s opinion, which was bittersweet: war was horrible, but they would not have missed it for all the money in the world. “I wouldn’t have missed it for a million and I wouldn’t want to go through it again for two million,” said New Haven, Connecticut native Corporal Wilber S. Jewell. He reported, “I served in the intelligence section as a scout, sniper, and observer and believe it was one of the most interesting branches of the service, at times it was very interesting. I believe now as I did before the war a big army and a big navy will make other countries leave us in peace.”44 Private Leonard R. Bennett, Battalion A, 12th Field Artillery, of Hartford, remarked, “It has made me a better man in many ways. I consider my experiences more valuable than gold.”45

Second Lieutenant Paul M. Atkins, from New Haven, Connecticut, spoke in positive terms: “It has all helped to broaden my point of view to a remarkable extent, and has given me an appreciation of the complexity of international problems that I have

42 Edward G. Pobuda, 22 May 1919, Box 64, CSL.
43 Edwin B. J. Priest, Box 35, CSL.
44 Wilber S. Jewell, 16 September 1919, Box 33, CSL.
45 Leonard R. Bennett, 18 August 1919, Box 5, CSL.
never had before. It has added to the number of my friends among people with whom I could never have come in contact in any other way.” Moore of Hartford stressed, “The smallness and narrowness of our ordinary daily life was impressed on my mind by the bigger things that happened everyday.” Moore stated upon his return to Connecticut, “Life looks better and happier than it did before the war.”

Harold J. Dougan, of Manchester, Connecticut stated, “I feel that I have at least done a small part of what is expected of one during his life.” A Sergeant in the Infantry, Dougan stated he “received a higher education than one could get in another way” by serving his country during the war.

Other doughboys expressed memories of friendships they made during grueling hours, days and weeks spent in cold, muddy trenches. With their lives being uncertain, the soldiers depended on each other for support. Lieutenant Colonel Charles W. Whittlesey, 308th Infantry, 77th Division spoke with emotion of his comrades in battle: “We remember them as friends…such men are richer to have known.” Perhaps Whittlesey felt that he let too many of these friends down (especially during those horrid five days in October 1918 when he commanded the Lost Battalion), because he threw himself overboard during a trip to Cuba sometime on 27 November 1921.

Sergeant Alvin C. York, Company G, 328th Infantry, 82nd Division, a farmer from the mountains of Tennessee, remembered the friends he made:

The war brings out the worst in you. It turns you into a mad fightin’ animal, but it also brings out something else, something I jes don’t know how to describe, a sort of tenderness and love for the fellows fightin’ with you. I had kinder got to know

46 Paul M. Atkins, 20 October 1919, Box 29, CSL.
47 Russell Y. Moore, 9 May 1919, Box 11, CSL.
48 Harold J. Dougan, 9 August 1919, Box 15, CSL.
and sorter understand the boys around me. I knowed their weakness as well as their strength. I guess they knowed mine. If you live together for several months sharing and sharing alike, you learn a heap about each other. It was as though we could look right through each other and knowed everything without anything being hid. I’m a telling you I loved them-there boys in my squad. They were my buddies.  

A Captain in the Field Artillery upon his discharge on 7 February 1919, Edgar C. Outten of Hampton, Virginia, described the changes in his state of mind following his war experiences: “One is not easily worried or irritated over trivial things any longer. Our country has duties to perform and obligations to fulfil beyond her own borders and shores just as surely as we have obligations to fulfil toward our fellow-man beyond the limits of our own self interests. I shall help her willing when needed.” Outten was twenty-six years old with a BS in Electrical Engineering and employed as a clerk and private secretary when he entered the service; after the war he became an assistant manager at an oyster packing plant in Hampton.

“The effect does not seem to be permanent, and it seems hard to realize that I really went over-seas and lived under the conditions I did,” said Hartford resident Sergeant Sydney D. Pinney, Company B, 101st Machine Gun Battalion. He went on, “However, I think that most of us returned with a more serious idea of life in our minds than we had previous to serving over-seas.” Twenty-one year old Pinney, wounded in action on 23 October 1918, unlike some more troubled AEF soldiers, handled his readjustment to civilian life with greater ease; each soldier who saw combat dealt with the experience in his own way.

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50 York, Sergeant York, 212-213. York was a devout Christian who almost refused to serve because he believed murder a sin.
51 Edgar C. Outten, 8 November 1919, Box 4, LVA.
52 Sydney D. Pinney, 21 August 1920, Box 12, CSL.
Sergeant William W. Parker, from Norfolk, Virginia, noted the change in his attitude after serving with the AEF: “Before the war I was all for myself and the devil take the other fellow. I lived in today, let tomorrow take care of its self, these things are changed, we must work together for we need each other in this life. Our trust should be in God, so we should live as such.”53 While leading his platoon at Vesle River on 9 August 1918, a high explosive shell buried Parker and caused a fracture of a vertebra; he spent the next eight months at base hospitals. Parker, discharged on 17 April 1919, was unable to find employment upon his return to Norfolk but by August of that year enrolled in Bowman Technical School in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

First Lieutenant Douglas C. France of Charlottesville, Virginia, served with the Army Ambulance Service, and remarked upon his return, “I believe I see life from a different position, viewing its seriousness both as to myself and as to those who are to come. There appears now a duty owing by us living to those yet unborn.”54 France received his discharge papers on 6 June 1918 and found employment as a lawyer with the United States Department of Justice after his service.

Carroll B. Case, a twenty-one year old Trinity College student from Hartford, joined the National Guard on 15 July 1917. Case stated, “I enlisted voluntarily, considering it my duty as an American citizen.” Case appreciated his time spent at the front and acknowledged, “It was an experience never to go thru again, but which I would not have missed for anything. It made me like home better. Experience has broadened my views in general.”55

53 William W. Parker, 22 August 1919, Box 22, LVA.
54 Douglas C. France, 16 November 1920, Box 12, LVA.
55 *Carroll B. Case, 6 September 1919, Box 6, CSL.
“I always did believe that the Germans aimed to whip the world, and I believe we
done the right thing before and after the war, since I seen so many of our boys killed,”
observed Infantry Private James O. McKarney, who received his discharge on 11 April
1919 and returned to farming in Washington County, Virginia.56 “Consider myself
fortunate to be among those to see, and, witness the great struggle. And to see the heads
of the allied gov’ts in Paris on May 30, 1919,” reflected Private Henry P. Lynch, a
resident of New Haven, Connecticut. He added that his involvement in the war supplied
him with “a world of experience, which has given me a better outlook on life.”57

“I’m glad I was in, enjoyed the experience and feel quite fortunate that I was not
even scratched. That I am able to earn a living today, and am happy. In an emergency,
you’ll find me present again,” emphasized New Haven resident, Captain Isadore M.
Levine, 122nd Cavalry, Connecticut National Guard.58 Thirty-four year old First
Lieutenant William P. Nye, Company M, 116th Regiment, 29th Division, from Radford,
Virginia was a building contractor with a high school education when he entered the
AEF. After his discharge on 28 May 1919, Nye returned to his previous occupation with
a new outlook on humanity: “There is lots of good in the worst of us. Lots of bad in the
best of us. The German people are not all bad. Nor the allies all good. Room for
improvement in any country, including the U.S.A.”59

Corporal Mark N. Holmes, from Manchester, Connecticut, said, “I will hereby
observe Nov. 11 1918, and July 16 1919 as holidays. Nov. 11 should be observed as a
holiday by all People, and as for July 16, I will observe it with a sense of FREEDOM, it

56 James O. McCarney, Box 11, LVA.
57 Henry P. Lynch, 5 September 1919, Box 33, CSL.
58 Isadore M. Levine, 7 December 1919, Box 33, CSL.
59 William P. Nye, 14 February 1921, Box 22, LVA.
being the day of my discharge. What could be sweeter?” Holmes continued, “I will say that I am not sorry for my experience. So heres thanking Uncle Sammy and the State of Conn. for all they have done for me. Amen.” In spite of what they endured firsthand during the war, the doughboys extracted some form of benefit from their experience, returning with conviction to continue their lives.

The war experience of African American soldiers differed from that of whites: the African Americans fought not only for the United States, but also for racial equality. This desire for equality is a distinctive common denominator found in the African American questionnaires, at the very least, these men wanted to draw attention to the prejudices embedded in American culture. They expressed hope that attitudes in the United States would change.

Grammar school educated African American Private Charles L. Hogue, 511th Engineers Corps, 80th Division returned to his home in Norfolk, Virginia and his occupation as a freight handler with the Southern Railway after his discharge on 18 June 1919. Reflecting on his service with the AEF, Hogue commented, “If it could have been possible for me to have seen some of the consequences before I entered the army, I would swear it is impossible to endure these ordeals.” He added, “If this record will be of any service to the War History Commission by me filling it out, please use it the best of our advantage. The colored boys of our beloved State of Virginia.”

Hogue, who resided in East Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania after his discharge, wrote a separate letter to the Virginia War History Commission in which he observed:

I am delighted to fill out this War History blank. I know it is for the purpose of perpetuating the memory of Virginia’s part in the World War. I am glad to state

60 Mark N. Holmes, 22 July 1919, Box 16, CSL.
61 Charles L. Hogue, 1 August 1919, Box 15, LVA.
the fact, that Virginia sent me into the service, and I did everything in my power to gain honor for myself and the beloved state whom I represented in the greatest and most terrific conflict that ever defaced humanity. I am not saying it because I went into the service from Virginia, but I want you to know that the Black boys from Virginia was second to none. We respected the government regardless of past circumstances.\textsuperscript{62}

As Hogue’s remarks indicated, African American doughboys felt the sting of racial prejudice as they served their country. Thirty-year old Private James P. Spencer, an African American student attending Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute, had much to say regarding discrimination during and after the war. Spencer, from Petersburg, Virginia, stated he was “cheated out of disability claims by prejudice on part of medical officers after discharge. Was not helped by anyone to re-enter new line of work. Change of occupation was due to injury.”\textsuperscript{63} Spencer also cited racism on the Western Front when he recounted how the army replaced his African American commanding officer, Colonel Franklin A. Dennison, “an officer of rare intelligence and ability” with “a white colonel simply on prejudicial grounds.” His former officer led his men with distinction and Spencer hoped “such information will aid in printing or recording the deeds of the Negro soldiers in the Great War for democracy.”

Discharged on 22 April 1919 and employed as a book agent, Spencer also voiced his opinion concerning war: “That most wars are fought from a selfish viewpoint, fought from an economic viewpoint; that the Great War was fought over the German’s desire to exploit Ethiopia and her rich resources instead of England and other countries.” He added, “Am now about to post-graduate from Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute to serve my race in my humble capacity, and to help the Old Dominion to still be great

\textsuperscript{62} Charles L. Hogue, 1 August 1919, Box 15, LVA.
\textsuperscript{63} James P. Spencer, 26 April 1921, Box 3, LVA.
among the many states.”\textsuperscript{64} African American Second Lieutenant John M. Ross of New Haven concluded the war gave him “A greater feeling of pride in the achievements of my race, and a hope that this great country of ours will give every man in it a square deal, no matter what his race or color may be.”\textsuperscript{65}

Another factor shared by African American soldiers was the pride they felt in contributing to the Allied effort. Upon their return, like their counterparts in the AEF, these men expressed varying emotions regarding their wartime experiences. Sergeant Harry E. Curry, an African American student from Hampton, Virginia, was not quite sixteen years old when he joined the National Guard on 23 May 1915; he was stationed at Potomac Park, Washington, DC until 24 December 1917 when he was called into duty with the AEF. Returning home after his discharge on 1 March 1919, Curry found employment as a laborer, and reflected on his views: “Before the war it all seemed foolish to me, but as I received training I learned each country must be protected and I was ready to go at any time. Any man living in a country under its Flag and is not willing to go to protect his Flag which he is living under I say should be killed.”\textsuperscript{66} Private John S. Fields, 369\textsuperscript{th} Infantry, an African American from Church Roads, Virginia, said, “I do not think about it if I can help it, and whenever it does come in my mind it seems like a dream and I wonder if it all really did happen. About most things in life I think just as I did before.”\textsuperscript{67} Fields, discharged on 28 February 1919, went back to his former occupation as a teamster after the war.

\textsuperscript{64} James P. Spencer, 26 April 1921, Box 3, LVA.
\textsuperscript{65} John M. Ross, 6 October 1919, Box 35, CSL.
\textsuperscript{66} Harry E. Curry, Box 4, LVA.
\textsuperscript{67} John S. Fields, 8 December 1919, Box 4, LVA.
African American Corporal Thomas M. Clary of White Plains, Virginia, stated, “Before the war, I thought it was awful, now I feel it was just the thing to do, fight for right and liberty.” Clary returned to his pre-war occupation, blacksmith and farmer, after his discharge from the army on 28 February 1919.\(^{68}\)

“I am more interested in what is going on in the world than before,” said Private Moses Randolph, Company C, 369\(^{th}\) Infantry, of Farmville, Virginia, an African American section hand for the Norfolk Western Railroad with an eighth grade education.\(^{69}\)

Soldiers discovered that their expectations of what war would be like or what they would gain from it were shattered, and that they themselves had been altered in ways they could not have predicted. As Eric J. Leed argued in *No Man’s Land*, combat changed “the status, self-conceptions, attitudes and fantasy lives of participants.”\(^ {70}\)

Having undergone life and death situations and having witnessed suffering and destruction made the soldiers different men. There was a change in the way in which they viewed themselves, and the way in which they viewed the world and their own role in humanity. Returning to their former place in society was not as easy a task as they might have believed before their involvement in the War. Still, in spite of problems of readjustment, the veteran overwhelmingly expressed his patriotism. “I am more contented to be in the United States after seeing foreign countries and foreigners. The world seems smaller and I feel lucky to be in,” said Private Edward B. Caulfield, Company E, 11\(^{th}\) Engineers, of

\(^{68}\) Thomas M. Clary, Box 2, LVA.

\(^{69}\) Moses Randolph, 17 July 1919, Box 4, LVA.

Hartford, adding that he “learned to appreciate the United States more than ever before.”

“I have better learned to appreciate the home country and see better the enlightenment our country has reached. Believe my “state of mind” is a bit more settled,” commented Earle T. W. Gronk, an engineer from Pembroke, Virginia following his discharge on 25 June 1919. Captain Ulysses H. Brockway of Hartford declared his wartime experience “made me a firmer and more enthusiastic believer in preparedness and strengthened my own belief in the glory of the U.S.” Alternatively, Private First Class James P. Sheehan, also of Hartford, affirmed, “I forget all about my experiences, I believe I was a better man after getting out of the Army than before I went in.”

“It made me appreciate the U.S.A. It has given me a pride I didn’t have before,” said Captain Arthur E. Westphal of Hartford. He added his recommendations for military training: “Lots to be said in favour of German efficiency and in disfavor of our own inefficiency. It has made me appreciate the need of universal military training.” Another call for training came from Major Stillman F. Westbrook of Hartford, who summed up his impressions of wartime succinctly: “As a very observing Englishman put it ‘Damned dull, Damned dirty and Damned dangerous.’” He felt his experiences served “to absolutely disillusion me of the romance of war,” yet Westbrook also declared, “I have always been and still am in favor of some form of universal service.”

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71 Edward B. Caulfield, 11 December 1919, Box 6, CSL.
72 Earle T. W. Gronk, 9 December 1919, Box 5, LVA.
73 Ulysses H. Brockway, 10 May 1920, Box 5, CSL.
74 James P. Sheehan, 5 November 1920, Box 13, CSL.
75 Arthur E. Westphal, 4 April 1920, Box 14, CSL.
76 Stillman F. Westbrook, 26 June 1919, Box 14, CSL. Westbrook references John Masefield, _The War and the Future_ (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918), 73-74. Masefield himself quoted an unnamed British officer in the book, he then writes why the Western Front was so dull, dirty and dangerous.
77 Westbrook F. Stillman, 26 June 1919, Box 14, CSL.
Captain Cyrus C. Washburn called himself “a firm believer in universal training” and added, “I believe that every male child who is physically qualified should receive at least one year of military training. Time spent now in training may prove a blessing in future years.” Washburn, from Hartford, was most impressed during the war by “the cheerfullness with which our men went forward to almost sure death, The amount of hardships that a man can stand without breaking.”

A Wagoner in Company B, 101st Machine Gun Battalion, 26th Division, Earle A. Penfield of Hartford, drew from the war “a deeper and stronger sense of duty to my fellow men and a deeper understanding of what life really is.” Twenty-three year old William G. B. Augermann of Hartford was born in Brandenburg, Germany, enlisted in the National Guard on 23 June 1916 and served as a Private with the 104th Ambulance Company, 26th Division. He said during the war, “That it is an easy matter to forget blood-ties where once liberty is in the balance, and that is quite easy to die when one has his mind made up when death arrives.” Upon his discharge on 29 April 1919, Augermann reflected, “I can now, although a foreigner, feel the pulse throb of America and I am happy in the thought that was able to help preserve the regular, healthy beat of life in America.”

“I feel that I have been especially privileged to have lived at a time when it was possible for me to take part in the greatest of all wars,” observed twenty-eight year old First Lieutenant Thomas N. Williams, Company C, 3rd Regiment, Anti-Aircraft Battalion, after his discharge on 18 August 1919. Previously employed as a clerk with one year of

78 Cyrus C. Washburn, 2 May 1919, Box 14, CSL.
79 Earle A. Penfield, 16 July 1919, Box 12, CSL.
80 William G. B. Augermann, 29 August 1919, Box 5, CSL.
81 Thomas N. Williams, 3 October 1919, Box 3, LVA.
college in Berryville, Virginia, Williams found work with the United States Shipping Board after the war.

Wilson H. Whitehouse, born in England, observed, “That there is a way to do anything no matter how hard or far away it may seem,” and that the war experience “gives a person greater insight into big things, develops a greater will power and self-determination to succeed despite the cost.”  

An Infantry soldier from New Haven, Connecticut, Morris Goldstein commented “I believe that the experiences of war brought out some of the finer dormant instincts i.e. sympathy, courage, unselfishness, independency.”

John Knudson, of New Haven, expressed a willingness to serve again if necessary, stating, “If the country has another good ‘scrap,’ don’t forget to drop me a line.” As he participated in the conflict overseas, Knudson said, “I began to realize what ‘Home, Sweet Home,’ meant.” He added, “It has broadened my view of life and given me trust in myself. I realized more fully what it means to live in a ‘Free Country.’”

“My impressions are, that there is not a Nation in the world that can conquer the U.S. fighting as we did in the world war. My mind has been changed since we entered the war, as we stand high above any nation in the world in the manner of fighting and military training etc.,” said New Haven resident Corporal Charles H. Henderling. His words reflected the pride expressed by many doughboys for their nation and the AEF. Henderling continued “I gained considerable in my experiences overseas and will never forget what I have seen, and learned by the trip.”

82 Wilson H. Whitehouse, 7 June 1920, Box 38, CSL.
83 Morris Goldstein, 1919, Box 32, CSL.
84 John Knudson, 22 July 1919, Box 33, CSL.
85 Charles H. Henderling, 27 June 1919, Box 32, CSL.
AEF soldiers discovered, as had veterans of other wars, that civilians soon forgot what the doughboys endured in France. Corporal Emory P. Barrow of Alberta, Virginia, who practiced law when he returned home after his discharge from the 1st Army Military Police on 23 July 1919, said his experiences during the war “created more intense devotion for the Stars and Stripes. The U. S. should not be the world’s dumping ground. Taught me something of the greatness of our country.” Barrow went on to express his dismay at the way civilians forgot the service of the soldiers, “To my mind the most marvelous and irreconcilable thing about the whole war was the rapid change in public sentiment for the soldier and away from the ex-soldier. Boys it is tough luck to be so soon forgotten, but we will never forget our “buddies” who sleep in Flanders Field.”

Other soldiers like Private William J. B. Morris, of Mappsville, Virginia, also noted the change in public attitude towards veterans of the war. Morris was a twenty-four year old traffic manager with a business college degree when he entered the service, and had much to say regarding his personal experiences and the welfare of his fellow veterans:

It gave me a wider scope of vision, I view things now from a world stand point instead of from a state or National viewpoint. It has been particularly interesting to personally watch and take note of the height that public opinion did and can reach from the standpoint of Loyalty, Liberality and Devotion and then watch to what depths it can sink. When we went away there was nothing too good for us and if and when we came back we could have anything we wanted, but soon after it was over even before I returned, any thing that an ex-service man asked for was quite out of the question, even our jobs were given and kept by fellows and girls that stayed here. (mine wasn’t).

Morris received his discharge papers on 10 July 1919 and asked the state of Virginia to aid its veterans:

86 Emory P. Barrow, 11 November 1921, Box 2, LVA.
I am and have been very much disappointed that Va. and the Old Dominion hasn’t as a state recognized the Sacrifice her men and women so nobly made in the World War and given them a bonus, not that I personally care or particularly need it, but it would set a good many of the Va. ex-service men to think that after all the sacrifice we made was appreciated, not that money could ever repay anyone, especially those of us that were fortunate enough to get into real action, for the Hell we went through. I am a member of the American Legion and as a Legionnaire I plead with you above all things to take care of our sick and wounded.\textsuperscript{87}

Corporal Wilbur L. Brownley of Norfolk, Virginia was seventeen years old and employed as a warehouse clerk when he entered Company D, 4\textsuperscript{th} Virginia National Guard, 29\textsuperscript{th} Division. After his discharge on 29 May 1919, Brownley found employment as a nautical instruments mechanic and observed, “That civilians are patriotic during the time of trouble. But don’t believe in it after the soldiers get home.”\textsuperscript{88}

Corporal Carl Noble, 60\textsuperscript{th} Infantry, 5\textsuperscript{th} Division, acknowledged the change in sentiment toward returning soldiers that some civilians displayed:

We were en route for Fort D. A. Russell, Wyoming. This trip was quite different from our trip from Camp Green to Camp Merritt in the spring of 1918. I suppose the people had seen so many soldiers and troop trains during the past two years that it was an old sight; they had become indifferent. There was little shouting, cheering or hand waving. In one town in my native state, Ohio, the train stopped for a few minutes. I got off the train and rushed across the street to buy a watermelon. I bought the melon and started to leave the store, when a gentleman spoke to me: ‘I beg your pardon, but I would like to know how much the lady charged you for that melon.’ I said I had paid 75 cents for it. ‘I thought so,’ he said. ‘I thought that was what she charged you. Those melons have been selling for 25 cents. Come with me and I’ll see that you get your 50 cents back.’ The train whistle was blowing and I told him I must go. The girl who had sold me the melon could hear our conversation, and looked perturbed. As I started for the train the man who had accosted me said, ‘Soldier, I’m going to do my part to see that this doesn’t happen again.’ I thought of the Y.M.C.A. chap who had made that speech when we went into the Argonne: ‘Men, when you get back to America and see anything you want, do not ask the price; just pick it up and walk off with it, and you will have carpets strewn with flowers to walk on!’\textsuperscript{89}

\textsuperscript{87} William J. B. Morris, 13 January 1923, Box 1, LVA.
\textsuperscript{88} *Wilbur T. Brownley, 18 August 1919, Box 13, LVA.
\textsuperscript{89} Noble, \textit{Jugheads}, 204-205.
These doughboys expressed the powerful sentiments felt by many veterans upon their return. Arthur G. Empey had entreated young men to join the AEF in order to “have it all over” those who did not do their bit.\textsuperscript{90} After the war, as in other wars past and future, Americans soon forgot the veterans and their sacrifices. The doughboys, especially the minority who engaged in heavy, close combat, learned the cost of war…a cost that they could not grasp as a civilian, and most importantly, a cost they could not confer upon a nation. War remained distant to the public, something they only read about, and in years later, watched in theaters, but when the film ended, so did the lesson. As Joanna Bourke states, “Civilians continued to view killing in war as though it was just another cinematic image – combatants were the ones who were eventually forced to realize that there was ‘no cutting it.’”\textsuperscript{91} Perhaps Second Lieutenant Orswald Fisher of Manchester, Connecticut, describes it best: “To the citizen patriotism is often but a word To a soilder it is a feeling.”\textsuperscript{92}

\textsuperscript{90} Empey, First Call, 319-320.
\textsuperscript{91} Bourke, An Intimate History of Killing, 357.
\textsuperscript{92} Orswald Fisher, 12 August 1919, Box 16, CSL.
CONCLUSION

A BLOODY, HORRIBLE, USELESS GAME

Why was Sherman right? Out of the 34,000 Military Service Records examined for this study, 400 men wrote, “Sherman was right,” “war is hell” or some combination of these two powerful three word sentences; some doughboys went even further, one Virginian felt, “Sherman had an inadequate vocabulary.” The Civil War ended in 1865 and Sherman gave his famous speech at a veteran’s reunion in Columbus, Ohio, on 11 August 1880, in which he said, “There is many a boy here today who looks on war as all glory, but, boys, it is all hell. You can bear this warning voice to generations yet to come. I look upon war with horror, but if it has to come I am here.”¹ The Enquirer and News published in Battle Creek, Michigan, credits Sherman with another “war is hell” speech delivered almost a year earlier on 19 June 1879 at the Michigan Military Academy. Here he departed from his prepared remarks and began “Cadets of the graduating class.” The students arose and saluted, and then Sherman continued, “Boys, I’ve been where you are now and I know just how you feel. It’s entirely natural that there

¹ Lloyd Lewis, Sherman: Fighting Prophet (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1932), 636. Sherman is credited with another “war is hell” speech delivered on 19 June 1879 to the graduating class of the Michigan Military Academy; however, many of Sherman’s biographers, including Lloyd Lewis, James M. Merrill and Michael Fellman, do not mention this speech. See James M. Merrill, William Tecumseh Sherman (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1971) and Michael Fellman, Citizen Sherman: A Life of William Tecumseh Sherman (New York: Random House, 1995).
should beat in the breast of every one of you a hope and desire that some day you can use
the skill you have acquired here. Suppress it! You don’t know the horrible aspects of
war. I’ve been through two wars and I know. I’ve seen cities and homes in ashes. I’ve
seen thousands of men lying on the ground, their dead faces looking up at the skies. I tell
you, war is hell!\textsuperscript{2}

Sherman died in 1891, the same time most doughboys were born – in the late
1880s or 1890s. Yet, the horrors of the 1860s and Sherman’s grim warnings of the cost
of battle could not deter hundreds of thousands of men from rushing to enlist and “not
wait to be called.” How could Americans so quickly forget the painful memory of the
Civil War?

This fallibility of memory is due to the cultural glorification of the Civil War and
of warfare in general in the United States. The only way to explain why 620,000 soldiers
died during the War Between the States, more than 2 percent of the population, was for
the country to glorify their sacrifice.\textsuperscript{3} Only fifty years after the Civil War, men rushed off
to battle with romantic notions of combat seeking honor and heroism. Romanticism for
the war crept into every state of the country with war memorials and statues on many
town greens; it even seeped into children’s literature, books that the young men who went
to war in 1917 had read in their childhood. The children’s literature written by Stephen
Crane, Oliver Optic (pseudonym for William Taylor Adams) and others left a deep
impression of warrior ethos on the future doughboys: Alice Fahs concludes that the

\textsuperscript{2} Enquirer and News (Battle Creek, Michigan), 18 November 1933. Charles O. Brown sat next to Sherman
the day he gave his speech and transcribed the General’s words.

\textsuperscript{3} Faust, This Republic of Suffering, 265. This is not atypical, but the norm, when a country loses a
catastrophic amount of their population to war, for example in the Great War, Britain and Germany reached
back into the Middle Ages and connected the noble sacrifice of the men from 1914-1918 with the warrior
culture and knights of old. For an in-depth study of this, see Stefan Goebel, The Great War and Medieval
Memory: War, Remembrance and Medievalism in Britain and Germany, 1914-1940 (Cambridge:
Cambridge University Press, 2007).
books left “an underlying consensus that the war had been – and should remain in memory – a white, masculinist experience in American life.”

Stephen Crane’s Civil War novel, *The Red Badge of Courage*, inspired young men for combat the moment it first appeared in a serialized version for newspapers in 1884, and when published as a book a year later. The novel chronicled the war experience of young soldier Henry Fleming and his path to manhood, Crane placed young readers in the midst of violence – connecting masculinity and war. When Henry engages in a skirmish with Confederate troops and fights with a fierceness he did not realize he possessed, his lieutenant who “seemed drunk with fighting,” called out to him, “‘By heavens, if I had ten thousand wild cats like you I could tear th’ stomach outa this war in less’n a week!’” Henry’s fellow soldiers “now looked upon him as a war devil.”

War transformed Henry, at the conclusion of the novel: “He felt a quiet manhood, nonassertive but of sturdy and strong blood. He knew that he would no more quail before his guides wherever they should point. He had been to touch the great death, and found that after all, it was but the great death. He was a man.”

Prolific writer Oliver Optic published books and stories for children during the same period. One of his most successful series of books was the Blue and the Gray Series: six historical novels set during the Civil War. He decided to write this series after his first Civil War novels (the Army and Navy collection) had “received more commendatory letters from young people in regard to the books of this series than

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4 Alice Fahs, “Remembering the Civil War in Children’s Literature of the 1880s and 1890s,” in Alice Fahs and Joan Waugh, eds., *The Memory of the Civil War in American Culture* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 91.
concerning those of any other.” Optic wrote the Blue and the Gray Series from the point of view of the Union, but with “ample justice” given to the Confederacy. In the books, the main character is seventeen-year-old Christy Passford, son of Captain Passford and Optic wrote each novel with a style reflecting the glory and romanticism of war. When Captain Passford explains his desire to join in the conflict, his son replies, “I want to go with you; and I am sure I can do my share of the duty, whatever it may be,’ demanded Christy…who had thrown back his head as though he felt the inspiration of all the manliness in his being.” He continued: “There is to be a war for the Union, I am a Union man, or boy, as you like; and it would be as mean and cowardly for me to turn my back to the enemy as it would be for you to do so, sir’…his chest heaving with patriotic emotion.”

Optic’s theme of glory and honor continued in the second book of the series as Christy furthers his desire to join the Union and his father agrees: “The young man, just entering his seventeenth year, protested against being left at home, and as the captain believed that a patriotic citizen ought to be willing to give his all, even his sons, to his country, the young man went with his father. The mother was as devoted to her country as the father, and terrible as was the ordeal, she consented to part with him for such a duty.” The novels of Crane and Optic planted visions of heroic battle in the minds of prospective AEF soldiers.

The cultural glorification of the war stretched to every corner of the country and a respect and appreciation for warfare grew, grandeur returned to the art of combat. The

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8 Optic, *Taken by the Enemy*, 41.
limited success of the Spanish-American War in 1898 and the Philippine-American War, 1899-1902, only augmented the theory that “war was all glory” to the American youth of the twentieth century. Images from those wars, such as Theodore Roosevelt’s charge up San Juan Hill, further motivated Americans into wanting to become soldiers in battle and obtain their manhood through war. Roosevelt’s allure even intoxicated future president Franklin D. Roosevelt, when on 6 April 1917, Theodore implored his fifth cousin Franklin to leave his post as assistant secretary of the navy and enlist in the AEF: “You must get into uniform at once. You must get in.” Franklin did attempt to resign his position, but President Wilson denied his request. It did not matter whether or not each man received personal motivation from Theodore Roosevelt, the American man wanted to answer the call to arms.

Almost fifty years after he wrote his memoirs in 1918, William L. Langer reflected: “What strikes me most, I think, is the constant reference to the eagerness of the men to get to France and above all to reach the front. One would think that, after almost four years of war, after the most detailed and realistic accounts of the murderous fighting on the Somme and around Verdun, to say nothing of the day-to-day agony of trench warfare, it would have been all but impossible to get anyone to serve without duress! But it was not so.” In 1977, in his autobiography, Langer felt, “When the American soldiers returned from abroad, they were cured of the yearning for danger and conflict…most

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12 Langer, Gas and Flame, xviii.
returning soldiers felt that they had seen enough, and that no such cataclysm should be permitted to occur again, if humanly possible.”¹³

Although most men entered the conflict with the belief that they fought the Central Powers to obtain their manhood, others lacked such idealistic goals. Two groups in particular fought for their identity: African and Italian Americans. The most important individual predisposition that altered each doughboy’s experience was race, but why did African and Italian Americans express more pleasure than their fellow doughboys in killing Germans? Where did this bloodlust originate?

For African Americans, the answer lies within Germany’s past and began with the country’s oppression of the native peoples of East and South German Africa (mainly modern day Namibia and Botswana) in the nineteenth century. Leading the genocide on 17 March 1904, German socialist August F. Bebel remarked, “I have not held a speech in favor of the Hereros; I have repeatedly emphasized that they are a wild people, very low in culture;” and from 1904-1907, the German Army killed 50 percent of the Nama population and close to 80 percent of the Herero population.¹⁴ This racial ideology ran throughout Germany and a decade later, the German Army reacted with shock and insult when the French drew soldiers from their African colonies, especially modern Senegal, to form the Tirailleurs Sénégalais.¹⁵ First Lieutenant Samuel Woodfill, 60th Infantry, 5th

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Division, from Jefferson County, Indiana, made the following observation regarding African troops serving with the French:

The Algerian and Senegalese soldiers, the chaps who liked to bring back souvenirs as visible evidence of what they had accomplished. A lot of them were serving down here in the Vosges, and whenever the sector got too quiet they would just sneak over to some German outpost during the night, slit a sentry’s throat, cut off his ears or mebbe his whole head, and carry it around with them for a few days. They would keep their souvenirs until the news got to their higher-up French officer’s ears – or noses. But if the French tried to make them give up their little keepsakes, that would only make them all the more determined to sneak out for a new supply of trophies at the first chance.  

Private Stanley J. Herzog, Battery F, 103rd Field Artillery, 26th Division also recalled the battlefield practice of African troops, “These Algerian soldiers, when over the top, each and every one of them, providing they kill a German, would either cut off an ear or some other part of the body, just to show or have evidence that he had killed his foe. Every Algerian soldier carries a small bag in which to place their souvenirs.”

The Senegalese infantrymen in particular, struck fear and hatred into the Germans, especially when France stationed Senegalese troops in the Rhineland after the war. This act would later become what the Nazis called die schwarze Schande (the Black Horror), used by Adolf Hitler’s Nazi Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels when he conducted an aggressive campaign to demonize African soldiers, which instilled German troops with the same fears from the previous war. When the African American doughboys entered the war, the Germans associated them with the well-established

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17 Herzog, *Fightin’ Yanks*, 55.
bloodthirsty identity of the *Tirailleurs Sénégalais*. Most black doughboys served with French African troops because the AEF segregated African Americans into the 92nd and 93rd Divisions.\(^{19}\) The other four African American infantry regiments, three from the National Guard and one from the draft, which included the famous 369th Infantry, served with the French and thus tapped into the decades of racial conflict between the Germans and Africans.

Yet, the stronger case for African American motivation is not in European history, but in the past of the United States – a past filled with as much racism as that found in Germany. It was a tense time of racial hatred. Only one month after America declared war the East St. Louis race riot erupted in which whites killed over one hundred African Americans; nonetheless, African American doughboys went to war to fight against oppression, an enemy they would conquer with their military contribution. With their patriotic service, African Americans believed they would get equal rights and prove that America should treat their race as equals.

Even within this atmosphere of bigotry, W. E. B. DuBois called upon African Americans to “forget our special grievances and close our ranks shoulder to shoulder with our own white fellow-citizens and the allied nations that are fighting for democracy. We make no ordinary sacrifice, but we make it gladly and willingly with our eyes lifted to the hills.”\(^{20}\) African American soldiers answered this call and entered the service with a desire to fight for equality, to prove that they, too, were Americans. African American

\(^{19}\) The AEF deployed 200,000 African Americans to France, of which only 40,000 participated in combat. Lanning, *The African-American Soldier*, 133.

\(^{20}\) W. E. B. DuBois, “Close Ranks” in *Crisis* 16, no. 3 (July 1918), 111. A year later, DuBois wrote a retraction to his first article, lamented that the United States did not change and still, “It lynchest…It disfranchises its own citizens…It encourages ignorance…It steals from us…It insults us…” in *Crisis* 18, no. 1 (May 1919), 13.
James P. Spencer, a twenty-nine year old student at the Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute, stated, “I felt that it was my patriotic duty to serve my country at the most critical hour in the Nation’s history. Though my Race had not been given the proper rights.”

Thirty-year-old African American Corporal Benjamin Skinner, of Norfolk, Virginia was a longshoreman when he entered the National Guard. He believed, “To fight for democracy trusting in God that my Mother, Sister & Race should be benefited by it.”

Twenty-eight year old African American Artillery Sergeant Jacob M. Sampson of Richmond, Virginia, expressed his views on the war: “An evil which was inevitable, and therefore should be faced gracefully. War is the most diabolically inhuman method of settling a dispute among intelligent men. I volunteered so as not to be sent like all other Negro men from my state into a service, or depot brigade, but to choose a more satisfactory branch of service.”

African American Christopher C. Watts was a twenty-three year old farmer from Portsmouth, Virginia when he entered the service on 27 October 1917. Watts had spent three years at Military School in Lawrenceville, Virginia prior to the war, and upon his return from France remarked about the differences he had observed: “There are no separation of races in Europe or elsewhere except in this country. All men are the same – not jim-crowed.” Watts also stressed the importance of the African American presence in the AEF, saying, “I think the Negro deserves much credit for what he has done for this country. I think if it weren’t for the black fighters, the war would be going on now.”

21 James T. Spencer, 25 April 1921, Box 3, LVA. See Spencer’s photograph on page 5.
22 *Benjamin Skinner, 20 August 1919, Box 14, LVA.
23 *Jacob M. Sampson, 6 April 1921, Box 19, LVA.
24 *Christopher C. Watts, 3 February 1920, Box 15, LVA.
Another African American, Willis B. Godwin, a student from Smithfield, Virginia, entered the service on 28 October 1917 at the age of twenty-two. Like Watts, Godwin reflected on his time in France and commented, “After the fighting and my return back to this country U. S. it made me wonder why can’t all men be treated equally. What did we fight for? Democracy. Are we having it?” Godwin added, “After the war I realized more clearly what a man’s life means to him.”

“My attitude toward military service in general is against it, and especially compulsory military service. I don’t believe greater injustice could be done to a man than to take him from his home against his will to fight on foreign soil,” declared Waverly L. Crawford, a twenty-seven year old African American farmer from Dendron, Virginia. Crawford continued his remarks commenting on the “injustice in the ranks…But practically a private in the U. S. A. has no right which an officer is bound to respect; and there is no such thing as a fair decision in a Courts Martial when it comes to a Commissioned officer trying a private if it happens that he doesn’t like the Private…there is nothing at all of the United States army that would or could encourage me to join any part of it. Especially when the investigation by the War Dept. failed to eliminate some of the evils of the Army.”

Other African Americans responded with remarks emphasizing killing the enemy. “Impressions were made upon me to fight for my country, and to kill as many Huns as I could for the benefit of my people at home,” noted seventeen-year-old African American Corporal Vernon Smith of Portsmouth, Virginia. Moses Randolph, an African

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25 Willis B. Godwin, 27 February 1920, Box 4, LVA.
26 Waverly L. Crawford, 25 November 1919, Box 11, LVA.
27 *Vernon Smith, 19 May 1919, Box 8, LVA.
American from Farmville, Virginia, served as a Private with Company C, 369th Infantry, remarked, “I wanted to kill as many as I could.”  

Whether or not African American troops’ motivations rested more in vengeance on an enemy that saw them as inferior or if it rested more with a fight for equality, which it most likely did, after the war the injustice continued. African Americans believed their service would bring them the equality they deserved; unfortunately, they were not the first or the last – this same belief motivated their ancestors during the Civil War and their sons during World War II. Even after the Vietnam War, African American veterans returned home to the same racist atmosphere they endured in 1919. Private First Class Reginald Edwards, 9th Regiment, Marines Corps, from Phoenix, Louisiana remarked, “I had left one war and came back and got into another one.”

Racial prejudice was not limited to African Americans, but extended also to Italian Americans, who fought for their solidarity as well. Many Americans viewed Italians as mongrels, unsure if they were black or white. In 1891, whites lynched eleven Italian immigrants in New Orleans and the same year President Wilson declared war in 1917, he enacted the Sedition and Espionage Acts, which led to the Palmer Raids. These raids enabled government agents to invade homes without warrants, detain people without council and deport Italians back to Italy. In 1927, a Massachusetts jury convicted

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28 Moses Randolph, 17 July 1919, Box 4, LVA.
30 Terry, Bloods, 12.
Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti of a supposed murder from 1920. Many Italian doughboys were as anxious to engage in combat as their fellow African American soldiers were; Sergeant Alvin C. York served in a platoon that included soldiers from varying backgrounds, including many Italians; he described how anxious these men were to fight:

The trouble with our boys when we went into this quiet sector was they would want to go out on top of the trenches and start something. They was wanting to get into it and get it over. I knowed now that the Greeks and Italians and Poles and New York Jews were fighters. Ho! ho! As right-smart fighters as the American-borne boys. They didn’t want to lay around and do nothing. And they would even go on top and get the Germans out. Once one of them come up to me right there in the front line and asked me, “Where is the war?” They was always wanting to go over the top – and keep a-going. They shore were ambitious.

Americus Paoletti, a truck driver from Bridgeport, Connecticut whose father was born in Italy, had just turned nineteen when he enlisted in the National Army on 2 April 1917. Paoletti stressed he was “willing to fight for the country,” and described himself as “One of the best fighting men of the Co.”

“I thought it was my duty to serve for the country and to hold up its flag from falling. The impression that I got while I was in fighting I thought it was heaven,” responded Italian born Robert Deilus who worked as a chemical printer in South Norwalk when he entered the National Army.

Another Italian born soldier, twenty-six year old Frank Piazza, a laborer from New Britain, Connecticut stated, “I enjoyed it very much,” and regarding his participation in combat, he explained, “It did not frighted me at all.”

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33 *Americus Paoletti, Box 51, CSL.*
34 *Robert Deilus, 7 August 1920, Box 56, CSL.*
35 *Frank Piazza, 14 August 1919, Box 20, CSL.*
Italy, twenty-two year old Giuseppe S. Peronne was a laborer living in New London, Connecticut when he entered the service. Upon his return from the war, Perrone said during combat he had, “No feeling of fear, rather a feeling of strength.”

“Well before I went to France I was thinking of having some of the hand to hand fight just with rifle and M.G. and artillery but when came to the real thing it was all different,” stressed eighteen-year-old Salvatore Distefano, an Italian born resident of East Hampton, Connecticut. Employed as a buffer in a bell shop, Distefano added, “I was in the fighting my impressions was something that I can even say or write it well it wasn’t as hard as the French was tell me.”

Twenty-two year old Italian John F. Carini, was a mechanic from Chester explained, “I felt that it was my duty as a U. S. citizen to help defend my country. I preferred being in the Machine Gun Co. to any other service.”

Another argument for Italian combat motivation is the Italian man’s search for honor and status. In the year 1870, when the Risorgimento ended, Vittorio Emanuele III declared, “The age of prose had replaced the age of poetry,” but the Great War gave Italy a chance to return to its romantic roots, which many citizens desired. Even Italian cinema attempted to enflame the passions of combat when Giovanni Pastrone released Cabiria in 1914, which Leo Braudy writes, “argued for Italy’s entry into the war under the guise of an epic story of the wars between Italy and Carthage.”

The war gave Italian Americans in the AEF a chance to prove that the courage of men such as Giuseppe

36 *Giuseppe S. Peronne, 15 July 1920, Box 42, CSL.
37 *Salvatore Distefano, 7 January 1920, Box 61, CSL.
38 *John F. Carini, 26 August 1919, Box 60, CSL.
41 Leo Braudy, From Chivalry to Terrorism: War and the Changing Nature of Masculinity (New York: Knopf, 2003), 378.
Garibaldi did not die in 1870, but more importantly, to revenge their countrymen who
died during the disaster at Caporetto in the autumn and winter of 1917. Yet, even without
the battle of Caporetto as incentive, Italians, specifically northern Italians despised
Austrians, who they had fought against for their independence in the 1860s.

Italians wanted to demonstrate they deserved to live in America, and the best way
to do so was at the front, just as Italian immigrant Tony Monanco of Buffalo, New York
did when he stormed into his local Selective Service Office and declared “In dees country
seex months. Gimme da gun.” Killing is power. These doughboys felt there was no
better way to prove their prowess than going to war and killing Austrians and Germans,
but ultimately, Italian Americans, like African Americans, fought for their equality, an
equality the United States would continue to deny them for decades.

This bloodthirstiness was not an AEF anomaly – British and German soldiers both
acknowledged the savagery of Canadian troops. In a letter to his mother and father on 29
August 1918, Lieutenant R. C. Germain, 20th Canadian Infantry Battalion, proclaimed,
“We rushed them and they had the nerve to throw up their hands and cry, ‘Kamerad.’ All
the ‘Kamerad’ they got was a foot of cold steel thro them from my remaining men while I
blew their brains out with my revolver without any hesitation.” A fellow Canadian
soldier, Richard Rogerson, declared, “I have got my share of Germans. I got fourteen to
my credit in about two hours some I shot with my rifle more I drove bayonit into and two
I killed with a milles bomb…Once I killed my first German with my bayonit my blood
was riled every german I could not reach with my bayonit I shot. I think no more of

42 Sweeney, History of Buffalo, 76.
43 Tim Cook, “The Politics of Surrender: Canadian Soldiers and the Killing of Prisoners in the Great War,”
The Journal of Military History 70, no. 3 (July 2006), 638.
murdering them than I usted to think of shooting rabbits.”\textsuperscript{44} This hatred between the Canadians and Germans parallels the fears between African and German soldiers, both groups’ abhorrence for each other aggrandized by rumors of violence and prisoner of war killings, imaged and real.

Regardless of race or ethnicity, men who participated in combat differed from those who did not – the men who came under fire, engaged in hand-to-hand combat whether or not they received wounds were apprehensive about going through it again, whereas, men who did not see the front or saw limited action, seemed enthusiastic for a second round. Out of the 1192 questionnaires with full completion data examined, 320 men received serious gunshot or grenade fragmentation wounds, and had close contact with the enemy, from this group, only a dozen had an insatiable thirst for violence, eight of whom were African and Italian Americans. The men who did not see combat or did not even cross the pond, wished they had. Nearly 2400 years before the doughboys entered the trenches, Pindar’s words remained true: “War is sweet to those who have no experience of it, but the experienced man trembles exceedingly at heart on its approach.”\textsuperscript{45}

Soldiers who craved action but engaged in little combat lamented their lack of participation. Fairfield, Connecticut resident Mike Sedlak, born in Austria-Hungary, was a thirty-one year old factory worker and one of the AEF soldiers who saw limited action. He offered these comments regarding combat: “Didn’t mind it in the least. I just kept

\textsuperscript{44} Cook, “Politics of Surrender,” \textit{Journal of Military History}, 650.  
my eyes opened and watched every move.” When he volunteered for service Sedlak said, “I knew what I was going for, and wanted the experience.”

Twenty-one year old George S. Crockett, a student at Virginia Military Institute, lived in Accomack, Virginia, and remarked, “In our branch (Aviation) it was taken and considered as sport and we found the Germans the same true sportsmanship.” The scenes between Captains Boëldieu and von Rauffenstein in Jean Renoir’s film *La Grande Illusion* reveals the element of Great War pilots’ chivalry and their respect for one another. Crockett continued, lamenting his lack of participation in air combat, “My duty was the safe conveyance of fighting planes to the front – too bad no active fighting.”

Twenty-five year old John E. Howell, a sales clerk from Alexandria, Virginia, served as an Ordnance Sergeant in the Coast Artillery. Howell saw limited action and stated, “I liked the Artillery fine and in time of war would gladly return to it.”

On the other hand, doughboys who engaged in heavy combat were more reluctant to repeat their ordeal. Alvin C. York, who, on 8 October 1918 in the Argonne, killed twenty-eight Germans, captured thirty-five machine guns and with a small group of soldiers captured one hundred and thirty-two prisoners, explained: “I didn’t want to kill a whole heap of Germans nohow. I didn’t hate them. But I done it jes the same. I had to. I was cornered. It was either them or me, and I’m a-telling you I didn’t and don’t want to die nohow if I can live…Jes the same I have tried to forget. I have never talked about it much. I have never told the story even to my own mother. For years I done refused to

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46 Mike Sedlak, 25 July 1919, Box 53, CSL.
47 George S. Crockett, 3 April 1923, Box 1, LVA.
48 John E. Howell, 30 August 1920, Box 12, LVA.
write about it for the newspapers, and wasn’t at all pleased when others wrote about it.”

York’s views are familiar but many previously unknown voices said the same, for example, Corporal John J. Deloughery of New Haven, stated, “Do not care to talk about war.”

There were veterans who contemplated the cost of war, and wondered who benefited from such a great deal of destruction. Twenty-four year old Turk Vahow Shabazian, of Bridgeport, Connecticut, stated he “was in the battle zone from June 7, 1918 to Nov. 10, 1918 without rest. Covered over 2000 miles of France by train and wagon roads during my stay of over 5 months.” Upon his return from the war he reflected, “I often wondered was the sacrifice of human beings, animals, and equipment worth the territory that was being so stubbornly fought for. I candidly believe that war benefits only the very select few, and that in a financial way.”

Private Amillo Aiello, Machine Gun Company, 102nd Infantry of New Haven, reflected, “The impression that too much was lost for the gain.” “Lives of humans are expendable when a financial goal is to be reached,” stressed Private Otis H. Culver of New Haven, a Machine Gunner.

Twenty-five year old David C. Dettor, a college educated farmer from Bristol, Virginia, was a Second Lieutenant in Company M, 317th Infantry, 80th Division, and concluded, “that war is the greatest piece of false economy in the world. Sometimes

49 York, Sergeant York, 236. York published his diary and wrote his biography ten years after the war in order to raise funds to build a school in his hometown of Pall Mall, Tennessee.
50 John J. Deloughery, 14 July 1919, Box 31, CSL.
51 Vahow Shabazian, 20 July 1919, Box 53, CSL.
52 Amillo Aiello, 1 May 1919, Box 29, CSL.
53 Otis H. Culver, 5 July 1919, Box 30, CSL.
necessary, perhaps war develops the animal in man more than anything else.” He added, “War never was worth what it cost, but subjects of the State can’t question this.”

The AEF represented an array of men and women with a variety of backgrounds, occupations, ethnicities, religions and education. For the most part, officers and enlisted men with more years of education, especially those who saw combat or sustained wounds, proposed an end to all wars and supported peaceful means of solving the world’s differences in the future. Robert C. Duval, Jr., a thirty-year old attorney from Richmond, Virginia, was a First Lieutenant in the 318th Infantry. Wounded in the left thigh on 5 October 1918 during an attack near Meuse, he reflected on his war experience almost two years later: “It makes one feel older and more mature in every way. Apparently most of us have forgotten that there was a war, and have gone back to the old way of thinking and living, but I don’t think this is entirely the case, certainly not with the men who saw action.”

First Lieutenant Herman R. Furr, a thirty-one year old real estate broker from Norfolk, Virginia whose father had been a Confederate soldier, stated the war “has aged me, made me more serious, and to some extent has modified my belief in the ‘Glory of War.’” After the Armistice William L. Langer of Company E, 1st Gas Regiment, 30th Engineers, observed: “For though we have been through hell together and know that many times in the years to come we shall miss the comradeship of the buddies and friends of our army days, we are, after all, essentially a peaceful lot, quite ready to forget

54 *David C. Dettor, 16 September 1921, Box 11, LVA.
55 Robert C. Duval, Jr., 23 July 1920, Box 16, LVA.
56 Herman R. Furr, 14 October 1919, Box 21, LVA.
the shot and shell, the gas and flame, and return to win our future laurels in the fields of peace.”

Participation in the war sobered the attitudes of many doughboys; men who were still young in years returned from combat with a seriousness of purpose they had not before possessed. “It has been a great education all in itself. Things that once interested me no longer make the same appeal. I have become much more serious in my ways, and perhaps may say that I believe I get a much better view of life and living in general,” commented twenty-two year old John R. Castleman of Berrysville, Virginia. He added that his experiences “left me in the most restless sort of condition, the excitement which had keyed me to a high pitch when taken away I did not want to do anything but dream and wander over the country.”

The army called Medical Reserve Corps Captain Thomas G. Hardy into active service on 15 August 1917 and sent him immediately the front. Hardy, a twenty-seven year old physician from Farmville, Virginia summarized his experience: “My part was only to mend those torn by the fighting, and my impression was that war is a bloody, horrible, useless game.” Battaliohn Sergeant Major Frederick W. Rowe, 102nd Infantry of Waterbury, Connecticut stressed, “Before the war I pictured men going ‘over the top’ with colors flying and bugles blowing and the band playing Yankee Doodle, but there is no glory in it. Its just a dirty, filthy game.” Fellow Allied soldier, British Captain William J. Mason agreed, “I don’t know how anyone can ‘glory’ in war...what can you

57 Langer, *Gas and Flame*, 121. Langer was teaching modern languages at a New England boarding school in November 1917 when he volunteered to help the 23rd Engineers translate French and German. Instead, he found himself in the “Gas and Flame” 30th Engineers in which he served as a Sergeant.
58 John R. Castleman, 15 May 1922, Box 19, LVA.
59 Thomas G. Hardy, 5 April 1920, Box 9, LVA.
60 Frederick W. Rowe, 28 April 1919, Box 39, CSL.
think then except of the crass stupidity of mankind in waging war. The suffering of men at the Front, of the wounded whose flesh and bodies are torn in a way you cannot conceive…What a cruel and mad diversion of human activity!" Mason and other soldiers learned the reality of war, and it was a lesson they could have taught American men, but those voices never crossed the Atlantic. Their government’s plea and their own desire for glory were all the doughboys could hear.

Men who remained in an active war sector for an extended time, such as three months, usually succumbed to fatigue. Many doughboys, however, did not endure this length of suffering, as the Allied armies did for the first three years of the war. After what felt like a lifetime of suffering, even going to a small shop was an uplifting experience for one exhausted French soldier: “The crowd, the lights, the rustling of the silk, the colors of the merchandise – all was a delight to the eyes, a contrast after the misery of our trenches.” As William L. Langer reflected, “Fortunately for us, we were spared the ordeal of the French, British, Germans, Russians, and Italians. Our term of service under fire was short. We got just enough of blood, sweat, and tears to satisfy our craving for adventure. And then, we were lucky enough to be on the winning side.”

The cost for the AEF being on the winning side, with only one year of combat, was 53,402 killed in action, which equals 146 men killed a day, by contrast, the French Army lost 1,397,000 in four years, but each day of the war an average of 895 French soldiers.

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61 Laurence Housman, ed., War Letters of Fallen Englishmen (Philadelphia: Pine St. Books), 192-193. Twenty-seven year old William J. Mason served with the Gloucestershire Regiment and was educated at St. Olave’s School; before the war, he was a lecturer at Bristol University. He was killed in action in France on 3 July 1916.
63 Langer, Gas and Flame, xix.
died. Fortunately for the AEF, 1918 saw the return to a war of movement and as Frederic C. Bartlett noted, “It is easier and requires less courage to attack than to withstand fire without retaliation, and extreme possession by unpleasant thoughts is apt to be peculiarly intense during much of the disagreeable routine of trench-fighting.”

Each soldier typically goes through a series of emotions that depend on the duration of his frontline service. At first, he has a sense of euphoria and feels a strong sentiment of excitement with the thought of encountering the enemy; this eventually fades to thoughts of home and loved ones after prolonged exposure to intense combat conditions. As the stress level increases, especially if it continues for a long duration over many weeks without interruption, his mental state becomes dangerous and unpredictable. In 1946 psychologists Roy L. Swank and Walter E. Marchand published their study on combat fatigue and a soldier’s state of mind. This popular piece of research on combat efficacy during the Normandy campaign in 1944 showed that a soldier reached maximum efficiency in about three weeks, but at two months, he reached an emotional exhausted stage. Even though the AEF saw heavy action for half a year, many doughboys remained at the frontline for well over this breaking point of two months.

Soldiers of the AEF who suffered from the psychoneurotic condition termed shell shock during World War I were often those who served prolonged periods of combat.

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66 For a more detailed discussion of the progression of the soldier’s psyche, see Bartlett, *Psychology and the Soldier*, 174-179.

Doctors named this condition shell shock since its cause was thought to be exposure to the vacuum produced by exploding shells. Today, this affliction, designated as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), is an unfortunate result of modern warfare. PTSD as defined by the American Psychiatric Association is “an event that is outside the range of usual human experience and that would be markedly distressing to almost anyone.”

During the Great War soldiers who exhibited emotional disturbances of anxiety, irritability and depression as well as more severe symptoms such as tremors, spasms, apathy and speech or hearing disorders were labeled shell-shocked by themselves and their fellow doughboys. Some soldiers sensed emotional and psychological changes within themselves, and although they continued to function in daily life, still felt imbalanced and restless.

Alvin C. York was one doughboy who felt different upon his return from the war:

“But I knowed, though, that I had done changed. I knowed I wasn’t like I used to be. The big outside world I had been in and the things I had fought through had teched me up inside a most powerful lot. The old life I had lived seemed a long, long way behind me. It seemed to be a sort of other life in another world. I knowed I had changed. I was sort of restless and full of dreams and wanting to be doing something; and I didn’t understand. So I sat out on the hillside trying to puzzle it out.”

Captain Arthur Y. Wear, 89th Division took his own life in France after the men under his command had gone through combat along the Meuse. One of his Lieutenants, Joseph J. Hook, 356th Infantry remarked later: “The pace was killing and the strain on him with the responsibility of the whole battalion must have been terrible…I am positive

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in my mind that he believed that he was saving his men at the cost of his own life. I was nowhere near him at the time. He sent word to me by his orderly to write his brother, Jim, and say simply that he was ‘weary and tired.’

Colonel Frederic M. Wise, 6th Marines, 2nd Division, who had also commanded his troops under severe battle conditions, eloquently told of his experience with combat fatigue which affected him upon his return to the United States after the war:

I was getting more restless and more nervous every day…then it dawned on me that it didn’t matter where I was…the trouble was with me. After those eighteen months in France, inaction had become unbearable. The whole ghastly show was milling around in my mind. I couldn’t get away from it. Here I was in peaceful America, with every comfort and attention…yet always that panorama of the hell of the last eighteen months kept unrolling before my eyes. Training camps. The roads up to the front. The trenches. Rusty barbed wire. The desolation of No Man’s Land. Shell bursts. Fox holes, with men stretched in them. Gray lines of Germans advancing to the attack. The steady roar of a barrage. Bursts of fire from machine guns hidden in the woods. Heat. Dust. Cold. Rain. Mud. Forcing myself to go over dangerous ground. Suppressing all emotions. Looking at men I had trained for months and grown to know as you know your own family – looking at them walking back, wounded; crawling back, wounded; stretched dead on the ground. I began waking up at night, shuddering, from dreams of the rain and the cold and the mud. In nightmares, the rats in the trenches kept jumping on me. Champillon, Les Mares Farm, the Bois de Belleau, St. Mihiel, the Argonne – I was living them all over again all the time.

Nineteen-year old Hugh H. Bishop, a silk weaver with an eighth grade education, from Marion, Ohio, suffered much trauma after the war. Bishop participated in heavy combat, sustained a gunshot wound in his left leg below the knee on 16 September 1918; his Battery was cited for bravery in action under heavy shellfire at Boncourt. After his discharge, Bishop described his wartime experience as “Not very good. I have a lot of nervous disorders now. A kind of shell-shock and nervousness. I give a jump now when a fuse blows out in a street car, which I never took notice of before I went to France…In

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70 Nettleton, *Yale in the World War*, vol. 1, 33.
other words I do not feel as good now as I did when I went over.” Hartford Private Edward F. Plumridge’s war experiences left him “with a broader mind, but shattered my nerves.”

Twenty-nine year old farmer Private Frank A. Starr from Easton, Connecticut, a wagoner in the 56th Artillery, Battery D, Coast Artillery, saw a great deal of action. He emphasized, “The experience is very hard to explain as I saw thirty men in my own Battery fall one night and shells were bursting all around us for two days and nights. But it was our duty to face them to bring us liberty so we all did it.” Starr noted the difference he felt upon his return from combat: “Before the war my mind was free and clear. And since I returned to civil life I am more or less nervous all the time.”

Twenty-five year old Lawrence T. Hager, an actor and vaudeville performer from Danbury, Connecticut, stated “had my forehead and part of my chin blown off” by shrapnel at the Argonne on 15 October 1918. When he returned from France Hager remarked, “Wouldn’t want to take a million for my experiences, or go through it again. I have had lots of trouble with my head and my mind so bad. And I am very nervous.”

Syrian born Samuel George, twenty-three, worked in a fur factory and resided in Danbury, Connecticut. George was gassed on 14 October 1918 at Verdun and spent the following two months at base hospitals in France; he described the consequences of his combat experience: “The effect is that I am nervous for the rest of my life and never expect to enjoy the health before I went across.” George went on to explain his change in occupation after his discharge on 30 January 1919, “On account of being gassed I am

72 Hugh H. Bishop, Box 16, LVA.
73 Edward F. Plumridge, 28 June 1923, Box 12, CSL.
74 *Frank A. Starr, 6 May 1919, Box 55, CSL.
75 *Lawrence T. Hager, 6 May 1921, Box 55, CSL.

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nervous and could not handle a machine in the factory I used to work in before I went in the army. So I have a little fruit stand, from which I think to earn my living, but I hardly can earn the most necessary thing.” 76

“The experience I had in the fighting is very hard to explain because it is always before my eyes and I still think about it while I sleep,” stressed thirty-year old Private Patrick Wynne of Bridgeport, Connecticut, born in Ireland, and a streetcar conductor. 77

Wynne shared the same experience as his fellow Allied soldier, British Expeditionary Force Private Hyder, who could not forget an incident when he assaulted a German pillbox in Ploegstraat Wood. Alone within the gun emplacement, Hyder heard the sound of a wounded German dragging himself across the floor, that sound remained with him, long after the war he lamented, “This was twelve years ago and still at night comes a sweat that wakes me by its deadly chill to hear again that creeping, creeping.” 78

British Tommies shared the same nightmares as their fellow doughboys, the difference however, is the AEF troops knew these nightmares existed before they landed in France but they, and their government chose to ignore them.

The men in this study are testimony for what happens when a government throws inadequately trained people into hand-to-hand combat and how these people react to the violence that confronts them; in this case, the Western Front, which spawned a level of brutality the American regular and enlisted soldiers did not anticipate. The immediate memories, recorded in the months or few years after the war’s conclusion, give a glimpse into the state of mind of the doughboys. It is these memories, the ones the men write down right after a conflict, that best describe a soldier’s ordeal.

76 Samuel George, 24 June 1919, Box 55, CSL.
77 Patrick Wynne, 21 July 1919, Box 54, CSL.
Memories are delicate and impressionable – they change, alter and fade with time, moreover, violent trauma reduces the precision of memory, and as decades pass memories weaken and even confabulate. As Elizabeth Loftus and Katherine Ketcham write, “Memories don’t sit in one place, waiting patiently to be retrieved; they drift through the brain, more like clouds or vapor than something we can put our hands around.” The truth lies within the moment of the event, as time passes so does the truth, the MSRs, such as the ones used for this study, provide a new and unique voice on the war because it was recorded almost immediately – a sort of exit interview – one that is available only for the United States. No other country offers anything like it. These MSR interviews occurred when the veterans’ memories remained vivid and not influenced by any social or cultural standards, which can alter a memory further.

Mentioned earlier, the case of French novelist and poet Maurice Genevoix, who served and was wounded during the war, best illustrates the elusiveness of memory. On 10 September 1914, Genevoix remembered: “I came across three isolated German soldiers, each running behind the other at the same pace. I fired a bullet from my revolver into the head or back of each of them. Each one collapsed, with the same strangled cry.” Over the years, each time he recalled the incident the number of Germans changed and so did the way he killed them. With every retelling, Genevoix added more detail, and in his 1961 version, he even described the weather, which he had not placed such a great deal of importance on in previous retellings. In 1977, three years

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80 Smith, *Embattled Self*, 97. For a closer examination of Genevoix, see pages 6-7 in the introduction.
before he died, Genevoix’s memory of the event became so cloudy he was not certain he had killed the German soldiers on that particular night in 1914.  

Affected by social and cultural norms, Genevoix’s memories, just like those of the doughboys, change to fit the propriety of the time. This is why memoirs written decades later or the questionnaires from Carlisle, collected in the late 1970s and 1980s, while valuable, do not have the immediacy or authenticity of the MSRs collected from 1919 to 1923. With memories still vivid, the doughboys recorded the reality of their war experiences, memories not softened or altered by cultural expectations or societal viewpoints. For Genevoix, in 1914, it was a great achievement to shoot Germans, after World War II and in the twilight of his life, it was not. By repressing the memories or with confabulation, Genevoix muddled the facts of the incident; each time over the years, the story changed and by the end of his life, even he did not know the truth.

Unlike Genevoix, William L. Langer did know the truth. He wrote Gas and Flame in 1918, but the publisher printed only four hundred copies for distribution in February 1919 to the officers and men of Company E, 1st Gas Regiment as the Army discharged them from service after their early return from France. When Knopf republished the book in 1965, Langer wrote the preface, but left the narrative unchanged. He wrote, “As I reread this simple narrative after a lifetime spent in the teaching and writing of history, I find its immediacy rather appealing. It has nothing of the sophisticated rationalization that invariably creeps into reminiscences recorded long after the event. What strikes me most, I think, is the constant reference to the eagerness of the men to get to France and above all to reach the front.”

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81 Smith, Embattled Self, 95-100.
82 Langer, Gas and Flame, xvii.
Young men did not want to believe that Sherman was right; all they wanted to do was cross the Atlantic as soon as possible. To the doughboys, Sherman represented a bad memory and the polar opposite of romantic warfare: a modern Black Prince, whose chevauchée style of combat brought war down to a vulgar dishonorable horror. What did Sherman know of war? His only achievement left huge swaths of Georgia and South Carolina in ruins. As the doughboys learned, however, he was right – war is hell. He warned them, but they did not listen…and as long as a culture glorifies war, will they ever?

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84 For an extensive examination of Sherman’s legacy from 1865 to the present, see Edward Caudill and Paul Ashdown, Sherman’s March in Myth and Memory (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield 2008).
APPENDIX A

UNPACKING THE SOURCE

These questionnaires are an invaluable historical resource, but why did only two states issue them? Who issued them? And why is so little known about them? To attempt to answer these important questions, one must start from the beginning, when Congress created the Council of National Defense on 29 August 1916. Established by Section 2 of the Army Appropriation Act of 29 August 1916 (39 Stat. 649), the Council coordinated industry and resources for the security of the United States.¹ This Council, the first emergency government agency designed to aid in production of war materials, spawned other specific commissions dealing with war issues. When the United States actively entered World War I, historians in each state almost immediately took steps to preserve materials and information that they considered vital to the chronological records of the country. The initial steps in this movement began with historians in Washington, DC, who in April 1917 formed the National Board for Historical Service. This nonofficial group sought “to place historical scholarship at the service of the government by adapting educational and research efforts to war needs throughout the country.”²

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¹ Council of National Defense, minutes, microfilm, National Archives and Records Administration II (hereafter NARA II), College Park, Maryland.
This National Board corresponded with state libraries, historical commissions and defense councils, urging them to develop projects for collecting war records and other items concerning the role of American service men and women during the war. This group of historians provided the impetus for the establishment of a national agency and state agencies to collect and preserve World War I memorabilia and official records. Shortly afterward the National Board disbanded; its work, however, continued under the auspices of the National Association of State War History Organizations established in 1919. It is difficult to discern why this board disbanded due to the lack of archival data that survives.

Each state formed a committee designed to document its citizens’ participation in the war. In Connecticut George S. Godard, the State Librarian, directed the Department of Historical Records, a subsidiary of the Connecticut State Council of Defense organized to preserve the world war records of Connecticut veterans. In Virginia, Governor Westmoreland Davis created the War History Commission in January 1919. Governor Davis then selected Professor Arthur Kyle Davis (no relation) of Southern College in Petersburg, Virginia, as Chairman of the commission. Connecticut and Virginia were at the forefront of collecting data regarding military records of their respective soldiers. In fact, Connecticut devised and circulated its questionnaire before the first meeting of the National Association of State War History Organizations. Supported by an appropriation of $20,000 from the State Legislature, Connecticut’s Department of War Records began collecting and recording war data.³

In Washington, DC, from 9-10 September 1919, representatives from sixteen states drafted a proposal for the creation of this National Association to coordinate the collection of war records by the individual states.\(^4\) Among those attending were James Sullivan, State Historian of New York, Arthur Kyle Davis of the Virginia War History Commission and Franklin Holbrook of Minnesota’s War Records Commission. For an annual membership fee of $200, states could participate in the exchange of publications and information regarding war records and memorabilia. Adjutant Generals and Historical Commissions of each state received invitations to join the National Association. Newton D. Mereness acted as the Director of Research for the group, and compiled a report including the activities of each state’s organization.\(^5\)

After 1920, as interest in war information declined, it became more difficult for commissions to attain appropriations with which to continue research and data collection. As a result, historical commissions grew more dependent on securing voluntary information from concerned citizens or civic groups. States collected all types of material and information for their archives. The most common type of data was the compilation of war service records, but they took many forms. Below, Figure 3 shows that only Connecticut and Virginia asked the vital subjective questions allowing a veteran to pen his memoir about the war. Minnesota’s questionnaire is similar in presentation to those of Connecticut and Virginia, but does not contain subjective questions. Utah’s questionnaire solicited less information than those of the other three states and no subjective questions. Finally, Vermont, though it prepared a questionnaire comparable in

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\(^4\) The sixteen states were California, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas and Virginia.

style, included no subjective questions and never sent it to veterans. Nineteen other states sent out either a simple sheet or a small card.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>State</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>questionnaire</td>
<td>four pages, six subjective questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>questionnaire</td>
<td>four pages, five subjective questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota, Utah</td>
<td>questionnaire</td>
<td>four pages, no subjective questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vermont (never issued)</td>
<td>questionnaire</td>
<td>eight pages, no subjective questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri, New Mexico, Wyoming</td>
<td>questionnaire</td>
<td>one page, no subjective questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maine, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Washington, Wisconsin</td>
<td>vital statistics</td>
<td>two-sided card, no subjective questions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 20: Type of records issued by states.

Ideas for the distribution of these records happened during the war. When the United States entered World War I on 6 April 1917, the Connecticut General Assembly and Governor Marcus H. Holcomb approved legislation to establish a Department of Historical Records in order to preserve records that documented Connecticut’s participation in the war. In March 1919, this department became known as the Department of War Records, and State Librarian Godard, appointed Administrator of the Department, sent a four-page questionnaire to all of Connecticut’s returning World War I veterans. These Military Service Record questionnaires were to be “filed as a permanent memorial of the deeds of Connecticut soldiers, sailors and marines in the service of federal, state and allied governments during American participation in the World War.”6 Other states, such as Minnesota, Utah and Virginia made similar declarations concerning World War I.

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The war record is only a small part of the initiatives states took at the end of the war. In conjunction with this war record, many states formed a historical commission or committee. Each state gave its group a different title, but each committee’s goal was the same: to preserve and collect everything of historical importance from their state’s participation in the war. States created most of these committees early in 1919 from a need for a single unit to collect historical data regarding the war. The question remains, why did only two states create a unique questionnaire?

Searching for Answers

The chance discovery of Connecticut’s Military Service Records for the Great War several years ago, while working as an archival assistant in the Connecticut State Archives, sparked my interest. At first, it seemed impossible no historian had used this detailed source, but in all of the scholarship I read or referenced, not one mentioned the Connecticut records or anything else similar to it. Curious. Consulting the latest publication on the primary sources of the war, A Guide to the Service Records by Christina Schaefer, provided no new insight. The book gave excellent detail on every state’s records; the author even provided a state-by-state listing of sources in the appendix, but it did not mention the questionnaires anywhere. Even more curious. Discussing the questionnaires with Connecticut State Archivist Mark Jones confirmed that no one, with the exception of a genealogist here and there through the years, had

used these records for serious historical research. Finally, a new source for a Master’s thesis.

A dissertation, however, requires more. The big questions need answers: which other states also issued questionnaires? Who created these records? How did they go about it and why? The answer seemed simple enough: contact every state and significant government agency, and the overabundance of information gained from this vast search would produce all the answers. It did not. Instead, I had a series of informative but ultimately fruitless discussions with state archivists, librarians and military officers. At least all of this research did produce an answer to one of the most critical questions listed above: besides Connecticut, only the state of Virginia issued a questionnaire of the same type. According to the Library of Virginia, a military service record questionnaire collected from World War I veterans included queries similar to those contained in Connecticut’s questionnaire. Otherwise, state after state lacked information concerning these records and replied with answers such as, “we are unaware of any such forms being sent out by this state” or “we do not have any records relating to World War I questionnaires in our archives.”

Some answers seemed plain wrong. Thus, Vermont responded, “The State Archives does not have records relating to a Service Questionnaire sent out after WWI.” Yet, the Connecticut State Library’s archive contained a sample of an eight-page questionnaire from Vermont from 1919. This indicates one of two possibilities. First, Vermont’s MSRs and all information concerning them disappeared over the decades;

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8 Texas State Archives, e-mail message to author, 20 January 2006 and Massachusetts State Archives, 8 February 2006.
9 Vermont State Archives, e-mail message to author, 23 February 2006.
10 Eight-page questionnaire contained in Box 135, Historical Data File, CSL.
therefore, they are lost forever or they remain buried deep within a dank and forgotten
corner of a random vault somewhere within a derelict municipal building. The other
alternative – perhaps this blank sample from Connecticut’s archive was a proposed
sample copy and Vermont did not have the funding to pursue the project.

Most states responded like Vermont and it began to make sense why no scholars
used these records before: besides Connecticut and Virginia, few states know the
questionnaires even exist. Moreover, the four states that issued questionnaires
(Connecticut, Minnesota, Utah and Virginia), believed their record was unique; no state
had any knowledge another state sent out an MSR to veterans. In addition, no state
archives contained any information concerning the origin of the questionnaire.

The responses of government agencies were also discouraging: “you may wish to
use an Internet search engine or visit a local library” or “I’m afraid you will have to
contact individual state historical departments.” Other states recommended contacting
another department or state agency, only to have the other state agency recommend the
first. In one state the State Archives responded, “There is nothing like this in our State
Council of Defense Collection, you might check with the State Library.” The response
from the Library: “we do not have any records of this kind; another agency who may
have these records is the State Archives.”

Replies from other agencies ranged from helpful to redundant. The best piece of
information came from Mitchell Yockelson of the National Archives. He recommended
a search of the Selective Service System’s (SSS) records at the National Archives.

11 Federal government, e-mail message to author, 26 January 2006 and Department of the Army, United
States Army Heritage and Education Center, Military History Institute, e-mail message to author, 14
February 2006.
12 Indiana State Archives, e-mail message to author, 23 February 2006.
13 Indiana State Library, e-mail message to author, 3 March 2006.
Similar to the state level, however, this information met with a counterpoint from another agency, this time the SSS. According to the SSS’s National Headquarters, “The Selective Service System was not established until September 16, 1940.” Yet, according to the SSS’s website, they inducted 2,810,296 men during World War I. Further research conducted at the National Archives, however, proved that while the SSS did draft men into the service; it did not play any part in the origin of the questionnaires: its task ended with placing the draftees into the training camps.

Many states felt their Adjutant General’s Office (AGO) and the head office in Washington, DC might know of a questionnaire. None did, even the AGO of the United States in Washington, DC did not know of any such records, and later confirmed that the AGO had nothing to do with any questionnaires. The Library of Congress (LOC) provided an immense amount of assistance, combing every key file index for information regarding a questionnaire, but every search produced the same answer: “In a review of the index for that file I did not identify any headings that seemed relevant to your topic.”

Key Facts Concerning the Questionnaires

At first, it would seem no useful information was gathered, but some helpful individuals provided enough information to confirm which states issued a questionnaire and which did not. In addition, there was a definite connection between the creation of

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14 National Headquarters, Selective Service System, e-mail message to author, 3 February 2006.
16 Joint Force Headquarters, District of Columbia National Guard (JFHQ-DC), e-mail message to author, 17 February 2006.
17 Library of Congress, e-mail message to author, 15 February 2006.
World War I historical committees and questionnaire distribution. The proof lies within the papers of Godard and Davis: the former handled all inquiries from veterans concerning the questionnaires and issued certificates of service that he promised when the State Library received a completed questionnaire. The latter, in a newsletter issued in Virginia, wrote of his duties as head of the commission, one of which was to collect the questionnaires.\textsuperscript{18}

In his report concerning the activities of the Connecticut State Library during the term 30 June 1920 to 30 June 1922, Godard expressed his disappointment in the rate of return of the military service questionnaires:

“It is to be regretted that so many of the Connecticut boys who saw service in the World War, do not appreciate the opportunity given by our Department of War Records to record, in their own words and in their own way, on special uniform blanks furnished for this purpose – for the benefit of those who shall come after them – something of the services which they were able to render; and for the benefit of the state and country, a statement of their observations and recommendations.”\textsuperscript{19}

It is obvious Godard considered the questionnaires to be of historical significance and conscientiously exercised his duties and responsibilities as head of the Connecticut Department of War Records – although even he never revealed how he decided which questions to place on the forms.

In 1919, at about the same time in the late winter and early spring Connecticut and Virginia issued their questionnaires. Page 4 of the Connecticut document asked five questions, while Virginia asked an additional question concerning the effect the war had upon a soldier’s religious beliefs. With the exception of this question, these two

\textsuperscript{18} War History Commission News Letter, no. 3, October 1919, War Historical Commission Records, Box 168, LVA.

\textsuperscript{19} George S. Godard, \textit{Report of State Librarian for the two years ended June 30, 1922} (State Archives, Connecticut State Library, 1922), 90.
questionnaires are exact duplicates of each other. This suggests that some government agency created a template for states to follow, but this is not the case, as will be seen below. Besides Connecticut and Virginia, only Minnesota and Utah issued a questionnaire bearing a parallel style. Out of these two states, only Minnesota includes the state seal in the top left corner of the first page, which renders it similar to that of Connecticut or Virginia. Both states also request the veteran to include a photograph and any additional information to help detail the soldier’s experience during the war. Minnesota, however, matches Connecticut and Virginia in presentation and style, an abridged record, but no doubt from the same template.

Rather than a questionnaire or a service card, Missouri, New Mexico and Wyoming issued a sheet of vital statistics. This sheet resembles a service card, but in the two standard paper sizes of eight and a half by eleven or fourteen inches. Many archive and library websites provide basic information on their state’s questionnaire or service card, but do not detail anything concerning who proposed the idea. Though useful for statistical purposes, these service cards did not allow veterans to write about their wartime experiences. More important, every other state’s record does not match the comprehensiveness of Connecticut, Minnesota, Utah or Virginia.

State Historical Commissions

A vital question of this project is why only two states issued a comprehensive questionnaire, while the rest of the country sent out similar surveys or service records, but

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20 See comparison of Connecticut, Minnesota and Virginia questionnaires at the end of Appendix A.
21 As discussed, Vermont created a questionnaire, but did not send it to returning veterans or the returns are lost.
22 Vermont’s questionnaire also contained its state seal in the top left corner.
23 Vermont requests the same data on the last page of its questionnaire.
nothing as detailed. Another is the question of which state created the questionnaire or service records. Most important though, is why some states did not create committees and service cards.

The formation of these historical committees was a major initiative undertaken by individual states. To form a commission whose sole purpose was compiling data on World War I both money and coordination. The only federal initiative was the recommendation to establish a historical commission, but no mandatory guidelines for states to follow exist. If such legislation had existed, each state’s war record and committee would have the same structure. On their own, states relied on each other for direction, as shown in another correspondence to Wyoming in which Arthur Davis asked, “what methods you employed to secure official citations and authentic information.”24 Figure 21 on the following page, illustrates the differences in each state’s level of commitment regarding its historical commission and production of service records.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Committee Established</th>
<th>Type of Record Sent</th>
<th>Date Sent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>Not created</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>Not created</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>Not created</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>Not created</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>Not created</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>March 1919</td>
<td>Four pages, five questions</td>
<td>early 1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Service Card</td>
<td>late 1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Service Card</td>
<td>mid 1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Service Card</td>
<td>mid 1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>Not created</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>Not created</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>Not created</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>Not created</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>Not created</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>15 March 1918</td>
<td>Service Card</td>
<td>1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>Not created</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maine</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Service Card</td>
<td>late 1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>Not created</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>Not created</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Not created</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>April 1919</td>
<td>Four pages</td>
<td>late 1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Service Card</td>
<td>early 1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>August 1919</td>
<td>Service Sheet</td>
<td>late 1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>Not created</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Service Card</td>
<td>mid 1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Service Card</td>
<td>mid 1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
<td>Not created</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>31 March 1919</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Service Sheet</td>
<td>late 1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Service Card</td>
<td>early 1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Service Card</td>
<td>mid 1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Dakota</td>
<td>Not created</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>Not created</td>
<td>None issued</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>28 April 1917</td>
<td>Service Card</td>
<td>mid 1919</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 21: Creation of Historical Committees and Service Records.
Research revealed correspondence between archivists of some states regarding the problems involved in establishing Historical Commissions during the period following World War I. Thomas Owen, Director of the Alabama Department of Archives and History, wrote to Eunice G. Anderson, State Historian of Wyoming: “In many states the regularly established Historical Departments, Commissions or Societies have for months been collecting such data, while in other states historians of State Councils of Defense, or of Committees of Public Safety, have been appointed, with carefully selected historians of County Councils of Defense.”  

Several correspondences from the Wyoming archives discuss the need of financial support that hindered the committee’s performance. Eunice Anderson wrote, “Owing to lack of sufficient funds and a staff large enough to compile such statistics, Wyoming’s Historical Department has not as yet gathered as much data regarding our service men as we hope ultimately to do.”  

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congratulates the Virginia War History Commission for their “splendid” work in collecting war source material, but also laments at her state’s inability to match Virginia’s work. She notes, “We of this Department were very disappointed to not succeed in obtaining a special appropriation for the carrying on of this division of History in the State of Wyoming.” These committees depended on non-government funding and volunteers in order to maintain their agency. Tennessee provides this valuable information. This state only distributed a standard service card, however, a government record from their archives proves each state funded the creation of state historical committees if resources were available. Tennessee Senate Joint Resolution 12 reads, “Resolved, that this committee shall serve without compensation, and that the Governor be requested to direct the sympathetic help of every department of the state government to assist in their undertaking.”

Committees collected any material dealing with their state’s participation in the war. These collections included diaries, memoirs, newspaper clippings, soldiers’ souvenirs and every type of war memorabilia possible. The name of Connecticut’s collection is the Historic Data File found within the War Records Department. Within this collection are many of the items listed above as well as dozens of photographs taken by the United States Signal Corps and memorial parade programs from individual towns. The collection of service records issued to all returning veterans formed a part of the committee’s duties. Many states did not receive a large response for their efforts, and often a veteran only partially filled out the form. Around the same amount of veterans

28 Tennessee, Senate Joint Resolution 12, 1919, Tennessee State Library and Archives.
filled out the entire survey (each question on all four pages) as shown in the Figure 22 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Soldiers in Service</th>
<th>MSRs Returned</th>
<th>Percent Returned</th>
<th>Full Completion</th>
<th>Percent Full Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>67,000</td>
<td>12,947</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>21,000</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>14,900</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 22: MSRs state return rates.

In Tennessee on 24 January 1919 “the state legislature resolved that a committee of 25 be appointed, to be known as the Tennessee State Historical Committee, part of whose duties was to ‘collect, compile, index and arrange all data and information of every kind and character relating to the part Tennessee has played in the Great War.’”

Virginia established the same type of committee: “on 7 January 1919, Governor Davis created the Virginia War History Commission whose goal was ‘to complete an accurate and complete history of Virginia’s military, economic and political participation in the World War.’”

States, such as New York, which did not distribute a service record, still formed a committee: “These records were procured in 1920, by the Bureau of War Records, from the federal government pursuant to Chapter 75 of the Laws of 1919, which directed the Adjutant General, through the Bureau, to compile, collect, and preserve the ‘records and

relics...relating to the wars in which the state participated.” The legislation of New York, though similar in style to the other states, never mentions any other projects or questionnaires.

At least twenty states verified the existence of some form of World War I veterans’ records or of a historical committee, but the difficulty lies in discovering the origin of these documents and committees. Every state that conducted some type of survey responded with the same answer: they have the records, but no correspondence on the origins of the questionnaire or the historical committee. States disbanded many of the historical commissions created in 1919 in the early 1920s, due to lack of funding or interest from state officials. Tennessee abolished their committee in 1923, Utah in 1920.

**Similarities Exist**

The federal government, which did issue guidelines for the creation of historical committees, could also have given advice for the creation of service records and questionnaires; but it did not. There is no evidence indicating participation of the federal government with questionnaires, what each state did, depended on their initiative. There is a strong influence seen with the creation and organization of historical commissions or war records department within each state. A prime example is Connecticut:

In 1919, the General Assembly created the Department of War Records in the State Library ‘whose purpose and duty it shall be to collect, classify, index and install in the library all available material relating to Connecticut participation, public or private, in the world war and thus to establish a permanent and accessible record of its extent and character, such record to be as complete and comprehensive as possible and to cover not only the activities of the state, its subdivisions and agencies but also of Connecticut agencies of the federal

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government, organizations of private persons and of those individuals who were
direct participants in the great struggle, whether as soldiers, sailors, aviators or
otherwise.” 32

This same phrasing is found throughout the records of each state that formed
similar committees. In Utah, the questionnaire “was the result of a request by Governor
Bamberger to the State Council of Defense that a War History of the State be
compiled.” 33

When first beginning this project, it seemed each state received a template or a set
of guidelines from the federal government. After researching at the National Archives,
however, it is apparent the federal government was not involved with the questionnaires.
There is not a single mention of the questionnaires within the entire War Records
collection in the National Archives. After America entered the war, the Adjutant
General’s Office decided to create casualty cards to keep a running record for family and
friends on the death of each AEF soldier. “It would appear that the casualty file
established in February of 1918 was the forerunner of the idea of furnishing statement of
service cards to the several States.” 34 However, these service cards are concerned with
veterans’ benefits not historical preservation, as the questionnaires of Connecticut and
Virginia affirm on the first page of their service records. Since there is no federal
initiative for the creation of questionnaires, the records must have came from a personal
relationship between the three states that issued them.

(World War I service questionnaires, 1914-1918).
34 Lewis B. Hershey, History of Furnishing Statement of Service Cards to the States, 1792-1948
The Connecticut and Virginia Connection

The three states with similar questionnaires do share the same origin, but within this triangle, the strongest connection is between Connecticut and Virginia. In a letter dated 27 January 1919, Col. C. R. Keiley, the Federal Field Secretary for the Council of Defense informed Arthur Kyle Davis about the “submission of questionnaires.” Keiley stated that the war history of Virginia was to be even more extensive than that which Governor Davis and the Virginia Council of Defense planned. Keiley asked Davis to submit a questionnaire at a meeting on 4 February 1919. Prior to this mention of a questionnaire, Virginia’s Military Service records were in the form of an index card (the type of record the majority of the other states issued). In a letter to Arthur Davis, dated 15 January 1919, Governor Westmoreland Davis refers to the card system used by the Virginia War History Commission. The card included vital statistics as well as military service dates and locations, but did not contain queries regarding the veterans’ beliefs and impressions of the war as the questionnaire did.

Further reference to Connecticut’s questionnaire is found in the summary minutes of a conference attended by both Arthur Kyle Davis and George Godard. On 9 September and 10 September 1919, at the conference of representatives of State War Historical Agencies held in Washington, DC, George S. Godard of Connecticut’s Department of War Records, reported, “To further the filling of questionnaires, certificates of service are given to every man answering the questions.” Arthur K. Davis made no mention of questionnaires in his report at this same conference. Was this

36 Summary of conference of representatives of State War Historical Agencies, 9-10 September 1919, Record Group 62, The Records of the Council of National Defense, Box 913, NARA II.
because it was not Davis’s invention but Godard’s? If this reference made to a questionnaire was in fact the military service questionnaire studied here, it seems unlikely that Virginia issued its form first due to documentation indicating Connecticut was already sending out its forms in March 1919. Then during the spring and summer of that year, Virginia sent out their questionnaires, seemingly indicating that Davis implemented Godard’s project.

**The Questionnaires**

There are only four minor differences when comparing the two questionnaires from Connecticut and Virginia. The first two differences occur on page 1. The wording of the paragraph below each state’s seal differs and Virginia has blanks for College Fraternities and Education. The other two differences occur on page 4. Virginia drops the second part of question 3, which asks about overseas experiences and adds a sixth question concerning the war’s effect on a veteran’s religious beliefs. Besides these slight variations, the two questionnaires are alike.

At first, it would seem that there must have been a federal initiative to create such a questionnaire. As mentioned, however, there are no records within the National Archives to support this idea. In addition, with only two states issuing a questionnaire of this type, the only explanation is a direct and personal connection between the two states. One state copied the other. According to the Latin adage, *lectio difficilior potior*, the more difficult reading is the stronger, then Virginia, whose questionnaire includes information on education and religion, came first. Yet, Virginia makes a précis of
question 3 concerning overseas experience. Not excluding Minnesota, perhaps it is the
opposite, and the thinnest of the three created the questionnaire.

The other factor to reflect on is that within Virginia’s archives, there is a copy of
Connecticut’s questionnaire, including three photographs of the War Department
holdings at the Connecticut State Library and several correspondences between Godard
and Davis. Did Godard send a copy of a questionnaire to Davis, which he used to create
Virginia’s questionnaire? A personal connection existed between these two men, but
how influential was it? Did both men exchange ideas during 1918 to create the
questionnaire or did one man share his idea with the other? The answer lies within
Minnesota’s archives, which contain a copy of Connecticut’s questionnaire, so both
Minnesota and Virginia have a copy of Connecticut’s MSR, but Connecticut contains
neither. The most logical conclusion is Godard, or one of his associates, created the MSR
and shared it with Minnesota and Virginia, both of which, quickly drafted their own
designs and mailed them off to returning veterans. Below are the questionnaires from the
three states.
Figure 23: Page one of Connecticut’s MSR.
WAR RECORD

Inducted into service or enlisted on ___________________________ at ___________________________ 

(date) (place)

in the ___________________________ as a ___________________________

(rank)

section of the ___________________________.

(Infantry, Artillery, Aviation, etc)

Identification number ___________________________.

Assigned originally to ___________________________ ___________________________

(company) (regiment) (division)

(or) ___________________________ at ___________________________.

(date) (place)

Trained or stationed before going to Europe:

School, camp, station, ship ___________________________ ___________________________.

From (date) to (date)

Transferred to:

Company ___________________________ Regiment ___________________________ Division ___________________________ Ship ___________________________ Date ___________________________ New Location ___________________________.

Promoted:

From ___________________________ to ___________________________ ___________________________.

(rank) (rank) (date)

Embarked from ___________________________ on ___________________________.

(port) (ship)

and arrived at ___________________________.

(place) (foreign port) (date)

Proceeded from ___________________________.

(date)

From ___________________________.

(date)

From ___________________________.

(date)

Trained or stationed abroad:

Country ___________________________ Place ___________________________.

From (date) to (date)

NOTE: Should form or space in any case prove inadequate for recording the desired information, please state facts on separate sheet of paper and enclose with this record.

Figure 24: Page two of Connecticut’s MSR.
WAR RECORD

First went into action: 

Participated in the following engagements: 

Cited, decorated, or otherwise honored for distinguished services (give circumstantial accounts of exploits, including dates and places where performed, also by whom and in what manner the honors were bestowed):

Killed in action, killed by accident, died of wounds, died of disease, wounded, gassed, shell-shocked, taken prisoner: 

Nature of casualty         Place         Date

Under medical care: 

Name of hospital    Location    From (Date)    To (Date)

Permanently disabled (through loss of limb, eyesight, etc.): 

Arrived at (American port) on (ship) (date) (from) 

Discharged from service at (place) (date) 

as a (rank)

RETURN TO CIVIL LIFE

Occupation after the war:

If a change of occupation was occasioned by reason of disability acquired in the service, describe the process of re-education and readjustment, and indicate the agencies or individuals chiefly instrumental in furnishing the new occupations:

NOTE: Should form or space in any case prove inadequate for recording the desired information, please state facts on separate sheet of paper and enclose with this record.

Figure 25: Page three of Connecticut's MSR.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

What was your attitude toward military service in general and toward your call in particular?

What were the effects of camp experiences in the United States upon yourself — mental and physical?

What were the effects upon yourself of your overseas experience, either in the army or navy or in camp in France or in England?

If you took part in the fighting, what impressions were made upon you by this experience?

What has been the effect of all these experiences as contrasted with your state of mind before the war?

Photographs — If possible enclose one taken before entering the service and one taken afterwards in uniform, both signed and dated.

Additional data

Signed at: __________________ on __________________

______________

(full name)

(date) (rank) (branch of service)

The information contained in this record, unless otherwise indicated, was obtained from the following persons or sources:

Figure 26: Page four of Connecticut's MSR.
STATE OF MINNESOTA

MILITARY SERVICE RECORD

Compiled by the Minnesota War Records Commission as a permanent memorial of the deeds of Minnesota soldiers and sailors in the service of the federal and state governments during American participation in the World War.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name in full</th>
<th>(Christian name)</th>
<th>(middle name)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of birth</td>
<td>(month)</td>
<td>(day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place of birth</td>
<td>(town)</td>
<td>(county)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, colored, Indian, or Mongolian?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birthplace of father</td>
<td>(country)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birthplace of mother</td>
<td></td>
<td>(country)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nearest relatives</td>
<td></td>
<td>Residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous military service or training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation before entry into the service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence before entry into the service</td>
<td>(street number)</td>
<td>(town)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trained or stationed abroad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Place</td>
<td>From (date)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First went into action: (date) (place)

Participated in the following battles:

Cited, decorated, or otherwise honored for distinguished services (give circumstantial accounts of exploits, including dates and places where performed, also by whom and in what manner the honors were bestowed):

Killed in action, killed by accident, died of wounds, died of disease, wounded, gassed, shell-shocked, taken prisoner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of casualty</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Under medical care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of hospital</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>From (date)</th>
<th>to (date)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Permanently disabled (through loss of limb, eyesight, etc.): ...

Arrived at: (American port) (date)

Discharged from service at: (place) (date)

If a... (initials)

Note: Should form or space in any case prove inadequate for recording the desired information, please state facts on separate sheet of paper and enclose with this record.
Return to Civil Life

Resumed former activities in civil life under much the same conditions as before? (yes or no)

If not, what changes occurred with respect to occupation, employer, etc. and why?

If a change of occupation was occasioned by reason of disability acquired in the service, describe the process of re-education and readjustment, and indicate the agencies or individuals chiefly instrumental in furnishing the new start:

Home address

(street number) (town) (county) (state)

The information contained in this record (except as otherwise indicated) was obtained from the following persons or sources:

Note. The value of this record will be greatly increased if there is filed with it a photograph of the subject, preferably in uniform, together with letters or copies of letters written by him, a specially written account of his experiences, and other things connected with his life in the service.

(This space reserved for file references)
Note. This Questionnaire should be completed as far as possible with such information as can be furnished at once, and returned with Photographs and additional notes or letters, if available, to Secretary, Virginia War History Commission, State Capitol, Richmond, Va.

WAR HISTORY COMMISSION
State of Virginia
MILITARY SERVICE RECORD

Compiled by the Virginia War History Commission for a permanent record in the State Library, where it will be filed, as a memorial of the deeds of Virginia soldiers and sailors in the service of the federal, state and allied governments during American participation in the World War.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name in full</th>
<th>(family name)</th>
<th>(first name)</th>
<th>(middle name)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of birth</td>
<td>(month)</td>
<td>(day)</td>
<td>(year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place of birth</td>
<td>(town)</td>
<td>(county)</td>
<td>(state)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of father</td>
<td>Birthplace</td>
<td>(country)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maiden name of mother</td>
<td>Birthplace</td>
<td>(country)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Are you White, Colored, Indian or Mongolian?

Citizen ... 
Voter ... 
Church ... 
(yes or no) 
(yes or no) 
(denomination)

Married ... 
To ... 
Born ... 
at ... 
(maiden name)

Children ... 
Born ... 
at ... 
(name)

Fraternal Orders

College Fraternities

Previous military service or training

Education (Preparatory) ... 
(Preparatory) 
(University) ... 
(University) 
(College) ... 
(college) 
(Degree) ... 
(Degrees)

Occupation before entry into the service ... 
; employer

Residence before entry into the service 
(street number) 
(town) 
(country) 
(street number) 
(town) 
(country) 
(state)

Present home address 
(street number) 
(town) 
(country) 
(state)

Figure 31: Page one of Virginia’s MSR.
WAR RECORD

Inducted into service or enlisted on .................................................. (date) (place)

In the ............................................................................................. (rank)

the ............................................................................................. (infantry, artillery, aviation, etc.)

(Regular Army, National Guard, Home Guard, National Army, Navy, Naval Reserve, or Marine Corps)

Identification number .................................................................

Assigned originally to (company) ........................................ (regiment) (division)

(or) ............................................................................................. (place)

Trained or stationed before going to Europe:— ..........................................................

Transferred to:—

Company | Regiment | Division | Ship | Date | New Location

Promoted:—

From (rank) to (rank) ..........................................................

Embarked from .............................................. (port) on (ship) .............................................. (date)

and arrived at .............................................. (foreign port) (date)

Proceeded from .............................................. to .............................................. (date)

From .............................................. to .............................................. (date)

From .............................................. to .............................................. (date)

Trained or stationed abroad:—

Country | Place | From (date) to (date)

Note:—Should form or space in any case prove inadequate for recording the desired information, please state facts on
separate sheet of paper and enclose with this record.
**WAR RECORD**

First went into action ___________________________ ___________________________
(date) (place)

Participated in the following engagements

... ...

Cited, decorated, or otherwise honored for distinguished services (give circumstantial accounts of exploits, including dates and places where performed, also by whom and in what manner the honors were bestowed):

... ...

Killed in action, killed by accident, died of wounds, died of disease, wounded, gassed, shell-shocked taken prisoner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of casualty</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Under medical care:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of hospital</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>From (date)</th>
<th>to (date)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Permanently disabled (through loss of limb, eyesight, etc.)

Arrived at ___________________________ on ___________________________
(American port) (ship) (date) (from)

Discharged from service at ___________________________ on ___________________________
(place) (ship) (date) (from)

as a ___________________________
(rank)

**RETURN TO CIVIL LIFE**

Occupation after the war

If a change of occupation was occasioned by reason of disability acquired in the service, describe the process of re-education and readjustment, and indicate the agencies or individuals chiefly instrumental in furnishing the new occupations:

... ...

Note:—Should form or space in any case prove inadequate for recording the desired information, please state facts on separate sheet of paper and enclose with this record.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

What was your attitude toward military service in general and toward your call in particular?

What were the effects of camp experiences in the United States upon yourself—mental and physical?

What were the effects upon yourself of your overseas experience?

What effect, if any, did your experience have on your religious belief?

If you took part in the fighting, what impressions were made upon you by this experience?

What has been the effect of all these experiences as contrasted with your state of mind before the war?

Photographs—If possible enclose one taken before entering the service and one taken afterwards in uniform, both signed and dated.

Additional data

Signed at Place on (date)
(full name) (rank) (branch of service)

The information contained in this record, unless otherwise indicated, was obtained from the following persons or sources:

Figure 34: Page four of Virginia’s MSR.
APPENDIX B

BIOGRAPHIES

Anderson, James W. Anderson trained at Camp Gordon from 10 August 1917 to 6 May 1918, sailed aboard the Persia out of New York on 6 May 1918, arriving in London on 21 May 1918. Anderson entered the service at the age of twenty-two on 10 August 1917 with a medical degree from the Atlanta Medical College; he engaged in action at the Somme, St. Mihiel, Argonne and the Toul sector.

Andreozzi, Nicola. Andreozzi enlisted on 25 April 1918 and trained at Camp Devens before leaving for France. He entered combat on 2 August 1918 at the Marne and served with the Army of Occupation; the army discharged Andreozzi on 19 May 1919.

Angell, Ralph M. Angell a high school educated clerical worker entered the Marine Corps on 13 May 1918 at the age of twenty-four. He trained at Paris Island, South Carolina from 13 May to 2 July 1918 and at Quantico, Virginia from 3 July to 4 August 1918, embarked from Philadelphia aboard the Henderson on 12 August 1918 and arrived in Brest on 27 August 1918, and went into action on 11 September 1918 at the Toul sector. Angell spent five months at base hospitals in France after he was wounded.

Augermann, William G. B. During his tour of duty, Augermann engaged in combat at the Toul sector, St. Mihiel, Verdun and Meuse-Argonne; Augermann was wounded in action on 20 April 1918.

Bagley, Raleigh A. Bagley trained at Camp Roanoke, Virginia and in Alabama, sailed on the Finland from Hoboken on 15 June 1918, arriving in Saint-Nazaire, France on 27 June 1918; he had no training abroad.

Barnes, John E. Barnes joined the Norfolk Light Artillery Blues on 20 June 1916 “when the President called for volunteers in regard to the Mexican situation.” A private in B Battery, 11th Field Artillery, 29th Division, Barnes trained at Camp Stuart, Virginia, arrived in Liverpool on 11 July 1918, attended motor school in Lyon, France from 26 August to 23 September 1918. Barnes fought at Meuse-Argonne and served with the Army of Occupation from 20 November 1918 to 2 July 1919.
Barrow, Emory P. Barrow was inducted on 10 May 1918, trained at Camp Wadsworth, South Carolina from 19 May to 30 June 1918, and Camp Mills from 2 July to 7 July 1918, with Company D, 1st Army Military Police Battalion. He then embarked on the Deana Belfast from New York on 7 July 1918 arriving in France on 27 July 1918 and received gas school training at Châtillon-sur-Seine from 15 August-22 August 1918. He saw combat on 1 September 1918 at the Vosges sector and the Meuse-Argonne on 30 September 1918.

Bell, Alden. Bell served as a Private First Class in the 116th Infantry, 29th Division; he trained at Camp McClellan, Alabama, embarked from Hoboken and arrived in Saint-Nazaire in May 1918. Bell “was blinded for 4 months by a bursting German gas shell, Argonne Forest,” and he saw action from July to November 1918; the Army discharged him on 14 April 1919 and he returned to employment as a lawyer. After the war, Bell lectured on “The Patriotism of the American Soldier” in the United States, Rome and Paris.

Bishop, Hugh H. Private Bishop served with Battery B, 3rd Field Artillery; he embarked aboard the Arania out of New York and arrived in Liverpool on 2 September 1917. Bishop trained at camps in France from 8 September 1917 to 23 February 1918; he entered action on 27 February 1918 at Bonecourt where his Battery was cited for bravery in action under heavy shellfire; he was later wounded in his left leg below the knee by gunshot on 16 September 1918. Bishop received his discharge on 29 February 1920 and worked as a shoe salesperson.

Blair, Harlin. Blair trained at Camp Lewis prior to his embarkation to France on 23 July 1918 and served with Company E, 91st Division.

Bonham, James F. On 4 August 1917, Bonham enlisted and then trained at Kelly Field, Texas, and Fort Sill, Oklahoma; he embarked for Liverpool aboard the Cedric out of New York, arriving on 18 March 1918. Bonham was cited for expert marksmanship with a Colt .45 pistol.

Bowen, Joseph B. Bowen received commission as a Second Lieutenant in the Air Service on 19 February 1918; he was a member of the 148th Aero Squadron on active duty with the 32nd British Aero Squadron. Bowen was killed in action on 7 September 1918.

Brown, Hugh E. Brown trained with the 1st Balloon Company at Omaha, Nebraska beginning on 13 May 1917, embarked from Newport News aboard the America on 4 June 1918 and arrived in Brest on 18 June 1918. He served as a Corporal with the 166 Aero Squadron Balloon Service in France, and in Germany as a member of the Army of Occupation commencing on 15 November 1918.

Brownley, Wilbur T. Brownley trained at Camp McClellan, Alabama from 3 September 1917 to 13 June 1918; he embarked on 15 June 1918 from Hoboken aboard
the DeKalb, arrived in Brest on 27 June 1918 and entered action on 28 July 1918; he was gassed at Bois de Consenvoye on 19 October 1918.

Callahan, Harvey G. Callahan was a Second Lieutenant in the Field Artillery and trained in Alexandria, Virginia from May to December 1917. He embarked from New York on the Olympic on 11 January 1918, and arrived in Liverpool on 19 January 1918; Callahan entered action on 20 March 1918 at Verdun; he was discharged on 23 August 1919.

Campbell, Harry S. Campbell trained at Camp Niantic in Connecticut from 22 August to 9 October 1917, embarked from Montréal aboard the Megantic on 10 October 1917 and arrived in France at Neufchâteau on 1 November 1917. On 11 February 1918, Campbell saw action at Chemin des Dames, and participated in the engagements at Toul, Aisne-Marne, St. Mihiel and the Meuse-Argonne. Campbell was promoted to Private First Class and then to Corporal on 21 September 1918. After the war, Campbell returned to his position as a traveling salesman for Colt’s Firearms.

Carini, John F. Carini entered the service on 19 September 1917 and served in Company C, 120th Machine Gun Battalion, 32nd Division; he trained at Camp Devens from 19 September 1917 to 7 July 1918; he then embarked from Boston on 8 July 1918 and arrived in England on 22 July 1918. Carini saw action beginning on 28 August 1918 at Soissons, and fought at Aisne, and the Meuse and Argonne Offensives; he received his discharge on 23 May 1919 and returned to employment as a mechanic.

Case, Carroll B. Case trained at Goodwin Park in Hartford for a week in July 1917 and then at Camp Yale in New Haven from 23 July to 15 September 1917. Case went into action at Chemin des Dames on 8 February 1918, and participated in the engagements at Seicheprey, the second battle of the Marne, St. Mihiel, Marcheville and Meuse-Argonne; he was gassed at Seicheprey on 20 April 1918; the army discharged Case on 29 April 1919.

Castle, Wayne H. Castle volunteered on 12 June 1917 and served with the 18th Company, 5th Regiment of the Marine Corps. He trained in San Diego and Mare Island, California, and embarked on 26 May 1918. His commanding officer cited him for bravery on the Champagne front for taking a machine gun nest.

Castleman, John R. Castleman trained at Fort Meyer, Virginia from 14 May to 4 July 1917 and then at Wilbur Wright Aviation School at the Ohio State University and in Dayton, Ohio from 4 July to 25 October 1917. He embarked on 2 November 1917, went into action on 18 August 1918 as a First Lieutenant with the Army Air Service and received a Distinguished Service Cross.

Catlin, Albertus W. Catlin was born in Gowanda, New York on 1 December 1868; he graduated from Annapolis in 1890, served in the Spanish War aboard the Maine, graduated from the National War College in May 1917 and led the attack on Belleau Wood on 6 June 1918 where he was wounded by a bullet through the right lung.
**Chenault, James E.** Chenault enlisted at the age of nineteen the day after America declared war as a Private in the 116th Company, 29th Division; before the war he worked as a paper colorer at Standard Paper Company in Richmond, Virginia. He trained at Camp McClellan, Alabama from 19 April 1917 to 10 June 1918. Chenault embarked aboard the *Finland* out of Hoboken on 16 June 1918, and arrived in Saint-Nazaire on 28 June; he entered combat on 23 July at Alsace.

**Claman, Garnett D.** Claman entered service on 28 July 1918, trained at Camp Sevier and arrived in France in June 1918. Claman saw action beginning on 17 July 1918 at Ypres where he was gassed and wounded by shrapnel, which caused almost total loss of eyesight.

**Clary, Thomas M.** Clary enlisted in the army on 30 October 1917, and served as a Corporal with the 15th Company, 369th Regiment. A blacksmith by trade, Clary entered the service on 30 October 1917, spent four months at Camp Lee and set sail on the *Pocahontas* from New Jersey in March 1918. He arrived in Brest and spent six months in the trenches.

**Cofrancesco, Humbert F.** Cofrancesco was inducted into the National Army on 3 October 1918; he was a student at Yale University and trained there until his discharge on 19 December 1918.

**Cooke, Joseph R.** Cooke was a Captain in the Infantry, 82nd Division; he trained at Camp Gordon, Georgia from 29 August 1917 to 11 April 1918, and embarked aboard the *Khyber* out of Hoboken on 6 May 1918. Cooke engaged in combat beginning on 26 June 1918 at the Toul sector; he was wounded by an enemy hand grenade on 29 July 1918 and returned to the front line at Meuse-Argonne, from 6 October to 1 November 1918.

**Cooke, Wylie R.** Cooke was a First Lieutenant with Company D, 314th Infantry, 80th Division and had been with the Mexican Border Service for six months prior to the war. He attended the Second Reserve Officers Training Camp at Fort Meyers, Virginia; he trained at Camp Lee from 15 December 1917 to 25 May 1918. Cooke left from Newport News aboard the *Mercury* on 26 May 1918, and arrived in Bordeaux on 8 June 1918; he saw action at Argonne, and following his discharge found employment as a chemist.

**Covington, John W.** Covington enlisted on 10 September 1917 in the National Army, and trained at Camp Funston, Kansas from 15 December 1917 to 25 May 1918, where he was also an instructor. He entered action on the front line on 12 September 1918 and was later cited for bravery.

**Crawford, Waverly L.** Crawford entered the army on 10 January 1917 and trained at Camp Sherman, Ohio with the 325th Field Signal Battalion of the National Army. He was in camp 10 January to 10 June 1917, and embarked on the *Crisaba* from Hoboken on 10 June 1917 arriving in Brest on 14 June 1917. He went into action on 23 July 1917 at Vosges and fought at the Argonne; he received his discharge on 31 March 1918 and became a public school teacher.
Curry, Harry E. Curry served with the National Guard at Potomac Park, Washington, DC until 24 December 1917; he trained at Camp Stuart from 25 December 1917 to 30 March 1918; he embarked on the Susquehanna out of Newport News on 30 March 1918 and arrived in Saint-Nazaire on 14 April 1918. Curry entered action on 26 September 1918 at Champagne and was in battle there until 14 October 1918. He stated, “At a rough calculation about 250 killed, 75 wounded, 150 gassed, 30 shell-shocked, no prisoners” during the battle. The 372nd Regiment, 37th Infantry in which he was a Sergeant, was “cited for bravery under heavy shell fire and captured 10 Germans.” The Army discharged Curry on 1 March 1919, and he returned to work as a laborer.

Daniel, Channing W. Daniel served with the 16th Field Artillery, 4th Division and entered Reserve Officers Training Camp on 28 August 1917. After three months, he received his commission and the army sent him to Camp Greene, North Carolina for an additional five months; he left New York on 21 May 1918 aboard the Northern Pacific. On 1 August 1918, he took part in the Marne salient and participated in fighting at Aisne-Marne, St. Mihiel and the Argonne-Meuse defensive sector. Daniel was slightly gassed and then wounded at Argonne on 29 September and on 2 October 1918.

Davis, Curtis R. Davis trained at Camp Mills, Long Island, New York from August to 18 October 1917; he embarked from Hoboken aboard the Covington on 18 October 1917 and arrived in Saint-Nazaire on 1 November 1917. Davis entered action on 20 February 1918 at the Lorraine front; he also saw action at Champagne-Marne, St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne, and served with the Army of Occupation.

Day, Arlie I. Private First Class Day served with the 318th Regiment, 80th Division; he trained at Camp Lee from 24 October 1917 to 1 May 1918; he embarked aboard the Vaterland out of New Jersey on 21 May 1918 and arrived in Brest on 30 May 1918. Day entered action on 4 July 1918 at Verdun; he was gassed at Argonne on 5 October 1918.

Deilus, Robert. Deilus was a Private First Class in Company B, 305th Regiment, 77th Division. He trained at Camp Devens and participated in action at Alsace-Lorraine, Argonne Forest and Meuse River. After his discharge, Deilus worked at a hat factory.

Dettor, David C. Dettor entered the service on 22 September 1917; he trained at Camp Lee from 22 September 1917 to 26 May 1918, sailed aboard the Mongolia out of Newport News on 26 May 1918 and arrived in Brest on 8 June 1918. Dettor participated in action at the Somme from 18 June to 1 July 1918 and at Meuse-Argonne from 26 September 1918 to 8 October 1918. After his discharge, he returned to farming and worked as a sales clerk.

Dickerson, John N. Dickerson entered the National Army at the age of twenty-eight on 19 September 1917 with the 302nd Field Artillery, and trained at Camp Devens before going overseas; he trained at Camp No. 2 in France from 6 August to 16 September 1918.

Distefano, Salvatore. Distefano, a Private First Class in the Regular Army, entered the service on 21 July 1917, trained in Syracuse, embarked on 7 September 1917 and arrived
Du Trienille Jr., Hamilton. Du Trienille enlisted in the National Guard on 10 September 1917 and trained at the Springfield Armory and at Camp Bartlett in Massachusetts from 10 September to 22 November 1917. He then trained at Camp Green, North Carolina from 24 November to 10 December 1917 and at Camp Stuart in Virginia from 11 December 1917 to 30 March 1918. He embarked from Newport News aboard the *Susquehanna* on 30 March 1918 and arrived in Saint-Nazaire on 14 April 1918. He saw action at Champagne during the September offensive from 28 September to 7 October 1918. After his discharge from the infantry, Du Trienille returned to his occupation as a letter carrier.

Dunn, Samuel. The army assigned Dunn to the Ordnance Corps, and he trained from 18 June to 24 July 1918 at Camp Hancock, Georgia. He then embarked aboard the *America* out of Newport News, Virginia on 31 July 1918 and landed at Brest on 12 August 1918.

Duval Jr., Robert C. After attending the First Training Camp for Officers at Fort Meyers, Virginia for ninety days, on 14 August 1917, Duval received his commission as a First Lieutenant in Company A, 318th Infantry, 80th Division. Stationed at Camp Lee for the next nine months, Duval did not sail for France until May 1918. Duval fought at St. Mihiel and the Meuse-Argonne from 25 September to 5 October 1918 and was wounded in the left thigh by a piece of high explosive (HE) shell in an attack on Bois de Forêt on 5 October 1918; he remained at base hospitals from 6 October to 29 December 1918. The army discharged him on 27 January 1919, he then returned to practice law.

Dwyer, John P. Dwyer spent his camp days in New Haven at Camp Yale, from June until September 1917. When Dwyer left aboard the Transport *Lenake* in September, the ship broke down two days out. Upon returning to shore, he spent the next three weeks at another camp at Fort Totten. In October, he was aboard the *Adriatic* with other Connecticut soldiers and arrived in Europe in November 1917. The army promoted Dwyer to Sergeant in October 1918. Dwyer received his discharge on 17 November 1919 after serving with the 204th Military Police in Paris from January to July 1919.

Edwards, Dan. Edwards served in the 26th Infantry, 1st Division, as a Sergeant. He embarked on 12 June 1917 from Hoboken aboard the *San Jacinto*, and arrived in Saint-Nazaire on 26 June 1917 with the first American troops to arrive in France. Edwards won the Distinguished Service Cross and the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Elmore, Theodore. Elmore trained at Paris Island, South Carolina from 30 June 1916 to 13 January 1917; he served aboard the *Maine* from 26 January 1917 to 9 March 1917, and in Cuba from 10 March to 25 May 1917. Elmore embarked from Philadelphia aboard the *Henderson* on 8 June 1917, arrived in Saint-Nazaire on 27 June 1917 and entered his “first real battle” on 6 June 1918 at Belleau Woods. Corporal Elmore also participated at Chateau Thierry, St. Mihiel, Meuse-Argonne, and served with the Army of Occupation. Elmore “received citation certificate and Croix de Guerre for carrying
important messages through heavy barrages and machine gun fire in Belleau Woods June
1918 by French government.”

**Fields, John S.** Fields, drafted on 29 October 1917, served with the 369th Infantry and
trained at Camp Lee from 29 October 1917 to 2 March 1918, and then at Camp Merritt,
New Jersey from 2 March to 14 March 1918, when he embarked on the *Pocahontas* from
Hoboken arriving in France on 27 March 1918.

**Fischman, Maurice B.** Fischman embarked for France aboard the *Arcadia* from Halifax
and arrived on 26 September 1917. He spent two months in the base hospital in Langue,
France; the army discharged him on 26 March 1919 and he returned to his wife and
young son, and to his occupation as a printer in New Haven.

**Flynn, Alexander J.** Flynn was almost twenty-two years old when he became a private
in the Medical Corps, 102nd Field Hospital, 101st Sanitation Train, 26th Division. On 3
October 1917, Flynn, left the United States aboard the *Cedric*, bound for Liverpool.
Once in England, Flynn proceeded to Soissons, France. On 10 February 1918, Flynn
engaged in combat for the first time at Chemin des Dames, and participated in the
fighting at the Toul Sector, where he was promoted to Corporal. He also saw action at
Aisne-Marne, St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne, and was promoted to the rank of Sergeant
in October 1918. Upon his discharge on 29 April 1919, Flynn returned to his position as
a clerk in New Haven.

**Furr, Herman R.** Furr enlisted in the National Army on 15 May 1917; he trained at
Camp Lee from 15 August 1917 to 24 May 1918; he embarked aboard the *Mercury* from
Newport News, Virginia on 24 May 1918, and arrived in Bordeaux, France on 9 June
1918. Furr toured the trenches with the British until the end of August 1918, then went
into action northeast of Verdun on 25 September 1918; he also saw combat at Meuse-
Argonne, Béthincourt, Cunel and the Somme. Furr wrote a brief history of his battalion,
a majority of whom were Virginians, at the request of his Major, and offered a copy to
the War History Commission.

**Fydenkeuez, Michael.** Fydenkeuez was assigned to Battery B, 7th Field Artillery, 1st
Division, and trained at Camp Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas from 1 June to 15
July 1917. Aboard the *Pastora* out of Hoboken, New Jersey, Fydenkeuez sailed across
the Atlantic to Saint-Nazaire, France for training from 23 August to 1 October 1917.
Fydenkeuez also participated in engagements at Lunéville, Aisne-Marne, St. Mihiel and
Meuse-Argonne, and on 30 July 1919, he was awarded the Victory Medal with four battle
clasps. Wounded by shellfire and gassed on 2 August 1918, he spent the next two weeks
at a field hospital, was transferred to Base Hospital #66 and remained there for one week
when he returned to active duty. Fydenkeuez’s eyesight and hearing were impaired by
his wounds; the army discharged him at the rank of Private First Class on 30 September
1919 and he returned home.

**George, Samuel.** George served as a Private in Company B, 315th Infantry of the
National Army; he trained at Camp Meade, embarked from Hoboken aboard a “Secret
Ship’’ on 7 July 1918, and arrived in Brest on 17 July 1918; he entered action on 26 September 1918 and participated at Argonne and the Meuse fronts.

**Goddard, Charles R.** Goddard was inducted into the National Army on 19 September 1917, served in Company B, 303rd Machine Gun Battalion, 76th Division, trained at Camp Devens from 20 September 1917 to 6 February 1918, and at Camp Greene from 9 February to 6 April 1918. He embarked from Hoboken aboard the Czar on 16 April 1918 and arrived in Brest on 28 April 1918, and received overseas training at Camp Pontenezen, Couvignon and Liézey in France. Goddard entered action on 20 June 1918 at Vosges; he was gassed during the Meuse-Argonne offensive in October 1918 and suffered “partial loss of eyesight.” Discharged on 6 August 1919, Goddard returned to his occupation as an attorney.

**Godwin, Willis B.** Godwin served as a Sergeant in Company K, 370th Infantry, the 93rd Division; he trained at Camp Lee beginning on 28 October 1917 and embarked aboard the President Grant out of Hoboken, arriving in Brest on 12 May 1918. Godwin went into action on 11 June 1918 and participated at St. Mihiel, Argonne and Soissons; he stated his “regiment won 21 A.D.S.C., 68 French War Crosses and one D.S.C., Reg. cited for bravery, fought the last battle of the war with 20% casualties.” The Army discharged Godwin on 27 February 1919 and he became an instructor in agriculture.

**Gronk, Earle T. W.** Gronk trained at Camp Grant, Rockford, Illinois from 10 October to 16 December 1917 and Camp Merritt from 19 December to 26 December 1917, embarked aboard the President Grant from Hoboken on 26 December 1917, and arrived at Brest on 10 January 1918; mumps delayed him from entering the lines with his regiment.

**Grove, Arthur A.** Grove entered the service on 25 March 1917, served as a First Lieutenant in the 115th Infantry, 29th Division, trained at Camp McClellan, Alabama and sailed from Hoboken aboard the Finland on 15 June 1918. He went into action at Haute-Alsace on 20 August 1918 after attending the Second Corps Machine Gun School at Châtillon-sur-Seine from 13 July to 13 August 1918 and entered action on 20 August 1918 at Balschwiller, France (then, part of Germany). Grove returned to his occupation as a merchant following his discharge on 29 May 1919.

**Hager, Lawrence T.** Hager entered the service on 29 March 1918 and served as a Private in the Depot Brigade, Company A, 320th Machine Gun Battalion, 82nd Division. He trained at Camp Devens and Camp Upton from 30 March to 24 April 1918, left aboard the Caronia on 24 April 1918 and arrived in Liverpool on 7 May 1918. Hager entered action on 16 July 1918 at the Toul Sector, and participated at St. Mihiel and Argonne; he underwent surgery to graft an eyebrow from a dead soldier over his right eye and insert silver plates in his head and chin; he spent three months in Base Hospital #46 in France. Hager received his discharge papers on 3 June 1919 and left the service with a 16% disability; he returned to his profession as an actor.
**Haislip, Walter B.** It is interesting that Haislip did not become an officer and instead entered the National Army on 18 September 1917, trained at Camp Lee from 19 September to 20 May 1918 and served in the 80th Division. He embarked on the *Leviathan* out of New York on 21 May 1918 and arrived in Brest on 30 May 1918, but never saw combat.

**Hardy, Thomas G.** Hardy recently graduated from the Medical College of Virginia when the army called Hardy into active service from the reserves on 5 August 1917. Without camp training in the states, Hardy was sent to England and then onto Ypres on 20 November 1917. He attended to troops in action at Ypres, Belgium, beginning on 20 November 1917, he returned to Virginia on 9 February 1919 to practice medicine.

**Hills, Ratcliffe M.** Hills enlisted in the National Guard on 5 June 1917 and trained at Yale Field before leaving for France in September 1917. Hills was twenty-one years old when he saw action at Chemin des Dames in February 1918. He also fought in the engagements at Toul, Aisne-Marne, Meuse-Argonne and Château-Thierry.

**Hodges, Fairfield H.** Hodges spent three months in camp at the Armory in Norfolk, Virginia and received additional training at Camp McClellan, Alabama; he arrived in Liverpool aboard the *Aquitania* on 11 July 1918. Fairfield was gassed on 15 October 1918 and listed a 10 percent disability.

**Hogue, Charles L.** Hogue entered the National Army on 27 October 1917, trained at Camp Lee from 29 October 1917 to 18 March 1918, embarked from Hoboken aboard the *Martha Washington*, and arrived in Bordeaux, France on 4 April 1918. General Pershing and French officials honored Hogue and his unit, the 511th Engineers Corps, for their work in constructing a railway stop at Montierchaume.

**Howell, John E.** Howell trained at Camp Merritt and Camp Meade from 24 October 1917 to 22 February 1918, embarked on the *Agamemnon* from Hoboken on 7 April 1918 and arrived in Brest on 15 April 1918. He participated in action on 27 July 1918 at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre; after the war Howell worked as a real estate salesperson.

**Hutchison, Curry P.** Hutchison served with the 317th Infantry, 80th Division and trained at Camp Lee in Petersburg, Virginia from 10 October 1917 to 25 May 1918, arrived in Brest on 8 June 1918 and entered action on 1 August 1918 at the Artois Sector; he also engaged in combat at Meuse-Argonne.

**Isleib, Henry A.** The army inducted Isleib on 29 March 1918, and after training at Camp Devens and Camp Upton in New York, Isleib was assigned to Company C, 325th Regiment, 82nd Division. He arrived in France in May 1918 and saw action on 27 June 1918 in Toul, Marbache, St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne.

**Jacobs, John M.** Jacobs was a Second Lieutenant in the 50th Infantry; he trained at Camp Greene, North Carolina and embarked from Hoboken on 16 April 1918. Jacobs went into action in June 1918 at Meuse-Argonne; on 11 October 1918, he was wounded.
by a machine gun bullet at Argonne, suffered a head wound and disfigurement and spent twenty-one months in numerous hospitals. He was discharged on 10 June 1920 and became a student.

**Jarman, Miletus B.** Jarman trained at the Second Officers Training Camp in Fort Meyers, Virginia, Camp Meade, Maryland and Camp Wadsworth, South Carolina. He belonged to the 1st Pioneer Infantry and sailed to Brest, France aboard the *Mt. Vernon* out of Hoboken 8 July 1918 – seventeen days later, he joined the second battle of the Marne. After the war, the army assigned him as a post school officer for the Coblenz (spelled Koblenz after 1926) area in January 1919; there he conducted “general supervision of the U.S. Army Post Schools in city of Coblenz and some of the surrounding villages. These schools employed 50 teachers and enrolled more than 2000 American soldiers.” Jarman remained at this position until the army broke up the schools in May 1919; he received his discharge on 31 July 1919 and found employment with Standard Oil Company.

**Johnson, Niels A. W.** Johnson sailed from Montréal, Canada and arrived in Liverpool, England on 10 October 1917. A week later, Johnson and his fellow soldiers were in Neufchâteau, France for training. Johnson saw action starting in February 1918 at Chemin des Dames, and later at Seicheprey, Château-Thierry, St. Mihiel, Meuse-Argonne and Verdun. When the army discharged him on 23 June 1919, Johnson was nine days away from his twenty-fourth birthday.

**Kimberly, Clarke O.** Kimberly attended the First Officers Training Camp, Fort Myer, Virginia from 15 May to 15 August 1917, and then embarked aboard the *Olympic* from Hoboken on 11 January 1918. Later, he was gassed at Soissons on 23 July 1918 and received the Croix de Guerre on 10 October 1918 at Blanc Mont.

**Kinzer, John D.** Kinzer was a Private First Class with the 8th Division Military Police; he trained at Fort Thomas, Kentucky and Camp Wadsworth, South Carolina from 11 May to 30 June 1918; he embarked aboard the *Deana Belfast* out of Hoboken on 7 July 1918, and arrived in France on 25 July 1918. Kinzer entered action on 7 September 1918, and fought in the Meuse-Argonne offensive from 2 to 11 November 1918.

**Langer, William L.** Boston born and Harvard graduate, Langer taught modern languages at a boarding school in New England when he enlisted in the army in November 1917. He served with the 1st Gas Regiment of the Chemical Warfare Service and after the war distinguished himself as a writer and historian.

**Lawson, Charles T.** Lawson graduated from the Virginia Polytechnic Institute (Virginia Tech) with a degree in engineering. He enlisted in the Marine Corps on 24 May 1917; Lawson attended Officers Training Schools at Parris Island, South Carolina, 12 June to 18 July 1917 and at Quantico, Virginia from 20 July to 21 October 1917, leaving as a Captain. He sailed 22 October 1917 on the *Von Steuben* out of Philadelphia, arriving in Brest on 13 November 1917; Lawson entered action at Les Éparges near Verdun 14 March 1918.
Lofland, Hezekiah E. Lofland trained on the rifle range at Camp Humphreys for six weeks and served as a Private First Class in Company A, 540th Regiment of the Engineers Medical Detachment; he embarked from Hoboken on the Leviathan on 24 October 1918 and spent four months in Camp at Abinsville after his arrival in Southampton. Lofland did not see action as his duty was to care for flu patients; he contracted flu and left the service “with weak eyes and a weak back.” Upon his discharge on 17 June 1919, Lofland worked as a waiter and a reporter.

Lyons, Harold T. Lyons enlisted in the Regular Army 24 October 1917, and spent only two months training at Fort Meyers, Virginia. He embarked for Liverpool aboard the Olympic on 9 January 1918, spending two months at Le Havre, France before seeing action beginning on 24 March 1918, as a Private in the 12th Field Artillery, 2nd Division.

May, Herbert D. May was a Captain in C Company, 116th Infantry, 29th Division. He attended the Infantry School of Arms at Fort Sill, Oklahoma in 1917, then became an instructor at Camp McClellan, Alabama. He embarked on board the Finland from Hoboken on 11 June 1918 arriving in France on 27 June 1918; he graduated from the Army Intelligence School, Langres, France in 1918.

McDermott, Thomas B. McDermott trained at Plattsburgh, New York from 15 May to 15 August 1917, and at Camp Mills, New York from 30 August to 29 September 1917, he served as a Captain in the 165th Infantry and embarked aboard the America out of Hoboken on 29 September 1917. McDermott went into action 20 February 1918 near Lunéville and fought in engagements at Château-Thierry, St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne among others. McDermott was cited for “conspicuous and exceptionally meritorious services and gallantry” by General Pershing on 16 July 1918 and 19 April 1919. Discharged on 7 May 1919, McDermott returned to work at the Rossia Insurance Company.

McKarney, James O. McKarney trained at Camp Lee, Virginia with Company B, 318th Regiment, 80th Division, he embarked on 22 May 1918 from Hoboken aboard the Northland and reached Brest on 30 May 1918. He entered action on 20 June 1918 near the Albert sector and sustained a shrapnel wound in his left leg on 5 October 1918 and earned a 15 percent disability.

Morris, William J. B. Morris trained at Camp Wadsworth, South Carolina from 17 May to 28 June 1918, arrived in France on 26 July 1918 and went into action on 1 September 1918 at Vosges; he also participated in combat at Alsace-Lorraine and at Meuse-Argonne.

Mosher, Cyril B. Mosher, of Providence, Rhode Island was a student at Yale University; he enlisted in the regular ranks on 23 May 1917 because he was underage for officer training. Mosher was a Sergeant with Battery D, 12th Field Artillery, 2nd Division; he trained at Fort Meyer, Virginia and embarked for France in early spring 1918.
Nye, William P. Nye enlisted in the National Guard on 20 February 1914, and later served with Company M, 116th Regiment, 29th Division. He trained at Brownsville, Texas from July 1916 to February 1917, and at Camp McClellan, Alabama until June 1918. He embarked aboard the Finland out of Hoboken on 15 June 1918, arrived at Saint-Nazaire on 28 June 1918 and entered action on 12 August 1918 at Alsace. Nye spent fifty-six days in trench warfare at Haute-Alsace and twenty-one days on the east bank of the Meuse, north of Verdun from 8 October to 29 October 1918.

Outten, Edgar C. Outten, a graduate of VMI with a BS in Electrical Engineering was a Sergeant in the National Guard Field Artillery when the US declared war. He attended Fort Meyers Reserve Officers Training Camp from 31 May to 15 August 1917 and received his commission as a First Lieutenant. He embarked for France on 7 September 1917 aboard the Pocahontas, trained at École d’application de l’artillerie, Fontainebleau from 24 September to 30 November 1917 and at the School of Fire, Saumur, during December 1917. Outten received his captain commission and entered action on 16 March 1918 at Verdun; he received his discharge on 7 February 1919 and found employment at an Oyster packing plant in Hampton, Virginia.

Overton, Nelson C. Overton became an officer after three months at the First Officers Training Camp in Fort McPherson, Georgia. After instructing troops at Camp Gordon from 1 September 1917 to 11 April 1918, Overton sailed from New York on the Carmela, arriving in Liverpool on 5 May 1918. On 3 August 1918, after seeing action for three months in the Toul sector, Overton was “sent back to the US to act as an instructor with some knowledge of actual warfare for the army of the new draft.”

Paoletti, Americus. Paoletti served as a Private First Class in the 119th Field Artillery of the National Army. He trained at Fort Terry, New York, from 29 January to 26 March 1918, and embarked aboard the Olympic on 26 March 1918 bound for Brest. Paoletti participated in action at Toul, Château-Thierry and Meuse; he received his discharge on 15 May 1919, and went to work as a truck driver after the war.

Parker, William W. Parker enlisted on 9 June 1917, trained at Camp Syracuse, New York from 21 June to 10 September 1917, and at Camp Green, North Carolina from 12 September 1917 to 11 March 1918. He embarked from Halifax, Nova Scotia on board the Corsican on 24 March 1918, arrived in Glasgow, Scotland on 31 April 1918 and entered action on 1 June 1918 at Château-Thierry.

Patterson, Leslie H. A student at Davidson College, Patterson entered the service on 29 September 1917, trained at Camp Lee for five months and arrived in England aboard the Olympic on 5 April 1918. At King’s College in London, Patterson, a Sergeant in the Tank Corps of the 301st Battalion instructed other soldiers “how to protect themselves from the enemy’s poison gas.”

Pemburn Jr., Charles S. Pemburn served as a private in Company E, 11th US Engineers; he trained at Camp Devens from 30 October 1917 to January 1918, embarked from Hoboken on the America on 26 February 1918, and arrived in Brest on 10 March
Pemburn entered action in March 1918 and fought at Château-Thierry and St. Mihiel; he was gassed and received a concussion from an HE shell, and spent several months at base hospitals in France. Pemburn received his discharge on 25 January 1919 with a 10 percent disability.

**Peronne, Giuseppe S.** Perrone served as a Private in Company E, 59th Infantry; he trained at Camp Mills in Long Island, New York for a short time and embarked for Liverpool aboard “a British ship” on 6 May 1918. Perrone entered action on 18 July 1918 and engaged in combat at Aisne-Marne, Meuse-Argonne and St. Mihiel. He received his discharge on 6 August 1919 and returned to employment as a laborer.

**Piazza, Frank.** Piazza enlisted in the regular army on 16 July 1917 and served as a Private in Company E, 9th Infantry. He was in camp in Syracuse for forty-five days, and embarked out of New York in September 1917; he participated in action beginning in April 1918 at Marne, Château-Thierry and St. Mihiel. Piazza received his discharge papers on 13 August 1919.

**Porter, Ernest C.** He trained at Fort Myer from 14 May 1917 to 25 August 1917, embarked aboard the *Adriatic* from New York on 6 September 1917, arriving in Liverpool on 22 September 1917 and was a Captain with Field Artillery upon discharge.

**Preston, Raymond A.** Preston trained at Camp Crane in Allentown, Pennsylvania from 21 June 1917 to 12 June 1918; he embarked on 13 June 1918, arriving first in Genoa, Italy and then in Toul on 30 August 1918; he entered action on 12 September 1918.

**Queenin, Raymond J.** Queenin trained at Yale Field in New Haven and Fort Totten, New York, and received more training in France before he went into combat on 8 February 1918 with the 26th Division. At Château-Thierry on 23 July 1918, he inhaled a dose of mustard gas and became “exhausted” from combat after a HE shell “wrenched” his back and threw him into a trench at the front in Verdun on 24 October. Queenin later had a difficult time readjusting to his former occupation as a salesperson.

**Randolph, Moses.** Randolph trained at Camp Lee from 27 October 1917 to 29 April 1918; he embarked from Newport News on 29 April 1918 and arrived in Bordeaux on 13 May 1918. Randolph went to the front at Champagne on 23 May 1918; he engaged in combat near Mount Kemmel, Hill 44, and remained under shellfire from 10 June until late October 1918 when he received a bullet wound in his right leg, and was hospitalized in Paris. Randolph stated he “was in an engagement at Rattlesnake Hill and my regiment received a flag from the French – a silver rattlesnake on a black field. We all received a device similar to it to wear on the left shoulder.” Randolph received his discharge papers on 27 February 1919 and returned to employment as a section hand.

**Ryan, Joseph.** Ryan trained in Maryland from April to July 1917, in Mineola, Long Island, New York, from July to September 1917, and in Miami, Florida, from September to December 1917 when he embarked for France.
Sampson, Jacob M. Sampson received his A.B. degree from Columbia University in New York, and taught at Virginia Union University in Richmond prior to his enlistment in the National Army on 25 March 1918. He trained at Camp Meade, Maryland from 25 March to 18 June 1918, embarked for Brest from Hoboken aboard the Great Northern on 19 June 1918 and arrived in France seven days later. Sampson received his discharge on 6 March 1919 and returned to his previous job.

Sanford, Nora B. Sanford worked at the Camp Jackson Base Hospital beginning on 1 May 1918; she embarked from Hoboken on 23 August 1918 and proceeded to her assignment at hospitals 45 and 87 in Toul, France.

Schadel, Joseph R. Schadel was inducted into the National Army on 28 March 1918 and received no military training in the United States; he left aboard the Metagama bound for Liverpool on 18 May 1918. Arrival in England was on 31 May 1918 and arrival in Bellebrune, France was on 7 June 1918. Briefly trained in France, Schadel was thrown into action on 28 June 1918 at Romeny, France, after which he saw action at Château-Thierry, the fifth German offensive, the advance on the Vesle River, Meuse-Argonne and St. Mihiel. At La Charmel Woods, on 18 August 1918 he was gassed. The army discharged Schadel on 2 August 1919, and he returned to Hartford as a bank clerk.

Sedlak Mike. Sedlak was a Private in Company K, 64th Infantry, 7th Division; he trained at Fort Bliss, Texas from 25 May 1917 to 8 August 1918, embarked on 8 August 1918 and arrived in Brest on 26 August 1918. Sedlak entered action on 10 October 1918 in the Puvinelle Sector; after his discharge, he returned to employment as a laborer and factory worker.

Shabazian, Vahow. Shabazian was a Private in the 147th Light Field Artillery, 32nd Division; he trained at Camp Mills and Merritt from 11 November 1917 to 11 January 1918, embarked out of Hoboken aboard the Olympic on 11 January 1918 and arrived in Liverpool on 23 January 1918. Shabazian entered action on 10 June 1918 at the Toul Sector and fought at Alsace, the Aisne-Marne Offensive and the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. Discharged on 22 May 1919, Shabazian continued employment as a laborer.

Simons, Albert M. Simons was wounded twice during the conflicts at Château-Thierry and St. Mihiel, and his regiment was decorated with the Croix de Guerre for their service at Apremont Forest in April 1918; the 116 men of H Company, 104th Regiment, 26th Division fought bravely and held their line against the Germans. Simons spent a month in Base Hospital 25 in Allerey, France recovering from his wounds; the Army discharged him on 11 February 1919, and he returned to his position as city assessor in Hartford.

Skinner, Benjamin. Skinner trained at Camp Lee Virginia from October 1917 to March 1918 when he embarked aboard the Pocahontas out of Hoboken for Saint-Nazaire; he entered action on 12 April 1918. After his discharge, Skinner returned to his occupation as a dockworker.
Smith, Verna M. Smith left New York on 25 March 1918, and arrived at The Havre on 6 April 1918; after the Armistice, she served in the Army of Occupation. Smith then returned to the United States on 20 June 1919 due to sickness, recovered and went on duty at Walter Reed Hospital.

Smith, Vernon. Smith entered the Infantry on 19 May 1917 in New York City, trained at Camp Merritt, embarked aboard the George Washington for Brest on 3 December 1917. He entered action on 15 March 1918 at Argonne; he received a citation for Distinguished Service at Champagne from General Foch. Upon his discharge on 12 February 1919, Smith returned to employment as a ship fitter helper.

Spencer, James P. Born in Charlotte, Virginia in 1888, Spencer enlisted in the infantry on 26 October 1917, and trained at Camp Lee, Virginia until 29 April 1918. He embarked for France aboard the Finland on 30 April, and arrived in St. Nazaire on 12 May 1918. Spencer went into combat in July 1918 at the Argonne Forest and participated at the Aisne-Marne and Château-Thierry where he sustained a machine gun wound to his hand on 18 September 1918. Spencer received his discharge on 22 April 1919 and worked as a book agent prior to his return to school at the Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute.

Spencer, Walter T. Spencer served in the Border Service from 16 October 1913 to 4 April 1918 when he shipped out for France. Spencer was a Supply Sergeant with the 4th Infantry, Machine Gun Company, his commanding officer cited him for bravery at Château-Thierry on 15 July 1918, he lost his hearing because of his participation in the engagement.

Starr, Frank A. Starr trained at Fort Terry from 20 December 1917 to 27 March 1918, sailed from New York on the Olympic on 28 March 1918 and arrived in Brest on 4 April 1918. He entered action on 20 August 1918 and participated in engagements at Blanzy-lès-Fismes, Verdun, and was at the Meuse-Argonne Offensive from 26 September to 11 November 1918. Starr received his discharge on 28 January 1919 and returned to farming.

Stevenson, William Y. On 1 January 1918, the American Ambulance Field Service officially became part of the Ambulance Field Service of the United States Army. Stevenson attended a six-week training course at the Technical School for American Officers at Meaux during September and October 1917 and received commission as a Lieutenant; earlier he received the Croix de Guerre on 30 July 1917.

Taliaferro, Thomas B. Taliaferro trained at Fort Myer, Virginia from 13 May to 15 August 1917, and at Camp Lee from 27 August 1917 to 26 May 1918. He embarked from Newport News, Virginia aboard the Mercury on 26 May 1918, and arrived in Bordeaux on 9 June 1918; in France, he attended Infantry and Small Arms School at Langres from 1 July to 1 August 1918. Taliaferro entered action with the British forces in August 1918 at the Arras Sector; he was wounded by machine gun fire at Saint-Juvin.
on 1 November 1918 and was hospitalized until 7 February 1919; he was discharged on 2 May 1919 and found employment as a merchant of fish and oysters.

**Thompson, Clarence M.** Thompson was born 18 August 1881 and worked as a secretary and agent of the Connecticut Prison Association when he joined the National Guard on 26 March 1917. Before embarking for Europe, Thompson was stationed in Hartford and in New Haven. He sailed from Montréal aboard the *Canada* on 16 September 1917, bound for Liverpool. On 6 October 1917, Thompson arrived in Neufchâteau, France. On 1 August 1918, the army promoted him to Major. Discharged from the service on 4 June 1919, Thompson returned home and worked in the insurance industry.

**Voight, Albert S.** Voight trained at Camp Wheeler, Georgia; he served as a Private with the 112th Machine Gun Company and embarked from New Jersey on 14 June 1918 aboard the *Orduna*, arriving in Liverpool on 28 June 1918. Voight entered action on 26 July 1918 at Chateau-Thierry and on that date he “tried to take prisoner who yelled ‘Kamerad!’ and afterward shot me in left leg with a pistol.” Voight was also “partly shell-shocked from explosion of our M. G. team nested in stone quarry when my two buddies were shattered.” The army discharged Voight on 20 January 1919 and found employment as a swimming instructor “to try and get my nerves back in condition as before the war.”

**Waters, Nelson F.** Waters enlisted in the National Guard on 19 June 1916 and served with the Border Service. In France, he saw action at Chemin des Dames and Seicheprey where he sustained hand and leg wounds on 20 April 1918. Waters was a prisoner of war from 28 April to 8 December 1918 when the Germans released him. During his time as a prisoner, he contracted typhoid fever and influenza. Waters received his discharge on 12 February 1919 and returned to his occupation as a sales clerk.

**Watts, Christopher C.** Watts served as a Sergeant in the 369th Infantry. He trained at Camp Lee, embarked for France on board the *Pocahontas* out of Hoboken on 12 March 1918 and arrived at Saint-Nazaire on 26 March 1918. Watts went into action on 1 April 1918 at Argonne Forest and participated in two drives at the Champagne front; he was gassed at Argonne and at two other fronts. Discharged on 12 March 1919, Watts found employment as a laborer when he returned home.

**Weston, Stephen J.** As a Private in the Infantry, Weston trained at the Fair Grounds in Syracuse, New York from June to October 1917. He was promoted to Corporal on 9 October 1917, and later to First Sergeant on 21 June 1919. Weston embarked from New York on the *Caserta* on 13 May 1918 and arrived with Company I, 47th Regiment, 4th Division in Rosoy-en-Multien on 14 June 1918. By the time of his discharge on 1 August 1919, after eight months service with the Army of Occupation, Weston received promotion to First Sergeant.

**Whitehouse, Wilson H.** Whitehouse worked as a die-toolmaker for R. Wallace and Sons Manufacturing Company of Wallingford, Connecticut, served with the 2nd Company
Infantry of the National Guard, and trained at Camp Yale. He did not recall when he reported to training camp, but he left Camp Yale on 15 September 1917 and sailed from Montréal, Canada on 16 September 1917. Whitehouse was gassed Chemin des Dames on 17 March 1918 and again at Verdun on 25 October 1918. He received his discharge on 29 April 1919.

**Williams, Thomas N.** Williams entered the service on 14 May 1917, received his commission as a First Lieutenant in the Infantry on 15 August 1917, and did further training at Camp Lee, Camp Wadsworth, South Carolina, and Camp Stewart, Georgia from 29 August 1917 to 14 August 1918. He embarked from Newport News aboard the *Martha Washington* on 14 August 1918 and arrived in France on 23 August 1918. He served with Company C, 3rd Regiment Anti-Aircraft M.9 Battalion; he entered action at Meuse-Argonne on 1 November 1918; the Army discharged Williams on 18 August 1919, and he found employment with the United States Shipping Board.

**Wollman, Solomon.** Wollman, born in Hartford on 29 September 1895 was a printer at Case, Lockwood and Brainard Company for six years before he enlisted in the service. Solomon’s parents were Russian-born Jews and Wollman attended a synagogue in Hartford; on 28 July 1917, Wollman became an infantry Private in the National Guard, Company K, 26th Division. He trained at Camp Yale, New Haven and on 15 September 1917 at 5:30 AM, Wollman’s Company left for England. On 5 October 1917, Wollman began training in France.

**Wynne, Patrick.** Wynne served in the 316th Infantry, 79th Division; he trained at Camp Meade, Maryland from 27 June to 7 July 1918, sailed on the *Kaiser Wilhelm II* on 9 July 1918, and arrived in Brest on 19 July 1918. Wynne was in action beginning on 26 September 1918 at Argonne where he sustained gunshot wounds on 29 September 1918; he was hospitalized from 2 October 1918 to 5 February 1919 and underwent surgery twice. Wynne received his discharge papers on 8 March 1919 and stated he was “waiting to hear from the government” regarding civilian employment.

**Wysocki, Paul T.** Wysocki trained at Camp Lee from 22 September 1917 to 20 May 1918; he embarked on the *Leviathan* out of Jersey City and arrived in Brest on 30 May 1918; he entered action on 12 August 1918 at the Artois sector and was at the Meuse-Argonne 12-16 September 1918. Wysocki returned to work in the navy yard after his discharge on 27 May 1919.

**Yaffo, Samuel B.** Yaffo was born in Russia in 1890. He worked as a salesclerk at G. Fox and Company, a Hartford department store. Yaffo enlisted in the regular army on 13 December 1917 and trained at Camp Jackson, South Carolina and Camp Hancock, Georgia until 15 May 1918, he then embarked aboard the *Cedric* out of Hoboken on 26 May 1918 and arrived in Liverpool on 6 June. He went into action on 3 September 1918 at St. Mihiel and after its capture went to Meuse-Argonne, where he remained until Armistice Day. Yaffo served with the Army of Occupation, and following his discharge on 8 July 1919, returned to his previous occupation.
Yancey, William B. Yancey entered service on 15 April 1917, trained at Cedar Bluff, VA from 20 April to 20 May 1917 and served in a machine gun company, 6th Division as a 1st Lieutenant. He sailed from Hoboken aboard the Cedric on 6 July 1918, arrived in Liverpool on 20 July and entered action on 27 August. He sustained a gunshot wound to his right foot at Lebauch on 15 September, which kept him in the hospital until his discharge from the Army at Walter Reed Hospital on 15 February 1919. When he returned to Virginia, Yancey became a lawyer.

York, Alvin C. York trained at Camp Gordon, Georgia from 17 November 1917 to 19 April 1918, embarked from Boston aboard the Scandeven on 1 May 1918 and arrived in Liverpool on 16 May 1918. York served with Company G, 328th Infantry, 82nd Division, known as the All-American Division made up of “boys from every state in the Union.”
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