LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

With Sand in their Pockets:

Lessons of the American Expeditionary Force's mobilization for the First World War.

A Dissertation Submitted

by

Kasey J. Comstock

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in History

Presented to the

Department of History in the

College of Arts and Sciences at

Liberty University

Lynchburg, Virginia

June 2023

Doctoral Dissertation Committee:
Director: Dr. Vance Kincade
Reader: Dr. Matthew Hill
Reader: Dr. Christopher Price

Abstract

When the Eleventh hour rang on November 11th, 1918, the United States Expeditionary Force, now the United States Army was no longer a mere constabulary organization. In fact, it had grown from just over 200,000 total soldiers to a staggering 4.2-million-man army. However, the growth of the army was not easy, through political and organizational in-fighting the army grew painfully. The inability of the United States government, especially its commander-in-chief, to implement reform measures ensured, and ultimately sealed the fate of thousands of American dead Doughboys in France. Additionally, the Army War College, General Staff, and War Department deliberately curtailed the progression of the army by virtually dismissing foreign reports of the war and discounting them as facts. The overall consolidation of facts points to several lackluster and implausible steps both in the military and political departments of the United States as to why the army had such growing difficulties. There was no reason for the most booming economy in the world to have the 17th smallest army to back up a weak and impulsive foreign policy. Within this project I address the raising, fielding, and overall effectiveness of the American Expeditionary Force from conception to victory. The paper embraces a top-down view from the political and military, both encompassing its leaders, President Woodrow Wilson, and his staff, as well as General John Pershing with his General Staff. While these men are magnanimous in the world of historical fact, the Doughboy's story is also told to get a better understanding of what these extraordinary men did for their country.

Acknowledgements

This process has been the most rewarding, most daunting, and most time-consuming venture I have ever undertaken. It has brought me across my home state, and to areas of the country, and world virtually to help bring all this research together. I am indebted to those around me who have endeavored to help me along the way, both in this process as well as those before. Without those who have paved the way in their own scholarship of this subject I could not have written, let alone imagined it possible to complete my own literature. Great military historians such as Russell Weigley, Edward Coffman, Correlli Barnett, and Arthur Link to name a few. These great historians paved the way for the newer generation of military historians to bridge new ideas and encompass past ideologies as well. My ambition is to join the growing number of current scholars such as Richard Faulkner, Mark Grotelueschen, Elizabth Greenhaigh, and Michael Neiberg to name a few.

Furthermore, to the most important person in my life who has been with me from the start of my academic career. My dearest wife, Nicole who has pushed, encouraged, wrote me inspiring notes, and prayed for strength for me. She has been my rock through this entire process. Without her love and support I would not be where I am today, nor the man I am today. I am truly blessed to have a wonderful person who would always listen to me rant about World War I and military knowledge altogether. Through countless hours of typing past 10pm, or early in the morning she has always strived to ask me what she can do to help. She is truly my best friend and biggest fan. To my children, Emily, Jason, Kamryn, and Austin, their love and support continues to be the bedrock of my continued pursuit of my education.

Finally, my passion for this subject is rooted in my belief of patriotism and for the love of country. It has been my life experience that in no other organization than the military a group of strangers can come together to form a cohesive fighting force. This lesson was what each Doughboy had to face when called to war in 1917-18. After only a few weeks, these strangers were thrust into a war they were not prepared for, and they went willingly, by the thousands. They believed it was their sacred duty to their country. I am proud to be a soldier in that same army today. It’s a brotherhood embedded in our esprit de corps that no matter what we can count on the person to our left and right.

Contents

Illustrations

Figures

Abbreviations

AEF	American Expeditionary Force
AFG	American Forces in Germany
AWOL	absent without leave
BDE	Brigade (Standard Infantry unit that usually consisted of two infantry regiments).
BEF	British Expeditionary Force
BN	Battalion (Each US infantry regiment had 3 battalions, usually consisting of around 800 men each).
CPI	Committee on Public Information
DIV	Division of troops (US divisions numbered almost 28,000 men, double the size of allied and Germany infantry divisions).
DOUGHBOYS	Nickname given to United States soldiers in Europe. Another name given was "sammies" for Uncle Sam's troops
LOC	Library of Congress
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer (known as the Backbone of the Army)
OTC	Officer Training Camps (United States)
Poilus	Nickname for French soldiers
POW	Prisoner of War
PWW	*The Papers of President Woodrow Wilson* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966-94).
RGMT	US Infantry Regiment (the main building block of the US Infantry Division)
SOS	Service of Supply
Tommy	Nickname given to British soldiers
U-boat	*Unterseeboot* (Germany Submarine)
USMC	United States Marine Corps
WWIS	*World War I Survey* (US Army Military History Institute)

Chapter 1 Introduction: America's Army

"They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old.
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn,
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them…."[1]

Most individuals can paint an incomplete picture of the trenches of World War I, muddy bottoms, small dugouts, torn uniforms, and the look of despair on soldiers' faces who endured technological advances not utilized in previous wars. British, French, Germans, and others suffered under these circumstances for years before the war had ended. "Attack! Attack," cried officers as terrified yet determined men rushed from the trenches, through barbed wire, and into the torn countryside of no man's land, for many never returned. Perhaps, in the trenches, there were far worse fates than death itself. For the first time in military history, men measured progress in feet, not miles; the death toll alone wiped out entire towns of their young men, and the destruction scarred the landscape for eternity. Called the Great War, the ramifications of the conflict had long-lasting global effects on all the significant participants involved, and it reshaped the global map.

New countries took the place of old dynasties, and old war wounds never healed. Nevertheless, year after bloody year, brave men continued to charge over the tops of their trenches in a futile effort to take the ground of their enemies. Many leaders considered the First World War a gentlemen's romantic endeavor, as in past wars. No longer the illustrious illusions of men in high places were the ideas of older European warfare; the First World War took on an entirely different form of fighting; it was the world's first actual attritional war.

For their part in the Great War, the American Expeditionary Force was unprepared for such a large-scale continental war with its poorly trained divisions. Desperately wanting to

[1] Laurence Binyon, *For the Fallen, and Other Poems,* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1917).

implement a new world order, President Woodrow Wilson threw the American fighting man into a conflict that he was in no shape capable of fighting. Still, top commanders in the United States military argued that the American Expeditionary Force would be the army that won the war in 1919. However, these means would only be accomplished through attrition rather than conventional warfare of evenly matched armies. General Pershing noted that the American Expeditionary Force would be the only military force on the continent capable of waging war in 1919, leading to an ultimate victory for the Entente. Even the government and top officials knew, including Pershing, that their army would not be able to make any substantial gains in 1918.

Moreover, why should they have thought any different? The training that each service member completed in the American Army until their involvement in the First World War was that of mediocre and outdated practices only relative to chasing Mexican bandits at the border. The average service member or their commanders did not think about fighting a European war. This paper is driven to enhance the scholarship gap about implementing the American Expeditionary Force's training and creation before its debut on the Western Front in 1917. While there will be instances of battlefield conduct, the majority of the research and scholarship will focus on how such a young and relatively inexperienced military, compared to European standards, rose and formed a formable fighting force.

However, through a period of fumbling to train, arm, and mobilize an army, the American Expeditionary Force had an essential and practical partner to gauge its doctrine. Refusal to conform to the woes and misgivings of the British Expeditionary Force's mobilization led to disastrous results for the American Expeditionary Force. Much like AEF, the British had a small constabulary army incapable of conducting a large-scale continental warfare. Before reforms such as the Cardwell Reforms, the 1860s, and the Haldane Reforms, 1907, the British

Army was suited for colonial duties over its vast empire, not continental warfare in France. However, due to obligations and guaranteeing Belgium's neutrality, Great Britain had no choice but to send the British Expeditionary Force across the English Channel in August 1914 after the German armies. Great Britain would continue to pound its face against the German military throughout the remainder of 1914 and through 1915 before it would emerge as a capable fighting force.

Before this conception, the British Government, much like the American Government, would continue to limit reform and hamper the reconstruction of its military.[2] Such restraints and limitations would come from forming a large standing army capable of fighting a continental war with outdated or colonial-style fighting tactics. As with the American Expeditionary Force, the military was only suitable for small-scale operations on the Mexican border and colonial work in distant territories. For the American Army to be capable of fighting in France, a rapid succession of reforms would need to take place. No longer was an army needing to support lighting types of maneuver warfare. Instead, each army division needed to be able to defend itself with the advent of new divisional organizations. Such organizations consisted of a more prominent logistical support element in which new areas of modern warfare took precedence. These logistical support areas included implementing contemporary communication and stockpiles of new weapons such as machine guns, grenades, chemical weapons, and entrenching tools. The American Army on the border of Mexico, or rather the only division on paper with the United States Army, the 1st Division, lacked everything except riflemen and some support artillery elements. Furthermore, the machine gun issues to each division were provisional. Therefore, the army could redeploy those machine gun battalions as they saw fit.

---

[2] Correlli Barnett, *Britain and Her Army, 1509-1970: A Military, Political and Social Survey. (*Allen Lane The Penguin Press, London, 1970): pg. 303.

Moreover, this small constabulary army was rushed into service in France to a conflict that had vastly changed the face of warfare entirely. As the acclaimed military historian Tim Travers once stated, "The British army that started the war was not the same type of army that ended the war."[3] The British Expeditionary Force, as described by many prominent military historians, was the best trained and best-equipped army to go to war in France. The harsh reality was that the BEF was woefully unprepared for a large-scale, long-lasting continental war. Furthermore, that was expected; no army that entered the First World War thought it would be anything longer than a few months. The Germans expected a repeat of the encirclement of the French Army as they had completed under Helmuth Von Moltke (the elder) during the Franco-Prussian War 1870-71.[4] The US War Department could had learned valuable lessons from watching the British, both militaries, both their Regular and Reserve (National Guard) closely resembled one another. Organization and leadership styles were more on par with each other, therefore, leading to a seamless transition to learning from either nation. However, this would not come to pass and the AEF would suffer the same disastrous consequences the BEF had in the beginning of the war.

The First World War was expected to be a gentlemanly war, limited objectives of terrain or territory would be conquered, and a negotiation phase would set in. The victor would claim what they had conquered, and the defeated would be forced to concede to terms of surrender and pay hefty war reparations. Each nation did not understand how much war had changed in the previous fifty years. Each should have had an account, for each was creating mass armies with new types of weapons to counter their foes. However, the First World War would still happen

---

[3] Tim Travers, *The Army and the Challenge of War 1914-1918. In The Oxford History of the British Army*, edited by David G. Chandler & Ian Beckett, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994): pg. 212.
[4] Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War. A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy* (Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1973): pg. 195.

through all of this. Therefore, a systemic failure in battlefield doctrine and policies crippled the raising of the American Expeditionary Force so much that it would stumble throughout its entire obligation to the Western Front of 1918. Perhaps one of the most grossly underrated assumptions made by army commanders was the idea that the war would be quick. With the ideology of a short battle, there would be a lack of logistics, in essence, a shortage of the bullets, beans, and bandages necessary to fight a protracted war. After the frontier campaigns, battles that sought each army trying to outflank each other, the short gentlemen's war differed. With no assailable flank to be turned, trench warfare in France was born.

However, the American Expeditionary Force did not have to go through the same growing pains as the BEF. Therefore, did the American government desire to give proper military training in current battlefield doctrine and tactics before sending the army over to France and the Western Front? Suppose there was a desire to train the American Expeditionary Force properly; why was there a severe lack of collaboration between the French and British tactics already learned in the trenches? Who was to blame, the United States Government or the United States military? The above questions and others uncovered throughout this research will be answered and further discussed through a wide variety of primary sources and first-hand accounts of the creation and training of the American Expeditionary Force in 1917 and before. However, the questions cannot be answered by looking at the near past of the war but must spread from decades before the First World War. Therefore, research will be conducted immediately following the American Civil War and conflicts such as the Spanish-American War for possible decision-making of policymakers on battlefield doctrine.

Why is this subject so important to the nexus of the military history of the First World War? It has been a widespread belief amongst many historians in the military history community

that the First World War is slowly losing its allure to other historical developments. Significantly being overshadowed by the Second World War, therefore, giving way to an effort to revitalize the importance of the many lessons learned from the First World War, many lessons still taught today. The very crux of the war has taught significant and deeply resounding scholarship to both past and current military historians. The furtherance of this scholarship should continue to be explored.

By the time the American Expeditionary Force sailed for France in force, the war in Europe was already in its third year of fighting. Not particularly tied to the alliance between France, Great Britain, and the other allied nations, the United States had been sending supplies to these nations for years, making the United States the premier global economy.

Moreover, President Wilson was an intelligent politician, and understood that 1916 was an election year. Furthermore, he had only marginally won the Presidency in 1912 against Theodore Roosevelt, a stout Republican who believed Americans should be fighting in France. Wilson had to keep the nation going in the same direction and out of the fighting in France until after he gained his second term. Likewise, top military officials and the Joint Chiefs of Staff understood that the United States military would eventually have to send troops over to France. Heeded by the words of President Woodrow Wilson, the consistent pleas for help from Britain and France, and the worsening situation of all-out submarine warfare in the Atlantic, the United States declared the First World War on April 2, 1917. The United States was in for a significant shock on just how much warfare had changed. Before the First World War, the United States had found itself in relative calm, with a series of miniature conflicts that would not bear the total weight of the United States military. Robert Dalessandro, in his short article, *"Creating the Modern Army, Building the American Expeditionary Force, 1917,"* perhaps put it the best when

he said, "Following the war with Spain in 1898, the Army drew heavy criticism because of its inflexible structure a lackluster execution of mobilization."[5] That mentality would continue to plague the American Army even through its mobilization during the First World War.

However, this was nothing out of the ordinary for the American military. Having long been told that a large standing army is detrimental to your freedoms and pocketbooks, the army was kept small. Furthermore, the United States Government continued to make regulations and policies that limited the United States Army to limited operational status instead of relying on National Guard units to fill gaps the active component could not serve. The United States Army was nothing more than a small constabulary force capable of fighting small, territorial types of conflicts before the First World War. There were no field grade commanders other than General Pershing, who had led a combat force more significant than a brigade, usually a command of 10,000 men. Historians of the United States Army, such as Mark Grotelueschen, Richard Faulkner, and John Eisenhower, all agree that the United States Army, especially at the beginning formation of the American Expeditionary Force, missed several great opportunities to formulate and train a military force capable of competing on the Western Front of Europe. For example, Mark Grotelueschen's work, *The AEF Way of War* (2007), focuses on a deep understanding of the AEF's lack of modern battlefield doctrine and its lack of knowledge of modern warfare.[6] More on the lines of the European war and the changing battlefield, Grotelueschen covers the AEF as it fights in Europe, the tactics they inherited, and the battlefield doctrine incorporated by allied forces.

---

[5] Robert J. Dalessandro, "Creating the Modern Army: Building the American Expeditionary Force, 1917. *Hampton Roads Military History (2008), 2*, 11.

[6] Mark E. Grotelueschen, *The AEF Way of War, The American Army and Combat in World War I,* (Cambridge University Press, 2007): pg. 14.

As stated by John Eisenhower, whose detailed work on the American Expeditionary Force, *Yanks* (2001) leans towards how the American Expeditionary Force struggled to gain any momentum when it came to reforming its battle doctrines instead of relying on tried and true methods of Civil War Era limited maneuvers which lacked support from elements such as artillery or aircraft.[7] While these two historians probe along with the idea of missed opportunities with the AEF itself, neither fully incorporate the belief that the AEF geared toward a continental war, but rather it simply needed to adapt quickly to meet the current expectations of modern warfare.

On the other hand, Brian Hall's "*The American Expeditionary Forces, Communications and the First World War: A Case Study in Inter-Allied Learning*" (2021) fills a critical gap between the AEF allies in the realm of communication and logistics. His main effort concentrated on the lack of initiative and foresight for the vast logistics needed to properly prepare an army capable of fighting in Europe.[8] Hall even goes as far as the American Expeditionary Force's high command, Pershing included, mocked their allies' efforts saying, "Considered British and French tactical advice to be a positive detriment of little value and a serious handicap in the training of our troops."[9]

Three main components of the existence of the AEF's force structure came from a culmination of senior AEF commanders' preconceived notions and self-assessments of the Allied forces before the arrival of the first American forces in France. The three components were the American military doctrine of 1917, which still relied heavily on open warfare with bayonet-

---

[7] John S.D. Eisenhower *Yanks. The Epic Story of the American Army in World War I.* (Simon & Schuster, 2001): pg. 29.
[8] Brian N Hall. "The American Expeditionary Forces, Communications and the First World War: A Case Study in Inter-Allied Learning." *Militärgeschichtliche Zeitschrift.* 80, no. 2 (2021): pg. 290.
[9] Ibid., pg. 292.

style charges and unlimited objectives. This was a direct contrast to British and French battle doctrine, which relied on prepared bombardments of heavy artillery, limited purposes, and overwhelming firepower. The second is AEF senior commanders evaluating the current successes and failures of allied forces in France thus far. Casualties' rates and limited gains had convinced AEF senior commanders that whatever the French and British were doing was not working. American commanders such as General Pershing, Tasker Bliss, and others believed their idea of mobile warfare, with large frontal attacks could still be a viable option in trench warfare. Furthermore, the *Infantry Journals* and *Field Service Regulations* up to the entrance of American forces relied heavily on large frontal assaults with a hint of artillery support.[10] These lessons and tactics derived strictly from a lack of information or censored information from the General Staff and Army War College. Although there had been a number of foreign attaches attached to armies in Europe and the Balkans, their reports and lessons were largely filed away or dismissed by higher ups in the War Department. Third, and perhaps the most critical aspect, was the constant fight for the amalgamation of American forces into existing French and British forces. Pershing would fight the idea of sending his divisions piecemeal into badly depleted allied regiments and brigades.

One such work by historian, Russell Weigley, "*The American Way of War, A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy*" (1973), speaks volumes of AEF commanders' continued effort to adopt lessons of modern combat from allied commanders.[11] Furthermore, perhaps a critical reading gained by other historians is corroborated by Matthew Muehlbauer and David Ulbrich in their 2018 book, "*Ways of War, American Military History from Colonial Era*

[10] U.S. Army Military History Institute. U.S. War Department. *Field Service Regulations, United States Army*, 1907.
[11] Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War,* 192.

to the Twenty-First Century." Here we see a very pointed assessment of how the AEF struggled with the three previously listed notions and a glaring fourth, potentially catastrophic issue, the severe lack of material to field a continental army.[12] The National Defense Act of 1916 would fix the workforce issues in raising an army. However, the issue of arming this fighting force would be sorely lacking from the beginning of the AEFs creation until the armistice in November 1918.

From what has been discussed and examined by prior historians within this process, two questions have yet to be entirely ascertained. The first question is, to what lengths did the American military command try to properly mobilize an army capable of fighting a war in Europe? At the beginning of the war, the United States Army was ranked 17th in the world for the size of its army, with roughly 200,000 member members, and could not correctly arm its military. In comparison, the French Army had over 4 million men at the start of hostilities, a well-established officer and N.C.O. corps, and a modern battlefield doctrine in 1914, at least what they believed to be a modern battlefield doctrine. Secondly, even when the AEF started to arrive in the trenches, why did many of its divisional and brigade commanders fail to follow the known tactical practices of seasoned French and British commanders? Instead of relying on antiquated tactics and maneuvers revolved around open warfare, unlimited attacks, and bayonet charges.

Despite the overwhelming amount of scholarship and research regarding the United States Army in the First World War, the overall consensus of the buildup of the American Expeditionary Force is still in its infancy. In contrast to what British and French forces had adopted as the primary battlefield doctrine, which American Expeditionary Force commanders

---

[12] Matthew S. Mühlbauer and David J. Ulbrich, *Ways of War, American Military History from the Colonial Era to Twenty-First Century* (Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2018): pg. 269.

had translated copies of, they still believed the key to victory laid within the infantry attack and limited fire support. Few historians have given the creation and buildup of the American Expeditionary Force little more than a placeholder in their works. Not to take away from any of their previously mentioned scholarship, besides individuals such as Richard Faulkner and Brian Hall, historians seem to brush over the slow, lackluster, and downright ignorant ways senior commanders formed and trained the Americana Expeditionary Force. Of them all, perhaps the most influential in their pursuit to bridge the gap between the formation of the American Expeditionary Force and its first battle of Cantigny is Dr. Richard Faulkner and his book, "*The School of Hard Knocks, Combat Leadership in the American Expeditionary Force*," (2012). This rendition pertains to, perhaps, the best look at the formation of leadership, both during the construction and the combat operations of officers in the AEF Dr. Faulkner addresses a large portion of how the American Expeditionary Force struggled to mobilize efficiently, thus leading to a relatively large amount of information on the topic.[13] However, he and only a handful of others honestly give this critical portion of historical significance to any natural substance.

A great example of the leadership of the American Expeditionary Force can be seen in Steven Rabalais' book, *General Fox Connor: Pershing's Chief of Operations and Eisenhower's Mentor*, 2016. Here is written a wonderful rendition of how the Chief of Operations was put together for the American Expeditionary Force, a position that has never been given much thought, let alone such a sizable tactical role in a large American Army. Rabalais writes about how Pershing had to virtually rewrite just how the AEF would have to operate while overseas in France. The American Army had no official command structure that allowed fluid adaption to a

[13] Richard S. Faulkner, *School of Hard Knocks. Combat Leadership in the American Expeditionary Force,* (Texas A&M University Press, 2012): pg. 100.

modern battlefield.[14] Modern fields of war in France consisted of long periods of stagnation; however, even though the fronts were stagnant behind the scenes, vast armies of logistics and work parties continuously moved the war. The American Army did not have extensive knowledge of engineering or trench fortifications. These functions and much more had to be discussed, drawn out, redesigned, and implemented on a large scale before the first combat operations of the war. These preconceived notions could have already had some small implementation in the American Army before 1917; however, American biases and distrust in allied command structures and policies drove the American elite and high command to take alternative roads for army building. An army only on paper the American Army had a big organizational issue on its hands. The only army unit that resembled an actual division was the First Division and it lacked all the actual force structure that makes a division a standalone unit. The First Division was based with General Pershing on the Punitive Expedition and was comprised of just infantry regiments, field artillery regiment, and provision machine guns units that did not actually belong to the overall force of the First Division. The division would be ordered back to the east coast for immediate mobilization to France, but not as a fighting unit but more as a political and moral stunt for the French and British. It had been said repeatedly by allied leadership that the introduction of the American Army was going to arrive too late and have little effect as an independent fighting force. The urge to amalgamate incoming American regiments into existing French and British units was on the minds all the allied commanders, however, it directly interfered with the standing orders General Pershing had from President Wilson.

---

[14] Steven Rabalais, *General Fox Conner: Pershing's Chief of Operations and Eisenhower's Mentor,* (Havertown: Casemate Publishers & Book Distributors, LLC. 2016): pg. 324.

To further supply a need to understand why the American Army command needed a drastic overall can be found in Mark Stout's article, *"G-2 From the Ground Up, How U.S. Army Intelligence was created by General John J. Pershing's American Expeditionary Force in World War I,"* (2015). "But when the United States declared war on Germany on April 2, 1917, the War Department effectively had no military intelligence officer on the general staff in Washington and virtually no doctrine for army intelligence."[15] Military intelligence would eventually grow to include its section on the General Staff of the United States Army and be an invaluable asset to each unit commander in the American Expeditionary Force. These assets would incorporate new talents and tactics to help battlefield commanders gain inside access to enemy troop movements and troop dispositions before offensive operations. Furthermore, a caveat to a well-instituted intelligence operation would be the advent of counterintelligence. The ability to feed the false enemy information about your troop movements to help fool them into attacking well-defended positions to maximize enemy losses.

One of the most important lessons that befell the United States government once entering the First World War was the vast expansion and billeting of an army capable of matching European standards. As stated previously, the United States military was nothing more than a small constabulary force capable of protecting its borders and nothing more. Numbering just a mere 200,000 soldiers in both the Active Component and the National Guard, the army was vastly wanting. In proper American form, this small matter would not stop President Wilson and his resolve to have American forces fighting in the trenches of France. As it stands from a historical perspective, one avenue that the United States did take that resulted in success was the enactment of the Selected Service Draft Act of 1916. As Joshua Kastenberg and his book, "*To*

[15] Mark Stout, 2015. “G-2 From the Ground Up.” *MHQ: Quarterly Journal of Military History* 27 (4): pg. 78.

Raise and Discipline and Army, Major General Enoch Crowder, the Judge Advocate General's Office, and the Realignment of Civil and Military Relations in World War I," stated how the government, at the direction of J.A.G. helped reimagine a civilian draft to fill the ranks of the newly created American Expeditionary Force.[16] France, Germany and Russia believed in conscription, which brought a mass pool of personal to fill the vast armies they were building. Furthermore, it allowed for these nations to have a ready reserve of soldiers they could rapidly fill depleted units who suffered casualties during combat.

Great Britain rejected the idea of conscription for several reasons. Britain truly believed the nation was above such notions of forced service in the armed forces. In his book, "*The Late Victorian Army 1868-1914*," Edward Spiers wrote extensively on the British Expeditionary Force's struggles when trying to mobilize its forces for war. "Conscription was still out of the question for Great Britain; Parliament ruled it went against the very thread of dignity, and therefore, must never be considered."[17] Not allowing conscription to raise a vast supply of men for reserves and replacements for combat casualties severely hindered the British Expeditionary Force. After the first few months of the war, casualties sustained by the BEF outnumbered the number of soldiers who originally crossed the channel in August 1914, showed just how misguided Parliament and the War Department were.

With the high casualty rates in France, poorly trained soldiers now served as rapid replacements for front-line units, therefore, leaving a considerable training gap within the regiments. To prepare the reserves for Kitchener's volunteer army, the British had to bring retired

---

[16] Joshua Kastenberg *To Raise and Discipline an Army: Major General Enoch Crowder, the Judge Advocate General's Office, and the Realignment of Civil and Military Relations in World War I.* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2017): pg. 93.

[17] Edward Spiers, "*The Late Victorian Army 1868-1914" In The Oxford History of the British Army*, edited by David G. Chandler & Ian Beckett (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994): pg. 294.

officers and N.C.O.s to fill vacant training staff positions. Far removed from current service, the training N.C.O.s and Officers were veterans of the Boer War and sometimes earlier. These soldiers were unfamiliar with modern warfare and, therefore, taught the volunteers tactics no longer in existence with British military doctrine. "Their senior officers and non-commissioned officers consisted of Boer War, or even pre-Boer War regulars brought out of retirement."[18] The British Army would struggle with raising an all-volunteer force until conscription was allowed in 1916, and a much larger, the better-controlled army went to fight in France. The struggles of the British Expeditionary Force were not solely an issue to be learned from the British government. Individuals in the United States, such as Major General Leonard Wood, an advocate for Theodore Roosevelt and ranking official in the United States Army, openly criticized the army and President Wilson, often stating that the poor condition of the military would not be able to sustain itself in any modern war.[19]

What the American government feared was a repeat of the Civil War draft enacted in the Spring of 1863. That same summer, a large riot broke out in New York City, and hundreds of citizens were cut down by Union forces. The riot lasted for days, and a repeat was on the minds of those in the current government. Secretary of War, Newton Baker, considered that the rewrite of the draft needed to be revised so that the patriotism of the American people could rally behind it. When the first draft notices went throughout the country's far corners, it was labeled a Selective Service. Just because a person might be selected did not ultimately mean they would be sent to fight. To his credit, President Wilson knew that to build the army he wanted, he would

[18] Barnett, *Britain and Her Army, 1509-1970*, 374.
[19] David R, Woodward, *The American Army and the First World War,* (Cambridge University Press, 2014): pg. 21.

have to have a fully manned infrastructure in place. In other words, men worked in the factories to make the necessary war material to sustain a 4-million-man army.

Furthermore, the Selective Service propaganda creators paid attention to what had happened in 1863. The US government decided under the supervision of Secretary of War Baker to have local officials and V.I.P.s in each town send out the notices to the individuals selected to serve. By creating a sense of peer-to-peer service notifications, it was believed the idea that a local individual who had vested interests in the area and knew the people being selected would yield better results. For the most part, this tactic worked in favor of the government, and within a few months of the first notices going out, the American Expeditionary Force's rank began to swell. Men could still volunteer for the Armed Forces, and it was hoped by many in Washington D.C. that most of the army would be raised through those volunteering. The Selected Service would not take effect until December of 1917, however, in the end 73% of the American Expeditionary Force would be raised through Selective Service. Papers, and local officials would shame those who did not volunteer of the military, the names of those who had volunteered and those who had not would be published in the local newspapers, a test of manhood was being called into question for everyone within the appropriate age of recruitment. Another idea on how the Selective Service was so successful was its categories of who would serve, President Wilson knew not everybody could be sent overseas to fight. He knew that a vast majority would still have to stay behind in the United States and serve in the industrial or agricultural areas of production. By many this draft would be considered the fairest draft of them all, however, just because it’s a fair draft doesn’t necessarily mean it was fair to all who registered. African Americans who were selected would comprise two of the National Army Divisions in the American Expeditionary Force. The 92nd and 93rd Divisions were made entirely of African

Americans within their ranks and led by white officers. Much like the famed 54th Massachusetts in the American Civil War, these units would be relegated to labor details well behind the front lines, many never leaving the docks of France.[20] But not all regiments of the 92nd and 93rd Division would remain in work party details, the most infamous regiment of African American fighters was the 369th Infantry Regiment or also known as the Harlem Hell Fighters. The regiment would see extensive fighting with French forces throughout the fall of 1918 and earn a reputation of being a fierce fighting unit. Another infamous division within the American Expeditionary Force was the 308th Infantry Regiment of the 77th Division. What made this unit so famous was the ethnic makeup of its units. Brought together from all parts of New York the Regiment was comprised of a melting pot of different ethnicities with a singular purpose, the thought of American inclusion.[21] These individuals, the African Americans and those of foreign birth would be 'selected' at far great rates and their deferments would be denied more often than their white counterparts. The American Expeditionary Force would still have some very significant barriers to hurdle when it came to racial equality amongst its fighting men, however, that issue would have to wait until after the war.[22] The War Department and General Staff had to solve an even greater issue at hand, now with an actual army, what was their next step going to be? What would the government do with the influx of contemporary men, and how would they organize, house, train, and feed them? With every notion of building an army, the United States government was always one step behind the power curve.

---

[20] Adriane Danette Lentz-Smith, *Freedom Struggles: African Americans and World War I,* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2009): pg. 172.
[21] Richard Faulkner, *Pershing's Crusaders: The American Soldier in World War I* (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2017): pg. 72.
[22] Robert J. Dalessandro, Gerald Torrence, and Michael G. Knapp\, *Willing Patriots: Men of Color in the First World War. (*Atglen, PA: Schiffer Military History, 2009): pg. 7.

Supposedly concerned will all things other than war, President Wilson can essentially be blamed for the slow creation and implementation of the American Expeditionary Force.[23] However, David Esposito's article, *"Woodrow Wilson and the Origins of the AEF,"* writes passionately about the failure of the President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, and his lack of military preparedness. President Wilson was thought of as a Pacifist and disdained all things war related. Although ordering the American military into minor conflicts in Haiti and Mexico, it remained by some of the top military commanders stated that President Wilson did not have the stomach to send troops to war to talk about peace without the actual cost of stability merely. Historians William O. Odom. "*Under the Gun: Training the American Expeditionary Forces*, 2000," and Jeffrey A. Hoffer's "*Coalition Warfare: Lessons from the American Expeditionary Force*, 2006" both concur with Esposito's assessment of how Wilson was primarily to blame for the slow buildup and arming of the American Expeditionary Force.[24] [25]

However, President Wilson is not the only one to blame, nor should he bear the brunt of all the misgivings of the lackluster mobilizations or training of the American Expeditionary Force. John D. Wainwright wrote 1972" *Root Versus Bliss: The Shaping of the Army War College*," which talks about the critical implementation and creation of the Army war college. Wainwright writes in his article how the Army War College, whose primary functions are listed below, is only part of a semi-general staff and nothing more. They were solely built to educate and train a cadre of young officers capable of leading an army during a time of war. Moreover, a secondary function of the newly established Army War College was to graduate young officers

---

[23] David Esposito M. "Woodrow Wilson and the Origins of the AEF." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 19, no. 1 (1989): pg. 129.
[24] Jeffrey A. Hoffer "Coalition Warfare: Lessons from the American Expeditionary Force." *Air Force Journal of Logistics* 30, no. 1 (2006): pg. 23.
[25] William O. Odom "Under the Gun: Training the American Expeditionary Forces, 1917-1918." *Military Review* 80, no. 4 (Jul 2000): pg. 101.

capable of maintaining a General Staff. The General Staff is the principal warfighting expert to the United States governing body. In addition, the person responsible for creating such an administration, Elihu Root, who was the U.S. Secretary of War and Secretary of State between 1901 and 1909. It would not be until after the First World War that the Army War College returned, or rather, started to educate young Army officers in the actual arts of war.[26] A continued battle was the inability of the Army War College to produce capable army officers educated in modern army doctrine and who possessed the necessary mental capacity to wage a total war concept.

Ultimately, we conclude that the American Expeditionary Force was grossly unprepared for any large-scale continental war. Through the scholarship listed from previous historians and the countless more that will be examined and cited in this work, we see a familiar pattern followed by the Americans as with the British before their debut in France. Nothing brings this more into the light than the vast constraints and limitations that faced the United States Army through a slew of mismanagement at the highest levels of the War Department and the United States Government. Furthermore, there was no need for such a slow mobilization nor a senseless need for poor training with the American Expeditionary Force Field; *Field Service Manuals* through 1917 still failed to mention or include current battlefield doctrine already gathered by French and British forces.

At its climax, the American Expeditionary Force fielded an army of over 4 million men, of which 2 million fought in France. Its formations would be filled with new weapons of war, such as machine guns, large-caliber field howitzers, airplanes, and chemical weapons. However, the American Expeditionary Force could have left the United States substantially better prepared

---

[26] John D. Wainwright "Root Versus Bliss: The Shaping of the Army War College." *Parameters (Carlisle, Pa.)* 4, no. 2 (1974): pg. 54.

for war than it had initially done. Far behind its counterparts, the American Expeditionary Force faced numerous difficulties when fielding their new army. Lacking in leadership, training, and weapons the AEF would face an enemy who had become accustomed to trench warfare for the previous three years. Furthermore, this enemy had perfected the art of killing their foes with new tactics adapted strictly for trench fighting. Using qualitative means of gathering and interpreting the many different primary sources and how they relate to the research already provided by other historians.

The primary source of credible information and scholarship will derive from memoirs, letters, journals, and other primary sources from high-ranking officials and officers and those from the regular grunt or doughboy. Their stories will help paint a picture of life as an American Soldier during the First World War. However, to help unfold the gross negligence of the War Department before the First World War, letters, field service manuals, soldiers' manuals, and a wealth of other printed information on all matters concerned with creating and training large field armies will be examined.

Each subsequent chapter covers possible motives for why the American Expeditionary divisions were so undertrained and ill-prepared for trench warfare. Chapter 1 will include the introduction and the main historiography conducted on the subject. Along with the established historiography Chapter 1 will set the foundation for the argument regarding the inefficiencies and limitations the American Expeditionary Force faced during its mobilization for the First World War. Chapter 2 will cover the Post Civil War Era and the idea of any army stagnation that might have taken place after the conclusion of the Civil War. Chapter 3 is centered around the Root reforms outside of Army organization. Although the Root reforms had marginal success when it came to how the Army should be organized and the establishment of the General Staff

and Army War College that is where the reforms ended. Furthermore, both military and political allies, who worked together to limit the General Staff succeeded in diverting precious funds and competent men to be a part of the new General Staff as well as the Army War College.

Chapter 4 dives into the start of the First World War and breaks down each major belligerents' initial thoughts and plans for the War. Covering such attack plans as the Schlieffen Plan for the Germans, combined with Plan XVII for the French we will see how the innovation of modern warfare would virtually render each armies plan obsolete within the first month three months of the war. Furthermore, this chapter will see just how many opportunities the United States missed in reforming the army to conform to a more modern style of fighting. In addition, there are several cases presented within the chapter that secure the argument that the United States was woefully unprepared for the war due to its own government as well as top military officials. Chapter 5 focuses on the Battle of the Somme, Battle of Verdun, and the Punitive Expedition. The importance of the two major battles, the Somme and Verdun highlight the paradigm of modern warfare in France. Furthermore, with military attaches sending a number of battlefield reports back to the US War Department, US leaders still chose to ignore these lessons as they gear up for the Punitive Expedition into Mexico. This expedition, much as the Spanish-American War, will highlight a standing problem on how the US Army mobilizes and prepares for war.

Chapter 6 research will go over the actual creation of the American Expeditionary Force post-America's entrance into the First World. Here the study will cover the initial success of the Selected Service Draft of 1917 and how it still struggled to properly reform and train its military for continental war. Consistently trained with outdated land warfare models, the American Expeditionary Force went to war with 1880s-era tactics and battlefield doctrine. Chapter 7

focuses primarily on the training of troops, more specifically the officers and noncommissioned officers of the AEF. Chapter 8 covers the American Expeditionary Force fighting in France and how the lack of training they received in the United States would prove devastating.

Nevertheless, what did Army learn? How did this nation's military grow from these lessons? This chapter discusses the vital lessons that the American Expeditionary Force and its leaders learned from their participation on and off the battlefield. Furthermore, was there a repeat of the stagnation that hindered military progression into the Second World War? Numerous sources point to a repetition of the stagnation and outdated battle doctrine that plagued the American Expeditionary Force in 1917-18. The final chapter covers the conclusion of facts. Facts ascertained from the material provided on how the American government and military failed to reform its army doctrine and effectively mobilize an army capable of fighting in France.

Although death is a product of any war, there has always been a fine line between necessary and unnecessary death tolls, or what some analysts call acceptable losses for war goals gained. The overall literature of this project will culminate in the idea that with proper training and modern battle drills, especially in the sweeping fire with machine guns, gas operations, as well as the implementation of heavy artillery guns and creeping barrages, the American Expeditionary Force may have fared better during the summer and fall of 1918. However, it is critical to consistently berate the American Expeditionary Force and its leaders over a hundred years later. The allied forces fought for almost three years with little to no gains on a tactical front. Perhaps Pershing saw the AEF as the only means to stop the fighting purely due to the number of men he could bear on the German army. Attritional warfare allowed for victory for the military, which had the most men to lose while remaining effective in combat. Pershing had

that number of men; regardless of how many men of the AEF would die in France, it was still more than the Germans could stand to lose. Battles such as Cantigny, Belleau Wood, St. Michael, and Meuse Argonne the American Expeditionary Force would blossom into the first independent American Army on foreign soil. Through sheer tenacity and an unconventional way of warfare American forces would bleed in France to secure peace in 1918. In February 2011 World War I officially could no longer be considered a memory but rather a history due to the passing of the last World War I veteran, Corporal Frank W. Buckles.[27] We as historians are now relegated to digging through the historical archives to piece together what made these young men like Corporal Buckles fight for their country and the experiences they faced not only in the trenches of France but also the battles they fought once they returned back to the United States of America.

The term "ignorance is bliss" must have come from somebody outside the armed forces, for ignorance in any aspect of military command usually comes at the cost of unnecessary lives lost. Many military historians' formal joint analysis of the First World War points to unfamiliarity with just how the war was going. It was not indeed decided who would emerge victorious on the Western Front of France. This war was the world's first attritional and perhaps only real total war. War goals meant nothing if there was still a large standing army capable of launching large-scale assaults on your armies' positions. Many more questions of the relevance of military reform would arise during the inner war periods, a topic that was initially discussed by military commanders prior to the American entrance into the First World War. Although there were small gains and attempts to reform the American Army in the early 20th century, it largely sat idle while other European nations mobilized for war. Some of the attempts made came during

[27] Edward A. Gutierrez, *Doughboys on the Great War: How American Soldiers Viewed Their Military Experience, (*University Press of Kansas, 2014): pg. 11.

the Root reforms, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 2 and 3, other changes came in legislative acts such as the Dick Act. All these attempts were modest in their actual function of reforming the army. The United States government and the War Department fell miserably short of attaining anything significant for the army prior to its debut in France.

Chapter 2: The Emergence of the United States on the World Stage

On the eve of February 15, 1898, the Battleship U.S.S. Maine, docked in Havana Harbor, Cuba suddenly and unexpectedly exploded killing over 200 sailors of the United States Navy. The reason for the ships mission was to help ease tension and to protect American citizens in Cuba from Spanish aggression. However, the subsequent events of the Maine and failed foreign diplomacy led to the Spanish American War. However, what was left out was the actual reasoning for the sinking of the warship, "The loss of this magnificent battleship is the most remarkable known to naval history, ships have floundered, burned, been wreck, and in many ways destroyed; but it remained for a vessel of the best type to be blown up and burned in a peaceful harbor. It is difficult to imagine, in the absence of full information, how the accident occurred."[1] Remember the Maine! To Hell with Spain! The aforementioned headline peddled by Yellow Journalists, wrongly due to no official inquiry administered by naval authorities past the improbable mine explanation. More interestingly was the idea that the United States would force Spain into a war with them by blockading Cuba and sending a fleet to the Philippians to destroy the Spanish fleet there. As Allan Mellett stated, "the United States became involved in a conflict that should not have been fought and could not have been lost."[2] The battle cry sent the American citizenry into a war frenzy and ignited a common enemy among the American people. The United States was still reeling from the effects of the Civil War, and the Spanish American War allowed for a reprieve for the country, which allowed both North and South to merge as a single cohesive fighting force against the repressive Spanish forces in both Cuba and the

---

[1] *Literary Digest* (February 26, 1898), vol. 16, pg. 262.

[2] Allen Millett, "The American Military as an Instrument of Power," in John Jesus and Louise Ketz (Des.), *Encyclopedia of the American Military* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1994), vol. 1, pg. 183.

Philippines. However, there was a deep rift within the United States Army senior command about how to mobilize, train, and deploy the Army.

The government did not have any issues with young men flocking to the colors and although the entirety of the conflict was short lived at the ending the United States Army consisted of 263,000 men amongst its ranks.[3] However, two issues would arise during the actual mobilization and activation of the U.S. armed forces. First, the National Guard could not be called for active service outside the United States, this issue would be resolved in 1916 with the National Defense Act, however, up until that point these trained men would have to volunteer for federal service. There was already a deep rift between National Guard soldiers and those of their active duty counterparts. Leadership differences and the overall nature of each organization led to poor military conduct amongst the mixed units. [4] Furthermore, was the logistical issue the United States and War Department. The Chief of Ordnance, General Daniel Flagler offered to congress the following justification on why he could not arm or supply the Army with adequate and modern weaponry, "A nation that does not keep a standing army ready equipped is still less likely to undergo the great cost of changing arms in store in order to be always ready to furnish the latest and most improve patterns immediately." [5] Of course, what General Flagler was referring to was the inadequate weapons the standard infantrymen carried with him into war. Some comprised the .45-70 Springfield, breach loading, single shot, black powdered rifles, while the supposed backward Spanish soldiers carried modernized German Mausers with twice the range of American weapons and had smokeless powder cartridges. In Flagler's testimony and

---

[3] Russel Weigley, *History of the United States Army* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1967) pg. 297.
[4] Roesser, Marie. *The Spanish-American War*. New York, NY: Gareth Stevens Publishing LLLP, 2019. Pg 14.
[5] Daniel Beaver, *Modernizing the American War Department,* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2006): pg. 28.

other statements, the justification for not having the most modern of equipment was simply because the money to support and constantly update such weaponry was far too expensive. A notion that seemed to please Congress who despised having large armies that wasted their money.[6] However, the war did show some ugly truths about the army as a whole, Major J. W. McAndrew, writing in the *Infantry Journal* noted, "Perhaps no military lessons can be drawn from our Cuban campaign of 1898, except in a negative way , in organization, in concentration, and in supply any more than in tactic or strategy."[7] Another officer wrote about the war and the many misgivings and failings the United States Army suffered during the campaign, General William H. Carter wrote, "As the results of the war with Spain unfold and the causes of many unsatisfactory conditions were analyzed, it became evident that our state of preparation for modern war with a strong and resourceful nation was decidedly in need of improvement." [8] Finally, the most direct, and pointed viewpoint came from Captain William Wallace (no known association of the Scottish hero) when he wrote, "History presented no more grotesque spectacle than the endeavor in 1898 of our ninety million people to raise an army of two hundred and fifty thousand men. With no handicaps such as a bad cause, lack of desire, want of material or time, our efforts to perform this task would have been discreditable to children. What would have happened if this campaign had rally developed into a war God only knows."[9]

Following the conflict, the American people returned to their daily lives, and work began anew as if nothing had happened. The Spanish American War, much like its predecessors, had

---

[6] Ibid., 30.

[7] Major J. W. McAndrew, "The Chief of Staff: His Duties Within the Division and the Field Army in the Field:" in *Infantry Journal* Vol. 9 No. 2 (September-October 1912): pg. 183.

[8] Major General William H. Carter, *The life of Lieutenant General Chaffee*, (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1917): pg. 75.

[9] Captain William Wallace, "Our Military Decline" in *Infantry Journal* Vol. 9 No. 5 (March-April 1913): pg. 638.

little impact on reform measures of the Army. However, changes needed to be made drastically. The United States had entered the twentieth century and was slowly becoming a global power amongst other leading nations worldwide. However, it was severely lacking in several categories, a modern army capable of fighting large scale battles was not amongst what the United States possessed. The United States had seen their first overseas territory since their creation, furthermore, unlike other European nations, who projected their foreign powers through military strength, the United States saw their foreign power through political means or as Foster Rhea Dulles wrote, “Blinding themselves to the inescapable obligations of their new world role, they thought they could avoid responsibility - in Asia and in Europe - by merely declaring their right to go their own way. Had isolationism really been abandoned in realistic acceptance of the twentieth century world, history would have followed a quite different course.”[10] The different course history would have to follow perhaps being the non-existence of the First World War or America being involved in the war at its onset.

What the United States military needed after the conclusion of the Spanish American War was a heavy overhaul that pinpointed specific issues within the general command structure of the organization. Before the Spanish American War, the Army's high command comprised a singular general who oversaw the land forces' organizational and tactical doctrine. This inherited type of command structure bred inefficiency as well as a "good ole boy" type of system of promotion and command time. A sense of rank came upon those well connected within the government rather than those who exhibited tactical merits, the only difference between the American promotion system and the British was the absence of a pay for rank style system. The Spanish American War helped convince top military leaders that a dramatic shift in tactical

---

[10] Foster Rhea Dulles, *America’s Rise to World Power, 1898-1954*, (New York: Harper Collions, 1955): pg. 43.

thinking needed to take place to help foster a better understanding of reforms needed for the army.

At the turn of the century, the United States was starting to emerge on the international stage, after the Civil War, the US became more of a singularity than a plurality of states. They had achieved through conflict the culmination of what other European powers had fought over for centuries. Following the Spanish-American War, the United States now had overseas territories that held economic significance and tactical dominance in the area. Areas in Cuba and the Philippines offered the United States a long reach in the Pacific and the Caribbean, the window to South America. Not only did the United States have new territories to incorporate into its economic plans, but the import/export prospects coming too and out of the United States also began to increase.

The United States also flourished in areas of production that helped propel the U.S. to the top of the economic charts. The production of raw materials such as iron, copper, and lead, as well as agricultural needs, like tobacco and cotton all helped to put the United States as a global leader in economics. Such markets as the oil, textile, steel, railroad, and food industries quickly overtook America's previous primary source of industry, agriculture. With the influx of immigrants streaming to both shores of the United States and the advent of the Industrial Revolution, the first decade of the twentieth century ushered in an unprecedented economic boom. Immigration would play a pivotal role in helping this economic boom, "Between 1900 and 1915, more than 15 million immigrants arrived in the United States. That was about equal to the number of immigrants who had arrived in the previous 40 years combined."[11] Immigrants flocked to the United States hoping for a better life and a piece of the rapidly growing American

[11] Immigrants in the Progressive Era, Library of Congress, www.Library of Congress.

Dream. Most would be fed into the American grinder of the Industrial Revolution and suspended in a never-ending cycle of work and death.

However, their alternatives sometimes were something far worse: a lack of hope in their home countries. Many immigrants would help the United States from the American Expeditionary Force in the First World War, a subject covered in later chapters.

Amongst other global powers, such as Germany, France, and Great Britain the United States was second only to Great Britain in exports of goods. Statistical information shows the following global exports between the year 1900-1910 in global exports per capita:

(Table 1: For statistical data on Percentage of World Exports)
Great Britain - 13.6% Percentage of World Exports
United States - 12.5% Percentage of World Exports
Germany 10.8% Percentage of World Exports
France 7.4% Percentage of World Exports
[12]

Compared to the export totals of the United States during the first three years of the First World War, the United States showed remarkable resilience to sustain itself as the global market began to crash for other nations.

At the turn of the twentieth century, foreign influencers started to intertwine their global policies, mainly trade and economics into America's foreign and domestic policies. Several World Fairs would take place within the first decade of the 20th century in the United States that helped move along these concepts. Under President Theodore Roosevelt, the United States turned away from a form of isolationism and instead achieved new foreign policy benchmarks.

[12] For statistical data on Percentage of World Exports see, International Trade Statistics 1900-1960 Tables XI, XII, XXII and XXIII.

Some of these benchmarks included the construction of the Panama Canal and instituting a form of government in the newly incorporated areas of the Philippines. President Roosevelt was also heavily involved in affairs in South America in places like Venezuela and other Latin American countries. Roosevelt's policies became known as the Roosevelt Corollary. This foreign policy directly contradicted the Monroe Doctrine of 1823, in which the United States originally stated they would stay out of foreign affairs in the region. However, President Roosevelt saw this as an opportunity to interject America's new foreign policies in the region and thrust Latin America into a form of policing towards other European nations' investments. Furthermore, the original framework of the Monroe Doctrine stated that European nations should not meddle in the Americas, except where these European nations had colonies of their own. This would further strengthen the United States 'claims' in the region while not having to get involved in European business. In the long run, this policy became highly unpopular amongst the affected countries in Latin America. However, it stood as another steppingstone for America on its way to the top of the world stage.[13]

However, a significant event in the Sea of Japan in 1905 would shift the viewpoint of the new President of the United States. The Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05 and Japan's major naval victory over Russia's Atlantic and Baltic Fleet shook the United States.[14] Once considered a feeble and sickly country, Japan had shown the world they possessed a central naval doctrine and modern ships that could match a world superpower such as Russia and win. In turn, President Roosevelt asked Congress for the most significant spending bill in its history to modernize and build a Great Fleet of their own. The historical significance behind this plan was to show that the United States was ready to take its place amongst other world superpowers. As much as the

[13] Sydney Milkis, Theodore Roosevelt: Foreign Affairs, The Miller Center para. 3.
[14] President Theodore Roosevelt, State of the Union Address, 1905.

Navy would prosper during this time, the army would remain stagnant and unreformed. In addition, the fleet was more than just showing Japan and other countries the immense power the United States Navy could harness if needed. Naval strategists designed fleet exercises to modernize foreign fleet practices for the United States Navy.[15] Throughout the cruise, the fleet engaged in numerous target and gunnery practices and test the longevity of the crews during the 14-month cruise.[16] Finally, it would highlight shortcomings in the current standing naval doctrine surrounding the large consumption of coal in all its naval vessels.

It was not just the Navy that was paying attention to foreign wars; it was the Navy that was reaping its benefits. That is different from saying the army was not paying attention to the war in Manchuria and lessons from the Second Boer War in South Africa, 1898-1902. Both wars offered an excellent insight into how future wars would take place on the changing battlefield. The failures in the early months of the Boer War showed United States officials how the leading European military could be pushed back and defeated on several occasions by a well-armed militia force. Not only were the British having to come to terms with their inadequacies, but the Russians on land were also being beaten by the relatively inferior forces of the Japanese. Both nations were learning harsh lessons.

Moreover, the United States military had attaches in both conflicts, and lessons seemed to fall on deaf ears on the senior commanders of the US Army. Even more, hampering a military organization than its administration is the internal fighting during times of reform. However, military reform is necessary; it still brings about the worst and best in both old and new practices. Stubbornness exposes its ugly head during times of change. It corrupts the best and empowers

---

[15] Jack Sweetman, *American Naval History: An Illustrated Chronology, the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps, 1775-Present.* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1984): pg. 98.
[16] United States Navy Department. *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy, 1908*. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1908. [The report begins by commenting on the world cruise.]

the worst. Often, ancient traditions and methods take center stage in the form of outdated policies and doctrines that no longer hold value in modern times. However, these traditions are argued vigorously and afforded to stay. For example, when Elihu Root was confirmed as the Secretary of War in 1899 by President McKinley his immediate response was, “I know nothing about war. I know nothing about the army.”[17] Root’s first immediate business was to eradicate the existing Armies singular organizational methodology. Previously the Army had a singular high-ranking commander for all decision-making in the Army. Instead, Secretary of War Root implemented three critical points to his reforms, and one was establishing a 'think tank' of senior commanders for the Army. Known later as the Root’s Reforms, Secretary of War Root set about to complete other areas of army command that were found to be severely lacking before, during, and after the recent Spanish American War.

As stated, Root was not a military man, however, he was approaching these reforms strictly from a legal and administrative point of view. Although criticized, especially by top leaders such as General Nelson A. Miles, who oversaw the Army at the time and the first to be relieved of his position as decision-maker if Root’s reforms took effect. As stated, the army worked off the principle of singular decision-making, a man without equal other than the approval of the President of the United States. With the new administration of the Army now being established by a General Staff, new reforms at the regimental and divisional level would have a better effect on a unit organization.

Along with the General Staff, Root helped establish a school for officers after graduation from one of the nation’s military academies. In addition to the nation’s military academies Root helped develop the Infantry and Cavalry school at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. These institutions

[17] Philip Jessup, *Elihu Root* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1938), vol. 1, pg. 215

were opened to officers who had been promoted through the ranks, as well as those who graduated from West Point. With some more revamping the school would broaden its educational horizon when it established their second year of course called the School of the Line in 1907. Finally, after some more improvements were made to the curriculum the second year at the school was renamed to the Staff College which focused on war games and military history with little attention being given to strategic planning and administration.[18] Before the Infantry and Cavalry School, School of the Line, Staff College, or Army War College, Army officers would be educated at either West Point, Virginia Military Institute, the Citadel, or Norwich, receive a commission as 2nd Lieutenant, and then perform on-the-job training with their units of assignments. However, there was very little follow-up training after this, and the Army War College allowed students to attend the school to learn a higher level of command and control, as well as essential lessons in foreign affairs, practice in war games and given the ability for career progression.

Furthermore, as stated, a lead component of the Army War College was to plan, organize, implement, and execute current war scenarios within the confines of the College. These plans included the ability to foresee and plan against the next war. These types of games and planning would cause a deep rift in 1916 between the War College and President Wilson due to his policy of isolation during the ongoing war in Europe. What the College decides to plan, and implement should depend on what the current or most recent conflict has taught them. As stated, there had been two recent and current wars ongoing that provided an ample number of lessons that could had been implemented. The Russo-Japanese War and the Second Boer War had a plethora of

[18] Timothy Nenninger, "The Army Enters the Twentieth Century," in Kenneth J. Hagan and William R. Roberts (eds.), *Against All Enemies: Interpretations of American Military History Form Colonial Time to the Present* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1986): pg. 223.

knowledge to draw upon for U.S. military planners at the General Staff and War College. Funding for the General Staff took a considerably more amount of planning and public support than the advent of the above-mentioned schools, strong advocates of the old system of Army organization centered around the idea that the Root's idea of a Centralized General Staff was mirrored after the German Command Staff, and it would trample on American principles and democratic values. However, the General staff, and the War Department would reject the French and German models, instead the General Staff was founded under the concept of, "a body of men selected and organized in our own way and in accordance with our own system to do these essential things."[19] In addition, Elihu Root was a cunning lawyer, who knew how to play the field in order to gain national support for his reforms. In Canton, Ohio, at one of President McKinley's commemorations Root was reported to have stated, "The Army of the United States has been and always will be in time of war that greater army, when the whole people of the United States putting forth their strength by militia and volunteer second the effort of the Regular Army."[20]

Foreign study was a pivotal part of the educational system of the War College and Staff College put forth by the Root Reforms. Root believed professional training for its officers was paramount to the modernization of the army. Furthermore, an army's reforms should be based upon what their potential allies and enemies are doing so effective strategies can be thoroughly planned and implemented if necessary. Several officers of merit, such as Peyton C. March, and Douglas McArthur were both military observers during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05. Their experience in foreign observation was a direct reflection of Root's educational system.[21]

---

[19] Five Years of the War Department Following the War with Spain's 1899-1903, pg. 294.
[20] Elihu Root quoted in "Mr. Root at Canton" in *Army and Navy Register* Vol. 33, No, 1206, (January31, 1903): pg. 85.
[21] Edward Coffman, *The War to End All Wars,* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986): pg. 12.

However, as great as the Root education progression system was, it wasn't without flaws, as mentioned earlier tactical and strategic planning as well as organization was not really taught. Furthermore, less than 10 percent of the small officer corps in 1916 had graduated from either the Staff College at Fort Leavenworth or the War College in Washington, DC. Moreover, less than one half of the officers selected to serve on the supposedly elite General Staff had received postgraduate military education."[22] In addition, the foundation of the General Staff was built around being the "brain" of the army with its focus surrounding the planning and directing of military operations rather than the day-to-day tasks of the War Department. However, the General Staff was so poorly manned, only 21 of the original 42 officers were a part of the General Staff, itself in quite the conundrum from the color of uniform stripes to who issues toilet paper to the troops.[23] Furthermore, the power vacuum left by the dissolving of the Chief of the Army left certain responsibilities such as logistical or quartermaster positions unattended. These responsibilities mostly revolved around logistics that bureau chiefs would fill these gaps. "The bureaus administered the Army *no;* The General Staff Corps, like the commanding general before it, was important for a war that only *might* happen."[24]

Another area that was addressed by Root's reforms was the organization of the nation's National Guard. Previously organized under the Militia Act of 1792 which basically organized the National Guard under 48 different state leadership commanders, and it really did not give a defined ruling on how the National Guard embedding with Regular Army. Root sent Colonel William Gary Sanger, the Inspector General of the New York National Guard to other European nations to see how their reserve forces are implemented within their military's organization.

---

[22] Edward Coffman, *The Regulars: The American Army, 1898-1941* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007): pg. 185.
[23] Ibid., pg. 188.
[24] Richard Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, pg. 323.

Colonel Sanger stated the “British military organization with its volunteer army backed up by a reserve of militia and yeomanry cavalry to be most congenial with the American system.”[25] In 1903 the Dick Militia Bill was passed which helped bridge the long-standing gap between the National Guard and Regular Army.

Brigadier General Tasker Bliss was among these individuals at the Army War College who helped plan and implement these war games. In fact, in 1902, he became the second president of the College. He published several articles to support why the army was doing exactly what it was doing at the college. Regardless of what was happening in the world, Brigadier General Bliss believed that the offensive was the only way to win wars, "Troops will be infallibly beaten in their entrenchments which had they taken the offensive would have been victorious."[26] With many of his publications at the War College and as a member of the newly formed General Staff, General Bliss continued to scoff at the increasing dangers to large infantry formations in open country. Furthermore, he wrote a damaging article that will set forth many spinoffs in the *Infantry Journals* of the time, writing, "We are so likely to be impressed with the terrible power of modern small arms reinforced with machine guns that we may come to believe that successful attack troops in position will be an impossibility. However, no fact is more certain than that such positions can be successfully assailed."[27] Historians have picked apart some of the facts within General Bliss' words. However, there was proof in the world, not only on the battlefield but also in literature.

Jan Gotlib Bloch was a man of many talents. He was an entrepreneur and held the title scholar, social activist, and pacifist. However, one of the most influential writings he published

---

[25] Philip Jessup, *Elihu Root*, pg. 265.
[26] Tasker Bliss papers, Stanford University Box 2 M2123. Pg. 140.
[27] Ibid, Tasker Bliss papers, pg. 160.

was his four-volume masterpiece, *The Future of War in Its Technical, Economic, and Political Relations,* published in 1893 and 1894.[28] The book was eventually translated into Polish, Russian, French, German, and Dutch. English versions were translated and dispensed after 1900. Here was the scholarly proof all the military thinkers in the world needed to truly understand that the next major war they fought would prove to be a fruitful venture that would lead to their own nation's downfall. Bloch pleaded with the European elites and tried to convince them that their next war would not be like the previous conflicts, which were short, bloody, and romantic. Instead, he insisted on several outcomes:

1. In the face of prevailing new weapons the aggressor would be unable to achieve surprise on the battlefield.
2. The war would be a lengthy affair that would require long grueling offensive and defensive campaigns.
3. The war would be a total war, the first of its kind that would lead to nations financial institutions collapsing.
4. Large amounts of casualties would lead to famine in the armies and at home thus contributing to a collapse of the nation's social order.[29]

As we know now these words went unanswered and were of little concern to those who read them. European leaders, as well as those in the United States just simply did not believe Bloch and his writings.

But Professor Bloch's imagination conceive a picture of total mutual annihilation along the entire line of battle. In his fancy he saw a modern battle as made up of an enormous number of duels, each between two men face to face and armed with perfect weapons. Even then an application of the mathematical laws of probability would place the average maximum less of both sides combined at about 50 percent. Curiously enough, we have to look backward to more barbarous aged and cruder weapons to approach a realization of his picture rather to the present or future times with warlike appliances were nearly perfect. As a matter of fact, there is no record of any land battle for centuries in which such a loss has occurred, while the percentage has been

[28] Janiak-Jasinska, Agnieszka: Bloch, Jan Gotlib, in 1914-1918-online. International Encyclopedia of the First World War, ed. by Ute Daniel, etc. 2014-10-08.
[29] Ibid.

constantly decreasing and that of the war now progressing in the East has thus far been less than that of any previous great war…[30]

Even though General Bliss and others in the upper echelons of the General Staff all believed the same ideology, attack was the only way to win wars. Looking further back in history, such as the Civil War and Spanish American War, a defensive army could never check the offensive attack. European nations believed the same logic; the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71 proved the concept of a surprise and envelopment by a quick-moving force. In a matter of months, the Prussian Army would encircle the French Army and force a capitulation. For the British, their baptism by fire in this new age of military technology was during the Boar War in South Africa, 1899-1902. Facing Dutch militants, the mighty British Army saw their tactical doctrine of volley fire and large infantry columns be decimated by smokeless powder magazine-fed rifles and artillery matching the same caliber of British guns.[31] Only the United States understood that their Army had not been tested by an enemy that could put up a staunch resistance. General Bliss notes, "We in this country are the more likely to fall into this error since we have no personal experience to guide us and are therefore apt to be unduly impressed with the power of the weapons which we handle."[32] Therefore, there is only one conclusion to present on how United States Army thinkers in the early twentieth century thought about war; simply put, there was no statistical or relative data to support a total war concept. In theory, plenty of proof was available to all nations willing to look. However, ignorance plagued military thinkers' to the point that no fundamental changes would occur within the United States Army. "All troops

---

[30] The Important Elements in Modern Land Conflicts, Tasker Bliss Papers, Stanford University Box 1. M2123 pg. 5.

[31] Barnett, Correlli. *Britain and Her Army, 1509-1970: A Military, Political and Social Survey.* Allen Lane The Penguin Press, London, 1970.

[32] Tasker Bliss papers, Stanford University Box 2 M2123. Pg. 161.

should be trained as though they were always to act on the offensive, and it will not do, to begin with teaching them that the offensive is impossible."[33]

Throughout the first decade of the twentieth century, the United States Army would continuously devolve into a never-ending, rudimentary form of reforms and tactical training. Relying heavily upon lessons learned several decades prior, open warfare and large-scale infantry assaults on 'fortified' positions would lead commanders into a false hope. War was already changing; reports from the war in Manchuria suggested that a large army equipped with modern weapons could not easily breach entrenched troops. Not only did the army fail to heed the lessons of the Russo-Japanese War in army tactics, but they also failed to recognize the enormous logistical issues the next war would bring. Thousands upon thousands of rounds of ammunition, food, bandages, and more were needed to sustain any army in the field. Regardless of a long or short war, the United States did not believe in the changing ideology of modern warfare. Their *Field Service Regulations* and *Infantry Drill Regulations* drove the doctrine utilized by regular army units as Colonel James Regan wrote in the 1905 *Field Service Regulation, "*The principle sum which our present tactics are used were those embraced in the first editions of General Upton's "Tactics," modified to suit the improvements in firearms, and with smokeless powder, and based upon experience in war."[34] The United States was booming and able to project its global economic power; however, sadly, that projection would come with no natural backing in times of conflict. The army alone was in dismal shape, so low that army strengths and units on paper lacked any fundamental factual basis. There were few conceptions that relied on the importance to the American fighting man and an over reliance on the highly

[33] Ibid, Tasker Bliss Papers, pg. 161.

[34] Colonel James Regan, "Remarks Upon Tactics, With Reference to Our Infantry Drill Regulations" in *Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States* Vol. 36 No. 135 (May-June 1905): pg. 479.

trained rifleman of the standard United States Army platoon. Volume of fire had always been at the forefront of the training cycles, however, the army relied on their riflemen to be actual riflemen prior to them joining the army and the United States was in no shortage of skilled riflemen. In 1875 an article in the *Army and Navy Journal* noted, "In our own country the enthusiasm for rifle shooting is now at a fever heat. Taken at the present time, it may be of immense service to the military strength of the country." [35] Furthermore, during the time of the China Relief Expedition, a young infantry captain stated, "What the Europeans respect most in us is our shooting qualities. Our rifles and ammunition are a good as any, and most of our men are better shots."[36] However, it's easy to be a good shot when nobody is shooting back at you with their own rifles and artillery.

There really could be no new ideology of warfare when it came to the General Staff and their next war. Although there was a multitude of lessons from previous wars, the United States Army believed they were suited for the next war they might face, whether it be a large-scale war or another war in South America. The Army War College and War Department believed their military could mobilized and be sent to fight a sufficient conflict. To a certain degree they were correct, based upon their previous conflict with Spain, the United States was well suited to undertake any conflict they might find themselves in. With the writings of the *Field Service Regulations* and the *Infantry Drill Regulations* to guide them army planners believe overwhelming firepower and marksmanship would be able to press home any attack on any type of enemy fortification. Artillery support and machine gun usage was not really factored into these scenarios solely based upon the idea that American intervention and the severe morality of

[35] International Rifle Shooting: in *Army and Navy Journal* Vol. 13 No. 3 (August 28, 1875) pg. 40.
[36] Captain Joseph Dickman, "Experiences in China" in *Journal of the United States Cavalry Association,* Vol. 13 No. 45 (July 1902): pg. 40.

its fighting man would be enough to carry the day. No real consideration had been given to the sheer destructive firepower the aforementioned weapon system would play upon the modern battlefield. Proponents of massed artillery and machine guns would voice their opinions in open forums but would still reside with the idea that mass losses are merely apart of war. Lt. Colonel Oliver Wood, who was an American artillery officer, and military attaché in Japan for the Russo-Japanese War, wrote of the brave assault by Japanese soldier during the battle of Port Arthur. "Every step taken by the Japanese was a bloody one, costing many gallant lives (shall we ever know how many?), but the pre-arranged plans were carried out regardless of losses. They knew what they had to do and did it."[37] The ideology of formulating a particular plan, and then implementing that plan without change due to strategic or tactical objectives would be a standing order for the United States Army on their debut in the First World War. The poor attitude and lackluster implementation and adaptation of modern reforms would lead to the insatiable number of losses of the American Expeditionary Force in France.

[37] Lt. Col. Oliver Wood, "A Week at Port Arthur," in *Army and Navy Register,* Vol. 38 No. 1344 (September 16, 1905): pg. 13.

Chapter 3: The Hard Truth of Reform

Following the turn of the twentieth century, much thought and criticism went into the significant military thought process. Two very distinct and different schools of thought emerged, although primarily centered around the same subject. Both dealt heavily with lessons from previous US campaigns and took very little consideration of outside viewpoints. The first school of thought was the significance of the infantry attack with support from artillery and cavalry guarding the flanks. Furthermore, the artillery would play a subpar role in staying forward and having a more direct line of sight on enemy positions. The second school of thought would play more towards a defensive role, however, not in the sense of siege or trench warfare, but instead of holding high ground long enough to exhaust the enemy. At that time, a large infantry frontal assault on enemy positions would occur.

Of course, US General Staff, as well as other prominent officers, agreed that the key to success was a strong army, a dangerous assumption based upon campaigns against weaker enemies and displaced armies. However, not all officers believed that frontal attacks were the key to success on the battlefield. General of the Army, General John M. Schofield, had this to say:

> Surely, twenty-two thousand men with the abundant supplies and time to select and intrench a position, need not apprehend the results of an attack by twice that number for two or three days! Was not the whole history of the war of secession full of examples of successful resistance in similar cases? Was it not, in fact, such attacks as that of Franklin, Atlanta, and Gettysburg, rather than any failures of defense, that finally exhausted and defeated the Confederate Armies? [1]

[1] John M. Schofield, note on J. H. Chalmers sketch of "Forrest and His Campaigns," 1879, Schofield Papers, Library of Congress, Box 93.

However, this solo conclusion brought about by Major General Schofield could have fared better in his later career. Although the judgment, in theory, was sound, US Army planners would always counter the assessment brought about by M.G. Schofield in the idea of the flanking attack. The lessons of such sieges of Vicksburg and Petersburg were singular strategic targets. However, they were not key successes in the war. In other words, leaders knew these positions would eventually fall due to the availability to outflank the areas and cut off vital supplies, thus starving the entrenched soldiers. It was later reconciled to the singular ideology of the frontal infantry attack that would solve all issues on the battlefield, including entrenched positions.[2]

Furthermore, students at the Army War College were taught what was considered modern tactics. Lessons such as maneuver warfare must be met with a sense of tenacity and direct collision with enemy forces to drive them from the field. No longer would infantry formations be able to outmaneuver the enemy but rather find them on the battlefield with their cavalry and directly and frontally assault them.[3] Lessons that had been carried over from the American Civil War, lessons that should have stayed in the American Civil War because modern combat had changed significantly. The Industrial Revolution allowed nations to rapidly build and mobilize large amounts of war materials. Railroads allowed for rapid transportation of troops up and down the battle lines, and breakthroughs in communication allowed for better command and control of individual army units. With all these lessons learned on the battlefield from other nations, the United States still neglected them and insisted their way of fighting was better.

---

[2] Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War. A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy*, (Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1973): pg. 197.
[3] Ibid., pg. 197.

The United States Army had attaches in two major Russian conflicts that would shed light on frontal attacks against positions of fortifications. The first was the Russian campaign against the Turks from 1877-78, where Francis Vincent Green, later to become a general in the Spanish American War, wrote to General Sherman on the conclusion of two distinct Russian generals. Both tried to develop battle tactics for a war with modern weapons such as breech-loading, magazine-fed rifles, and machine guns. Green's assessment aligns with the American idea which was directly attacking the enemy where they are found, although costly, would yield a larger reward for the attacking army. A minor annotation from his assessment follows, "The results of these two lines of thought are most interesting. Gourd's enemy finally escaped, dispersed, and routed it is true and losing all its artillery and baggage, but still, the enemy with most of their muskets on their shoulders did get away and might at a future time have been reorganized into another army, whereas Skobeleff by terming Cenovo with large loss ebbed the whole Shipka army, artillery, baggage, supplies, and men."[4]

The second conflict with American attaches was the Russo-Japanese War 1904-05. The Russo-Japanese War yielded a plethora of tactical lessons for the US Army to adhere to. No longer, as mentioned, could a superior army sweep their enemies from the battlefield with quick assaults and encirclements. "Modern long-range arms have changed all this; the fire-swept zone which must be crossed by the attacker has steadily increased, has grown deeper until today shrapnel is used with accuracy at 6,000 yards."[5] Trenches were stretching both men and machines to their very breaking points. Battles now lasted days or weeks instead of hours or a single day. The idea of the defense was slowly taking over the idea of the large frontal attacks on enemy positions. An excerpt from the *American Infantry Journal* from observers during the

[4] Green to W.T. Sherman, March 13, 1878, W.T. Sherman Papers, Library of Congress, Box 47A.
[5] Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War,* pg. 198.

Russo-Japanese War wrote, "Though smothered under a blanket of concentrated fire such as was never before known in military history, though their trenches were blown about their ears by high explosives shells, though attached by superior numbers during three consecutive nights and two days, and suffering hunger and thirst, the I Siberian Corps repulsed all attacks. This will convey some idea of the strength of the defense."[6]

Institutionalized tactics and doctrine continued to drive the US Army toward absolute reliance on large frontal assaults with sweeping waves of infantry and their gleaming bayonets attached to their rifles. Continued reforms inside and outside the military did little to change the ideology of modern times and how the battlefield had changed significantly. For example, artillery on the battlefield had taken a prominent part away from these sweeping infantry assaults. With advents in non-line of sight aiming and forward observers, artillery was becoming a less and less frontline weapon as it had during the Civil War. However, Army leaders continued to employ their field guns in a matter as to give direct fire to the enemy of which the infantry was advancing. Although howitzers had been a long-standing type of artillery firepower, more emphasis was put on field guns, field pieces with a limited quadrant effect on the barrel. In other words, the gun had minimal motion going up and down and could only truly be utilized in a direct-fire role. Therefore, this left the artillery open to accurate rifle fire or counter battery fire. Before including rifled barrels on firearms, artillery would be relatively safe from smoothbore muskets or rifles. However, after the invention of rifled groves in rifle barrels, the accuracy of a trained or even semi-trained soldier could reach distances far beyond the effectiveness of a smoothbore. Therefore, this would leave artillery gunners in danger of being targeted prior to the advancing infantry.

---

[6] Capt. Carl Reichmann, 17th Infantry, “Chances in War,” *Infantry Journal* III, (July 1906): pg. 26-28.

Again, these lessons had been learned in other conflicts not directly involving United States forces; however, significant details from observers for the United States Army were present and took copious notes on the ever-changing atmosphere of modern combat. As with past demonstrations, it seemed these lessons fell on deaf ears; in 1904, Capt. R.H.C. Kelton wrote in his "Artillery in the Attack" the following about the roles of the 'modern' artillery, "Afterwards, to protect the infantry from the fire which it cannot effectively return, the artillery must open such a cannonade upon the defender's batteries as to cause them in self-defense to turn their attention from the foot troops to the assailant's guns. This causes a duel between the opposing batteries, which is generally carried on at ranges varying from 3,000-2,000 yards, and continued until the guns of the defender are silenced, or the assailing batteries find themselves unable to continue the contest."[7] Moreover, this direct quotation signifies the aggressive tactics of American artillery doctrine. For counter-battery fire (counter-battery fire is the dueling artillery batteries.) to be accomplished, each of the batteries must usually be in visual sight of the other to land natural high explosive shells upon each other's firing positions.

However, it is to be noted that not all lessons received by the United States Army of foreign conflicts were ignored or thrown to the side. There were cases that military leaders would consolidate and take heed of specific innovations or improvements in military doctrine. For example, the same "Artillery in the Attack" lecture notes the new type of 'fixed' ammunition to be carried by the gun battery. Fixed ammunition is a new type of development that would fuse the shell casing to the actual projectile. The shell casing would have an already set amount of propellent inside, thus allowing a breach-loading field gun to increase its rate of fire from 1 to 2

[7] Infantry and Cavalry School, Department Military Art, Course in Organization and Tactics, 1904-05. Lecture No. 8. Subject: Artillery in the Attack by Captain R.H.C. Kenton. Pg. 2

rounds a minute to upwards of 12-15 rounds a minute.[8] An evident downfall of the United States Army was to continuously, on paper, count their units at the Corps level, which in turn would lead an individual to believe the actual strength of the United States Army was much larger than it was. An example is listed below of what a Corps of Artillery on paper looked like:

Table 2: Breakdown of Corps of Artillery, US Army circa 1905

Present Assignment of Artillery to the Corps		Proposed Assignment of Artillery w/new equipment.	
Army Corps Corps ARTY Two Battalions of four batteries each battery of 6 guns. Total 49 guns	1st Division Div. Artillery One battalion of four batteries; each battery of six guns. Total 24 guns 2nd Division (same) 24 guns 3rd Division (same) 24 guns Div. Arty 72 guns Corps Arty. 48 guns Total 120 guns	Army Corps. Corps Arty. Four Battalions of three batteries. Each battery of four guns total 48 guns.	1st Division Div. Arty. Two Battalions of three batteries. Each battery of four guns. Total 21 guns. 2nd Division (same) 3rd Division (same) Div. Arty. 72 guns Corps Arty. 48 guns Total 120 guns

[9]

With a peacetime army following the Spanish-American War, the United States Army went through a tremendous downfall and demobilization. "Just as had happened after the Civil War in 1865, however, the federal government cut military expenditures following the end of

[8] Ibid, pg. 14
[9] Ibid, pg. 17

hostilities with Spain. The U.S. Army slipped from 125,000 soldiers in 1898 to 75,000 in 1903."[10] Of what remained of the standing army, and looking at the numbers of the above breakdown of a Corps of Artillery leaves the notion of fielding such an army unit somewhat lacking. Furthermore, from the aforementioned, Capt. Kenton, "With the 25 Batteries of Field Artillery (this is exclusive of the two siege trains and the three Mountain Batteries) re-armed with the new rapid-fire gun, the Army will have its "indispensable Companion" a total of 100 guns, or 33 guns to the Corps, a figure so small in the light of every development of modern warfare, as to become pitifully absurd."[11]A severe mistrust within the United States Army service branches would also cause doubts and misleading amongst the Active Component and Reserve or National Guard Component.

Theories that Reservist or National Guard officers or non-commissioned officers (NCOs) were incapable of accurately fielding a battery of guns and precisely bringing upon the enemy fire that would silence the defender's guns and bring about a swift end to the enemy barrage on the advancing friendly infantry." Moreover, even supposing that they do find such places, is it probable that their chiefs, who often will be officers of the reserve, and even non-commissioned officers, will be sufficiently familiar with the necessities of the battle to intervene at the right moment?[12]

In addition, a significant amount of this in-service bickering would cause large issues once the United States entered the First World War in 1917. However, for now, a rudimentary solution to the issue was a part of the Elihu Root'

s reforms in 1903 and the advent of the Dick Act of 1903. Charles W. Dick, a Republican Congressman from Ohio, was Secretary of War Elihu Root's co-author and supporter of his reform measures in 1903. Hence, the Militia Act of 1903 was commonly referred to as the Dick Act of 1903. As previously mentioned in the previous chapter, these reforms served to modernize

---

[10] Matthew S. Muehlbauer and David J. Ulbrich, *Ways of War, American Military History from the Colonial Era to the Twenty-First Century*, 2nd Edition, (Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2018): 268.
[11] Artillery in the Attack, pg. 17-18.
[12] Ibid, pg. 30. Quoted by Captain R.H.C. Kenton.

the Army after the horrific losses and stumbling of leadership during and after the Spanish American War.[13] One of the specific reforms that Secretary of War Root imposed was to modernize the Nation's National Guard. Instead of having individual state militia, the National Guard would become a federalized organization with access to federal funding and training. Furthermore, it would provide modernized training to all officers and non-commissioned officers to help bridge the gap between themselves and their Active component counterparts. Internal fighting would continue between the components no matter the training given to National Guard units.

A branch that had become obsolete with the introduction of the machine run was the cavalry. However, just like other European nations of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the United States held onto the idea of having vast, sweeping formations of saber-wielding cavalrymen. There may have been a place for such formations, such as the sweeping plains of the mid-west, the deserts of the Southwest United States, or the border states with Mexico. However, on a machine gun-swept, crater-filled landscape, the only need for a horse and rider is to pull artillery or machinery. Modern warfare had capped the idea of the cavalry charge. Moreover, it made it clear to some nations that motorized vehicles would soon outdo a horse.

These failures to see the significance of how the modern battlefield has changed was a running theme amongst the top leaders of the United States military. Cavalry, virtually unchanged since the American Civil War, still operated on an objective doctrine of shock and awe tactics. Large formations deliver a massive blow with saber in hand and scatter the enemy forces. "Success lies with that cavalry which unites the greatest mobility with the highest power of cohesion in the charge and supplements the effect with effective use of its weapons during the

[13] Matthew S. Mühlbauer and David J. Ulbrich, *Ways of War*, pg. 270.

melee. Mounted fire actions are often successful during the pursuit, occasionally so, before the delivery of the charge, but rarely is cavalry, depending on such action alone, able to accomplish anything of importance on the battlefield."[14] The last great cavalry charges had gone by the wayside in the 19th century. Even the British Cavalry, who truly believed in the traditionalistic values of the cavalrymen, had gone through significant reforms regarding their cavalry. Essentially, they had gone away with the idea and instead relied exclusively upon the concepts of dragoons. The idea was that instead of having cavalrymen, dragoons were mounted infantry still capable of exploiting gaps in enemy lines; however, they preferred to fight on foot. Their weapons were exchanged from the small carbine to the standard fighting rifle of the infantry regiments they supported. "During this period, cavalryman, armed with short-barreled carbines, sword, and lance, were suited for open field charges into unsuspecting enemy flanks, but the Boers did not expose themselves in such ways. Instead, they concealed themselves in high rocky terrain. By arming cavalrymen with infantry rifles and ditching the sword and saber, a commanding officer gained not only mobility but also became dismounted infantry if needed."[15] The reason for such mirroring of the British Army for the United States Army was their close relationship regarding cohesion among their nation's military.

The idea of utilizing cavalry would have to be a perfect scenario. The ground needs to be a wide-open field to which the cavalry can maximize its charge. Moreover, if the front lines of an enemy were incapable of charging, a flanking attack to either side or the rear of the enemy would be attempted. "The worst possible combination is that ground which impedes the progress of the attack and, in addition, affords no shelter. For charge in line, there should be room enough for

---

[14] Infantry and Cavalry School, Department Military Art, Course in Organization and Tactics, 1904-05. Lecture No. 5. Subject: Cavalry in the Offensive. By Captain Malin Craig, 10th Cavalry. pg. 8.
[15] Edward Spiers, "*The Late Victorian Army 1868-1914" In The Oxford History of the British Army*, edited by David G. Chandler & Ian Beckett (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994): pg. 199-200.

lateral deployment and a flank attack. Otherwise, the charge must be delivered in some other formation."[16] However, such attacks would only be possible in October and November 1914 as the race to the sea in the First World War would take place. There was no conceivable way for United States military planners to predict the future, however, there were plenty of signs and analyses to help them understand the futile efforts of utilizing cavalry. Still, military leaders in the upper ranks of the U.S. Army continued to push the idea of having a separate cavalry arm to help augment the infantry in the attack.

Although cavalry would be molded into a new type of war machine, tanks, the days of the horse and rider were rapidly closing. The usage of horses still proved beneficial in some instances on the battlefield. However, the sheer human resources it would take to keep these animals going would strain the already limited supply chain that each army would have. The United States Army, up until its involvement in the First World War, would continue to have a large contingent of mounted cavalrymen within its ranks. As stated, cavalrymen in the border states and chasing down Mexican bandit Pancho Villa proved quite successful. However, as the harsh lesson other nations were going through in the crater-filled landscape of Western France, there was no place for glorious cavalry charges. This a lesson the United States once again refused to heed too and, in turn, continued to implement cavalry tactics within their military doctrine.

Much like the artillery and the cavalry, the army was going through its issues at the turn of the century, both in tactical doctrine and operational changes. Leaders and top brass failed to grasp lessons from many foreign wars. Overlooking issues and ignoring the modernization warfare on the battlefield:

---

[16] Cavalry in the Attack, pg. 11-12.

The Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05 was an ideal conflict for American observation and analysis of combat, strategy, and technology. During the ground war, Russian machine guns firing 10 rounds per second, for example, delivered withering fire that made massed Japanese infantry assaults into early and pointless exercises. American and European observers and analysts learned that Japanese soldiers were fierce fighters with high morale. However, both Europeans and Americans ignored Japan's enormous casualties and the reason behind them, and their oversight would contribute to gross overestimations of offensive capabilities during the First World War in Europe a decade later. [17]

As discussed throughout this chapter, significant reforms were needed. Lessons learned both abroad and at home seemed to fall on deaf ears. Roadblocks and constraints limited the forward progression of the Army during times that should have been utilizing these lessons to make a modern army. *Field Service Regulations*, *Infantry Drill Regulations*, and *Cavalry Service Regulations* paved the way forward for how the United States Army would now only be regulated and formed on a tactical doctrine basis. Evidently, those in the General Staff were openly ignoring lessons, and any attempt to circumnavigate this lesson was dealt harshly with. It would be a career-ending move if any officers of the General Staff or below dared to improve training tactics within the ranks. Reliance on large frontal assaults remained the predominant status quo for all infantry regiments with supportive fire from artillery batteries. "These documents and others like them ingrained American Soldiers with beliefs that aggressive offense, good morale, and darling leadership could win battles. However, Root's reforms were organizational reforms, not operational or tactical. The increasing killing power stemming from higher cyclic rates of fire, rifled barrels, longer-range artillery, more potent explosives, and other technological advances did not play significant roles in these manuals."[18]

Indeed, these reforms that Secretary of War Root implemented benefited the United States Army on the organizational level. They sought to change the overall structure of the

[17] Matthew S. Mühlbauer and David J. Ulbrich, *Ways of War*, pg. 271.
[18] Ibid, pg. 272.

military and left the actual daily drills and regulations to those with experience in the subject. They were meant to shore up the many shortcomings of the Army. Elihu Root was not a military man and, to his credit, never claimed to be. He took a position, much like other nations such as Great Britain with Lord Richard Haldane, individuals in charge of military affairs without military experience. In the words of Viscount Haldane with his appointment to Secretary of War, "At this time I knew but little of military affairs, and of Army organization I was wholly ignorant."[19]

Root's main aim was to reorganize the centralized command of the Army, essentially forming a think tank of the Army's top leadership. What would eventually become the General Staff, Root endeavored to stop prior mishandling of Army doctrine. However, roadblocks from prominent members of Congress and military leaders would block his measures for some time. In fact, on several occasions, when Secretary of War Root approached Congress with his ideas, he was turned away; powerful politicians and military leaders with political connections viewed his reforms as direct hindrances to their progression. Stating opinions that the way the Army operated caused no actual harm to its tactical effectiveness.

Furthermore, deep distrust in such a system led lawmakers and military leaders to assume that the United States would no longer be unique in how the army would be run. "Some in Congress equated Root's proposed General Staff to the militaristic Splendor of the German General Staff, which in turn aroused American fears of tyranny or territorial expansionism."[20] Root failed to understand that even with the creation of the General Staff in 1903 and the Army

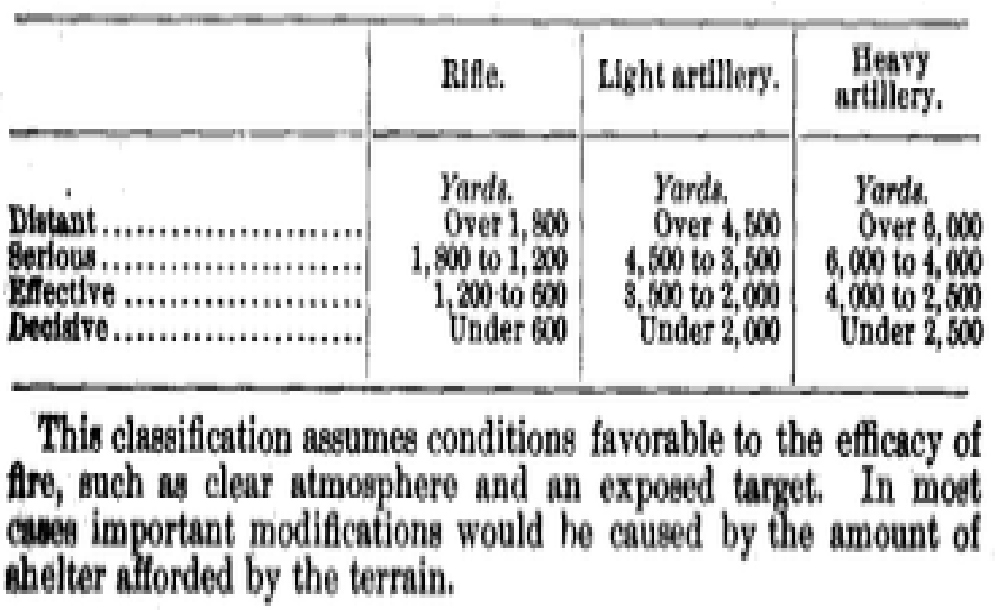
---

[19] Richard Burdon Haldane, *Viscount Haldane, An Autobiography,* (Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc. Garden City, New York, 1929): pg. 196.
[20] Matthew S. Mühlbauer and David J. Ulbrich, *Ways of War*, pg. 274.

War College, top military thinkers who opposed him would still be making decisions on how the army would be trained and organized.

Field Service Regulations, or FSR, laid out organizational conditions for the Army. Within its pages laid hundreds of examples of how infantry, artillery, and cavalry units were to perform on the battlefield. Supposedly taken from examples both within the United States and outside, these regulations set forth a guideline for individual units and how to mobilize and take action against the enemy. However, lessons outside the United States were taken with a figurative grain of salt. The *Field Service Manual of 1907* lays out the importance of the offensive while the defensive should only be obtained temporarily; furthermore, the importance of the large frontal assaults, carried out by tenacious tactics and bold leadership, is what wins battles in the minds of the top military leaders of the time. "Combat will be either Offensive or Defensive. Decisive results can usually be obtained only by the Offensive. The Defensive should, as a rule, only be adopted temporarily or locally, with a view to the eventual assumption of the Offensive."[21] The lessons fell considerably short of how modern the battlefield was vastly becoming. No longer were these large assaults effective against large enemy formations. A chart from the same manual implies the ranges at which infantry and both light and heavy artillery should take up effective fire against an enemy in the open, not entrenched, and present the perfect target for friendly units. However, in modern war, optimal ranges for infantry fell considerably short than the serious or effective range. Even the ranges of light artillery and the imposed 'heavy' artillery signified a sense of direct fire only due to the short ranges.

[21] U.S. Army Military History Institute. U.S. War Department. *Field Service Regulations, United States Army*, 1907, pg. 101



	Rifle.	Light artillery.	Heavy artillery.
	Yards.	*Yards.*	*Yards.*
Distant	Over 1,800	Over 4,500	Over 8,000
Serious	1,800 to 1,200	4,500 to 3,500	8,000 to 4,000
Effective	1,200 to 600	3,500 to 2,000	4,000 to 2,500
Decisive	Under 600	Under 2,000	Under 2,500

This classification assumes conditions favorable to the efficacy of fire, such as clear atmosphere and an exposed target. In most cases important modifications would be caused by the amount of shelter afforded by the terrain.

Figure 2: United States Artillery Ranges.

[22]

A standardized issue of ammunition for an infantryman in 1907 through 1917 would be 200 rounds of 30.06 for their Springfield 1903 bolt-action, magazine-fed rifle. The Springfield 1903 was an excellent rifle and accurate enough to sustain itself in combat. For long-duration battles, 200 rounds per man will be exhausted within the actions in the first couple of hours. According to previous doctrine and the *Field Service Regulations*, a large, sustained fire in a frontal assault must be carried out aggressively against any enemy position. For these frontline soldiers to sustain such rates of fire without exhausting their supply of ammunition, a vast network of resupply must be adequately established and unhindered by enemy forces. Throughout the establishment of these networks, communication is a crucial component and must be unhindered by the enemy.

Furthermore, the transportation trains must be able to operate on roads capable of carrying the supplies and without road or rail construction delays. Although the mass

[22] Ibid, pg. 102

transportation of troops and supplies had been revolutionized during the American Civil War, the United States Army and its Corps of Engineers had done little to modernize the technology. Therefore, heavy reliance was still invested on the mule or horse-drawn wagons of long-supply trains. Moreover, if conditions were not ideal for the supply trains to resupply the troops, they would have to resort to a scavenging-type mentality.

The devastation of the machine gun on the battlefield had been proved undeniable by those slain infantrymen who paid the ultimate sacrifice on the battlefield. The ability of a single machine to fire at rates upwards of 600 rounds a minute is worth more than an entire company of infantry. Moreover, even though the overall weight of the machine gun was upwards of 110 pounds, its ability to cover a far-sweeping field of fire was worth its weight in gold. However, the United States Army only carried its machine gun crews as a part of a provisional contingent. They were not permanently attached to any specific Regiment or Battalion. Although they would be listed as provisional or machine gun companies on paper, they were often relegated to the Brigade or Division level. A provisional type of assignment in the army means they can be reassigned throughout the entirety of the Division. They are not subject to or belong to any specific commander outside the General of the Division. Therefore, unit cohesion needs to be established, and training tactics are achieved using these great weapons. Also, the small number of guns per the provisional machine gun company needs to be much higher. With a total of six guns per company and a total of 108 enlisted men per company, the number of 18 men per gun constitutes a lack of interest in the firearm and an over-reliance on the standard infantryman with his bolt-action rifle.

Not surprisingly, battlefield tactics of open warfare and vast maneuvering formations had little room for hauling heavy machine guns around the battlefield. So, machine guns were often

relegated to defensive roles or security details of vital areas. As pointed out in several lectures in the *Field Service Regulations*, the United States Army was dominated by doctrine detailing the offensive's importance and the defense's ineffectiveness. Stating an infantry unit on the defensive can generally not have a positive outcome in any battle decisively. Therefore, little thought of the capabilities of the machine gun was taught to the United States Army. Another excellent opportunity to bring the army into the new age of warfare was missed. However, a keynote from other nations was developing a more minor, more versatile rapid-firing gun system. What would later be dubbed the light machine gun, a light machine such as the British Lewis Gun or the French Chauchat. Both weapons provided rapid movement and a devastating rate of fire for advancing foot soldiers. The ability for this type of firepower to be with the forward portions of an attack allowed for fast and effective fire upon a target.

Figure 3: United States Army Standard Infantry Division.

Division, complete.

Organization.	Personnel.						
	Officers.			Enlisted men.			
	Combatant.	Sanitary and chaplains.	Veterinarians.	Combatant.	Sanitary.	Civilians.	Aggregate.
The line (including attached sanitary troops).							
Division headquarters [a]	8	4	.....	.....	9	13	34
Infantry (3 brigades, 9 regiments)	453	45	.....	13,500	216	6	14,220
Cavalry (1 regiment)	50	5	2	1,188	24	.....	1,269
Artillery (1 brigade, 2 regiments)	83	8	4	2,252	42	2	2,391
Engineers (1 battalion, 3 companies)	15	3	.....	501	9	.....	528
The staff.							
Quartermaster's department (not counted elsewhere)	[b] 4	.....	6	4	.....	30	44
Subsistence department (including bakery)	[b] 3	.....	.....	4	.....	104	111
Signal troops (1 battalion, 2 companies, including attached sanitary troops)	11	2	.....	207	6	.....	226
Sanitary troops (4 ambulance companies, 4 field hospitals, reserve)	.....	43	.....	.....	559	.....	602
Ammunition train (5 wagon companies)	.....	2	.....	.....	8	180	190
Supply train (6 wagon companies)	.....	1	.....	.....	4	216	221
Pack train	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	14	14
Total	627	113	12	17,656	877	565	19,850

[a] Including sanitary inspector and his orderlies. In this table it is assumed that the brigade adjutants and the personal aids of general officers are detailed from the division; they are therefore not counted at their respective headquarters.

[b] Assuming 2 as majors.

23

[23] U.S. Army Military History Institute. U.S. War Department. Field Service Regulations, United States Army, 1909, pg. 39.

Figure 4: Individual Breakdown within U.S. Army Division.

DETAILS OF ORGANIZATION.

THE LINE.

24. I. *Infantry.*[a]

Company:
- 1 captain.
- 1 first lieutenant.
- 1 second lieutenant.
- 1 first sergeant.
- 1 quartermaster sergeant.
- 5 sergeants (1 as mess sergeant).
- 9 corporals.
- 3 lance corporals.
- 2 cooks.
- 2 musicians.
- 1 artificer.
- 84 privates (1 as wagoner).
- 1 field wagon.

108 total enlisted.

Provisional machine gun company:[b]
- 3 officers (detailed by regimental commander).
- 7 sergeants. } (Detailed and organized as a company).
- 9 corporals. }
- 92 privates. }
- 6 guns.
- 30 pack mules.[c]
- 1 field wagon.

108 total enlisted.

Battalion:
- 1 major.
- 1 adjutant (first lieutenant).
- 1 quartermaster and commissary (second lieutenant).
- 1 sergeant-major (mounted).
- 1 sergeant (detailed as supply sergeant).
- 6 privates (detailed, 2 as drivers, 1 as wagoner, and 3 as mounted orderlies).
- 2 ammunition wagons.
- 1 field wagon.
- 4 companies.

15 officers (3 mounted).
440 enlisted men (4 mounted).
2 ammunition wagons.
5 field wagons.

[a] To provide enlisted men for the details indicated, the above strength of each company is increased by 1 sergeant, 1 corporal, and 12 privates. These additional men are included in the aggregate enlisted strength of the regiment.

[b] This organization for the machine gun company will be used until the organization applicable to the new machine gun is perfected and published. One section is armed with rifles.

[c] Grain in battalion headquarters wagons.

Regiment:
- 1 colonel.
- 1 lieutenant-colonel.
- 1 adjutant. } Captains.
- 1 quartermaster. }
- 1 commissary. }
- 1 chaplain.
- 1 sergeant-major (mounted).
- 1 quartermaster sergeant (mounted).
- 1 commissary sergeant.
- 2 color sergeants.
- 1 sergeant (detailed as trumpeter sergeant—mounted).
- 9 privates (detailed, 2 as horseshoers, 1 as farrier, 1 as saddler, 1 as wagoner, 4 as mounted orderlies).
- 1 sergeant. } (Detailed detachment of mounted scouts).
- 3 corporals. }
- 17 privates. }
- 1 chief musician. } Band (36).
- 1 principal musician. }
- 1 drum major. }
- 4 sergeants. }
- 8 corporals. }
- 1 cook. }
- 12 privates. }
- 8 privates (detailed, 1 as cook and 1 as wagoner). }
- 2 field wagons.
- 3 battalions.
- 1 machine gun company.

51 officers (15 mounted).
1,500 enlisted men (40 mounted).
30 pack mules.
6 ammunition wagons.
18 field wagons.
4 mules (extra team).[a] (Sec. 34).

Attached sanitary troops:
- 1 major.
- 3 captains and lieutenants.
- 1 sergeant, first class.
- 3 sergeants and corporals.
- 20 privates, first class and privates (1 as wagoner).
- 1 field wagon.
- 1 pack mule.
- 4 officers (mounted).

24 enlisted men (8 mounted).

[a] The extra team mules in all regimental organizations are cared for by the regimental headquarters detachment. All field and ammunition wagons are four-mule.

NOTE.—In regiments of infantry, cavalry, and artillery the trumpeter sergeant is orderly for the commander. An orderly for the chaplain is detailed from the band.

[24] Ibid, pg. 43.

The above charts break down the basic army unit into Company, Battalion, and Regiment. The second chart shows the combat breakdown of an Army Division and the number of subsequent units assigned, for example, how many Brigades, Battalions, and Regiments were assigned to each Army Division. It demonstrates the small numbers of actual personnel assigned to each level of command and the inability to truly make practical gains outside of chasing bandits or Filipino insurrectionists. Even in the large-scale but short European wars, units as small as American Companies or Battalions would not last long before attrition rates would force units off the battlefield; therefore, making their combat ineffective. Furthermore, these units were held to strict guidelines of usage; therefore, making them incapable of working independently of each other.

Communication is a critical skill set in any organization. The army is not a stranger to communication; over the years leading up to the First World War, it had to work on advancing its communication technology. During this time, the telephone, the telegraph, and other modernized communication forms were invented and implemented in all modern European armies. The United States Army had even implemented these advents into their organization. However, a heavy reliance on Semaphore codes or signal flags was still essentially the primary usage of communication amongst the different units on the battlefield.

ORDERS, COMMANDS, AND SIGNALS. 21

Letter of alphabet.	If signaled from the rear to the firing line.	If signaled from the firing line to the rear.
A M	Ammunition going forward	Ammunition required.
C C C	Charge (mandatory at all times).	Am about to charge if no instructions to the contrary.
C F	Cease firing	Cease firing.
D T	Double time or "rush"	Double time or "rush."
F	Commence firing	Commence firing.
F B	Fix bayonets	Fix bayonets.
F L	Artillery fire is causing us losses.	Artillery fire is causing us losses.
G	Move forward	Preparing to move forward.
H H H	Halt	Halt.
K	Negative	Negative.
L T	Left	Left.
O (Ardois and semaphore only.)	What is the (R. N. etc.)? Interrogatory.	What is the (R. N. etc.)? Interrogatory.
- - — — - - (All methods but ardois and semaphore.)	What is the (R. N. etc.)? Interrogatory.	What is the (R. N. etc.)? Interrogatory.
P	Affirmative	Affirmative.
R	Acknowledgment	Acknowledgment.
R N	Range	Range.
R T	Right	Right.
S S S	Support going forward	Support needed.
S U F	Suspend firing	Suspend firing.
T	Target	Target.

(2) THE TWO-ARM SEMAPHORE CODE.
(See illustrations on pages following.)

(*C. I. D. R., No. 13.*)

25

Figure 5: Example of United States Army Signal Corps Semaphore Flag codes, circa, 1911.

A caveat to this was the easy ability of phone or cable wires to be disrupted by enemy artillery fire or other means of destruction such as weather, poor equipment, or even poorly trained signal soldiers. So, the U.S. Army decided to keep its 'reliable' semaphore flags as its primary source of communication. However, this type of communication was a significant

[25] Infantry Drill Regulations, United States Army, 1911. Washington Government Printing Office 1917 pg. 21.

problem; a soldier holding two large, colorful flags in the air during the battle became an instant target for enemy fire. Furthermore, if the enemy has been able to secure a friendly code book, they can read your coded messages and counter your moves on the battlefield.

In addition, this showed a very inadequate picture of how communication technology had started to improve the modern battlefield; communications during the Boer War, Russo-Japanese War, and even the Balkan Wars demonstrated the usefulness of telephones and telegraphs in war. Field phones primarily provided frontline officers with the ability to communicate to the rear and direct resupply or adequate artillery support for infantry attacks. Likewise, it provided the generals in the rear with a relatively live picture of the battle space. It allowed them to concentrate forces where needed and direct their forces toward a positive outcome.

The usage of practical fire superiority as it pertains to tactical and objective doctrine demonstrates a severe lack of awareness of the growing debate among the increasing deadlines the modern battlefield has indeed become. Fire superiority is often spoken about in the *Field Service Regulations* and the *Infantry Drill Manuals* to the point that there seems to be no other outcome other than the absolute destruction of the enemy and their positions. Therefore, we must ascertain those military leaders, although cautious about losing men needlessly, are only concerned with obtaining total control through the insatiable thought of victory through firepower. *Infantry Drill Manual* specifically points out the idea that fire superiority is key to obtaining victory. "In a decisive battle, success depends on gaining and maintaining fire superiority. Every effort must be made to gain it early and then to keep it. Attacking troops must first gain fire superiority to reach the hostile position. Over open ground, an attack is possible only when the attacking force has a decided fire superiority. With such superiority, the attack is

possible, but success is probable and without ruinous losses."[26] That quote comes directly from the *Infantry Drill Manual of 1911*. This document had been viewed and approved by the top military officials in the General Staff and circulated throughout the army from the Army War College. Within the text lies a very misleading sentiment of a lack of awareness and foresight amongst the United States Army's top officials; the very idea of large frontal attacks is no longer capable on a battlefield swept by machine guns and large artillery pieces.

Furthermore, it implies a failed misunderstanding of these officials to take into consideration that a standard United States infantryman cannot maintain fire superiority with their limited resources on the battlefield. Some limitations come in the form of support by fire positions of either machine guns or even light, indirect-fired artillery pieces, as well as the ability to coordinate a proper large-scale bombardment of howitzers capable of indirect fire on an enemy position. In addition, the *Infantry Drill Regulation* or IDR offers very little in preparation to advance against 'fortified' positions. Although one can argue that the trenches of World War I in no way compared to the trenches in past wars, a keynote could be taken away from the siege of Port Arthur during the Russo-Japanese War. Trenches were utilized to devastating effects against the attacking Japanese, as discussed earlier in this chapter. Although not as elaborate as First World War trenches, the Russians could hold off repeated frontal attacks from advancing Japanese soldiers to the point of exhaustion. A point to make here is that although trenches in warfare were not a new concept, in fact the American Civil War, in its final year saw a great deal of trench systems being constructed by both sides. It was the case that even though trenches existed prior to the First World War it was not an unbreakable line of defenses but rather a fortification of a single point of interest such as a vital infrastructure location. Armies could

[26] Ibid, pg. 104.

circumnavigate these trench systems and fortifications, however, during the First World War, armies could not attack a flank simply due to a flank no being available after 1914.

However, as prescribed in their manuals, infantrymen were too advance still and take enemy fortifications with little to no preparation:

> Few notifications enter into the problem of attacking fortifications. Such as are to be considered relate chiefly to the greater timid labor of advancing, the more frequent use of darkness, and hand grenades to augment the fire. If the enemy is strongly fortified and time permits, it may be advisable to wait and approach the charging point under cover of darkness. The necessary reconnaissance and arrangement should be made before dark. If the charge is not made at once, the troops intrench the advance position, using sandbags if necessary. Before daylight, the foreground should be cleared of obstacles.[27]

Moreover, these actions are merely words without deeds. The idea that an advance on enemy fortifications with little to no preparation plays into the ideology of top military officials and their disbelief in the advancement of weaponry. Their unwillingness to foresee how the battlefield had changed dramatically since their last war in Cuba has solidified the very concept of taking positions without catastrophic results. In later chapters, the results of all these lessons would come to fruition, and rising casualties in the trenches of the First World War would demonstrate just how wrong military leaders were.

There was a distinct difference in the beliefs of higher military officials between the offensive and defensive capabilities of their units. Although large amounts of literature in both the *Field Service Regulations* and the *Infantry Drill Regulations* are focused on the offensive, there are sections dedicated to the defensive positions of soldiers. The sections dedicated to the infantry mention emplacing machine guns to help cover the forward or flanks of the defensive positions. Just as with every unit that would eventually participate in the First World War, an excellent fortification evolution would occur. However, the United States would lag

---

[27] Infantry Drill Regulations, United States Army. Washington Government Printing Press 1912.

tremendously in this area as well. Until their war involvement, the United States relied heavily upon earthen bunkers and built-up defensive positions.

Furthermore, the trench's overall depth is augmented by adding sandbags and earth atop the level area of the ground. Easily prepared and easy to dismantle, early defensive positions were only temporary fortifications and were never meant to stay for long periods. Another indication of their temporary emplacements was the lack of dugouts for various functions. Dugouts provided spaces for living quarters, kitchens, aid stations, and many other functions for army units for sustained operations in war.

However, the main points of how entrenchments and fortifications served several purposes to the fighting man were missed by military planners—over-reliance on the offensive capabilities of the below-strength infantry.[28] Another indication of the little importance given to the advancement of entrenched positions is the number of entrenching tools and engineer equipment carried by the standard infantry company from 1907 through 1916. A breakdown below gives an insight into what each infantry company was expected to carry into battle with them:15 pick mattocks (pick axe), 45 intrenching shovels, four hand axes, three wire cutters, and a variety of other small pieces of equipment to help build up defensive positions.[29] Little consideration was given to the advent of heavier entrenching equipment allotted for making more permanent positions of defensive still due to the overall reliance of the frontal assault on enemy positions.

Revisiting the idea of absolute trust in superiors, there is a very eerie section of the *Manual for Privates of Infantry* that spells out precisely what makes a good soldier; on the very

---

[28] U.S. Army Military History Institute. U.S. War Department. Field Service Regulations, United States Army, 1908, pg. 119.

[29] Appendix, General Order No, 23, 1906 Field Service Regulation 1906.

first page of the lecture, it states, "All persons in the military service are required to obey strictly and to execute the lawful orders of their superiors promptly."[30] These ominous words seem harmless enough to the standard infantryman doing his duty for his country. However, the more profound meaning can be deduced through the research of how far superiors were willing to go to achieve victory on the battlefield. Results from the first months of the war in which major United States forces participated would paint an ugly picture of just how wrong army superiors were when it came to trench warfare—although nobody can see into the future military planners and analysis had several current events to reform the U.S. Army into a modern fighting force capable of fighting in Europe. Wars such as the Boer War, which saw the most 'modern' army at the time, the British Army, almost defeated by Dutch colonists in South Africa. The Russo-Japanese War saw the might of the Russian Army and Navy swept away by the otherwise little-known island nation of Japan. Large European-trained armies mobilizing and fighting what they still believed would be the romantic short war of the past came dangerously close to being humiliated on the world stage, the Russians being a prime example.

However, United States military observers and analysis refused to give into these lessons, partially based on ignorance and others on the side of foolishness. Either way, each policy outlined in *Field Service Regulations* or *Infantry Drill Regulations* needed to catch up to their times. Generals of the United States Army were truly practicing for the war they had already fought and lacked the forethought of what the next war would be. On several occasions, lower-ranked officers who could observe foreign wars on the frontlines continuously wrote to their superiors about how much warfare had changed and how dramatic reforms in tactical and strategic doctrine needed to be amended. Lessons would fall well short of any measurable reform

[30] U.S. War Department, Division of Militia Affairs, Manual for Privates of Infantry of the Organized Militia of the United States, Government Printing Office, Washington 1909 pg. 2

that had any real impact on the training and implementation of field units. Unlike the other European nations that participated in the First World War, the United States would not have an excuse for its lack of preparedness regarding modern tactical doctrine and proper training for its soldiers. A quote that would best sum up just how unprepared the United States had during the war was taken from Major General Tasker Bliss:

> Strategy had failed in its prime objective of bringing two armies in contact in such a way that the issue would not have to be decided by a frontal attack. And thus, the ensuing struggle for four years became rather a test of the courage and endurance of the soldier and the suffering civil population behind him than of the strategical skill of the general.[31]

[31] Tasker H. Bliss, draft of an article, Jan. 1923. Bliss Papers, Library of Congress, Box 274, pp. 15-16.

Chapter 4: The War Begins and an Army for Defense

On June 28th, 1914, the second shot heard around the world was fired by Black Hand members in Sarajevo, Bosnia. Their target was the heir apparent to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Archduke Franz Ferdinand. Although not the sole reason for the start of the First World War, the implications set in motion that fateful summer day led to the deadliest war in human history. The First World War would dominate the total war concept. Total in nature, for it, would bring each participating nation to the brink of virtual collapse. The first to break would do so, varying little difference then the victors. In theory, each nation would suffer huge losses not only in men, but their economic structure would collapse as well as their social structures. "Total War surely describes the First World War. The term itself was born during this vast conflict, which exhibited all the characteristics that have conventionally come to define the concept.[1]

In addition, what made this War a Total War had as much to do with Industrial Revolutions, the advents of weapons created during this time, and the furtherance of military thought on the tactical and strategic levels. Historian Dennis E. Showalter explained, "The relationship of mass to technology of World War I is better understood within the context of a forced-draft synergy among machines, matrices, and mentalities. Well before 1914, the instruments of War had evolved from hand tools into machines, who's increasing, and interfacing complexities had changed the essentially the nature of military operations."[2] Essentially, the basic idea of war had not changed; how countries now wage it and what weapons they use had evolved. It would be within this scope of evolution, not just of weapons but also

---

[1] Marc Ferro, *The Great War an Imperial History*, (London; New York: Routledge, 2002): pg. 199.
[2] Dennis Showalter, *Great War, Total War Combat and Mobilization on the Western Front, 1914-1918*. Edited by Roger Chickering and Stig Förster, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000): pg. 73.

tactics, that the First World War would be a Total War. Its juxtaposed position is the intricate relationship between both men and materials. Those involved, especially those of the German and Austro-Hungarian upper military elites, longed for such a war. Great wars of the nineteenth century, such as the Franco-Prussian War 1870-71, Austro-Prussian War 1866, the Russo-Turkish War 1877-88, and even as far back as the Crimean War 1853-56, all brought an illusion of vast armies set for quick wars against their foes. Generals taught in older style Napoleonic ideology of warfare with large front infantry assaults and gallant cavalry charges on the flank would try to impose the same style of warfare in the First World War. Misconceptions of the First World War would be:

- War is Inevitable
- Victory will go to the attacker.
- It will be a short war.
- It will be a war of maneuver.
- It will be a bloody war.

The generals who would start the fighting in 1914, generals such as Field Marshall Sir John French for the British, Chief of the French Army Joseph Jacques Joffre, and Helmuth von Moltke the Younger for the Germans, would hardly last past the first year of the conflict, Joffre being the longest to serve in the position, 1916. With all their combined military knowledge and experience, nothing could prepare them for this war. Their ideals of warfare were far better suited to the Battle of Waterloo rather than the Battle of Marne in 1914 and others. Ideologies long overdue for a vast re-understanding of modern warfare.[3] Their ideals still lay in the romantic realm of warfare, a harsh reality that would quickly fade into mud-filled trenches of the

[3] Ibid., pg. 73.

Western Front. Long trained at established institutions such as Sandhurst for the British or Ecole Speciale Militarie de Saint-Cyr for the French figures like Joseph Joffre and Sir John French relied upon their outdated training and tactics to stem the tide of Schlieffen Plan of the German Army, or better known as Moltke's Plan as he altered it when in charge.[4] All of their combined training would count for nothing; within the first few months of the War, thousands of soldiers would lay dead on the battlefield, and a stagnant, new form of warfare would evolve. Soldiers understood that to survive on this new battlefield; they would have to dig in and dig deep. For this was Total War, and in Total War, the further below ground you went, the better your chances of surviving to the next day increased. "Victory in the Western War had historically depended on training, discipline, and experience. Enthusiasm as such was in the "nice to have" category, even for the armies of revolutionary France. Determining a nation's fate by banking on the spirit of the offensive was a gamble far riskier than the often-cited German adoption of "lighting war" or blitzkrieg in the 1930s."[5] Declaring war and preparing/mobilizing for war were two very different dilemmas. It could be said that the first notion is probably the easiest, for it only takes a belligerent to declare war on another country. On the other hand, preparing for such a war is entirely different. And each nation, including the United States, would lead with their faces with this problem. "As a consequence (mobilization for war), no relevant specific preparations existed. Germany and Britain called hundreds of thousands of men to arms but had no arms. Nor did they have uniforms, field equipment, or toothbrushes."[6]

---

[4] John S.D. Eisenhower, *Yanks. The Epic Story of the American Army in World War I,* (Simon & Schuster, New York, 2001): pg. 13.
[5] Joel Setzen, "The Doctrine of the Offensive in the French Army on the Eve of World War I," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1972
[6] Peter Simkins, *Kitchner's New Armies* (Manchester, U.K., 1988): pg. 156.

Carl Von Clausewitz, perhaps a scholar more than a military man, composed a series of alternative concepts to war, a set of realities that each nation would face during their next war. One of his most important and significant dictums was, "War is merely the continuation of policy by other means."[7] Ignorance could be the word that described the leaders of the belligerents in this War; ideologies of patriotic zeal, aggressive leadership, and elaborate battle plans would not be able to overcome the destructive firepower of modern War. "All these factors could be considered a powder keg waiting for the right spark to cause an explosion and plunge the continent into war."[8] However, through the lens of history, it was unforeseeable for these generals to understand just how much warfare had changed. Although the writings of Jan Gotlib Bloch helped illustrate the devastation of modern warfare, there was still no printed doctrine, either tactical or organizational. Neither Plan XVII for the French nor the Schlieffen Plan for the Germans was fluid enough to incorporate a stagnant battlefield; there simply was no short war as so many planned for. They, much like their men, would have to lead with their faces in order to understand just how much warfare had changed and, more importantly, how to win in this new type of warfare:

> The next great War was intended to combine mass and impulsion at all levels. Mobilization and concentration in the interior, followed by fire and maneuver at the Front, would decide the issue in weeks. When this shock strategy failed, states and armies initially began emphasizing mass. Mass warfare was a logical outcome of an age of systems and an age of mobilization. It was something armies and governments knew how to do in theory but had rejected, even as a contingency, for being too dangerous in practice.[9]

---

[7] Carl von Clausewitz (trans. By Michael Howard and Peter Paret), On War (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1984): pg. 87.
[8] Matthew S. Muehlbauer, and David J. Ulbrich, *Ways of War: American Military History from the Colonial Era to the Twenty-First Century.* Second Edition, (New York; Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2018): pg. 87.
[9] Dennis Showalter, *Great War, Total War*, pg. 79.

Casualties' rates alone should have shocked the world and those 'running 'the war into rethinking their entire military experience. However, wave after wave of infantry assaults would be devastated in no mans land on the Western Front. Nothing in the proceeding wars could have prepared battlefield commanders for trench warfare, nor could there have been any preconceived notion that trenches would be formed and used in such devastating ways. However, there were plenty of firsthand accounts of how devastating the new, modern battlefield had truly become. In practicality, or situational endurance, the modern lessons of war were being tested, and every commander, on all sides, was found severely wanting. The battlefield, at least on the Western Front, had become less fluid and more stagnant than on the Eastern Front. The totality of mass assaults bled on impenetrable defensive lines, with a large contingent of secondary and tracheary lines for immediate support. The short, romantic war hoped for by all evolved quickly into a slug fest in the mud. "The common European idea that a European war would be short War implied the continuing vitality in Europe of the Napoleonic concept of the climactic, decisive battle, the Austerlitz victory. Europeans were unwilling to concede that it was Prussia's wars of 1866 and 1870-71, not those of the United States and Russia, that were outside the mainstream of the evolution of War."[10] The simplicity of outflanking your enemy and routing them from the rear had become a pipe dream for generals who dreamed of vast victory parades, glamor, and glory. Soon, the illustrious fantasy of war was shadowed by the vast reality of modern warfare. As stated, the only way to survive was to dig down and dig down deep.

If military commanders couldn't ignore something, it was the enormous casualties their armies suffered. The below table illustrates just French casualties for the first year of the War:

[10] Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War. A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy,* (Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1973): pg. 199.

Table 3: *French Army Casualties (Killed, Wounded, or missing*)

Dates	Number of Casualties
Aug-Sept 1914	329,000
Oct-Nov 1914	125,00
Dec 1914-Jan 1915	74,000
Feb-March 1915	69,000
Apr-Jun 1915	143,000
Jul-Aug 1915	48,000
Total -	788,000 men [11]

For an army in the millions, a loss of 788,000 men constituted just the beginning of what was to come for another three years. All other belligerent armies would suffer roughly the same number of casualties in the opening months of the War. Great Britain would suffer so many casualties during the first year that the number of dead, wounded, or missing would surpass the actual number of soldiers sent over in the British Expeditionary Force in August 1914. The British Expeditionary Force was a small, constabulary force molded for territorial work rather than large continental warfare. Although the United States incorporated a much larger recruitment pool and had a vast number of resources to field a large army, it followed the same principle the British Army followed. The British army paid a high price for its small professional army during the first months of the war losing most of its trained, professional soldiers for the cost of little ground gained. The situation in Great Britain was so bad that to train the new conscription army of 1916, British officials had to rely on 'relics' to train the Army. "Their senior officers and non-

[11] Pierre Guinard, Jean Claud Devos, and Jean Nicot, Inventaire sommaire des Archives de la Guerre, Serie N: 1872-1919, vol. 1: *Introduction* (Troyes, 1975): pg. 45.

commissioned officers consisted of Boer War, or even pre-Boer War regulars brought out of retirement. These 'dugouts' were out of touch with the professional modernization of the Army since 1902, and with modern weapons and tactics, modern organization and methods."[12]

If America got one thing right when they started building their Expeditionary Force, it was the notion of conscription or the Selective Service Act. However, it would be a small measure of respite in a long line of misgivings and fumbling that would be known as the American Expeditionary Force, or AEF Hard pressed, and short of men and materials, the British pushed through the first year of the War, barely holding on to their small piece of Western Front. Sir Douglas Haig took command of the British Expeditionary Force after Field Marshall Sir John French suffered from a nervous breakdown and was seen far behind his withdrawing troops after the Battle of the Mons in August 1914.[13]

However, it would not just be the French or the British that would fail in the initial part of the War. The Germans grand Schlieffen Plan failed as well, although well-practiced in theory; it would take an incredible amount of command and control to pull off, neither of which the German high command under Helmut Von Moltke possessed. Both Germany's 1st Army and 2nd Army under Commanders Von Kluch and Von Bulow, respectively, despised each other and therefore failed to work together during the opening push through Belgium. Von Kluck was an audacious commander, a testament to his attack and maneuver mentality; his 35th Fusiliers, between the time of August 12 through September 12, 1914, marched over 403 miles and were engaged in 11 different battles.[14] In fact, it was the attack of Germany's First and Second Army

---

[12] Correlli Barnett, *Britain and Her Army, 1509-1970: A Military, Political and Social Survey.* (Allen Lane The Penguin Press, London, 1970): pg. 379
[13] Ibid., 381
[14] Robert J. Dalessandro, "Creating the Modern Army: Building the American Expeditionary Force, 1917," *Hampton Roads Military History 2,* (2008): pg. 11.

through Belgium that initially brought Great Britain into the War. Great Britain's alliance relied on lesser, neutral countries being attacked on mainland Europe. After several weeks of fighting, Von Kluck's First Army received conflicting orders from Supreme Commander Von Moltke instructing him to take his Army east of Paris instead of west.[15] Believing his left flank was guarded by Von Bulow, Von Kluck swung his Army-wide and east of Paris and ran directly into the awaiting British Expeditionary Force. Von Bulow was far too cautious for Von Kluck, and a gap was opening between the two advancing German armies. It was the quick formation of the French 9th Army under General Ferdinand Foch, reluctantly made up primarily of reservists, and the French 5th Army would assail through the open gap and force Von Kluck's Army to turn back towards Von Bulow's Army, thus beginning the race to the sea in late 1914 and early 1915. Inevitably it would be this pivotal moment at the beginning of the War that would lead to the stalemate on the Western Front.

As flawed as the Schlieffen Plan was, there were merits to the ideology behind the strategy. Originally designed by Germany's Chief of Staff von Schlieffen in 1907, it correctly assumed the French would have its armies attack through the Alsace-Lorraine province. Furthermore, Von Schlieffen knew the French Army had a large amount of regular, conscripted troops but would not rely on reservists, for they believed their training lacked any real value on the battlefield. The area of attack and quality of troops the French had were all learned during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71 from then Chief of the German Army, Von Moltke, the Elder.[16] Von Schlieffen was correct in his assumptions, for in 1911, the Chief of the French Army, Joseph Joffre, drafted Plan XVII. An offensive push of French forces through the Alsace-Lorraine province. This large frontal push of infantry into the region that was captured during the

[15] Matthew S. Muehlbauer, and David J. Ulbrich, *Ways of War,* pg. 108.
[16] Ibid., 143.

short Franco-Prussian War served as a focal point of the attack, for beyond laid a vast network of factories and refineries geared specifically for producing war materials.

Plan XVII was drafted on the same basis that the Germans, like the French, would not bolster their manpower by inducting reservists into their ranks. Instead, Joffre and many in France's war council believed the Germans would push through the same way they had in Franco-Prussian War. Many on the council never conceived the idea that Germany would loop around and through Belgium, thus violating her neutrality and bringing Great Britain into the War. However, even with an early copy of the original Schlieffen Plan (the original that was drafted in 1907 by Von Schlieffen called for 72 Army divisions broken up into seven different armies. However, when Von Moltke the Younger took over for Schlieffen, he downgraded the total number of divisions from 72 to 58) French military strategists believed the German 1st Army would only be near the border of Belgium but not actually pass through it. However, in the end, it would not matter; the French under Joseph Joffre did not have the foresight to see beyond the implementations of their own plan. Plan XVII was doomed to fail at the onset of the War, "The Germans correctly assumed that the French would attack through Alsace and Lorraine and were waiting. The stronger and larger German forces easily outmanned and outgunned the French troops. The Germans had made extensive use of reservists to increase the size of their fighting army."[17]

Within a few weeks of the War, the French Army, dressed proudly in their bright blue tunics and gleaming red trousers, had been pushed all the way back to their initial starting points of the War. The Germans nearly made it to Paris, stopping shy a mere 30 kilometers short of their original objectives. It would be the British Expeditionary Force that would help slow down

[17] Kaili Bisson, "Frances WW1 Plan XVII," *Owlcation,* (November 30, 2022).

the German 1st Army of Von Kluck. However, the number of troops the British Expeditionary Force had in the field was far too little to rout the advancement. The focal point of the War had shifted dramatically in favor of maneuver warfare, each army trying to find the flank of the others to bare more troops on the exposed sides of each nation's armies. However, there was no flank to be found, not because one did not exist, but rather because each nation's armies had grown in such mass there now was, albeit in the beginning, an abundant number of soldiers in the field. The armies were simply too big to just maneuver around, and the race to the sea, through Flanders, became the only viable option for either the German or French/British armies. However, even that strategy, once proven successful just a mere three decades ago, was now obsolete. Trenches would now stretch from the English Channel all the way to the Swiss border. An unbroken chain of barbed wire, crater holes, and dugouts plotted the land in an endless line of War.

However, the United States would not suffer the same Total War concept as its allies. While each belligerent country fought for almost no economical or territorial gains, the United States, which kept its isolationist concept widen its gap as a global superpower. The victors of the Frist World War would still suffer ruinous damages to their economic standing as well as their own social structures. During the first three years of the War, the United States maneuvered itself into a position of power on the economic level. Its political stance of isolationism hardly stood for the actual definition of isolation. However, American investors were more than happy to sell their goods to progress the war effort. Goods such as war materials, guns, ammo, and steel flowed from American factories. War loans also flowed from American Banks; the United States was making money off the War without the loss of its soldiers. "Under the direction of Benjamin Strong, the chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York (FRBNY), the Federal Reserve

system incorporated additional banks between 1914-1917, and it hoarded large amounts of gold in member banks."[18]

Williams Gibbs McAdoo was the man in charge of all the lending and oversight of the United States wartime budget. Appointed to the position of Secretary of the Treasury and President Wilson's son-in-law, McAdoo advised President Wilson closely on matters of the Federal Reserve and future war spending. However, prior to America's entrance into the War, he oversaw the vast amounts of war loans being given to the French, British, and Russians as they fought in Europe. In addition to the Federal Bank giving money to the allies, the New York Bank of J.P. Morgan & Co. was named by the British as their purchasing agent. Both France and Russia would follow suit. J.P. Morgan & Co. secured an Anglo-French loan, as well, helped produce and ship valuable war materials to the allies.[19] By 1916 the loans and exchanges coming from the United States were now indispensable to Great Britain and her continued war effort. The table below shows the British loan debts that accumulated throughout the entirety of the War in Europe:

Table 4: *Summary of British debts to the United States, 1915-18 (in millions of pounds).*

Type of Loan:	1915-16	1619-17	1917-18
Anglo-French	51	51.4	51.4
US. Government			
Collateral notes		143.2	122.3
20-year bonds		0.2	29.5
J.P. Morgan's loan	73	26.5	
Others	10.3	33.1	43.2

[20]

[18] Lester V. Chandler, *Benjamin Strong, Central Banker* (Washington, D.C., 1958)
[19] Ibid., 390.
[20] Morgan, Studies in British Financial Policy, 320.

The French, as stated earlier, were also to benefit from the large reserves of cash flow from the United States, however, their financial situation varied slightly from that of Great Britain's.

Table 5: *Summary of French loans contracted in the United States and in all foreign countries 1914-18*
(in millions of French francs)

	U.S.	All Foreign Countries
1914	51	51
1915	1,845	2,806
1916	1,624	8,800
1917	7,532	11,885
1918	5,388	8,695

[21]

With the large responsibility of funding the allied war effort, Secretary McAdoo also took steps to safeguard his position within the administration. Largely not wanting to delegate his duties to others and not having any military experience in tactics or organization, McAdoo, along with President Wilson, sought to control every aspect of military funding and spending as a political asset. "In July, McAdoo proposed to Wilson that the allied governments to which the United States was extending credits coordinate their purchases in an interallied council that would sit in London or Paris. A central purchasing commission in Washington, D.C., would serve as the American counterpart to this council."[22] The overall control of spending McAdoo wanted to exude eventually led to criticism amongst his British counterparts, "McAdoo's' whole object is that allied governments should first notify him what their essential war needs in money

[21] Henri Truchy, How France Met her War expenditure (New Haven, Conn., 1927): pg. 316-19.

[22] William G. McAdoo to Woodrow Wilson, July 10, 1917, in Aruther Link, ed., *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson* (hereafter the PWW), 69 vols. (Princeton, N.J., 1966-94): pg. 43:136-8.

and material and then he will try to provide money are. The political situation and the huge sums required compel him to safeguard his position in this way."[23]

In addition to many finances, the United States was sending to Great Britain, their contribution of war materials was also substantial. By 1917 the United States' production of iron had surpassed Great Britain and Germany combined, allowing American companies to charge top dollar for their goods. "The flow of American supplies to Great Britain and France more than doubled during 1916 due to Morgan's activities (see table in chapter two with regards to steel exports to Great Britain and France, 1915-18). From 1915 to 1917, the United States produced and delivered 24 percent of Allied munitions supplies."[24] Furthermore, these war materials were being transported on foreign and domestic ships being produced and seized by the United States Government.

However, as the American economy grew, the Armed Forces of the United States continued to stagnate. Valuable lessons were wasted at the General Staff and the Army War College. Life-altering events in the adaptation of modern warfare were not making a big impression on military planners in the United States. These life-altering events could have been learned and adopted by military officials at no cost to military servicemen. This costly mistake would haunt the General Staff as the American Expeditionary Force would enter its first real combat in the Summer of 1918. The General Staff and War College squandered these opportunities as foreign war reports were lost to the anvils of time in their offices. Besides the Boers War and the Russo-Japanese Wars, Army planners in the General Staff and Army War

---

[23] Viscount Northcliff to Arther James Balfour, July 31, 1917, Public Record Office, Colonial Office 687/34.

[24] Ministry of Munitions, Phipps to Foreign Office, July 4, 1917, Public Records Office, Foreign Office 371/3115/133535/29503.

College missed great opportunities to revamp the American Army with observations from the Balkan War, the first Balkan War October 1912-May 1913 and the second Balkan War June-August 1913. Due to interference within the confines of the War and the belligerent's foreign nation attaches or observers had a difficult time gaining any real knowledge of the fighting taking place, especially during the First Balkan War. However, while visiting a friend Major Tayler, who himself was a military attaché to Sublime Porte, Army doctor Major Clyde Sinclair Ford was able to utilize his skills as a doctor in the red cross helping battlefield casualties.[25] Major Ford's unique viewpoint of the War, particularly the destructiveness of massed artillery on fixed positions, was consolidated into a series of lectures at Ft. Leavenworth in 1915, a full two years prior to the United States entering the War. A most valuable piece of eyewitness testimony Major Ford gave during his lecture was: "At 5:00 a.m. on March 24, the Bulgarian heavy guns opened a devastating barrage to open the way for the main assault. Within two hours, the Bulgarians had seized their objectives, having cracked open the outer Turkish defense. The Bulgarian artillery continued firing, providing a protective curtain of shrapnel and high explosives for the Bulgarian infantry while they prepared to renew the attack. On the afternoon of the next day, the Bulgarian infantry, supported by pioneers attached to the assault units, again attached, and shattered the Turkish defense."[26]

Although Major Ford delivered the lectures to students at the Army War College, supposed professionals of reforming the army's tactics, it seemed to fall well short of actual change within the standing army doctrine of support by firepower. The ignorance exuded by top

---

[25] Lief A. Torkelsen, "Battles Were Not Fought In Lines," Nationalism, Industrialism and Progressivism in American Military Discourse, Ph.D. Dissertation, 1865-1918, (Ohio State University, 2018): pg. 162.
[26] Maj. Clyde Sinclair Ford, The Balkan Wars: Being a Series of Lectures Deliver at the Army Service Schools, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas (Ft. Leavenworth, KS, Press of the Army Service Schools, 1915): pg. 43-44.

military officials to Major Ford's report would soon come back to haunt them when American soldiers experienced firsthand the devastating effects of artillery barrages, both physically and mentally. Military leaders could not rally behind the ideology of mass firepower and still viewed artillery as a direct infantry support weapon. This methodology led to an increasingly amount of smaller caliber field guns and only a handful of large caliber howitzers, which were relegated to usage by the Division or Corps rather than individual regiments or brigades. These leaders, including Bliss and Pershing, found solace in their reasoning to largely ignore the idea of mass firepower by artillery in another report by Major Ford, which stated that he observed and noted 80% of the wounds he treated were caused by small arms fire rather than artillery.[27] However, the lesson Major Ford was trying to convey was how effective large caliber artillery batteries could be to standing, fortified structures, not that small arms still cause casualties.
Major Ford was not the only United States officer to witness firsthand the adaptation of modern weapons on the battlefield.

Much like Major Ford, West Point Graduate Thomas Hutchison was a high-ranking officer in the Tennessee National Guard. He volunteered to fight for the Greeks against the Turks during the First Balkan War, October 1912-May 1913. Hutchison volunteered with the Greek Artillery and later published his accounts in 1913, distributed to military leaders in the United States. What immediately drew military leaders to discount the idea of changing their tactics was Hutchison's observations of how Greek infantry, Efzones or Highlanders, advanced to take an objective. The tactics differed little from not only how the United States Army Doctrine and the *Field Service Regulations* taught troops in open ground to react to contact but also from other prominent European doctrines. However, the lesson of the artillery was missed again by

[27] Ibid., 144.

American leaders and the rapid development of artillery as an indirect asset to the advancement of infantry on a hardened objective or fortress. Hutchison would observe: "The attack was successful, and the evzones drove the Turkish defenders from the outer works. However, the fire from the Turkish guns proved too much, and the Greeks were forced to relinquish their gains. The Greek attack cost approximately 1,200 casualties for minor gains."[28]

Two United States officers had documented and delivered their findings regarding the usage of modern weapons on the battlefield. Each time they were met with a sense of wanting. Military officials such as Chief of Staff General Scott disproved the findings and saw no flaws in how the army was trained, leaning on the false ideology that the spirit of the American infantry can carry the day regardless of the firepower they may face. It was evident that while Major Ford's and Hutchison's reports were being spoken about, the *Infantry Journal* of the United States Army still produced a widespread frontal attack mentality while artillery played a secondary role in providing direct fire support to the advancing infantry. However, suppose the military leaders did not want to pay attention to two United States officers, in that case, they could have seen the reports of the Balkan War from foreign correspondents such as British journalist Philip Gibbs. Gibbs wrote several pieces on the First Balkan War (1912-1913), and each account was published in the United States in 1913; he particularly paid close attention to the multiple accounts of Bulgarian bayonet charges, "The Turks became paralyzed, as it were, by the fear of Serbian and Bulgarian bayonets; the very name of 'La nosche,' or knife, as they call these weapons, was like a dreadful spell which scattered a Turkish force even before a man had

[28] Thomas Hutchison, *An American Soldier Under the Greek Flag at Bezanie: A Thrilling Story of the Siege of Bezanie by the Greek Army, In Epirus, During the War in the Balkans* (Nashville, Greek American Publishing Co., 1913): pg. 26

died."[29] However, the results of the bayonet charges, while successful psychologically, proved devastating physically to the advancing Bulgarians and Serbian troops.

Further developments in the advancement of troops during nighttime operations against entrenched positions or fortified positions were utilized extensively not only in the Balkans War but also in the Russo-Japanese War 1904-05.[30] The *Infantry Journal* noted this increased development of the new tactic of night infiltration, "It is evident that the bayonet and frontal attack have played no unimportant part in this last war, and the night attack, properly planned and carried out in these days of aerial scouts, be the deciding factor which counts for success."[31] A thorough analysis of the Russo-Japanese War was received at the Army War College and distributed amongst its participants. Brigadier General Tasker Bliss even wrote about the war and was as equally dismissive as others in the institution. Killer initiative was still taught as the top priority amongst military leaders for the everyday infantrymen, and artillery would remain a secondary, lesser option for the infantry assault. However, a grave misconception would befall American leaders in France, for artillery was the big killer on the battlefield.

Another British journalist who was with Gibbs, Bernard Grant, repeatedly referred to the effectiveness of the Bulgarian artillery," The Turkish artillery was overmastered from the first. The Bulgarian guns were in greater numbers and better served, and they had an inexhaustible supply of ammunition."[32] The Bulgarians, in comparison to the Turks, used a mixture of large

---

[29] Philip Gibbs & Bernand Grant, *The Balkan War: Adventures of war with Cross and Cresent* (Boston, Small Maynard & Co., 1913): pg. 49.

[30] Lief A. Torkelsen, "Battles Were Not Fought In Lines, pg. 165.

[31] Editorial, "The Turco-Balkan War" in *Infantry Journal* Vol 9. No. 4 (January-February 1913): pg. 539 (538-541).

[32] Gibbs & Grant, pg. 173

caliber 120 mm howitzers and 140 mm siege guns in their artillery arsenal.[33] Furthermore, a German officer who was a war correspondent for the *Reichspost* noted, "An important development in artillery tactics was the decline of traditional artillery duel in favor of directly targeting enemy infantry."[34] Bombarded with all this new information on modern warfare with its new powerful weapons, the Army War College and the General Staff still sat idly by. They missed an enormous opportunity to reform their army.

As war drew closer in Europe, the United States War Department did its limited share of trying to feed the appropriate organizations with updated reports of maneuvers and strategic planning of foreign nations. Books, field reports, press releases, and personal papers flooded the War Department, General Staff, and Army War College with vital information on modern warfare. To some extent, those in charge agreed that the army might need slight reforms, but any major overhaul of its standing doctrine need not be tampered with; as stated, only light tweaks were all that was necessary. Attaches from the United States Army had been sent out to all major belligerents in their capitals to observe their armies, albeit with some suspicion from these observers from their host nations. Capt. Ernest Scott was an artillery officer, and one of the United States attaches that was sent to study 'modern' European tactics. He recorded his thoughts in a journal and reported back to his superiors of the findings. Most interesting was a conversation between himself and a German officer who stated, "Many German officers mentioned the fact that officers from every country, but the United States attend and asked why it was[sic]."[35] In reference, the instance the German officer was asking Captain Scott about was

---

[33] Lief A. Torkelsen, "Battles Were Not Fought In Lines," pg. 166.
[34] Hermenegild Wagner, *With the Victorious Bulgarians* (Boston, Hughton Mifflin., 1913): pg. 163
[35] Capt. Ernest D. Scott, "Notes on the German Maneuvers" in *The Field Artillery Journal* Vol. 2 No 2. (April-June 1912): pg. 190.

how lackluster the United States had been in sending military officials to observe maneuvers, but rather these attaches spent their time focusing on the documentation side of foreign armies, such as how their tactical doctrines, any new technological advances, and organizational elements. However, in contrast, these observers failed to grasp the significance of witnessing foreign armies conducting field maneuvers firsthand but instead relied on their after-action reports. This left little room for interpretation or adjustments in the fields if an unforeseen obstacle or an on-the-spot adjustment needed to be made.

Furthermore, even if the attaches to the foreign governments would have witnessed these maneuvers firsthand, what is to say the Army War College, General Staff, of the United States Government would have taken heed to the reports? They had demonstrated time and time again to ignore valuable lessons that were taking place in real-time. They did not have to study Napoleonic battles or even American Civil War battles, war was changing right in front of their eyes, and they continued to remain blind to the simple fact the United States was being left behind. The continued practice of secrecy, even prior to the turn of the 20th century, was largely at fault for foreign reports being lost or simply not published for observation by current military leaders. As well as downplaying the importance and rise of European armies, United States officials, both in the military and the Government, censored and controlled what would be published in their journals and what would remain hidden from view. Retired Major General Francis V. Green stated:

> Our soldiers knew the drill books (*Field Service Regulations and Infantry, Cavalry*, and *Artillery Journals*) of squad, company, and battalion drill, which are really forms of mental and physical exercise and discipline; but of all the rest they knew nothing except for what they had read in unprofessional newspapers, report from which all really important matters had been carefully deleted by the censors; the reports of our military attach abroad had been securely locked up in at the offices of the War College and General Staff as Washington, and all publications and discussion of them by those who had read them had been positively forbidden by the highest

authority; any officer who violated this injunction had been summarily and severely reprimanded.[36]

As stated previously, foreign governments often were weary of other nations' military attaches, researching and observing their armies' maneuvers. Each foreign nation allowed only a handful of military attaches, and only at certain times; for example, Austro-Hungary allowed up to only four United States observers, while Great Britain only allowed three.[37] However, as the War progressed and trade, economic and supplies grew between the allies, German and Austro-Hungarian relationships began to dissipate, "At the last visit our observers made to the Front, now more than a year ago, they were shown no courtesies whatever. In the summer of 1916, the general staff (Germany) passed an order that no Americans are to be permitted to go with the armies, although this privilege is accorded other neutrals."[38] In addition to foreign governments limiting the access granted to American observers to field maneuvers, the United States government also heavily derailed their observer's ability to study foreign armies, going as far as denying American military officers proper funding to travel.[39] Despite all the regulations and roadblocks, United States Army officers still found lucrative ways to travel to Europe and study foreign armies. Along with Major Ford and Hutchison, another officer of the United States cavalry who was with the allied armies (unsure which one) in 1915 made three distinct and important deductions about the War up to that point. He stated, "Among the things which stand out in my mind to a very marked degree, the first three are: *First*, the importance of

---

[36] Francis V. Greene, *Our First Year in the Great War* (New York, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1918): pg. 98-99.
[37] "Military Observers in Europe" *in Army and Navy Register* Vol. 56 No. 1780 (August 29, 1914): pg. 266.
[38] Herbert B. Swope, *Inside the German Empire in the Third Year of the War* (London, Constable & Co., 1917): pg. 168.
[39] "Officer's European Expenses" in *Army and Navy Register* Vol. 56. No 1791 (November 14, 1914): pg. 617.

artillery; *second*, the value of *our* cavalry; and *third*, the importance of aeroplanes."[40] Out of the three observations this officer made, the first and third applied directly to modern warfare.

The assessment of the importance of cavalry seemed to stem from his own branch organization because, at this stage in the War, mounted cavalry had already been relegated to police actions behind the lines. His final assessment of artillery pleads to the same ideology of so many of his colleagues back in the United States. The artillery argument after speaking to the number of both British and French officers who stated their combat casualties caused by artillery was estimated to be between 50%-75%. He wrote, "These figures are undoubtedly absurd, but it goes to show how our minds are impressed by what may be called primitive reasoning."[41] However, gross negligence and oversight by United States military planners was their inability to see the true destructive power of artillery. When the American Expeditionary Force was in the trenches of Western Europe, 70% of their combat casualties were caused by artillery and shellfire.[42]

Oversight and mishandling of important information from the Western Front at the Army War College and General Staff would continue even when the United States entered the War. Harold Fiske, who would lead the American Expeditionary Force's head of Training, stated:

> It is difficult to imagine a duplication elsewhere of the present state of affairs in France. Both sides rest both flanks on impassable obstacles: the sea on one side, Switzerland on the other. Such practically stationary trench warfare can hardly occur in the United States because similar enormous numbers will not be here engaged, and the theatre of operations will be relatively so large that a flank can usually be reached. Great care must therefore be exercised in making

---

[40] An Officer Abroad, "Notes on the European War" in *Journal of the United States Cavalry Association* Vol. 26. No 107 (July 1915): pg. 53-61.

[41] Ibid., 53-61.

[42] Richard Faulkner, *Pershing's Crusaders: The American Soldier in World War I* (Lawrence, KS, University Press of Kansas, 2017): pg. 569.

deductions from their experiences on the western Front that we do not take as general application formations that are simply expedient under these very special conditions.[43]

American military planners, including Fiske, believed the Russian Front mirrored more of the lessons the American Army needed to immolate rather than the Western Front due to the fluidity of mobile warfare, rather than the stalemate the Western Front had become.[44]

The Army War College and General Staff were not the singular points of blame when directed toward the slow growth of the United States Army. The United States' civilian political branch at large conducted anti-growth policies that hindered the army from progressing. Their commander in chief, President Woodrow Wilson, despised his position and was a hands-off president regarding all things military. On December 8, 1914, Present Woodrow Wilson delivered the following speech during his annual address to Congress regarding the situation in Europe:

> It is said in some quarters that we are not prepared for war. What is meant by being prepared? And what is it that is suggested we should be prepared to do? To defend ourselves against attack? We have always found means to do that and shall find them whenever it is necessary without calling our people away from their times of peace…we shall not turn America into a military camp. We will not ask out young men to spend the best years of their lives making soldiers of themselves. This is a war with which we have nothing to do, whose causes cannot touch us.[45]

Having witnessed the devastation of the American Civil War and the consequences of the Reconstruction of the South, President Wilson came to office with the foresight of maintaining control of the military on a political and civilian level. After a depiction of President Wilson in a military uniform Arthur Link wrote, "he had no interest in military and naval strategy, little understanding of the role that force plays in the relations of great powers, and a near contempt of *Realpolitik* and the men who made it. Military men, he thought, should speak

---

[43] H.B. Fiske, "Notes on Infantry: Lecture Delivered January 29, 1917, at Ft. Leavenworth. Kansas" (Ft. Leavenworth, KS, Army Service School Press, 1917): pg. 31-32.

[44] Ibid., 28.

[45] Woodrow Wilson, December 8, 1914. Library of Congress.

only when they were spoken to, and the suggestion that his military advisers might know more about important strategic matters than he was enough to evoke suspicions of a sinister attempt to undermine civilian control."[46] President Wilson continued to play the field from both ends regarding his foreign policy and his assessments of his country's military preparedness. However, in February 1915, the German Admiralty announced their plans to blockade the British Isles with their submarine force. This announcement caused considerable strain between Washington and Berlin when on May 7, 1915, U-20 torpedoed and sank the cruise liner Lusitania killing 128 Americans in the Irish Sea. A few days after the sinking, America's newspapers were running stories filled with disdain and hate for the German atrocity. The *New York Times* wrote, "From our Department of state there must go to the to the Imperial government at Berlin a demand that the Germans shall no longer make war like savages drunk with blood, that they shall cease to seek the attainment of their ends by assassination of non-combatants and neutrals."[47]

On May 10, 1915, President Wilson sent the following message to Congressman Herbert Bruce Brougham, which gives an interesting insight into how President Wilson viewed the sinking of the Lusitania. President Wilson wrote, "I do not feel that I have any right to say whether I would approve of your writing on a particular subject (the sinking of the Lusitania) or not, and I hope that you will feel perfectly free to do anything that your judgment dictates. My only thought is that this time of deep irritation is hardly a time when suggestions will be of any real service, no matter how wise they are. The air may clear enough for your article by the time it is ready to appear, but at present, men are not listening to reason."[48] Furthermore, on June 3,

---

[46] Arthur Link, *The New Freedom* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1956), Vol 2, pg. 77.

[47] *New York Times, May 5, 1915.*

[48] *PWW*, vol. 33 April 17-July 21, 1915, pg. 139.

1915, Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan sent a message to President Wilson circumnavigating the facts about the sinking and urging President Wilson to exercise caution when dealing with the German Government and the sinking of the Lusitania, also to avoid war if possible. Furthermore, Jennings explains to President Wilson to agree to deal 'harshly' with the German Government without souring the ideology of isolationism with the American people.[49] Likewise, on May 10, Robert Lansing, who would follow Williams Jennings Bryan as Secretary of State, sent the following course of procedure regarding the sinking of the Lusitania:

> A reaffirmation of the assertion made in the note of February 10 that the German Government would be held to strict accountability for loss of American lives and property. A demand (1) that the German Government disavow the act and apologize for it; (2) that the officers guilty of the offense be punished; (3) that the German Government acknowledge liability and promise to pay a just indemnity; and (4) that the German Government will guarantee that in the future ample measures will be taken to insure the safety of the lives of American citizens on the high seas unless they are traveling on a vessel of belligerent nationality, which is armed or being conveyed by belligerent war craft.[50]

Furthermore, Lansing informed Wilson if Germany did not follow these directives, then a possible course of action would be a severance of all diplomatic relations with the German Government; however, a severance would not be a necessary course to war but rather a falling out of relations between the countries.[51] Moreover, this course of action was not directly pointed at Germany but also at Great Britain as well. The United States government saw Great Britain as a belligerent who, in a way, forced the Germans to implement the submarine warfare tactic due to their blockade of the European continent and their effort to interrupt neutral trade to countries such as Italy, Netherlands, Denmark, and Sweden. President Wilson would have his answer from his political allies and send the reprimand for the sinking of the Lusitania while keeping his army

---

[49] *PWW,* vol. 33, pg. 158.
[50] *PWW,* vol. 33, pg. 144.
[51] Ibid., pg. 153.

out of the War. However, not everybody shared the same sentiment the President had, the future commander of the American Expeditionary Force, John J. Pershing, wrote to his wife with his concerns of the leadership in Washington. "What do you suppose a weak, chicken-hearted, white-livered lot as we have in Washington are going to do?"[52]

It turned out that Pershing, General Leonard Wood, and others were right to assume that the government policy was not only weak in their own country but also viewed as weak by the nations of Europe. The United States Ambassador to Germany, James W. Gerard quoted the following, "the Germans fear only *war* with us – but state frankly that they do not believe we dare to declare it, call us cowardly bluffers and say our notes are worse than wastepaper."[53] This sentiment was echoed by Edward Mandell House, who was President Wilson's most trusted ally and friend. Colonel House, although never a military man, the title of Colonel was just honorary, worked closely on foreign affairs for President Wilson both in England and abroad. Colonel House's letter to President Wilson was both ominous and concerning, for it told two very distinct truths about the United States and its preparedness for War. "If unhappily, it is necessary to go to war, and I hope you will give the world an exhibition of American efficiency that will be a lesson for a century or more. It is generally believed throughout Europe that we are so unprepared and that it would take so long to put our resources into motion that our entering would make little difference."[54] Colonel House seemed, during some instances, given reassurance of a stern response from President Wilson to his counterparts in England. On the other hand, his correspondences with President Wilson seemed to lack the same vigor. Another

---

[52] Robert Ferrell, *Woodrow Wilson and World War I, 1917-1921* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1985): pg. 50.

[53] "A Colloquy with a Group of Antipreparedness Leaders," May 8, 1916, *Papers of Woodrow Wilson,* vol. 36, pg. 644.

[54] *PPW,* vol. 33, pg. 144.

telegram from Colonel House to President Wilson on May 13, 1915, affirms that Colonel House was downplaying the War to President Wilson "The forecast of your note to Berlin seems to me in every way admirable, it should lessen the chances of War unless Germany is bent upon it…I hope Germany may give the United States necessary assurance so that some way out may yet be found."[55] In his journal, Colonel House admits to himself, "I have urged him [Wilson] ever since the war began to make ready, and we are no more ready today than we were two years ago…we have no army worth speaking of."[56] It had seemed all the United States had given Germany was the ability to torpedo ships they suspected of carrying war materials to the allies. A hidden secret for some time was the cargo manifest of the Lusitania had indeed been carrying several items of war materials; perhaps this is what led to the inconsequential response from Washington to the German Government.

Not a particularly strong military president, Woodrow Wilson would continue to get his answer of keeping the United States out of the way of the political portion of his government. Democratic Senator Robert Latham Owen's letter to President Wilson on May 13, 1915, serves the purpose of strengthening President Wilson's stance on the sinking of the Lusitania and the action taken after: "I believe it my duty to say to you that I profoundly believe that the United States can be of much greater service to humanity by keeping at peace than by taking preliminary steps which may lead inevitably to War, and therefore I wish to endorse your attitude as explained in the public press. Everybody agrees to the enormity of the Lusitania incident, but everyone may not see the extremity of the military necessity with which the German Government is confronted, and while the military necessity does not excuse the conduct in destroying this vessel without notice and the neutrals on board, we should seek in every way

[55] Ibid., pg. 138.
[56] *PPW*, vol. 36, pg. 321.

possible to get satisfaction without going to the extremity of War or to the steps which must eventuate in War. The entire county will look to you with confidence to solve this extremely difficult problem, and we believe that you will receive Divine guidance in its wise solution."[57]

However, it would not have mattered if President Wilson cared about the preparedness of the United States Army. Currently ranked seventeenth in the world, the U.S. Army was in no shape to sail across the Atlantic Ocean and fight the Germans in trench warfare; they were simply unable to grasp the new concept of modern warfare. Even though the Army War College and General Staff played a large role in the armies' inadequacies, the United States government was also hard at ensuring the United States Army remained in a state of unpreparedness. However, their stance truly remained centralized on the Army, not the United States Navy. Thanks largely in part to former President Theodore Roosevelt and his vast naval building program, and the Great White Fleet of the early 20th century, the United States Navy did not suffer from the same lack of reform measures the Army did. The Navy truly remained and was the only form of projected foreign policy the United States possessed.[58] Consolidating the notion that Congress and the President handicapped the Army from learning is not as sobering as it first appears. As discussed earlier, the General Staff severely hindered its officers from learning from foreign governments' ways of war. Furthermore, when permitted to travel, the War Department only permitted their officers to study documents and training manuals. However, it wasn't just the War Department or General Staff; the United States Congress and the President looked poorly on the sending of United States officers to foreign lands to study War. After all, the United States wanted to be considered the Great Peacemaker.[59]

---

[57] Ibid., pg. 328.
[58] David R, Woodward, *The American Army* pg. 21.
[59] John Finnegan, *Against the Specter of a Dragon: The Campaign for American Military Preparedness, 1914-1917* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1975): pg. 18.

Future Commander of the First Army in France, Hunter Liggett, later lamented, "The fundamentals of warfare remain the same, but the application changes constantly, and under the forced pressure of three years of desperate fighting, human ingenuity had devised many new aids to killing and perfected old ones, a great deal of it know to the American Army only by hearsay."[60]

Despite all Congress' talk of having a strong foreign policy and President Wilson's weak intervention concerning the sinking of the Lusitania the people of the United States paid little attention to the conflict in Europe. The war was being published in both domestic and foreign papers, however, the overall stance was America's isolationism position in the world. Congress was happy to keep it that way as well, and even more than happy to stagnate any growth the Army might call for. In July 1915, President Wilson instructed his then Secretary of War, Lindley M. Garrison, to gather an initial assessment of the preparedness of the Army. However, when presented the findings by Garrison, President Wilson immediately backed down and told Garrison the country was simply not ready to hear or debate the overall preparedness of the Army.[61] In addition, before the original request by President Wilson to Garrison was even brough up, Garrison had taken it upon himself and set into motion his own inquiry of the preparedness and overall efficiency of the Army. In his inquiry, Garrison asked leaders at the Army War College to provide a mobilization plan in the event the United States was attacked, what they brought up to him was a laundry list of requests Garrison knew would never be accepted by Congress or President Wilson.[62] The report asked for an Active Army strength of 500,000 men, with an additional 500,000 men for a total of one million men under arms. In

---

[60] Hunter Liggett, *AEF Ten Years Ago in France* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1928), pg. 289-90.

[61] *PPW*, vol. 34, pg. 4.

[62] David R, Woodward, *The American Army*, pg. 22.

addition, the National Guard should be relegated only to territorial work, and the additional 500,000 men should be formed into a ready reserve under the direct command of the Active Army. Furthermore, these men should be raised through a draft.[63]

The proposed expansion of the Armed Forces was also going to cost the American taxpayer and considerable amount of money, and nothing would make Congress turn down a proposal more than increased expenditures on military affairs. The estimated cost from the Army War College to increase the Armed Forces would quadruple the Army's budget from $116,127,753 to $506,136,100.95.[64] Garrison was no fool when it came to the expansion of the Armed Forces and immediately dismissed the idea the Army War College presented to him. Primarily on two separate basis the first being the idea of the draft or conscription, and the second: the large amount of money that would be needed. Instead in October 1915, Garrison revamp the Army War College's plan and presented his own, which was known as the Garrison plan. It called for an only modest increase in the Active Army numbers from 108,000 to 141,797, in addition, at the core of his plan he would comprise a federal force of volunteers, also known as the Continental Army. This army would be raised through the draft at the rate of 133,000 a year for three years totaling 400,000. The soldiers would serve two months a year for three years on Active Duty and then an additional three years as part of a ready reserve of trained soldiers that can be called up for service if the need arose.[65]

In retrospect, even if Congress would have considered such measures the Army would still only be raised for the defense of the country and would never be considered for offensive

---

[63] Ibid., 23.
[64] "Study of the Cost of the Army of the United States as Compared with the Cost of the Armies of Other Nations," November 1915. War College Division 9053-120 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1916): pg. 5.
[65] Daniel Beaver, *Modernizing the American War Department* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2006): pg. 142.

operations.[66] Reluctantly, President Wilson, armed with the Garrison plan began to launch support for Congressional backing. During his rallies and speeches, President Wilson placated the idea that the Garrison Plan called for a ready force of trained fighting men for the defense of the country.[67] With the Garrison Plan gaining some traction amongst the nation, Chief of Staff Scott testified before the House Committee on January 10 to which he stated, "I feel that the Armies of all civilized countries of great size, or countries that are in danger of being invaded, have been obliged to come to that,"[68] The issue was the idea of conscripting men between the ages of 18-21. However, America's checkered past would be revisited when it came to American politics and conscription for the creation of the Continental Army under the Garrison Plan. James Hay was the chair of the House Military Affairs Committee, who was a southern Democrat and despised the General Staff, stated the measure would never be passed, "many southern members fear it because they believe it will be the means of enlisting large numbers of negroes."[69]

Refusing to compromise on the Continental Army portion of his plan, and with the dwindling support of Congress and President Wilson, Secretary of War Lindley M. Garrison and his Assistant Secretary Henry Breckinridge of Kentucky resigned on February 10, 1916, in disgust. Garrison's successor would be the former Cleveland Mayor, Newton D. Baker, who approach the expansion talks with a little more tact and political maneuvering. Congress and President Wilson, with the support of the new Secretary of War Baker would continue to exude control over the Armed Forces. Continuous back and forth between the Army War College, the

---

[66] David R, Woodward, *The American Army,* pg. 25.
[67] Ibid., 25.
[68] Committee on Military Affairs, January 10, 1916, quoted in "Report of the Chief of Staff," in *War Department Annual Report,* 1916, vol. 1, pg. 160.
[69] Arthur Link, *Confusion and Cries, 1915-1916,* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1964): pg. 15-16.

General Staff, and Washington D.C. would further degrade the ability of the United States Army to grow and modernize.

Newton Baker would be extremely busy soon after taking office in October 1915, President Wilson formally recognized Venustiano Carranza's Constitutional Party in Mexico. In turn Carranza's rival, Francisco (Pancho) Villa decided the actions of President Wilson and the United States, incorrectly, made Mexico a virtual protectant of the United States. On March 9, 1916, Pancho Villa and his men attacked United States Citizens and troopers of the United States 13th Cavalry in Columbus, New Mexico, killing and wounding as they road past screaming, "Viva Mexico."[70] Soon after the attack the Punitive Expedition, with John J. Pershing at its command would cross into Mexico to hunt down those responsible for the attacks. The effort would prove not only fruitless but also highlight many inefficiencies with the Army. These inefficiencies would also compound the future mobilization of the American Expeditionary Force both in the United States and France in late 1917 and all of 1918. Going forward into 1917 and the declaration of War by President Wilson would expose the hard truth about the lack of preparedness the political and military arm of the United States would have on its armed forces.

[70] Thomas Knock, *To End All Wars: Woodrow Wilson and the Quest for a New World Order* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992): pg. 82.

Chapter 5: The French had Verdun, the British had the Somme, and the Americans had Mexico

"There's going to be a battle here, the likes of which the world has never seen."[1] Those were the words of a young Hessian soldier who was about to take part in Von Falkenhayn's Verdun attack in February 1916. Finally, on the 21st of that month over 1,200 artillery pieces, including heavy bombardment howitzers fired almost 2.5 million shells which were brought to the front using 1,300 supply trains for almost seven weeks.[2] Verdun held no significant strategic value to the Germans, in fact the strategy was simply to annihilate the French army that was in Verdun. Germany had adopted a new plan that would expedite the end of the war. The German's main objectives for Verdun were to bleed the French army white, or to create a 'blood mill' (Blutmuhle in German).[3] The Germans would spend almost an entire year fighting around Verdun, only returning to the mundane grind of trench warfare in November 1916. In the end the Germans would lose 336,000 men out of their original 700,000 while French casualties mounted to 365,000 out of 1.2 million. Writer Ernst Junger stated, "It could only be called butchery, not a battle."[4] As Major T.E. Compton would write about Verdun, "posterity will see in it one of those giant actions which range against each other the living forces of two nations, etc.," like "Bovines, Leipzig, and Waterloo."[5] Verdun would eventually lead to the German army reshaping

---

[1] Alistair Horne, *The Price of Glory: Verdun 1916* (London, 1973) pg. 76
[2] Dennis Showalter, *Great War, Total War Combat and Mobilization on the Western Front, 1914-1918*. Edited by Roger Chickering and Stig Förster, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000): pg. 73.
[3] Ibid., pg. 114.
[4] Hermann Wendt, *Verdun 1916: Die Angriffe Falkenhayn im Maasgebiet mit Richtung auf Verdun also strategisches Problem,* (Berlin, 1931): pg. 2.
[5] Compton, T. E. "VERDUN and the Somme." *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution* 62 (Feb 01, 1917): 46.

the front as of July 1916, however, events on another part of the front would lead them to abandon their efforts, and focus their reserves in the Somme region, north of Verdun.

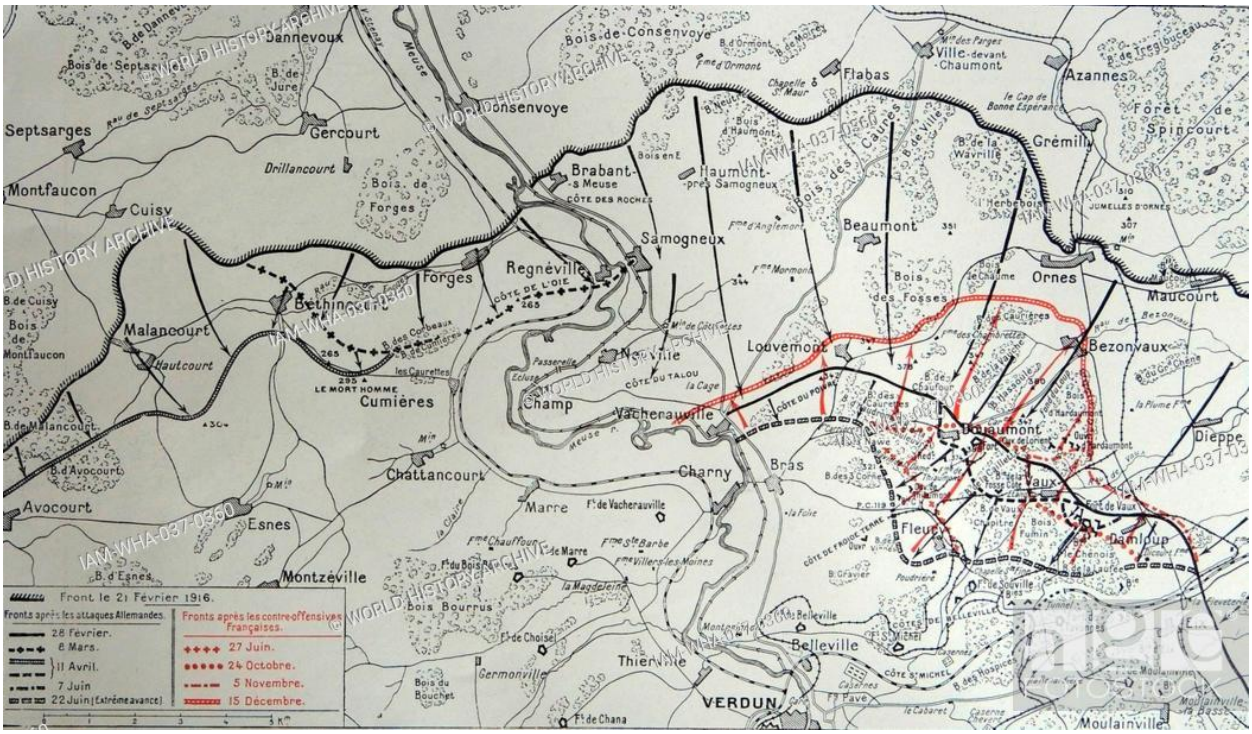


Figure 6: The above map is from Verdun, France. The Battle of Verdun from 21 February to 18 December 1916 – French map showing the changing positions French Forces in red, German attack lines are shown in black.

On the 1st of July 1916 Field Marshall Sir Doughlas Haig of the British Army launched their summer offensive early on orders from French commanders to help alleviate pressure on the Verdun front. Known as the Battle of the Somme, the British Army launched thirteen divisions, along with five French division over the top of their trenches. Prior to the attack at Verdun, the French planned to lend upwards of 44 divisions to the British for the Somme offensive. After the first day of battle was over, for meager gains the British lost 60,000

casualties, with 19,000 dead.[6] The British army would continue to fight for marginal gains through the Somme, however, the reason for the battle was slowly waning and British commanders started to lose hope in breaking out against German lines. The familiar sight of death was no longer affecting the soldiers of the Western Front, "whoever it is we are relieving, they have already gone. The trench is empty. In the watery moonlight it appears a very ghostly place. Corpses lie along the parados, rotting in the wet: every now and then a booted foot appears jutting over the trench."[7] The Somme would drag on for several months, finally culminating at the end of November 1916 with the British and French only gaining a few kilometers of ground while incurring hundreds of thousands of casualties. David Lloyd George, the Minister of Defensive for Great Britain after Lord Kitchner's death rebutted, "It was decided that I should once more sum up the misgiving which most of us felt and leave the responsibility to Sir William Robertson and Sir Douglas Haig."[8] However, the fault not all lay with the commander of British forces but also with British industry. General Haig unveiled a new weapon of war at the Somme which he believed would upset the tides of trench warfare and cause a breakthrough in the area. The tank, first attached and formed as the 'Heavy Section' of the machine gun corps but were later designated the Royal Tank Corps.[9] These armed machines carried either a hefty number of machines guns for clearing trenches or three-pound cannons for clearing concrete machine gun pillboxes. However, these new inventions, although proved useful and would be implemented in larger numbers in the future, were still largely unreliable, and not in a plentiful number. British

[6] Correlli Barnett, *Britain and Her Army, 1509-1970: A Military, Political and Social Survey.* (Allen Lane The Penguin Press, London, 1970): pg. 394.
[7] A.H. Farrar-Hockley, *The Somme* (1964): pg. 500
[8] David Lloyd George, *War Memoirs* (n.d.), vol II, pg. 1293.
[9] Correlli Barnett, *Britain and Her Army,* pg. 399

industry had simply failed to produce enough tanks for them to contribute enough for a substantial gain on the Somme.[10]

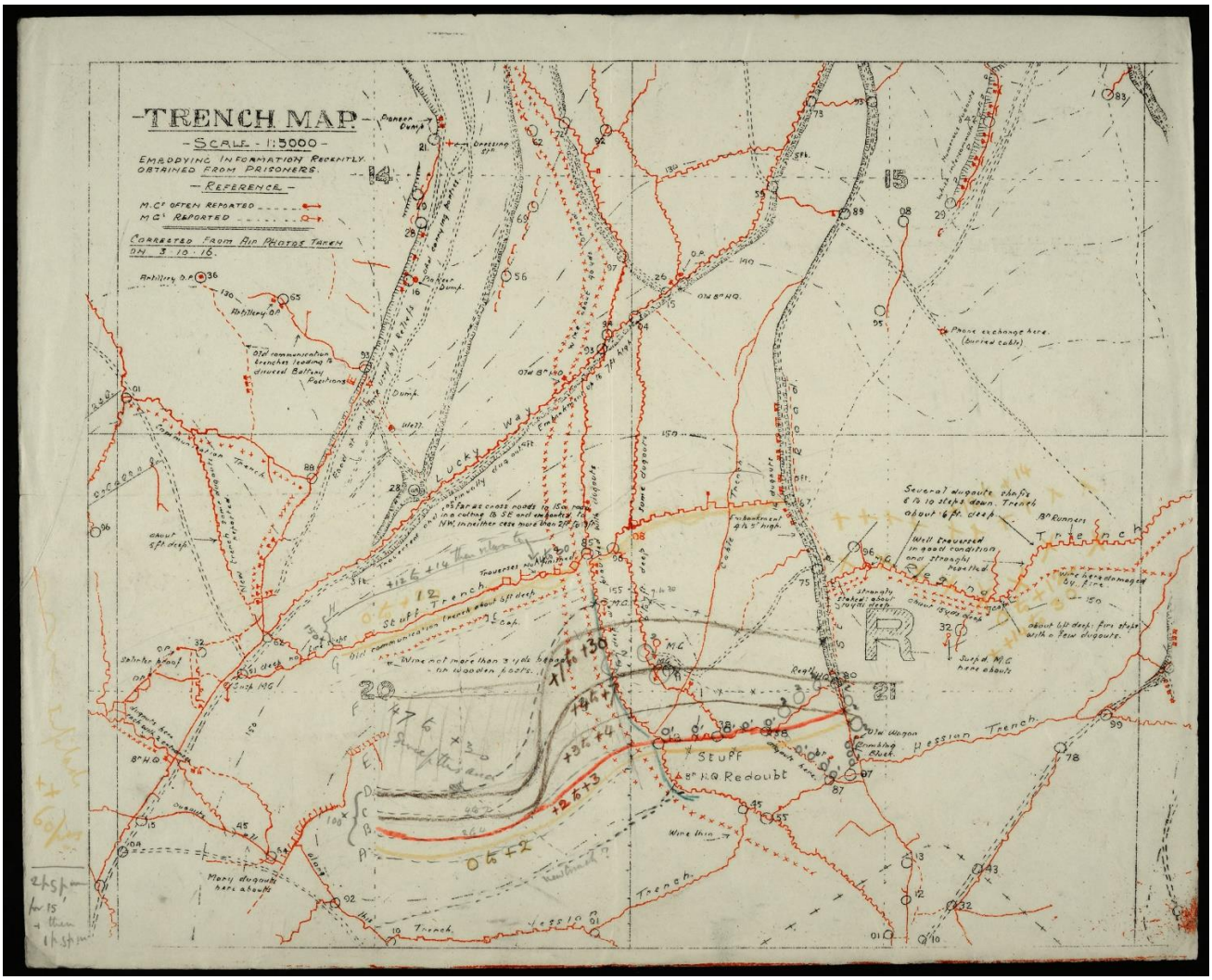


Figure 7: Map of Somme battlefield, 1916. What is so unique about his map are the individual trench lines, drawn from aerial reconnaissance planes and German prisoners. For the first time in modern warfare, aerial reconnaissance helps commanders plan attacks and help pinpoint enemy positions.

[10] *The History of the Ministry of Munitions* (H.M.S.O., 1924) for the dismal story of tank production in 1915-18.

Meanwhile, in the United States the government and War Department were still on a crusade to shun the war in Europe as far as military preparedness goes. During the time of these two great campaigns in Europe, the American military portrayed a stagnant position. Refusing to learn from real world warfare the War Department continued to display a haphazard stance on modernizing and reforming their army. Furthermore, the most recent campaign the United States Army embarked on was in the previous century, against an enemy who was almost in a similar position of despair with their own military forces. Neither the military nor the public of America really had a full understanding of the war in Europe. The American media was relegated to writing secondhand information about the war and tried desperately to gain access to all materials pertaining to it. "There were many things that the American people never understood about the reporting of the war. At the outset the leading American newspapers ran into the difficulty that no American correspondents were allowed upon the Allied front."[11] However, just because the public was ill-informed it did not mean that those in Washington D.C. were. President Wilson received hundreds of telegrams and correspondences from his ambassadors and confidants overseas. These reports kept President Wilson well abreast of the ever-changing dynamics of what was transpiring overseas in Europe. This only invigorated Wilson to keep his promise of neutrality only growing brighter:

I, for one, would prefer that our thoughts should not too often cross the ocean but should center themselves upon the policies and the duties of the United States. If we think of the United States, when the time comes, we shall know how this country can serve the world. I will borrow a very interesting phrase from a distinguished gentleman of my acquaintance and be that you will keep your moral powder dry.[12]

[11] Walter Millis, *Road to War, American 1914-1917,* (Boston and New York, Houghton Mifflin Company, The Riverside Press, Cambridge, 1935): pg. 63.
[12] Woodrow Wilson speech, Jackson Day, January 8, 1915.

Furthermore, Wilson's cabinet members still persuaded the president that war at all costs must be avoided if possible. That his mentality of stern letters of strong rhetoric was the best course of action with Germany. Woodrow Wilson in a letter to Secretary of State Bryan underlines his progressive stance towards the war in Europe and the American people. "This expression of the view of Senator Martin and Representative Flood has made a deep impression on me, and I have no doubt echoes a great part of public opinion. I wish with all my heart that I saw a way to carry out the double wish of our people, to maintain a firm front in respect of what we demand of Germany and yet do nothing that might be any possibility involve us in the war."[13] In addition, President Wilson's ambassador to Great Britain, Walter Hines Page kept on drying the 'moral powder' with his continued talks with members of Britain's Parliament and the King himself. On the 7th of July 1915, Page wrote a long letter to President Wilson outlying a conversation between himself and King George V when Page noted the King pressed upon the idea of the United States entering the war and the likely course the war would take if in fact the United States intervened on the side of the Entente. Moreover, Page stated the King was passionate about these two important observations, first, not only would the war end sooner if the United States would get involved, also, "you will throw your moral weight against the predatory system of Germany; and the English-speaking world will be drawn together for all time as a controlling forced in the world against the recurrence of such an outbreak.[14] However, the conversation turned more serious with the King's warning of German intentions, an ominous foreshadowing of what would happen with German submarine warfare. "But war is not to be entered into lightly and I admire the President's patience

[13] Woodrow Wilson to William Jennings Bryan June 6, 1915, *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson Digital Edition.* Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, Rotunda, 2017. Vol. 33, April 17 – July 21, 1915, pg. 349.

[14] Walter Hines Page to Woodrow Wilson, July 15, 1915, *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson Digital Edition.* Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, Rotunda, 2017. Vol. 33, April 17 – July 21, pg. 483.

and forbearance. But you will find that the arrogance of the Germans has no limit, and they will force you in. If you do come in, I wish it understood how deep my appreciation of your great nations' help will be."[15] Page insisted that the time for a peace negotiation with the Germans could be something arranged soon in hopes to avoid a wasteland in Europe. He ended the letter with the gut-wrenching truth of trench warfare in Europe, in referring to the paper plan of peace Page wrote, "But all these men must first be killed. Perhaps 3,000,000 to 5,000,000 have already been killed outright and perhaps 20,000,000 are now under arms or are ready to be marched out. When 10,000,000 more are dead, perhaps peace, perhaps not."[16]

However, in August of that same year, Colonel House wrote Walter Page a very direct message of the continued isolationism from the United States and his resolve to keep President Wilson and the nation out of the war. Fiercely loyal to President Wilson, Colonel House explained to Page the predicament the President faced daily of keeping the United States from opening hostilities. "Ninety percent of our people do not want the President to involve us in war. They desire him to be firm in his treatment of Germany, but they do not wish him to go to such lengths that war will follow. He went to the very limit in his last note to Germany. If he had gone beyond that, he would have lost his influence with the American people."[17] In addition to this pointed conversation of how omnipotent the President was and his 'harsh' reaction to the Germans for the sinking of the Lusitania, Colonel House explained that other neutral nations such as Holland, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark have all had their shipping sunk and possibly had citizens of those countries aboard the Lusitania when it sank, and none of them reacted as strongly as President

---

[15] Ibid., pg. 483.
[16] Walter Hines Page to Woodrow Wilson, July 15, 1915, *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson Digital Edition.* Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, Rotunda, 2017. Vol. 33, April 17 – July 21, pg. 486.
[17] Edward Mandell House to Walter Hines Page, August 4, 1915, *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson Digital Edition.* Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, Rotunda, 2017. Vol. 34, July 21 – September 30, 1915, pg. 85.

Wilson had. Adding, "Holland today with her well-equipped army and potential situation would be of more momentary value to the Allies than could the United States."[18] These comments would come in contrast to Colonel House's harsh sentiment about President Wilson doing nothing to prepare the United States for a possible entrance into the war. Furthermore, the notion that Holland's army, which as Colonel House stated was better equipped seemed to appear he knew the United States Army was in no condition to fight overseas in a modern war. Again, President Wilson's thought process towards preparedness up until the point of declaring war in 1917 had always been a stance of defense. When the President would talk of American Armed Forced preparedness, the idea of defense of the nation was the foundation of his speech.[19] In December 1915, President Wilson personally wrote to Colonel House doubling down on his stance of preparedness and the inability of the United States Army to make a difference in France, "if the Allies were not able to defeat Germany alone, they could scarcely do so with the help of the United States because it would take too long for us to get in a state of preparedness. It would therefore be a useless sacrifice on our part to go in."[20] However, in an unfortunate turn of events, Colonel House would not convey the same message to his counterparts in England, specifically to Edward Grey, the British Foreign Secretary, who on February 17, 1916, along with Colonel House's skewed viewpoint of the President's messages, drafted the House-Grey memorandum. A section of the memorandum read in part:

> Colonel House told me that President Wilson was ready, on hearing from France and England that the moment was opportune, to propose that a Conference should be summoned to put an end to the war. Should the Allies accept this proposal, and should Germany refuse it, the United States would probably enter the war against Germany. Furthermore, the memorandum stated that

---

[18] Ibid., pg. 86.
[19] David R, Woodward, *The American Army and the First World War,* (Cambridge University Press, 2014): pg. 34.
[20] Arthur Link, *Confusion and Crisis, 1915-1916* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1964): pg. 111.

if Germany accepted a proposal to negotiate but proved unreasonable the United States would leave the Conference as a belligerent on the side of the Allies.[21]

House's empty promises of misinterpreted messages from President Wilson, whether on purpose or not, did not sit well with the British outside of Edward Grey, and before the month was out both Colonel House and Edward Grey would become unpopular with a large portion of the British government. Only five days after the House-Grey memorandum the Commander of the German 5th Army, Crown Prince Wilhelm, unleashed his nine-hour bombardment on the French fortification at Verdun. At Bois des Caures, an area only 500 yards by 1,000 yards square, as many as 80,000 shells exploded. This was the Germany's Chief of the General Staff, Erich Von Falkenhayn's plan to bleed the French Army white.[22] Before the day was over, Edward Grey took his new memorandum before the British War Committee and exclaimed, "he was convinced that President Wilson really was prepared, if the allies desired it, to take the action that Colonel House stated."[23] However, it was only Grey who truly shared this sentiment about the United States, and their willingness to enter the war. David Lloyd Geroge, future British Secretary of War who was currently the Minister of Munitions stated, "the United States would possess no coercive power this year."[24] The Allies were right, President Wilson's foreign policy of isolationism with a spin of timid support of preparedness meant that the United States would not, nor could not enter the war as a belligerent on the Allied side. "Moral force did not serve as a substitute for military power in the hard coin of diplomacy."[25] In either case, the United States' preparedness would be put to the test in 1916. President Wilson understood just how fragile his position was with both the

[21] Charles Seymour (ed), *The intimate Papers of Colonel House,* (Boston, Massachusetts.: Houghton Mifflin, 1926-28), Vol. 2. Pg. 103-04.
[22] David R. Woodward, *The American Army,* pg. 35.
[23] Memoranda by Grey to Bertie, February 17 and 22, 1916, FO 800/181, NA.
[24] War Committee, February 22, 1916, CAB 42/9/3.
[25] David R. Woodward, *The American Army,* pg. 37.

American people and the German government. The Lusitania dangerously brought the two nations close to war, and surely if another liner was struck or sunk by another U-Boat wounding or killing Americans then for sure this would be the final straw that brought the United States into the war. On March 24, 1916, the Allies watched patiently for the American reaction to the damaging of the French passenger ferry, *Sussex.* Although the vessel was able to limp into harbor four American citizens were injured during the incident. Lord Kitchener, while speaking to Lieutenant Colonel George O. Squier of the United States Army stated, "Tell your Secretary of War, if he will merely send me a wire for any assistance that I can give, it will be given immediately without the necessity of regular diplomatic channels." Furthermore, Kitchener told Lieutenant Colonel Squier, "American soldiers should complete their training in France, enabling them to enter the trenches in the shortest possible time."[26]

However, almost a full month later, on the 18th of April 1916, President stated he would break off diplomatic ties with the German government.[27] The length at which it took President Wilson to respond to the maiming of American citizens, and the damaging of a harmless passenger liner seemed to negate the very fact of America's stance on preparedness, therefore, driving the narrative that President Wilson at this point was all talk and no action, or in Latin, "Facta non Verba." This message seemed to convey a very real possibility of the United States entering the war on the Allied side. The British government started to prepare the idea of amalgamating freshly training American troops into their depleted regiments in the trenches, however, it would not come to pass. On May 4, 1916, Berlin would issue the *Sussex Pledge* which in turn relegated U-Boat

[26] Squier, "Memorandum for the Ambassador, Subject: Interview with Field Marshal Earl Kitchener, Secretary of State for War, London, April 27, 1916," Baker Papers.
[27] Meirion Harries and Susie Harries, *Last Days of Innocence: America at War, 1917-1918* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998): pg. 97.

captains to not attack merchant or passenger ships without warning them first.[28] Although the German government, on the recommendation of Von Hindenburg and Ludendorff, would resume unrestricted submarine warfare in the early months of 1917, for the time being, the peace would remain between the United States and Germany. The allies would continue to doubt the ability of United States foreign policy to be anything more than empty threats.

Threat after empty threat flew from Washington D.C. to Berlin, with little to no results for their efforts. The United States sunk further and further into a pit of untrustworthiness that would lead them into a further dilapidated state of military preparedness. On May 24, 1916, Colonel House besieged his friend, President Wilson, of the hard truth of how the United States was seen by the Allies, "It is evident that unless the United Staes is willing to sacrifice hundreds of thousands of lives and billions of treasure we are not to be on good terms with the Allies."[29] Further, it wasn't just the Allies that doubted the United States, the German government, to include both Hindenburg and Ludendorff had confirmed, "It has to be. We expect war with America and have made all preparations for it. Things cannot get worse. Germany's two leading generals agree, "I don't give a damn about America," exclaimed Ludendorff.[30]

The United States Army and the government's stance on preparedness if not already well known to those around the world would soon be in full bloom when Pancho Villa crossed the border, and attacked a small settlement in New Mexico, killing several and wounding a dozen more, to include opening fire on the 13th United States Cavalry's' fort. When the United States Army was 'mobilized' for the expedition to hunt down and capture Villa, however it was underscored by the simple fact they were not prepared for such a mobilization, let alone a full

[28] David R. Woodward, *The American Army,* pg. 37.
[29] Arthur Link, *Wilson: Campaigns for Progressivism and Peace, 1916-1917,* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965): pg. 24.
[30] David R. Woodward, *The American Army,* pg. 40.

expedition into a foreign land. The Punitive Expedition would stand as the United States first test of mobilization since the Spanish-American War of 1898. Large troop formations, mass industrialized weaponry, and modern doctrine had all been made for the War Department, utilizing real word applications in Europe. The War Department and the Army War College had hundreds of pages of documents from both battlefield observers and foreign attaches at their disposal. This was the moment the American military could put on full display all they had learned or should have learned from their European counterparts. However, as per the status quo, the American military was unable to formally mobilize an army, let alone, standardize a form of doctrine for their venture into Mexico. Possessing no trucks, the United States Army had to procure motorized vehicles from private companies. The Boston *Transcript* stated it the best, "its is like what we should have done if we had attempted to fight the Civil War with flintlock muskets."[31] The weapons and tactics deployed in the expedition were far inferior to those being employed on the Western Front, those in command at the War Department and civilian branches of the government did nothing to mend the stack of issues within their army. Commanders in high-ranking positions started to reach out to public journals and newspapers with their opinion of the state of the current army.

One example was Colonel Edwin F. Glenn, the Chief of Staff of the Eastern Division of the Army, noted, "the cold fact is that the American Army today is the most pathetic thing any nations ever knew or contemplated, and other nations know it very well, I assure you."[32] Perhaps the reason for such the frustration by Army leaders was due to the long standing preoccupation of having Mexico as a potential enemy, especially due to the 1910 Mexican Revolution. Army planners knew and understood, that such a venture would be virtually impossible; an estimated

[31] Ibid., 36.
[32] *Papers of Woodrow Wilson,* Vol. 36, pg. 321.

150,000 soldiers would be necessary to move from the Rio Grande to Mexico City.[33] If the 1910 Mexican Revolution didn't provoke a sense of urgency of the potential conquest of Mexico, then the 1914 arrest of the United States Navy landing party at Tampico should have pushed American policy makers into a frenzy. In response, President Wilson occupied the port city of Veracruz, only withdrawing later in the year, however, tensions on the southern border remained very high. President Wilson's reasoning for his erratic behavior in Mexico in 1914 was due to a shifting political ideology. President Wilson would periodically impose and remove arms embargos in the region which in turn raised tension between both nations, as well as the warring factions within Mexico. The seizure and ultimately the release of Veracruz was a show of military force by the US government. Robert Lee Bullard, who was a graduate of West Point, the Army War College and future commander of the 1st Division in France, had a lot to say about the unorthodox and ungainly mobilization of American troops to the Southern Border. The most appalling aspect of these mobilizations according to Bullard was how long the General Staff had planned for such an operation. Bullard would note, "There is but one conceivable conclusion; it is that the General Staff had been in this matter ignored or disregarded, and that we had obstinately returned to the rotten, inefficient system and methods of the days of the Spanish-American War."[34] However, prior to the mobilization of both Regular Army troops and National Guard soldiers, both President Wilson and Mexican President Carranza had to agree on terms of just how far and to what extent United States troops would venture into Mexico. According to historian John S.D. Eisenhower it would be a conversation between the deaf and the dumb, which in turn would cause several

[33] "The Mexican Situation" in Army and Navy Register Vol. 49, Nov. 1630 (March 18, 1911): pg. 14.

[34] Major General Robert L. Bullard, *Personalities and Reminisces of the War* (New York, Doubleday, Page & Co., 1925): pg. 7.

incidents between both Mexican federal troops and those of the Regular Army troops of the United States.[35]

Geneal Frederick Funston of the United States Army was the commander of all forces on the border when Pancho Villa attacked. Once given authority to mount an expedition after Villa by President Wilson, General Funston requested the following units for the job:

- Four cavalry regiments, organized into two cavalry brigades.
- Support and logistic troops
- One battery of light artillery
- One aero squadron (relegated to scouting duty since American plans lacked any weapons other than the pilots personal sidearm)
- A heavy Brigade of Infantry which comprised three infantry regiments and an artillery battalion.[36]

The question to General Funston on who would lead this expedition was quite simple. On the recommendation of both Major General Hugh L. Scott and Major General Tasker Bliss, Brigadier General John J. Pershing's name was at the top of their list. His exploits not only during the Spanish-American War, but also other campaigns in Philippines, and against the Moros propelled Brigadier General Pershing's reputation amongst the best in the Army. Once he was named commander of the expedition Pershing was ordered into Mexico no later than the 15th of March 1916.

[35] John S.D. Eisenhower, *Intervention! The United States and the Mexican Revolution, 1913-1917* (New York, W. W. Norton & Co., 1993): pg. 321.
[36] Robert S. Thomas and Inez V. Allen, The Mexican Punitive Expedition Under Brigadier General John J. Pershing, United States Army, 1916-1917 (Washington, DC, War Histories Division (U.S. Army), 1954): pg. II 2.

Figure 8: Map of the Punitive Expedition, 1916.

Reports put the remaining strength of Pancho Villa's *Division del Norte* or Division of the North, at no more than 500-1,000 men.[37] Immediately as soon as Pershing and his men crossed the border into Mexico issues with supply and logistics started to plague the expedition. Unreliable transportation with wagon was deemed impossible by the terrain. Pershing had to resort to using the untested motorized trucks to help supply his men. Standardization within the number of trucks purchased early in the expedition was another issue faced by Army planners. The sheer variety of trucks utilized caused problems for the ordinary soldier, who was used to mounting on a horse rather than a motorized truck. Furthermore, there were numerous different types of motorized

[37] Ibid., pg. 2.

trucks that required a large amount of man hours to maintain and operate.[38] A further complication was the inadequacy of local telegraph wires and signals. Having to turn to the infancy of wireless radio sets, General Pershing hoped to get his expedition the most up to date intelligence of enemy movements and activity. Historian Allan Reed Millett summed up a perfect first snapshot of what Pershing was as a commander, "Pershing was a real field general. As a brigade commander he had recognized the importance of artillery and machine gun fire to the success of infantry assaults. He appreciated the importance of new technology, motorizing his troops and supplies and employing the army's primitive airplanes. He paid close attention to wire and radio communications, and he demanded thorough staff planning. He used his officers impersonally, encouraging the most able and discarding those who made mistakes, (Something Persing would come known for in France was the firing of divisional commanders who did not meet his explicit expectations). He commanded as much by fear as he did by rapport with his subordinates."[39]

Although no great pitched battles would occur within the Punitive Expedition, several small skirmishes would take place amongst U.S. Regulars, and with a mixture of Mexican troops and armed civilians. It was here the great marksmanship of the infantrymen would come to prevail and perpetuate the ideology of the fighting spirit of the American soldier. The idea that a frontal assault with rifle armed American infantrymen was all that was needed to send the enemy running. However, during the limited actions that did occur, the idea of marksmanship, and well-made rifles help lower casualties of American forces. Colonel Harry A. Toulmin, who was during the Expedition a junior officer stated the following about an incredible eight-man rearguard action:

Right here was a fine example of American Army discipline. This small detachment, under command of Lieutenant Clarence Lininger, showed the finest sort of fire control. The rear guard

[38] Cothren, S. E., & Barnes, A. F. (2015). Long Distance Logistics: The Mexican Expedition: Army Logistician. *Army Sustainment, 47*(3): pg. 48.
[39] Allan R. Millett, *The General: Robert L. Bullard and Officership in the United States Army 1881-1925*, (Westport, Ct. Greenwood Press, 1975): pg. 304.

fired coolly and deliberately, correcting their sight upon field glass observations by a noncommissioned officer. This outfit killed twenty of the enemy at this point, and wounded many others, according to the later reports the Mexican authorities themselves.[40]

However, there were always exceptions to the rule, and during the Battle of Carrizal which took place on June 21, 1916, the American Army suffered a loss to Mexican forces. During the battle, the American outfit which consisted of only 82 men was led by Captain Charles T. Boyd, who insisted on putting his forces into a disadvantage by charging his men in a long frontal assault through an open field. His attack was laid against a fortified position by Mexican forces and his men were easy targets for their rifle and machine gun fire. Amongst the 48 casualties, Captain Boyd was counted as killed in action. Colonel Toulan would later sum of the battle in his after-action report noting:

Boyd gave the Mexicans every military advantage of time and notice so that they could deploy into a strong military position. He even moved his own troops into a position of great military disadvantage where they must attack across a barren plain in a direct frontal attack. To accomplish his objective, they would have to move across a flat plain devoid of cover, against superior forces, under cover and well intrenched. He further added, the Mexican defenders possessed machine guns, one of which enfiladed Boyd's attack.[41]

Sadly, these lessons seemed to fade away after the Punitive Expedition because tactical doctrine mentioned very little of open assault of troops towards intrenched enemies and enfiladed fire from machine guns.

Following the conclusion of the Punitive Expedition Brigadier General Pershing was the most experienced leader in the United States Army. Although General Funston would be considered as a competent leader for the future American Expeditionary Force, he sadly passed away in February 1917, thus pinning Brigadier General Pershing as one of the front runners for

[40] Colonel Harry A. Toulmin, *With Pershing in Mexico,* (Harrisburg, PA. The Military Service Publishing Co., 1935) pg. 63-64.
[41] Ibid., pg. 76.

the position. Although Pershing's expedition proved to be fruitful in many aspects it did produce an over sense of confidence on the tactics utilized by Pershing in France. An over reliance on these tactics would lead Pershing to believe in France his forces could utilize the same type of doctrine as they did against Villa's bandits against the trained armies of Germany. Pershing wrote in his own memoirs, "While my command in Mexico was taught the technique of trench fighting, it was more particularly trained in the war of movement. Without the application of open warfare methods, there could have been only a stalemate on the Western Front."[42] This statement and others in his memoirs point to a very skewed version of just how much modern warfare had changed in the last few years. On all accounts, Pershing believed, and even tried in France, to establish a mobile war against hardened German positions, which resulted in the senseless loss of thousands of American Doughboys. Whether or not Pershing deliberately believed his 'open warfare' tactics that were utilized in Mexico would work in France is still a debate today. The very notion of the *Field Service Regulations* and *Infantry Journals*, and other publications that dealt with tactical doctrine did very little to change what was already handed down as law insinuates a perpetual notion of radical change was not a top priority of the War Department.

To bolster the claim of open warfare being a prominent fixture in American military doctrine after the Punitive Expedition can be seen in the *Journal of the United States Cavalry Association.* As previously covered, the United States, well after the war in Europe had started, still employed large units of cavalry, therefore, leading to the assumption that the War Department and military planners truly did not understand just how much warfare had changed. The editorial cited, "The Pershing Expedition into Mexico proved the cavalry arm the only arm which could successfully operate south of the Rio Grande, *aggressively*. Without reflection adversely on our

[42] Pershing's memoirs pg. 11

brother so the infantry and field artillery, they were simply armed guards of camps and communications in Mexico; the engineers proved good road builders only; and the aviation corps failed to render only notable service. It was the cavalry alone which secured results; and had armed resistance to our forces continued, the brilliant handling of our cavalry would undoubtedly still have been more in evidence."[43]

The usage of machine guns and artillery was also something of a moot point during the Expedition into Mexico. Only on a handful of occasions were these weapons utilized, the machine gun more than the field artillery. One of the more successful employments of the machine gun in Mexico was during the small action at Ojos Azules on the 4th of May 1916. A small group of American soldiers along with their Apache scouts cornered several loyal *Villistas* at a ranch. Although 44 of the bandits were killed during the action, the machine gun section, which was attached to the advance guard, proved ineffective due to their horses being exhausted because of the extreme weight of the equipment they carried. Furthermore, when the machine gun section was able to set up their weapons, they could only engage the enemy at maximum range, causing a mixture of results.[44] However, it was the artillery that truly had no effect on enemy engagements during the entire campaign. "The hunt for Pancho Villa brough little glory to the United States Army, but for the field artillery, the Punitive Expedition was a veritable disaster."[45] Historian James W. Hurst's book, *Pancho Villa and Black Jack Pershing, the Punitive Expedition in Mexico* has no mention of artillery as a prominent figure of the expedition, only relegated to camp defense

[43] "The Cavalry" in Journal of the United States Cavalry Association Vol. 28 No. 117 (January 1918): pg. 429.

[44] Mark Grotelueschen, *Doctrine Under Fire: American Artillery Employment in World War I* (Westport, CT, Greenwood Press, 2001); pg. 4.

[45] Colonel Harry A. Toulmin, *With Pershing*, pg. 84.

duty, with no offensive capabilities.[46] For the entirety of the campaign in Mexico, both the artillery and machine gun played little roles and were not fully taken to their full potential on the battlefield. It is interesting to think, that maybe due to the little participation and lack of usage these two awesome weapon systems possessed, led, or even persuaded Pershing to not fully endorse their usage in Europe a year later. By the time the Expedition in Mexico was waning down, and the United States government was losing interest in the conflict, the war in Europe was approaching its third year of fighting. Hundreds of thousands of men on all sides had already fallen to intense machine gun and artillery fire. Yet the War Department and the future leader of the American Expeditionary Force still believed infantry assaults could break entrenched troops if properly managed and organized.

Going further into the debate about artillery, losses in the First World War contributed to artillery ranged from 65-70% of all casualties. The United States Army both in the Punitive Expedition and the start of their entrance into the Frist World War ranked very low on artillery tactics, and artillery pieces themselves. Following the ending of the American Civil War in 1865, and the ensuing wars with the Indians out west, field artillery advancements dwindled. These fast paced, quick assault battles had no placed for fixed artillery, therefore, tactical doctrine of the artillery piece was left in 1865. In addition, there were large stockpiles of Civil War era ammunition for cannons and artillery, and with war funding no longer a concern to congress, there was no need to progress artillery technology.[47] However, besides the abundance of such ordnance from the American Civil War, and the under spending for artillery technology, the United States

[46] Hurst, James W. *Pancho Villa and Blackjack Pershing the Punitive Expedition in Mexico*. Westport, Conn: Praeger, 2008. pg. 161.

[47] Boyd L. Dastrup, *King of Battle: A Branch History of the U.S. Army's Field Artillery,* (Fort Monroe, VA. Office of The Command Historians – United States Army and Doctrine Command, 1992): pg. 129.

War Department paid some attention to the advancement of artillery in European nations. Particularly France, with their Model 1897 75mm howitzer, or Canon de 75 Modele 1897 in French, which was equipped with a pneumatic tube and recoil system underneath the barrel. This new artillery piece, although considered a field gun and not a howitzer (field guns were used for more direct infantry support due to their low angle of deflection of the gun tube. Howitzers utilized a pendulum type gear which allowed the tube to swing in large vertical angles to achieve a variety of ranges.) the pneumatic tube which kept the gun in place after firing allowed French gunners to achieve a sustained fire rate of upwards of 15 rounds per minute.

Figure 9: French Canon de 75 Modele 1897. (Notice the recoil tube under the gun barrel/this allowed the French gun to stay in place after each shot.

Figure 10: American M1897 3.2-inch gun. (No recoil system, after each shot the gun would roll back and the crew members would have to roll it back into battery and resight after each firing.

Compared to the older American 3.2-inch gun M1897 (81mm) roll back field gun which could only manage a dismal 3-5 rounds per minute.[48] In 1892, the War Department dedicated an entire new institution to teach modern artillery, and cavalry tactics located at Fort Riley, Kansas. However, even with the advent of the new school, and some new artillery pieces, the tactics of

[48] Ibid., pg. 136.

artillery still stayed connected with the teachings of Civil War traditions. In the Spanish-American War, artillerist on several occasions were found to be rolling their pieces far to forward and in turn being cut down by Spanish sharpshooters or being destroyed by Spanish counter-battery fire.[49]

After the Spanish-American War, the United States War Department adopted the plans to upgrade their artillery. These upgrades would include the larger M1906 6-inch howitzer, however, a large portion of the upgrades still incorporated small, M1902 3-inch and M1904 4.7-inch field guns. Larger M1907 4.7-inch howitzers which were allocated for the Costal Artillery.[50] While the United States still fiddled with small caliber guns, the Germans and French armed their divisions and corps with bigger and better guns. Both German and France fielded 105mm or 4.2-inch howitzers, 150mm or 6-inch howitzers, and 210mm or 8.3-inch howitzers in large quantities.[51] These howitzers could now lob their projectiles over a great distance and destroy targets with either an airburst or direct penetration fuse. Unlike their European counterparts, the American's failed to realize the potential of large caliber guns for usage other than coastal artillery. Furthermore, the implementation of movement under fire, or fire suppression from artillery was still widely taught as a secondary means of attack or support for infantry assaults.

In addition to the Artillery and Cavalry service school that was established at Fort Riley in 1892 the War Department opened a school just for the advancement of artillery at Fort Sill, Oklahoma in 1911. The location is still utilized today to teach both United States Army and United States Marine cannon crewmen. More importantly the establishment of the *Field Artillery Journal* which as with its predecessors, taught current battlefield tactics and embraced foreign experiences specific to the realm of artillery. Although a step in the right direction, the school established at

---

[49] Ibid., pg. 141.
[50] Ibid., pg. 147.
[51] Shelford Bidwell & Dominick Graham, *Fire Power, British Army Weapons and Theories of War 1904-1945,* (London George Allen & Unwin, Boston, Sydney, 1982): pg. 11.

Fort Sill was plagued with budget issues and the low overall status of the average artillerymen. Congressional support and budgetary measures seemed to skip over land-based artillery usage, and instead was used to bolster coastal gun defense. A measure ensured for the building and modernization of a ready force for the usage of national defense. Furthermore, the doctrine both printed by the War Department and the *Field Artillery Journal* lacked a sufficient amount of current information regarding the progression of artillery on the modern battlefield. Likewise, the training at Fort Sill was largely spent on training the basics of artillery (mainly from Civil War era tactics) so the introduction of advance artillery training was neglected. As a result, the artillery corps of the American Expeditionary Force would enter the First World War, largely untrained, and very inadequate for the task given to them.[52] Much like the infantrymen of the AEF the artillerymen would have to be retrained and, in a hurry, once reaching France in late 1917 and all throughout 1918.

An important aspect not often covered is the relationship between President Wilson and the United States military. A role that would plague President Wilson both during the Punitive Expedition into Mexico, and ultimately the sending of U.S. troops into France. Wilson could be characterized as an 'hands off' type of commander in chief. President Wilson was neither, a good commander in chief, nor a great foreign policy enforcer. In the twentieth century, a good foreign policy must be backed by an even greater military presence. "Limited interventions generally are conducted with a narrowly defined goal and minimal commitment of forces and national resources. Thus, the political leader must maintain a greater level of command and control over the military to guard against unnecessary and dangerous escalation, a task Wilson struggled to accomplish."[53]

---

[52] Boyd L. Dastrup, *King of Battle*, 155.

[53] Beckstrand, Alex. "Woodrow Wilson and the Struggle of Civil-Military Relations During the Punitive Expedition of 1916–1917." *The journal of military history*. 86, no. 2 (2022). 374.

President Wilson's policies, both in Mexico and with France in 1917-18 were far too weak to really accomplish anything of significance. During the Punitive Expedition, Brigadier General Pershing failed to achieve the ultimate goal of capturing or killing Pancho Villa, which further added to the frustration of President Wilson and the United States government. Both General Funston and General Pershing were making up rules of their own during the campaign, and both President Wilson, and Secretary of War, Newton Baker sat ideally by, "Failure ensued, however, as Wilson neglected to control his military commanders."[54] Moreover, Newton Baker, the new Secretary of War first day in office was the same day Pancho Villa attacked. Furthermore, after the expedition was confirmed and the troops were in place to advance, President Wilson instead of taking direct command in his role as commander in chief, decided to control the situation in Mexico through Secretary of War Baker.

President Wilson had another problem in the United States that was at its very core seemed to undermine the President's stance on foreign policy and even his domestic policy as president. On January 31, 1916, General Leonard Wood, former Chief of Staff, and Medal of Honor winner, testified to Congress about the preparedness of the United States military. Wood's testimony aired the nations dirty laundry about the deplorable state of the U.S. armed forces which supported Germany's viewpoint of America's weakness. Neither Newton Baker nor Woodrow Wilson could tame General Wood who spoke his mind in Congress that day:

> The Regular Army did not possess the modern weaponry deemed virtually essential in modern war. Nor had the War Department taken the necessary steps to expand production of military equipment in an emergency. Our arsenals for small arms have been working only to a small extent of their capacity. We are without reserves of clothing, shoes, or other equipment necessary for war. We have not taken the necessary steps to establish plants for the manufacturing of our military rifle at the great arms factories in various parts of the country. This absolutely necessary

[54] Samuel P. Huntington, The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Practice of Civil-Military Relations (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 1957): 189.

in order to permit that expansion which will be necessary in order to meet the demands of modern war.[55]

General Leonard Wood was not the only problem the President would face that day. Robert Lansing, Secretary of State received the German Ambassador, Johann von Bernstorff in his office. The news from Germany would not be pleasant, and contained in a note passed from von Bernstorff to Lansing was the resolution of continued unrestricted submarine warfare by the German Navy on February 1, 1917. The note read in part, "With a fleet of 111 U-Boats, Germany planned to attack all sea traffic in the blockade zones around Great Britain, France, Italy, and in the eastern Mediterranean." Having marked large blockade zones on the map in international waters the Germans then announced that American ships entering these zones, including those carrying passengers, would be sunk on sight.[56]

President Wilson was faced with a difficult decision at this point. Germany had pushed the United States to its closet point of war. On the 3rd of February Wilson recalled the ambassador to Germany and severed diplomatic ties with the country, however, he still hoped to continue civil relations with them. In a speech to Congress on the same day the ambassador to Germany was recalled President Wilson stated, "the United States did not desire any hostile conflict with the Imperial German Government. We are the sincere friends of the German people and earnestly desire to remain at peace with the Government which speaks for them."[57] However, during the same timeframe President Wilson asked Newton Baker to quietly ask the General Staff to "prepare a plan to raise and train a *volunteer* force of 500,000 men to reinforce the Regular Army and

[55] Jack Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood* (San Rafael, California.: Presidio Press, 1978): pg. 149.
[56] David Woodward, *The American Army,* pg. 41.
[57] *Papers of Woodrow Wilson,* Vol. 41, pg. 111-112.

National Guard."[58] In addition, President Wilson ordered the War Department not to take any public actions that might lead the nation to believe Wilson was gearing up the country for war. Before General Wood's testimony and the visit of the German Ambassador to Robert Lansing, President Wilson wrote in his journal of a telling thought about his understanding of modern warfare:

> Never before in the world's history have two great armies been in effect so equally matched never before have the losses and the slaughter been so great with as little gain in military advantage…The mechanical game of slaughter of today has not the same fascination as the zest of intimate combat of former days; and the trench warfare and poisonous gases are elements which detract alike from the excitement and the tolerance of modern conflict. With maneuver almost a thing of the past, any given point can admittedly be carried by the sacrifice of enough men and ammunition. Where is any longer glory commensurate with the sacrifice of millions of men required in modern warfare to carry and defend Verdun?[59]

Furthermore, as President Wilson was contemplating whether to send his military into France, some civilians reassured him that the best course of action was not to get involved with a large continental type of army. On February 14, 1917, Herbert Hoover, who had been organizing the relief for Belgium citizens in occupied German areas, sent Secretary Newton Baker a letter, who in turn forwarded it to President Wilson. The contexts of the letter suggested that the United States should stay out of the war at all costs. Furthermore, Hoover suggested that a small expeditionary force should be recruited by French and British forces, trained by these nations, and amalgamated into their existing units to fight for them. In addition, he warned that if Wilson was to raise a large army it would to be expensive to train, equip, and transport such a large force to Europe, which why the previous plan would benefit all nations involved. Finally, Hoover stated

---

[58] John Chambers, *To Raise an Army: The Draft Comes to Modern America,* (New York: Free Press, 1987): pg. 75.
[59] *Papers of Woodrow Wilson,* Vol. 40, pg. 67-70.

the United States should build a formidable army on its own soil to give weight to Wilson's influence on the peace settlement.[60]

If the unrestricted submarine warfare memorandum from the German government hadn't been enough, the final straw would come on February 25, 1917, with another two events that finally pushed America over the edge. On that day the British passenger liner, *Laconia*, was torpedoed and sunk with two American civilians killed. In addition, President Wilson was handed the intercepted copy of the infamous *Zimmerman Telegram* from the German Foreign Secretary Zimmerman to the German Minister in Mexico, Heinrich von Eckhardt. Within the note laid out by Zimmerman was a plan for Germany to ally itself with Mexico if the United States decided to end its neutrality. In turn for the cooperation with Germany, the German government would give financial support for a Mexican conquest of territories previously lost such as Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona.[61] Furthermore, the telegram stated Japan would be invited to join this anti-American alignment. On the 1st of March 1917, President Wilson released the telegram to the American press, and immediately both Mexico and Japan denied any participation in such a deal with Germany. However, in Berlin, when asked if the telegram was true, Zimmerman would reply, "I cannot deny it. It is true."[62] In a cabinet meeting President Wilson was faced with the real possibility of war with Germany, however, absent from this meeting were any members of the actual military, who would be undertaking the venture of war in Europe. Whether or not an army for France was needed or just the mere raising of an army would be sufficient to scare Germany was a question still be debated in these turbulent times. Newton Baker suggested that it might only

---

[60] *Papers of Woodrow Wilson,* Vol. 31, pg. 227-28; Daniel Beaver, *Baker and the American War Effort,* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966): pg. 25-26.

[61] David Woodward, *The American Army,* pg. 43.

[62] Barbara Tuchman, *The Zimmerman Telegram,* (New York: Macmillan, 1966): pg. 183

be necessary to raise an army to frighten the Germans into submission.[63] Both he and everybody in the room that day knew that the United States Army did not possess the required men or equipment for such a mobilization, at best the Regular Army could assemble a meager mobile force of 24,000 men.[64] On the first day of the Battle of the Somme in 1916, the British casualties were over double that of the mobile force contemplated by the United States government.

Even with these new threats to the United States, Wilson's foreign policies still left a lot to be desired by the Allies. The British Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Sir William Robertson, gave his professional opinion about the United States and its military presence. "I do not think that it will make much difference whether America comes in or not. What we want to do is to beat the German Armies, until we do that, we shall not win the war. America will not help us much in that respect."[65] Even American officers agreed with Sir Robertson, General Tasker Bliss, who would deal and negotiate the future transportation of American soldiers to France with Sir Robertson aligned this claim with Robertson, "the war must last practically two years longer before we can have other than naval and economic participation."[66] On April 2, 1917, at 8:32 p.m. President Wilson stepped in front of the Congressional special session to ask for a declaration of war against the German government. During the thirty-six-minute speech President Wilson stated, "the immediate addition to the armed forces of the United States already proved for by law in case of war, at least 500,000 men…and also the authorization of subsequent additional increments of equal force so soon as they are needed and can be handled in training." Furthermore, President Wilson assured the people of the United States the soldiers of America would be putting their lives at risk

---

[63] David Woodward, *The American Army*, pg. 44.
[64] Robert Ferrell, *Woodrow Wilson and World War I, 1917-1921*, (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 19685): pg. 50.
[65] Daniel Beaver, *Modernizing the American War Department* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2006): pg. 70.
[66] John Chambers, *To Raise an Army*, pg. 105.

for a higher purpose, "to make the world safe for democracy."[67] On the 6th of April 1917, President Wilson had officially signed the declaration of war.

There was no turning back at this point. The United States was officially at war with Germany; however, they did not consider themselves a part of the allies, but rather an associated power linked with the Allied war goals. No matter how the US government saw themselves, the prevalent nature that the army was in was in no way capable of fighting in Europe. Poor battle doctrine, tactics, and the sheer lack of men and manpower led to a singular conclusion at the War Department. With the authorization of raising the number of men necessary to fight the United States government would have to authorize a draft. However, that was only one of the problems that the General Staff, War Department, and President Wilson currently faced. The first order of business was to have the US War Department and it associated organizations learn modern warfare, and quick!

[67] Arthur Link, *Confusion and Crises, 1915-1916,* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1964) pg. 15-16.

Chapter 6: We are at war. Now what

The United States had declared war in April 1917, with no sizeable army, no stockpiled munitions or war materials, no leader, and worst of all, no plan or doctrine to guide them. Their immediate contribution to the war effort was nothing more than a promise, and a paper division. Furthermore, the United States government gave no guidance to the War Department on how to prepare the country, and its men to serve. In fact, it was the Army War College, in late 1916, that gave the ultimatum to Secretary of War Newton Baker, that if the United States was going to send troops to Europe it would need to field an army of over four million men. At the outbreak of the war the United States Army was ranked 17th in the world.[1] Calls from both civilian and military entities for war preparation went unanswered. President Wilson was bent on keeping the United States on their track of isolationism, in military power only, the economic gains was another matter. Eventually, the number of materials sent to the allies allowed the United States to top the world stage of global power based up materials produced and exported. (See tables 4 and 5 in chapter 4 for exports and American intervention on the warfront).

As much as the War Department, and the General Staff ignored prior assessments from their foreign military attaches, or from actual warfighters like Ford and Hutcheson the leaders of the United States Army were more than happy to accept their next guest to the War Department. The organizer of Plan XVII for the French Army, General Joseph Joffre was a national hero in the United States, the people of America, who received outdated information about the war, mostly from foreign papers, held Joffre, or as known Papa Joffre to some, was regarded by many in the United States as the 'Hero of the Marne' for the halting of the German juggernaut.[2]

---

[1] Scientific American Sept 15, 1914.

[2] Joseph Jacques Joffres, *Memoirs,* II, pg. 566.

Figure 11: French General Joseph Joffre.

However, in France, Joffre's fame wore off with the continued presence of trench warfare and the ultimate loss of life during the Verdun offensive in the winter of 1916. Finally, in December 1916, with a mass call for his removal he resigned as Chief of the French Army, and was replaced by General Robert Nivelle.[3] However, new life would be given to Joseph Joffre, on April 1, 1917, the day before President Woodrow Wilson would ask Congress for a declaration of war against Germany, the French Premier, Alexandre Ribot asked Joffre to take part of a special delegation to the United States. The Premier Ribot knew that the entrance of the United States into the war was approaching, and he and a great deal of others were very interested in the military capabilities of the United States Army. Joffre would be the perfect attaché to put the American war machine to the test. However, Joseph Joffre, like many other allied commanders hardly gave a second thought to the overall capabilities of the United States Army. Up to that point, the United States had only truly contributed war materials to the war effort, while their army stayed stagnant, and chased Mexican bandits on the southern border.

A great shock to Joffre was the small size of the United States Army, at that time all the American Army could muster in uniform was a combined force of just over 200,000 men, both those in the Regular Army, and the National Guard.[4] Moreover, a great portion of the army was

[3] Cyril Falls, *The Great War*, pg. 263-64.
[4] Joseph Jacques Joffre, *Memoirs*, pg. 567.

not in the United States. Spread over the world, the United States Army was in the Philippines, the Canal Zone, and in Mexico. 200,000 men was a biproduct of a bad offensive on the Western Front, in comparison the French Army still have an estimated four million men, and the German Army was sitting at 2.5 million under arms.[5] Joffre had his work cut out for him as how to best break to the American War Department that a substantial increase in numbers would need to be rapidly established if the United States was going to make a considerable contribution to the war effort in ways other than material, and funds.

However, Joffre knew that he did not need to focus on the little details of raising a proper army to fight in Europe, such details as logistics, command and control structure, and tactical doctrine. A caveat of Joffre's mission to America was all that were needed were trained men to replace the horrific losses his own divisions had suffered. An even greater urgency pressed Joffre to make his claim for a basic corps of soldiers, as he was in the United States, word had reached him that General Nivelle's offensive in Verdun turned into a massive defeat for the French Army.[6] The French Army itself was in rapid decline, and with the what many French soldiers believed was the waste of human life in the drugging assault after assault fell into what French commanders called, 'collective indiscipline' or mutiny. Across many of the French frontline divisions a call for defense over offense took place. French soldiers and commanders refused to take part in another slaughter and would only fight if their country was being attacked. Joseph Joffre knew the best way to replenish the numbers of losses for the French was to send raw American recruits to replace them. Training an American officer corps would take months for these young officers would have to learn modern warfare and under fire and implement what

[5] Rod Paschall, *The Defeat of Imperial Germany* pg. 11.
[6] Falls, pg. 276.

they learned quickly.[7]The word, amalgamation would be the tactic Joffre would use in America's War Department. In his estimation sending small units such as companies and battalions they could easily amalgamate into existing French units and be trained under French officers and non-commissioned officer. As Joffre stated, "no occasion for training general officers and staff for the larger units, only captains and majors being needed."[8] However, as appealing the idea was to Joffre, the French and British, knew that America would not stand for sending its young men to war and fight under another nations flag. "No great nation, especially the Americans, would allow its citizen to be incorporated like poor relations in the ranks of some other army and fight under a foreign flag."[9] Therefore, Joffre would have to find different avenues to lure the Americans into forming a properly training army to fight in France.

Not only was the defeat of the Nivelle offensive, the lingering unpreparedness of the American Army weighed heavily on the mind of Joffre, but so were the sobering words of Georges Clemenceau the future Premier of France. Clemenceau gave his assessment of the olive branch the French were offering the American's, "If the Americans do not permit the French to teach them, the Germans will at a great cost of life."[10] However, Joffre would not sulk about the recent news of another French defeat, his resolve was penned in his memoirs, "a gigantic effort would have to be demanded of the Americans; what must be done, and without a moments delay, was to mobilize in the service of the Allied cause all of America's resources."[11] In his efforts to gain the military support of America, as well as Joffre was a British delegate, the former British

[7] Yanks, pg. 12.
[8] Joffre pg. 568.
[9] Ibid., 569-60.
[10] Charles Seymour (editor), The Intimate Papers of Colonel House (Vol. III): Into the World War, April 1917 – June 1918 (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1926): pg. 268-69.

[11] Joffre, pg. 568.

Prime Minister, and current Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour. Although both delegates had different agendas of who they were meeting, Balfour was an aristocrat who focused on the political side of the talks, while Joffre meet with senior military leaders of the American Army. On April 27, 1917, Joffre was able to sit down and talk to the American General Staff leadership, to include Army Chief of Staff Hugh Scott, and his deputy commander, Major General Tasker Bliss at the Army War College. Joffre was blunt and straight to the point, in his assessment to Scott and Bliss he concluded, "The Americans could obviously not take part of the battlefront immediately. Yet, if they waited until they had mobilized, trained, and supplied a powerful army, they might arrive in France too late to save the degenerating military situation. It would be better, he said, to act now with such elements that are ready."[12]

What Joffre was suggesting to Scott and Bliss was something they knew was a pipedream. Joffre had asked that a single unit of American troops, perhaps only a division, be sent immediately to France as a gesture of hope for the French people and French Army. However, both Hugh Scott and Tasker Bliss understood that no such American division existed except on paper. Furthermore, Joffre claimed that the first American troops entering France could be trained in the French rear area before being brought into the trenches in a more active area. He pressed upon Scott and Bliss his biggest conviction of his plan, "the biggest problem would lie in the training of new officers and noncommissioned officers. Privates in the ranks, he insisted, were far easier to train, and the French would be very willing to help.[13]
However, nothing of what Joffre was saying was news to both Scott and Bliss. Both men understood the immense undertaking that needed to take place in order for the American Army

[12] Yanks, pg. 15.

[13] Ibid., 15.

to be ready for combat in France. Furthermore, these men both agreed that the American Army would need a drastic overhaul of the combat tactical doctrine, however, other question to preparing a large army for combat arose during these talks that Joffre could partially answer for them. Scott asked about logistical support, deep water ports for offloading men, and material, and the biggest question came in the form of command and control of the American forces. It was in this question that Joffre was the most unsettled yet was ready for. His answer to both men was simple, Though the first American troops in France would obviously have to serve under French Amry commanders, however, he quickly assured both men that the American's should soon have an army of their own. It was unadvisable that an army be divided. Both Scott and Bliss agreed greatly with Joffre.[14]

While Joffre was looking to bolster the ranks of the French army during the first few months' American units arrived in France, so to was the British military advisor to the Balfour party, Major General George T.M. Bridges. Much like their French counterparts the British Army in Europe was drastically running out of military aged men, and quickly. However, unlike their French allies, British policy strictly forbit the usage of conscription until 1916, far too late in the war to have a sizeable pool of draftees, and equipment stockpiles to field an appropriate army. In a very unique way, America was facing the same type of problems the British had faced in 1914. It was up to Major General Bridges to help bring raw American recruits into the British Army. Major General Bridges urged American military planners for an immediate 500,000 men to be utilized in replacing British losses, especially after the sobering losses at the Battle of the

[14] Ibid., 16

Somme in 1916, and the failed assault at the Third Battle of Ypres in 1917.[15] However, when the American's asked the question about command and control of the American forces, General Bridges' answer was less than convincing of his answer then Joffre had been. General Bridge stated, "The great advantage of this plan is almost immediately America would be actively participating in the struggle. In the process, they would be suffering casualties, without which it is difficult to realize the war."[16] His answer was received with mixed results, to the Americans' there was no clear path to a command and control of their army, and were not ready to hear the facts of what they were about to endeavor, however, after three years of fighting, and thousands of firsthand accounts of how much war had changed, the American Army still refused to except the fact that their Army was grossly unprepared for trench warfare.

While each delegate, both political and military vied to get the Americans to agree to their own proposals it would be the British that nearly sunk any deal before it had materialized. A long-lasting dispute between the British and the French was the idea of the language barrier between each army. Obviously, it would suit American units to amalgamate with other English-speaking soldiers such as the British. However, according to the French, the war was being waged in their country and have suffered the most casualties because of it, so fresh American troops should be given to understrength French units first. General Bridges sly remarks put strain on the French and British alliance, and it did not sit well with the American's. General Bridges remarked, "The French have few English-speaking officers. Americans will soon get tired of being instructed through interpreters. If you American's serve with the French, you would

[15] British recruits, Bridges pointed out, underwent nine weeks of basic training in England and then only nine days in France. Despite that short indoctrination, however, they gave a 'good account of themselves" within those established units, under the supervision of battle-trained officers and NCOs.

[16] Bridges to Kuhn, April 27, 1917.

probably want your own food supply also."[17] As rash as the statement was, there was a great truth to it. As with General Bridges earlier comment regarding the loss of American lives in France, so to was the language barrier between the French and American's. Either way with each growing concern over the state of the American Army, and all the issues each delegate brought forth the most important to all involved on the American side was the idea of amalgamation, the blending of smaller American units into French and British regiments. Major General Tasker Bliss understood this concept very well and did not dwell lightly on the idea of American servicemen fighting and dying under a French or British flag. Major General Bliss wrote to, Secretary of War Newton Baker saying, "When the war is over, it may be a literal fact that the American flag may not have appeared anywhere on the line because our organizations will simply be parts of battalions and regiments of the Entente armies.[18]

However, Joseph Joffre was the man the War Department listened too. General's Scott and Bliss felt Joffre understood their concerns most about amalgamation and the side effects it could cause the people back home who were sending their sons, husbands, and brothers off to war to fight under another countries flag. Another talking point everyone understood was the immediate sending of a single American division to France. The division should consist largely of Regular Army soldiers and be prepared to act as a ceremonial detail to help bolster the moral and spirits of the French people. The actual training for war would come later.[19] When Joseph Papa Joffre said goodbye to his newly found friends in America, he had poured the foundation of what was to be known as the four-million-man army of the American Expeditionary Force.

---

[17] Ibid

[18] Bliss to Baker, May 25, 1917. Papers of Tasker Bliss, Library of Congress.

[19] John S.D. Eisenhower, *Yanks*, pg. 17.

Although support for the war was widespread it was not shared by all, especially some in the American political system. Senators and Congressmen, especially those from the deep south objected to the declaration of war. Congressmen Pat Tillman, and Senator James K. Vardaman knew exactly what would happen if the war declaration was passed, a large American army would need to be raised, and conscription would be utilized to raise that army. The main worry of these two individuals laid with the troubled American past of slavery. They knew that if conscription was enacted in the South, which it would be, then many African American men would be selected to serve. Quite frankly that scared both Tillman and Vardaman because nothing was scarier to them then a large amount of military training African Americans' coming back into the South.[20] Furthermore, people, like Vardaman believed the sending of American troops to Europe to fight was unnecessary since no American state or territory had been directly attacked by the Germans. An army for defense was all that was necessary by those who opposed open war. An ideology that had been peddled by President Wilson for far too long. So, for the President to get the American people rallied around the idea that the United States was truly at war and would need to send a sizable army to France he enlisted the help of George Creel. George Creel was a man of quick action and never let an opportunity slip him by, a former newspaper man, politician, and professional boxer he was a staunch ally of President Wilson and had supported him in his 1916 Presidential campaign.[21] Only two weeks after the Declaration of War against Germany was signed, President Wilson set up the Committee on Public Information with George Creel as its chairman. The Committee had various amounts of different jobs;

---

[20] Vardaman insisted that not all the crimes on the high seas had been committed by the Germans. He further stated that "if the people of the United States---I mean the plain, honest people, the masses who are to bear the burden of taxation and fight the war against Germany Today." Congressional Record, Folder 7, Pershing Papers. Manuscript Room, Library of Congress.

[21] John S.D. Eisenhower, *Yanks*, pg. 20.

however, its main purpose was to sell the war to the American people who were about to be thrust into it. Creel worked around the clock to get the civilian campaign ads throughout the nation. Both Secretary of War, Newton Baker and George Creel worked hand in hand to draft what was to be known as the Selected Service Act. This Act would be published in over 4000 polling locations across the country and its main purpose was to 'select' individuals who would be indoctrinated into the Armed Forces. However, the main drive behind the Act was the word 'selected' which denotes being selected for service but not necessarily selected to fight overseas. President Wilson, and others in the government knew, that all men who were selected were not going to be needed to fight, some would still have to remain home and work in the factories and fields to supply the massive army that was being raised.

However, during the early months of the raising of the army President Wilson still distanced himself as a true commander in chief of the military. And in retrospect a large portion of the formation of the army fell to Secretary of War Newton Baker. Baker's official biographer had said this much about him:

> the bridge between the people and the Army which was to translate the people's strength into armed power; the bridge between the President and the people; between Congress and the Army, with its colossal demands for appropriations; between the parents and the son in the ranks; between the shoemaker and the soldier who wore out shoes on the march; between the soldiers' stomach and the kitchen.[22]

Newton Baker was the right man for the job. Not only did he believe in President Wilson's policies but was also able to liaison between the civilian branches of the government, and the military, his relationships with the top officials was well met with mutual respect. Therefore, the task ahead of Baker seemed almost insurmountable, however, these measures could had been

[22] Frederick Palmer, *Newton D. Baker*, I, pg. 115.

avoided if proper planning and training had been institutionalized years earlier. One such measure was the actual General Staff itself. Formed during the Elihu Root reforms of 1902-03 the General Staff's, as argued previously, main function was to act as a committee of talented officers whose main role was to modernize the army and train the army up to current warfare standards. War gaming, and foreign attaches would provide the premise of their doctrine, however, due to powerful political allies in Washington DC, the General Staff was woefully understaffed and inadequate for the job. The first draft of the General Staff was supposed to have a total of forty-two senior officers which was eventually raised to fifty-five officers. However, during its creation the most officers in the General Staff was only twenty-nine.[23]

As stated, Newton Baker had his work cut out for him. Even before the United States had declared war on Germany he was dealing with the issues on the Southern border with Pancho Villa. However, the army was relatively small, and easier to manage from an organizational aspect, albeit, although not very well organized the army did what it could in Mexico. However, the United States Army now faced something more than just banditos in Mexico, it would now face the most professional European Army in the world who had a three-year head start on modern warfare, in fact the German Army was a main contributor of authors who wrote the doctrine of modern warfare. With the failure of the Garrison Plan in late 1916 the National Defense Act of 1916 faced similar difficulties, and on May 20 the Act was passed, however, it was over concerns with Mexico rather than Germany.[24] Although on paper the Act looked promising for all parties, even the National Guard. Within the contents of the Act the Regular Army would be increased to 175,000 over the next five years, while the National Guard would

[23] Russell Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, pg. 350.

[24] John S.D. Eisenhower, *Yanks*, pg. 23.

be raised to 400,000 men, also the National Guard would fall under regulatory guidance and standardized training from Regular Army units. Furthermore, the National Guard would spend two weeks training with Regular Army units and could be federalized for active duty under the provision of Title 10 (this Act is still in usage today for National Guard units for overseas duty). However, when war was declared a year later, both President Wilson and Secretary of War Baker knew the National Defense Act of 1916 was never going to be adequate to supply the army with the manpower necessary to fight in Europe. A consensus between the politicians and military advisors understood that a large part of Army would have to come from citizen soldiers, or as cited previously from draftees. All new inductees would be trained and supervised by Regular Army officers and non-commissioned officers.[25] A debate between the Army components, Regular Army, and National Guard about the advent of a Continental Army system. The same system form Secretary of War Garrison had championed for just the year prior. However, with the politically connected National Guard it was shot down and Garrison resigned over it, (See chapter 5 for the Continental Army system, and the political pressure brought on Secretary Garrison).

An interesting factor to the expansion of the army came from the Regular Army itself. Chief of Staff for the Army, General Hugh Scott was a very big supporter of a national draft of the citizenry of America. General Scott was relentless with his views of the draft with Secretary Newton Baker. In turn Secretary of War Baker agreed with General Scott and on several occasions presented the idea of a national draft to President Wilson, being careful to explain all the different avenues of rejection by members of political bodies, and regular citizens. Secretary of War Baker explained several reasons why people would vote against the idea to include

[25] Ibid., pg. 25.

constitutional grounds, and personal beliefs. However, the most egregious reason was the last time the United States instituted a draft was in 1863 during the height of the American Civil War as previously mentioned. However, after President Wilson, and Secretary of War Baker made the decision to go through with the draft, a large portion of the American people largely supported the idea.[26] Furthermore, both President Wilson, and Secretary of War Baker imposed that this draft would be of the people, an implementation that the individuals who would be conducting the draft would be local officials, not some aristocrat in Washington DC. Each official who organized the draft in their local areas were not paid either, it was considered their civic duty to help build the American Army, and they would conduct themselves free of charge.[27] Throughout the nation, local polling and election sites prepared to implement the new draft of the American Army, however, some individuals did push back against it. Former President Theodore Roosevelt, who had run against President Wilson in 1912, took every opportunity to attack President Wilson's policies, especially those that dealt with unpreparedness. Roosevelt even went as far as to ask permission to raise his own division with him as its general for immediate mobilization and deployment to France. His own companions from Ivy schools would make up the bulk of his staff officers. Also, Roosevelt would want to establish an officer training school at Plattsburg New York to train these officers in modern warfare.[28] However, this would never come to fruition, Baker gave President Wilson a list of other ways they could use President Roosevelt's help in the war effort. Much to the relief of the War Department, President Roosevelt did not raise he own division for France. In the end, President Roosevelt did contribute to the war effort, three of his sons would fight in the Great War, two would be

[26] Peyton C. March, *Nations at War*, (Garden City: Doubleday, Duran, 1932): pg. 237-38.
[27] Hugh S. Johnson, memo to Pershing. Pershing Papers, Manuscript Room, Library of Congress.
[28] Theodore Roosevelt, *The Foes of Our own Household*, pg. 304-05.

wounded, and his youngest son, Quentin Roosevelt, a fighter pilot with the United States Air service would be shot down and killed over the Western Front on July 14, 1918.

On July 19, 1917, the Selective Service Act was passed which mobilized the vast amounts of manpower in the United States. The first draft was opened to males between the ages of twenty-one, and thirty-one. The draws of the first selected batch of numbers took place on the 5th of June 1917. During its run time the Selective Service Act would be amended two other times to open the age ranges, the first allowing males ranging in age from eighteen to thirty-five, and the final age requirements from eighteen to forty-five. During this time an impressive 24 million men eventually registered in which 2.4 million would actually be indoctrinated into the Armed Forces. They would join their counterparts in the Regular Army, and National Guard, for the men of the draftee divisions, or National Army as it would become were vested in their patriotic duties.[29] Prior to the Congressional approval of the Selected Service Act, Secretary of War Baker had ordered the printing of over 10 million registration forms. After they were printed, he had them hidden away in the basement of a discreet post office in Washington DC. When the Selective Service Act was passed, Secretary of War Baker had the registration forms shipped to over 35,000 sheriffs across the country that would help serve as ex-officio of the national government.[30]

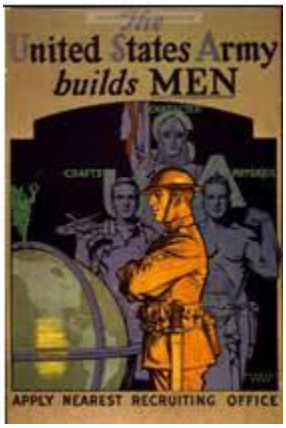
On the morning of July 20, 1917, in a room full of reporters, and surrounded by other delegates of both senior military officers, and politicians, Secretary Newton D. Baker, blindfolded, reaching into a large glass bowl containing the numbers of the first 10,500 men who had registered for the Selected Service. Their selection number was written on a small, folded piece of paper, Secretary of War Baker pulled the first paper with the number 258 written on it.

---

[29] Leonard Ayres, *The War with Germany,* pg. 17.
[30] David R. Woodward, *The American Army and the First World War,* pg. 49.

When the individual associated with that number was informed that his number had been drawn, he was to report to his local draft office immediately. Other individuals to include chairman of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs, or known later as the Committee of Foreign Affairs, (D) Senator George E. Chamberlain, Acting Chief of Staff, Tasker Bliss, and future Provost Marshall of the Army, General Enoch Crowder all pulled numbers out of the bowl.[31] These names being drawn from the glass bowl constituted the creation of the first men of the American Expeditionary Force.

President Wilson remained as far detached from the process of drafting his fellow countrymen into service. However, he did do his part in capturing the hearts and minds of Americans across the country by utilized propaganda through the newly created Committee on Public Information (CPI). A committee created on April 13, 1917, its main purpose was to 'sell' the idea of patriotism and service to country to those who were about to be drafted.[32]



[31] Frederick Palmer, *Newton D. Baker*, 218-19.

[32] Ronald Schaffer, *America in the Great War: The Rise of the War Welfare State*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991): pg. 3-10.

Figure 12: Examples of Recruiting posters created by the CPI.

President Wilson later exclaimed, "Carried in all our hearts as a great day of patriotic devotion and obligation, when the duty shall lie upon every man to see to it that the name of every male person of the designated ages is written on the lists of honor."[33] President Wilson wanted the men who registered to be honored by those in their local communities, lists of those who registered were written in local newspapers, both as a sign of patriotism, and also as a way of shaming those who had not registered. Furthermore, great length was taken to ensure these registration sites and the registration itself was not tampered with or otherwise interfered with, US Attorney General, Thomas Watt Gregory, issued instructions for all US attorneys and marshals to arrest anybody attempting to tamper with or otherwise sway men from registering for the draft. Within the next few days of the first numbers being called, local officials had already arrested twenty-one people.[34] Although resistance to the draft was largely minor there were still instances where individuals deliberately took action to not be drafted or failed to register altogether. A few rare cases in local communities, were clashes with local authorities where an estimated fifteen to twenty men were killed.[35] Furthermore, others decided to purposely fail their medical examinations from taking a wide range of prescription drugs, using defective eyeglasses,

---

[33] Mark Sullivan, *Our Times: The United States,* 1900-1925, vol. 5, *Over Here, 1914-1918,* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933): pg. 497.

[34] John Chambers, *To Raise an Army: The Draft Comes to Modern America,* (New York: Free Press, 1987): pg. 184.

[35] Schaffer, *America in the Great War,* pg. 10-12.

and even one man from Kentucky to pour carbolic acid over his face.[36] President Wilson doubled down on his speeches to help rally the nation behind the Selective Service Act, "They are crusaders (he was mentioning the men who were registering) fighting for no selfish advantage for their nation." The Committee of Public Information also released the movie, *Pershing's Crusaders* which was shown in almost 4,500 theaters nationwide.[37]

When men registered for the draft, they received a green card with their name and registration number on it. *The Chicago Tribune* stated, "Ten million actors called at once to possible appearance on the most amazing of stages. Its staggers the imagination. A nation, the freest of all democracies, after less than two months of hesitation, calls by law to the most rigid of all employments one-tenth of her population. What body so huge ever before moved psychologically so quickly to such tremendous action?"[38] Over the duration of the Selective Service individuals who avoided military service were categorized into three separate groups, 'slackers' the individuals who failed to register, 'delinquents' those who failed to report for physicals or accept the jurisdiction of the local boards, and 'deserters' those who refused to report for military duty. The total amount of deserters as of September 11, 1918, amounted to 474,861. Out of this number 111,839 were men who had already enlisted into either the Regular Army or National Guard, and individuals who were enemy aliens (individuals from nations apart of the German or Austria-Hungary).[39] Men who registered for the Selective Service were granted a number of different deferments. These deferments ranged from conscientious objector, getting

---

[36] *Second Report of the Provost Marshal General to the Secretary of War on the Operations of the Selective Service System to December 20, 1918,* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1919): pg. 199.
[37] Meirion Harries and Susie Harries, *Last Days of Innocence: America at War, 1917-1918,* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998): pg. 97.

[38] *Literary Digest* (June 16, 1917), Vol. 54, pg. 1831
[39] *Second Report of the Provost Marshal,* pg. 199-203.

married, or other reasons for not being able to serve in the military. Perhaps the most famous of these deferments was Sergeant Alvin York of the 85 Division. Basing his deferment on his deeply held religious beliefs, Alvin York noted he could not kill another man. However, his deferment was denied, ultimately, Sergeant York would live on to be the most decorated soldier of the American Expeditionary Force. As well as Alvin York's reasons to not fight, many of young men rushed to get married to as to avoid service in France. An all-time high in a single day of marriages took place in New York City on July 31, 1917. A total of 527 men took their vows that day, and it had reached the desk of the Provost Marshal of the Army, General Crowder who threatened to prosecute anybody using marriage as a reason not to fight. However, nine out of the ten men who immediately married after America's entrance into the Great War were still granted exemptions.[40]

For those already in uniform, mainly National Guard soldier's things were entirely different. As established in the National Defense Act of 1916, the President of the United States could order them into Active Federal Service which was exactly what happened in July of 1917. Those already mobilized for the Punitive Expedition, and those ordered to Federal service reported to their respective armories for immediate training. In all a total of 433, 478 National Guardsmen spent their first weeks on Federal service being trained by Regular Army officers and non-commissioned officers. They were being trained on antiquated techniques and had to wait for actual training facilities to be constructed.[41]

---

[40] Jennifer Keene, *Doughboys, the Great War, and the Remaking of America*, (Baltimore, Maryland, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001): pg. 18-19.
[41] Coffman, *War to End all Wars*, pg. 62-63.
[41] Mark Meigs, *Optimism at Armageddon: Voices of American Participation in the First World War*, (New York: New York University Press, 1997): pg. 14.

A high zeal for God and Country ran throughout the United States, men flocked to local registration sites to do their civic duty for their nation. However, an interesting poll taken after the war cited a great many reasons why these men volunteered or registered for service in the military. For those who volunteered in 1916 it was Pancho Villa that filled their minds, neither Germany nor the kaiser were significant reasons to join the military. Likewise, those who were either selected or volunteered in 1917-1918 cited their reasoning as, "my country needed me, or I was about to be drafted." The upper elites or the more educated population also joined the masses of volunteers or draftees, Historian Mark Meigs, who studied veterans after the war concluded in his survey that 56 percent of the better educated group remembered enlisting enthusiastically, while 41 percent of farmers and laborers remembered that spirit.[42]

The United States now had the foundation of a growing army, however, that was all they had. Other countries, except for Great Britain, had already adopted conscription to raise their armies. Furthermore, nations such as France, Russia, and Germany had large pools of manpower to draw from for conscription. These nations possessed large amounts of land and facilities to train their armies and prepare them for war. The issue the US had was where to train the new recruits now became a top priority amongst other issues. The United States did not have the proper number of facilities to house, train, and take care of its growing army. The facilities had to be built from scratch, and that would take a large amount of time.[43] The War Department as well as those in Congress understood that it would be a herculean effort to build the necessary amount of training bases, over the next few months approximately 50,000 carpenters, and 150,000 other skilled workers raced to complete the massive complexes.[44] A standard army

---

[42] Mark Meigs, *Optimism at Armageddon: Voices of American Participation in the First World War,* (New York: New York University Press, 1997): pg. 14.
[43] John Chambers, *To Raise an Army,* pg. 185-86.
[44] David R. Woodward, *The American Army,* pg. 55.

barrack measured 43 feet wide, 40 feet long, and was 2 stories high. A single wooden cantonment area (a cantonment area in the Army is known as the area were all matters of physical fitness, chow, supply rooms, and administration duties take place) required 4.5 million board feet of lumber, as well as, thousands of doors, latrines, and cots.[45] Furthermore, it would take more than just skilled workers, once these training bases were completed a literal army of support personal, cooks, medical staff, logistics, paper pushers, etc. were needed to ensure the men were to be trained, and ready to go to war. A factor that would hamper the construction sizes of these new facilities was the early decision by the War Department as to the size each American division would be. A true American attitude of 'We are America, therefore, our stuff is bigger' type of mentality was how the War Department approached the actual formation of the American Expeditionary Force. A United States Army company prior to the war was roughly 150 men, however, after America entered the war US Army planners increased that number to 250 men. An issue that builders of these facilities found out only months prior to construction, or as Frederick Palmer stated, "much the same as if, after all plans had been made and material ordered for constructing a high office building, the owner had suddenly decided to add ten stories, put the elevators in different places, and reduce the height of the ceiling by a foot."[46] Not out of the ordinary, the camps themselves were massive undertakings and quite often newly arrived volunteers found themselves apart of the construction crews in between their training courses. Corporal Paul Murphy of Company H, 309th Infantry Regiment, 78th Division wrote the following in his journal about Camp Dix in New Jersey:

a marvel of construction, have been erected during the previous three months, upon what up until that time was nothing but farmland, woods and a few scattered farm buildings. But construction was still going on and we were training in the midst of dust, dirt and the apparent confusion of a

[45] Ibid., pg. 55.
[46] Federick Palmer, *Newton D. Baker*, pg. 225.

large construction job. The grounds were littered with scrap lumber, nails, nail kegs, sawhorse and various other building materials.[47]

Life in the training camps were harsh, fast paced, and unforgiving to the soldiers. These raw recruits had to be trained on what the War Department thought they knew about modern warfare. Private Henry L. Henderson of Company K, 358th Infantry Regiment, 90th Division described his experience at the training camps:

> They herded us like a bunch of cattle ready for the market, first in one barrack door, down the aisle, sign your names, a preference for any branch of the service, what you were working at, and so on down the lie, out the door for another tramp down the line first this way then that, finally we ended up at another barrack where they slung a straw tick, 2 blankets, mess kit, knife, fork, and spoon, also canteen, and cup.[48]

These men were not accustomed to such daily stresses of army life. Many fell victim to the harsh reality of army discipline. Discipline in the army was swift and merciless to those who dared to break the rules, the most common offense was soldiers leaving post without a pass, or absent without leave (AWOL) Private John J. Blaser, Company B, 47th Infantry Regiment, 47th Division wrote about his experience seeing men within his company being punished for being AWOL:

> [sic]10 or 12 of them got chanes on their legs s they can only take a short step. Them changes are'nt only locked on. Thay take them to the "Blacksmith" and have them "welded" right on to stay. Them are fellows that have been getting away from the guard house. Buth thay don't care. Thay have one hell of a time in there. Them chanes would rattle in there, it sounded like a cage of wild animals. Around the guard house they got a high barbd wire neeting fince about 15 feet high … The most of them left camp without pass. They would get them back. And the first chanch thay got thay went again.[49] (the following quote was taken from on excerpt of the above soldier).

---

[47] "An Account of my Personal Experience in World War I," April 1, 1963, as recorded in the World War I Survey (WWIS).

[48] *WWIS*

[49] *WWIS*

Training of the men fell to the officers and non-commissioned officers of the individual units. The *Infantry Drill Regulations*[50] mapped out a gradual increase of 'hardening' the men of the infantry. However, many officers proceeded to ignore the gradual part of the regulations and pushed their men hard and fast from the very beginning. Such is the way the army had to be at times, without a properly training cadre of non-commissioned officers, training guidelines were left to officers, who generally acted as administrative duties rather than training instructors. Corporal Murphy recalled a specific incident after a route march at Camp Dix, New Jersey. After the march was completed the Battalion Commander asked the Company Commander if any of the troops had fallen out during the march. The Company Commander, a captain replied stating that a man had fallen out due to blisters on his feet. Upon hearing this the Battalion Commander expressed his deep dissatisfaction in the following way:

> the general whirled his horse round and said, you let a man fall out for blisters on his feet? Absurd, preposterous – young man do you know that it is a tradition in the regular army that they haven't had a man fall out in forty years, when a man couldn't walk anymore he got down on his belly and crawled and when he couldn't do that anymore, the last man in line kicked him off to the side of the road, so he wound' the run over by the following units of horse and guns.[51]

The mentioned about the regular army portion was in reference to Corporal Murphy's unit being a part of the new National Army, and not considered by those who were Regular Army as of the same standards of men. One good thing the boys in the camps enjoyed thoroughly was the food served, their high carb diets were necessary to keep up with the demands of army training. An example of the menu at Camp Dix is as follows:

- Breakfast: boiled rice and milk, fried bacon, fired potatoes, hot muffins, bread and butter, coffee or milk

---

[50] *Infantry Drill Regulation, US Army, 1911, with corrections to February 1917. Changes No. 18,* (New York: Military Publishing Co., 1972).

[51] *WWIS*

- Dinner: puree of bean soup, croutons, roast beef, sweet potatoes, stewed kidney beans, tapioca pudding, bread and butter, coffee or milk
- Supper: meat and potato pie, hot biscuits, fresh apple-sauce, bread and butter, coffee or milk [52]

Training for the men of the new American army was still situated around antiquated techniques. Open field advances with a bayonet charge at the end. Rifle training was especially emphasized amongst the new recruits, however, there was not enough weapons to go around. Although the standard army rifle, the Springfield 1903 bolt action rifle was superb weapon it was only produced at a single factory in Springfield Massachusetts, furthermore, the weapon was almost handmade and could not keep up with demands of the army. However, there was a solution, both Remington and Winchester companies were already producing rifles for the British Army, Secretary of War Baker brokered a deal with each company to mass produce a weapon chambered in the American 30.06 round. The weapon was equally as superb as the Springfield model, it was called the Model 1917 and most infantry units shipped to France were armed with it.[53]

Figure 13: United States Army rifles issued to Doughboys. Springfield M1903 and Remington & Winchester M1917.

A horrible new weapon of war was not being trained with at the Army and Marine camps, chemical agents, or gas had been introduced on the battlefield by the Germans in 1915 and had sweeping success. Private Malcom Aitken, who was a marine training at Quantico,

[52] Sullivan, *Our Times,* Vol. 5, pg. 32.
[53] Daniel Beaver, *Modernizing the American War Department,* pg. 90.

Viriginia described his gas training to his mother in a letter home, "we go into an air tight room containing gas, I don't know that kind but it smarts like wood smoke, makes you weep gallons [and] also makes your nose feel funny. Outside of that there is no effect. we only stay in five minutes without the masks – 15 minutes with them."[54] An interesting fact about United States Marines in the First World War, prior to the Selective Service Act and the growing of the Armed Forces, there was an estimated 11,000 marines in the service, and most of these men were either aboard naval vessels or the Philippeans. The marines in France would fight in the 4th Marine Brigade, in the 2nd Division, never having their own independent designation.

More antiquated training would take place amongst the infantry soldiers at these camps. As mentioned, a heavy emphasis on bayonet training took place. Consistent drilling with the bayonet seemed to most men that firing their weapons might become a secondary measure if they could not thrust their bayonet into the enemy. Corporal Carl Klaesi, who was originally assigned to the 311th Engineers of the 4th Division received bayonet training, upon this training the officer in charge explained to Corporal Klaesi that, "after bayonetting the enemy you should kick him in the face; that [is] what your got those hob nail shoes for." Corporal Klaesi stated, "After going through this I had enough and wanted to [go] home."[55] However, not many German soldiers would be the recipients of American bayonets on the Western Front. In fact, there was little face to face contact between the two sides long enough for bayonets to be truly affective. However, American leaders pushed the ideology of aggressiveness in fighting, to close with the enemy under fire and deliver cold hard steel to Germans.[56]

---

[54] Aitken to mother, April 16, 1918, *WWIS.*

[55] *WWIS.*

[56] David R. Woodward, *The American Army,* pg. 61

However, the training the infantry soldiers received prior to being shipped overseas paled in comparison to the training their counterparts received in the corps of artillery. Just as with the shortages of the rifles, artilleryman lacked actual artillery pieces. For many, a large log on wagon caisson was their training weapon. The United States Army lacked the large amounts of equipment needed to train and field such a growing army. Most artillerymen would not actually touch their field guns until landing in France and being issued French M1897 75mm field guns. One of the graduates of the Officer Training Corps (OTC) stated after being trained as an artillery officer, "after being bombarded with such weird sounding terms an angle of site, mil, and corrector without the proper equipment at the end of the lecture, heads whirled like a toting band blown through a rifled tube."[57]

Figure 14: Example of wooden artillery piece used in place of real artillery.

Likewise, machine gun battalions, who were now assigned to individual regiments and were no longer provisional units of the division lacked their own weapons. The shortfalls of not modernizing the American Army were coming to fruition and army leaders knew it. Furthermore, there was no clear understanding amongst army leaders just how long training for

[57] Fort Sheridan Association, *History and Achievements*, 344-45.

these new soldiers should actually take. Former Chief of Staff, General Leonard Wood suggested that training could be conducted in as little as six months. However, he was the minority in this debate, others believed it would take closer to a year to completely train the army. These notions of time are a direct derivative of not having a standing training doctrine, therefore, leading to medial issues, such as training times, becoming a priority over many other pressing issues.[58] However, after much back and forth a decision of sixteen weeks of training in the camps, followed by another two months of field training before being shipped to France. Once arrived in France the units would receive an additional two months' training behind the lines, and a final month of training in a quite sector of the trenches.[59] Altogether the United States War Department deemed a man was ready for heavy fighting after nine months of hard training.

However, the main issue was what exactly to train these soldiers on. Each training camp commandants determined the course of training their camp participants would receive, and hardly did any camp mirror another. It wasn't until after the United States entered the war that the War Department, with the enlisted help of the Army War College being to translate and distribute war journals and doctrines of the French and British military. The 1916 French Infantry manual, titled *Instructions on the Offensive Conduct of Small Units* comprised several observations of infantry tactics on the Western Front, the most prominent being, "Infantry of itself has no offensive power against obstacles defended by fire and provided with accessory defenses.— When a line is stopped, by organized defenses which are intact and occupied by the enemy the reinforcement of riflemen by the troops in reserve has no chance of accomplishing the capture of the position; it will simply increase the losses. An attack must, therefore, never be

[58] Robert Weigley, *History of the United States Army,* pg. 371.
[59] Leonard Ayres, *War with Germany,* pg. 25.

launched without having it preceded and accompanied by the efficacious action of artillery. You cannot fight with men against material."[60] These, and other observations were not well received amongst the senior leadership of the American Army. To them it was a direct slander against the American rifleman, whom to them was the most profound implementation of warfare on the battlefield. Furthermore, it was a slap in the face to a long-standing tradition of the tenacity of the American fighting spirit, which above all else, believed the overall ruthlessness of the American fighting man could carry the day, regardless of the task put before them. The lessons in these manuals were direct contradictions to the *Infantry Drill Regulations* and *Field Service Regulations* that had been published and distributed up to that point.

The U.S. Army's standard Tables of Organization and Equipment (TO&E) had to be scrapped, as the army scrambled to incorporate the plethora of new and unfamiliar infantry weapons. Concurrently, the small peacetime infantry company ballooned to a wartime strength of two hundred and fifty men. Yet, despite these radical outward changes, official combat doctrine barely budged, as the 1911 *Infantry Drill Regulations* effectively remained the basis for infantry tactics. New weapons were simply grafted on to old ideas about the battlefield, and the Americans prepared to enter the lists in Europe.[61] Now with the army being built, doctrine, to a degree was finally being pushed to the training units, and the production of war materials for the army had taken place it was time to find an officer to lead these great men on what President Wilson had portrayed as, "The Great Crusade." When the time came there was only five individuals who made the short list of both President Wilson and Secretary of War Baker, the

---

[60] Instructions on the Offensive Conduct of Small Units (translated from the French and edited by the U.S. Army War College) (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1917): pg. 9.

[61] Battles Were Not Fought in Lines, Dissertation, pg. 194.

five individuals were Generals Tasker H. Bliss, Frederick Funston, Leonard Wood, George Bell Jr. and John J. Pershing.

(Figure 15: Generals being considered for selection to lead the American Army pictured here, top left George Bell Jr., top middle John J. Pershing, top right, Tasker H. Bliss, bottom left, Frederick Funston, and bottom right, Leonard Wood).

All men had outstanding military records to include two Medal of Honors, former Chief of Staffs to the Army, and a multitude of leadership capabilities albeit some more recent than others. In fact, to begin the debate, Secretary of War Newton Baker had actually considered General Frederick Funston as his first choice as the commander for the American Expeditionary Force. General Funston was a decorated officer and was the commanding officer for the Southern Department at San Antonio, Texas. General Funston was an audacious and aggressive officer, who entered service with the National Guard of Kansas. Funston had earned the

Congressional Medal of Honor at the Battle of Calumpit during the Philippine Insurrection. However, on February 19, 1917, a devastating message was delivered to Army General Staff, the Duty Staff officer that evening was a relatively little-known Major named Douglas MacArthur. Along with Major MacArthur, another little-known individual working that night as the Adjutant General duty officer was Lieutenant Colonel Peyton C. March. Both men were friends and considered that night to be nothing more than routine. However, a messenger burst into the doors of the Army General Staff building and delivered a rushed message from San Antonio to Lt. Colonel Marsh. Immediately, Major MacArthur read the face of Lt. Colonel Marsh and understood something terrible had transpired. The message read that General Frederick Funston had died of a massive heart attack during dinner.[62] The most important task at hand was to now deliver the contents of this message to both Secretary of War Baker and President Wilson. Both the President and the Secretary of War were together that evening, Secretary of War Baker was hosting a dinner party in celebration of the President, and Major MacArthur, who was known to both was charged with taking the news of General Funston's death to them both. After having difficulty gaining entrance to the venue Major MacArther was finally permitted to see both men, his message was gut wrenching. Major McArthur turned to President Wilson and Secretary of War Baker and said, "Sir, I regret to report that General Funston has just died."[63]

After the initial shock of the news had worn off, the three gentlemen excused themselves from the other guests and went into an adjacent room to discuss the future of the leadership of the Army. After dictating a message of sympathy to Mrs. Funston, President Wilson turned to Secretary of War Baker and asked, "What now Newton, who will take the Army over?" The

[62] John S.D. Eisenhower, *Yanks*, pg. 27.

[63] Ibid., 27.

indication that President Wilson did not have a full grasp of command leadership of the army shows another example of his hands off approach to his duty as commander in chief. It was Secretary of War Baker, who looked to Major MacArthur and asked the simple question, "Whom do you think the Army would choose, Major?" Major MacArthur's answer was sincere and simple, "I cannot, of course, speak for the Army but for myself the choice would unquestionably be General Pershing." President Wilson looked at the young officer for a lingering moment, and after what seemed an eternity, softly replied, "It would be a good choice."[64] For President Wilson the choice of General John Pershing was an easier decision. Both General Tasker Bliss, and George Bell Jr. were quite old at the time, 64, and 61 respectively, also President Wilson had a deep distain for General Leonard Wood who had on many occasions openly attacked President Wilson's policies, especially those concerning preparedness of the American Army. Furthermore, General Leonard Wood took every opportunity, along with former President Theodore Roosvelt to gain valuable allies in a possible presidential run for General Wood. At the time, General Leonard Wood was commander of the Eastern Department with proximity to New York. Here General Wood would befriend powerful allies in Wall Street and other politically connected organizations to better position himself politically. When Secretary of War Baker heard of what General Wood was doing, he immediately transferred General Wood to the Southern Department, headquartered in Charleston, South Carolina. Later asked why the transfer had taken place Secretary of War Baker coldly responded, "I think General Wood has been very indiscreet and I think the appearance of political activity which he had allowed to grow up about many of his actions has been unfortunate for his reputation as a soldier."[65] So, in

[64] Douglas MacArthur, *Reminiscences,* pg. 46-47.
[65] Donald Smythe, *Pershing: General of the Armies,* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1986): pg. 2.

the end the selection of General Pershing to lead the army came down to two separate factors, the first being General Pershing's command experience, and secondly his willingness to keep his disagreements about the current President to himself, albeit he did share his opinions to his wife (see chapter 5 regarding General John Pershing's assessment of President Wilson's appeasement stance regarding the German sinking and killings of American citizens on ocean liners).

General John Pershing also had something else the other officers on the short list did not possess, tactical command of a 'sizeable' army. General Pershing had led the 1st Division in Mexico, and although it was not a full division, it resembled the largest formation of American troops in the country. A very staunch, and rigid man, General Pershing demanded excellence and military discipline amongst all around him. He graduated from West Point in 1886 and immediately saw action in the Indian Wars. He returned to West Point as a tactical officer and was immediately made unpopular by the cadets for his harsh regulations of discipline. It was West Point that cadets saddled General Pershing with the nickname that would stick with him throughout his career, to those who knew him he was General John Black Jack Pershing. The nickname came from his command of the 10th Cavalry during the Spanish American War. The 10th Cavalry was an all-African American unit that charged up San Juan Hill next to Colonel Theordore Roosevelt's 11th Volunteer Cavalry.

General Pershing was well respected and despised at the same, without political ambitions he was a man that commanded respect in any room he was present. Pershing was a man of military ambition, in addition, a staunch advocate of military customs, and dress. "He was not a man one could serve with comfortably. There was always the ambition, the air of moral superiority, the cold-bloodedness, the feeling that he would expend men like cartridges, the knowledge that he demanded an uncomfortable degree of personal loyalty and that he

considered his own judgement nearly infallible."[66] However, as strict or dedicated to military bearing General Pershing seemed to be a biproduct of a tragic event that taken place three years prior to his appointment at West Point as a Tactical Training officer. A fire had swept through the Presidio of San Francisco, killing his wife, and two small daughters. His son, Warren, was the only to survive due to his absence on holiday. This horrible tragedy seemed to have an adverse effect on Pershing, although his duty and dedication to the nation never waned, he did seem to, "throw himself into his military duties with even great single-mindedness, providing his abilities by his aggressive conduct in Mexico if he could be faulted in any way, it was only for overzealous execution of President Wilson's vague orders regarding the objectives of the Punitive Expedition."[67]

For all the features General Pershing embodied as the perfect fit for the leader of the American Expeditionary Force, West Point graduate, recent military experience, leadership characteristics that aligned with traditional army values, a number of shortcomings would hinder his tenure as the commander of the AEF. Pershing's inability to see issues in a 'lighter' tone instead of his usual direct approach caused issues, especially between himself and General Foch, the future Generalissimo of the Entente. General Pershing still believed in open warfare, large frontal assaults with artillery as a direct fire support asset still dominated military doctrine. General Pershing was confident with his doctrine of open warfare due to his recent exploits in Mexico. Pershing was a micromanager when it came to both army organization, and army tactics. When the AEF did see combat in France, he advocated and rewarded officers who continuously pushed their units forward regardless of losses, while punishing and relieving those

[66] Allan R. Millett, The General: Robert L. Bullard and Officership in the United States Army 1881-1925 (Westport, CT, Greenwood Press, 1975): pg. 305.
[67] John S.D. Eisenhower, *Yanks,* pg. 29.

who failed to continue an attack once the initial assault had failed to achieve any meaningful results. Another personality trait that would hinder internal growth of the AEF leadership at the highest levels was General Pershing's issues of trust outside those he held closest as confidants as author Robert Ferrell stated this made Pershing, "one of the U.S. Army's most devoted micromanagers."[68] Above all, General Pershing wanted to incorporate the AEF's leadership and organizational structure through his image was apparent in his doctrine *The General Principles Governing the Training of Units of the American Expeditionary Force:*

> The standards of the American army will be those of West Point. The rigid attention, upright bearing, attention to detail, uncomplaining obedience to instructions required of the cadet will be required of every officer and soldier of our armies in France. Failure to attain such discipline will be treated as lack of capacity on the part of a commander to create in the subordinate that intensity of purpose and willing acceptance of hardships which are necessary to success in battle.[69]

However General Pershing was as a military man, his overall devotion to the accomplishment of this tasks was his only priority. Once his nomination was cemented in Congress, and the conclusion of General Joffre's visit both Secretary of War Baker, and General Scott started to work on one of General Joffre's suggestions to the Americans, send a division over as soon as possible to help stem the tide of the failing morale of the French and British armies. On May 2, 1917, General Pershing received the following orders from General Scott:

> For your eyes only. Under plans under consideration is one which will require among other troops, four infantry regiments, and one artillery regiment (a second artillery regiment would join this original manning prior to departure to France) from your department for service in France. If plans are carried out, you will be in command of the entire force. Wire me at once designation of the regiments selected by you and their present stations.[70]

From these orders General Pershing organized the following units:

---

[68] Robert H. Ferrell, Collapse at Meuse-Argonne: The Failure of the Missouri-Kansas Division (Columbia, MO, University of Missouri Press, 2004): pg. 7.
[69] General Headquarters, AEF, "The General Principles Governing the Training of Units of the American Expeditionary Forces (April 9, 1918)" in A.E.F. Policy Documents (vol. 2): pg. 95.
[70] Pershing, *My Experiences in the World War*, I, pg. 2.

- First Division
    - 1st Infantry Brigade
        - 16th Infantry Regiment
        - 18th Infantry Regiment
    - 2nd Infantry Brigade
        - 26th Infantry Regiment
        - 28th Infantry Regiment
    - 6th Artillery Regiment
        - 1st Battalion 6th Artillery Regiment
        - 2nd Battalion 6th Artillery Regiment
        - 3rd Battalion 6th Artillery Regiment

As per his *modus operandi* once Pershing reached Washington DC, he set out to work organizing the American Expeditionary Force. First order of business was setting up General Pershing's command think tank. First and foremost, on his mind for the position of Chief of Staff for the AEF was known to General Pershing as a solid officer and tactician. Major James G. Harbord was unusual in those times, he was not a graduate of West Point, but rather he had enlisted in the Regular Army as a private in 1898. Through time in Philippine campaigns, he had made the rank of major. Pershing had heard nothing but good things about Major Hubbard, and believed he would make a great fit for the position.[71] In all, General Pershing had originally selected thirty-one officers to his general staff. An oddity was a letter received by General Pershing on the 20th of May, 1917, from President (Colonel) Roosevelt stating, "If I were physically fit, instead of old and heavy and stiff, I should ask myself to go under you in any capacity down to and including a sergeant; but at my age, and condition, I suppose that I could not do work you would consider worthwhile in the fighting line (my whole line) in a lower grade than brigade commander."[72] An additional sentiment departed by President Roosevelt's letter was the wish that General Pershing taking two of his sons to be placed on General Pershing's staff. Politely, and professionally, General Pershing decline the offer.

[71] Ibid., pg. 18-19.
[72] Ibid., pg. 23.

Pershing would meet with several other delegates culminating in a session with President Wilson who promised the general his "full support."[73] Assigned to an office in Washington DC, with his Chief of Staff, Major Harbord, both men drafted and submitted their written orders to Acting Army Chief of Staff, General Bliss, who was the acting in the absence of General Scott. General Bliss signed the draft orders from Pershing, however, on the same day, Pershing received another set of orders from Secretary of War Newton Baker. These orders read as follows:

1. The President designates you to command all the land forces of the United States operating in Continental Europe and in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, including any part of the Marine Corps which may be detached for service there with the Army.
2. …….. (Order missing from text).
3. You are invested with the authority and duties devolved by the laws, regulations, orders and customs of the United Sates upon the commander of an army in the field in time of war…
4. You will establish, after consultation with the French War Office, all necessary bases, lines of communications, depots, etc., and make all the incidental arrangements essential to active participation at the front.
5. In military operations against the Imperial German Government, you are directed to cooperate with the forces of the other countries employed against that enemy; but in so doing the underlying idea must be kept in view that the forces of the United States are a separate and distinct component of the combined forces, the identity of which must be preserved. This fundamental rule is subject to such minor expectation in particular circumstances as your judgment may approve. The decision as to when your command, or any of its parts, is ready for action is confided to you.

These orders, written by Baker, and Bliss closely aligned and at first glance gave General Pershing ultimate power with very little guidance on how to implement the AEF in France. The only real difference was the interpretation between Secretary of War Baker's assessment on working with Allied forces, in which Baker did not specifically state which allied force to work with, whereas, General Bliss stated the following when speaking about working with allied

[73] Ibid., pg. 28.

forces, "plan and conduct active operations in conjunction and in cooperation with the French armies operating in France against Germany and her allied."[74] Finally, after a month of waiting General Pershing and his staff departed Washington DC, on a special train bound for Governors Island in New York. There Pershing and staff would take the navy tugboat, *Thomas Pattern* to meet the United States Navy Cruiser, *Baltic*, for their journey across the Atlantic to France. Amongst those present was the G-1 for the First Division, or Chief of Staff for the Division headquarters, Captain George C. Marhsall. His wife was looking upon the small party of the cornerstone of the American Expeditionary Force's command structure she noted, "They were a dreadful-looking lot of men, I cannot believe they will be able to do any good in France."[75]

However, a critical issue that would plague the unique viewpoint of the American Expeditionary Forces new commander's stance on leadership style would have a negative effect on this new type of American Army. The majority of General Pershing's staff were graduates of the America's most prestige military academies, West Point, Virginia Military Institute, Norwich, and the Citadel. When America had an army with just over 200,000 officers, and enlisted personal that leadership mentality usually ran without issues, however, now with the Selective Service Act in full swing, and a proposed increase of manpower by the Army War College of four million servicemen, those antiquated methods were proven to be obsolete overnight. Now, officers of the army would have to come from the newly founded officer training camps, or OTCs. It would be a trial by fire for this new army, and its leaders. Furthermore, there would be a steep learning curve for the *backbone* of the army, or non-

---

[74] Ibid., 38-40. These orders indicate that Bliss's order came from him, not drawn up by Pershing and Harbord. This version comes from Frederick Palmer, I, pg. 170-171. Palmer cited Pershing's lapse of memory simply as evidence of how hectic those early days were (Referring to the missing 2nd order).
[75] George C. Marshall, *Memoirs of My Services in the World War,* pg. 3.

commissioned officers. These individuals were the chief disciplinarian of the individual units. Skilled in many tasks, a good NCO was the moral glue that held a unit together. Again, in an army of only 200,000, the old school apprentice program of selecting NCOs was working. In pre-World War I the American Army NCO was selected by the company commander, with the recommendation of the company First Sergeant and assessed through years of training. If that individual proved to be a good a candidate they were promoted, if not, they were returned to the ranks. As with the pitfalls of the officer training, NCO training timelines were dramatically reduced in order to meet operational standards for mobilization.

Prior to the American's entering the war, the French and British had tried to implement modern tactical doctrine to the US War Department, and Army War College. However, as previously discussed many of these lessons went unpublished, or were merely ignored. Now that America had officially entered the war, the efforts of their allied counterparts ramped up their efforts to help quickly modernize the American Army. Furthermore, the War Department, and War College started an orgy of printing every document they had received from the French and British into the growing army doctrine. However, British, and French advisors from the start had found it extremely difficult to have American warriors acclimate into the rule of modern warfare. Several examples from foreign advisors to America pointed to the prominent American patriotism as, "American patriotism is perennial and proud, therefore egoistical. Americans wherever they are, are working for themselves. The worship of the homeland is too absorbing for them to lend themselves to international fads and diplomatic sentiment. They are convinced of their superiority. They do not serve others, they use them." Elsewhere, he spoke of the

Americans' "naïve and brutal confidence."[76] Furthermore, other foreign dignitaries shared the same resolve about the American people. H.G. Wells had this observation about how patriotic the American people were, and how proud they were of their patriotism, "I do regard that much as so obvious and true that it seems to me a little undignified, as well as a little overbearing, for Americans to insist upon it so[.]"[77] However, these observations were not just coming from foreigners, Major George Shelton, who enlisted in the United States Army in 1898, was later appointed the Chief of Staff of the 26th Division when America entered the First World War. He was later promoted to Brigadier General and commanded the 51st Infantry Brigade in France, 1918. His assessment of America was recorded in his personal journal, "Military preparedness is a thing unknown to the United States. There is no national assurance of success in any trial of arms. There is, indeed, a kind of national arrogance which seeks to take its place, but this is the antithesis of the knowledge implied by our definition. It is ignorance entrenched in the pride of lusty youth."[78]

An assessment of the of foreign help was thought to be something of a jab at the American way of war. A deep divide remained within the General Staff, War Department, and Army War College that sought to slow the pace of the modernization of the US Army. A persistent advocate of change for the American way of War was General Tasker Bliss. An individual who knew that war in Europe would be something far exceeding the current

---

[76] André Tardieu, Notes sur les États-Unis : la société, la politique, la diplomatie (Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1908): pg. 267 "L'Américain a le sentiment que son pays est [must be "est"] un monde et que ce monde peut se suffire à lui seul. Ce que se passe au loin sur le champ rétréci de la vielle Europe ne l'intéresse guère.", pg. 371.

[77] Oscar Wilde, *Impressions of America* (edited by Stuart Mason) (Sunderland, Keystone Press, 1906): pg. 25.

[78] Maj. George H. Shelton, "The Organization of the Land Forces of the United States" in *Infantry Journal* Vol. 9 No. 1 (July-August 1912): pg. 1.

expectations of other American commanders, General Bliss pled for change, and to allow those willing to help full reign of reforming American military doctrine. Bliss expresses these visions with Chief of Staff, Hugh Scott, stated, "Personally, my view has always been that if we want to get into this war 'with both feet' at the earliest possible day, the only way to do it is to follow the recommendations of the two missions, we might complicate matters by teaching men things in America that they will have to unlearn in Europe."[79] The savior of Verdun, French General Philippe Petain through correspondence with President Wilson's cabinet also tried to convey his position of helping training the Army of American for war in France. "Practice can rapidly be attained at good advantage if the American army would, for a very short time, waive their feeling of national pride and depend completely upon the experience of the French army. Such practice would be the fruit of slower and costly efforts if, desirous of flying too soon with its own wings, the American army gains the apprenticeship by receiving the lessons which the enemy will not fail to give it."[80] However, there would be no waning of American pride for European nations to train. True to their nature, the American mindset would hold firm as a nation of great warriors, and even better tacticians. After all, their last war against Spain and the Punitive Expedition proved their point of open warfare, therefore, leading to a utopian movement of the same type of soldiering in the First World War. American fighting doctrine, with their new army would remain stagnant while thousands of American soldiers would be killed in the trenches of France.

An example of the steadfast stagnation of tactical doctrine for U.S. forces and the Doughboys who followed it can be seen in General Pershing's own decision to adapt "Open

---

[79] Bliss to U.S. Army Chief of Staff Hugh Scott (May 4, 1917) in Palmer, pg. 147.

[80] Memorandum from Pétain to House in Seymour, pg. 293.

Warfare" for the American Expeditionary Forces in France. Although General Pershing saw a chance to debut American toughness in the trenches of World War I, it would be the soldier who would suffer the immense consequences of the actions of the officers appointed over them. Officers who had been educated at the Army War College and had not seen modern warfare prior to entering France themselves. In a memorandum to his staff in 1918, General Pershing wrote the following:

> The essential difference between open and trench warfare, so far as effect upon formations is concerned, is characterized by the presence or absence of the rolling barrage ahead of the infantry. From a tactical point of view, the method of combat in trench warfare presents a marked contrast to that employed in open warfare, and the attempt by assaulting infantry to use trench warfare methods in an open warfare combat will be successful only at great cost. Trench warfare is marked by uniform formations, the regulation of space and time by higher command down to the smallest details, absence of scouts preceding the first wave, fixed distances and intervals between units and individuals, voluminous orders, careful rehearsal, little initiative upon the part of the individual soldier. Open warfare is marked by scouts who precede the first wave, irregularity of formation, comparatively little regulation of space and time by the higher command, the greatest possible use of the infantry's own fire power to enable it to get forward, variable distances and intervals between units and individuals, use of every form of cover and accident of the ground during the advance, brief orders, and the greatest possible use of individual initiative by all troops engaged in the action.[81]

General Pershing's memorandum in addition to a slew of personal annotations in his memoirs point to the direct opposition of what the French and British had tried to inheritably teach American soldiers prior to setting foot in the trenches. Furthermore, again Pershing and his General Staff missed the very point that infantry alone was not capable of mounting any decisive offensive on the Western Front, artillery was the big killer on the battlefield and American doctrine continued to leave out this important fact. Pershing's key evidence of his tactics over that of the French and British was the sheer amount of time each nation had been involved in the war up until the American's arrived in France. For three years the French and British had tried

[81] Gen. John J. Pershing, "Memorandum (September 5, 1918)" in A.E.F. Policy Documents (vol. 1): pg. 491 (491-95).

and tried again to modernize their own battlefield doctrine and implement new ways of fighting in the trenches. According to Pershing, even the Germans paid little attention to the modernization of warfare, and instead pushed on with a narrative of fighting that reflected more of the Napoleonic type of tactics. “The fact that neither the British nor French had trained their armies for open warfare, either offensive or defensive, was at least in part one cause of the tremendous success of the German drive with divisions expressly trained for that kind of warfare.”[82] The successes Pershing was referring to was the usage of a new type of tactic, to the Germans it was known as *Stosstruppen*, or Storm Trooper, small, elite units made up of veteran fighters of Germany’s most battle hardened division. The main goal of each elite battalion of Storm Troopers was to breach the enemy trench lines, using lightning quick tactics, and expose the vulnerable rear areas of the allies. A host of new weapons were utilized to achieve such stunning successes amongst these assaults, weapons such as the flamethrower, sub machine guns, and grenades. Once within the enemy trenches, hand to hand fighting would take place with rudimentary weapons like clubs, and elongated knifes with serrated edges. Command and control were further delegated down the rank and file of each unit, junior officers and non-commissioned officers were given far more leeway then usual to help keep up with the fluidity of the battle. In essence the German high command had effectively and successfully created the first quick strike infantry units that could inflict devastating damage upon larger enemy units. Nevertheless, these concepts were far beyond the grasp of General Pershing, he lacked the mindset to understand just how much warfare had changed, and refused to give into his stubborn ideology of how the American Expeditionary Force would fight in France.

[82] Pershing, *My Experiences*, (Vol. II): pg. 35.

Chapter 7 Training Pershing's Army of 1919

The training of specialists in the United States was necessarily of a theoretical character. The Divisional Automatic Rifle School possessed about a dozen Chauchat rifles; the regiments had none. Old machine guns were issued to machine gun companies, although this weapon was never to be used in battle. The Stokes Mortar platoon never saw a 3-inch Stokes Mortar while in the United States, and the 37-mm gun platoons possessed collectively one of these weapons during the last two or three weeks of their stay at Camp Gordon. A limited number of offensive and defensive hand grenades were obtained and thrown by selected officers and non-commissioned officers at the Division Grenade School. The men of one regiment witnessed a demonstration where four rifle grenades were fired. These shortages not only hindered the training of the unit's weapon specialists, but also prevented the junior officers from understanding the employment or potential of the new military technologies.[1]

The above quote came from the 82nd Division's General Staff, Colonel G. Edward Buxton as he recalled the difficulties that faced the four infantry regiments within the division. Colonel Buxton would not be alone, in fact, all the American Expeditionary Force would face similar issues when training their men to fight. To raise an army was one task which seemed too impossible, yet it was achieved. Through the Selective Service Act, the United States would raise over four million men, however, just because the ranks were filling up with eager men to fight did not mean they knew how to fight. The United States would continue to spiral into a pitfall of outdated doctrine and tactical decision making both prior to and once in the trenches of France. The men that would make up the bulk of the ranks would undergo a rigor, and unorthodox method of training over the next couple of months, however, to train a man of the ranks was, at least on paper, was easier than training the young men who would lead them into battle.

The American Army of World War I had no set doctrine that would guide them through their training. As covered in earlier chapters, the *Field Service Regulations* was the only real guide the army had to help train the massive army being assembled across the United States.

---

[1] 328th Infantry Historical Committee, *History of the Three Hundred and Twenty-Eight Infantry Regiment,* 7-8: G. Edward Buxton Jr., ed., *Official History of 82nd Division, American Expeditionary Forces: "All American" Division, 1917-1919.,* pg. 4.

However, the last time the FSR had been ratified or even really revamped was 1913, well before the war in Europe had started, and even if it had been revamped after the start of hostilities in France, the General Staff, and Army War College would not have departed from their belief of their infantry first mentality. General Robert Bullard, along with other senior officers had noted, "As far as I know, hardly a suggestion is contained in the whole West Point curriculum of the need or value to a young officer of knowing or understanding either his soldiers or his fellow countrymen." Furthermore, Bullard stated, "We have lectures and manuals and treatises and textbooks on all sorts of technical subjects. On the subject of how to manage men, the most important subject of all, the young officer will find nearly a barren field. A few paragraphs in the *Army Regulations*, a few scattered magazine articles, and a general order or two composed the literature available. Neither West Point, nor our service schools, has this subject received the attention that it deserves."[2]

The United States Army had a big problem on their hand in the form of raising a class or professional officers able to lead men into combat. According to the Army War College's initial assessment of 200,000 new officers would need to be trained and in a hurry. The new number of officers now required mirrored the exact number of all combined soldiers in the Regular Army and National Guard prior to the United States entering the First World War. The major issue the United States Army was having was the sheer size of the influx of new trainees into the ranks. Through a tried-and-true method training these young men for war would be relatively easy, especially since the United States refused to learn modern warfare. Training would be mainly on marksmanship (without the rifles), and bayonet training, however, that was just the common

[2] Col. Robert L. Bullard, "The Military Study of Men," *Infantry Journal,* No. 3 (November – December 1911): pg. 327; Maj General David C. Shanks, *Management of the American Soldier,* 4-5. The material in the booklet was compiled from a set of articles that Shank had written in the *Infantry Journal* form November 1916 through March 1917.

infantrymen. What about the officers? Up to the point of the establishment of the Officer Training Camps (OTCs) the Army worked off an apprentice program for all officers and non-commissioned officers. The apprenticeship was based off a merit system and proved well to help indoctrinate those junior officers who were not a part of the pristine realm of West Point Cadets or cadets from the other service schools. These junior officers were taken under the wing of senior, long standing company commanders, usually in the rank of captain, and taught the various ways to lead men in the field.[3] There were still traditional means of allowing these men into the officer ranks. Schooling was the main discriminator that allowed young men to become officers, General John Schofield stated the following in regard to education and officers, "It is a feeling, and a very strong one, in favor of *education*, of qualification in all respects for the service which may be required."[4] The tie of education to officership still remains a main precedence for the selection of officers in todays' Armed Forces. Perhaps an interesting side note is the relationship to education and leadership. Does the ability of a leader rest solely on his ability to be a graduate of college? A harsh lesson learned by many of these junior officers in France was their formal education in both college and during their time at the OTCs did little to prepare them for the realities of trench warfare. A short-term solution for the immediate problem of staff shortages was to immediately graduate the West Point class of 1917, furthermore, a mass recall of retired officers was put into place to help stem the tide of trained officers. If the United States War Department, and government had paid attention to Great Britain they would have learned a very valuable lesson.

As discussed early, Great Britain found themselves in a very similar situation after 1914. When the British Expeditionary Force suffered horrendous losses in 1914 a mass recall of retired

---

[3] Richard S. Faulkner, *School of Hard Knocks,* 12.
[4] John M. Schofield, *Forty-Six Years in the Army,* pg. 535-36.

officers and noncommissioned officers went out all over the Commonwealth. However, all feeble bodied men who answered were of the Boer War era and prior, men who had no inclination of what modern warfare was about, nor the slightest clue what trench warfare had evolved too. Title 10 of the National Defense Act of 1916 allowed the President of the United States to order National Guard soldiers into active service, however, this Act had not been in effect when the war started, so President Wilson federalized all competent and fit National Guard officers to augment more officer shortages within the growing National Army. A severe cassum of mistrust between officers in the Regular Army, and those in the National Guard created training issues within the AEF General Pershing himself distrusted and had a large distain for the lack of training and motivation National Guard officers exuded amongst themselves and their units.[5] However, the National Guard, unlike the Regular Army, had a large political following further compounding the training issues and professionalism some National Guard officers had. Some sought political appointments rather than military careers and believed the National Guard was a form of service. Furthermore, to help build upon the lack of qualified officers, the Regular Army selected NCOs and proceeded to give them direct commissions, as later discussed in this chapter, the noncommissioned officers of the Regular Army had been severely handicapped in their principal duties which would lead to a fumbling of their ability to train soldiers of the AEF.[6] These measures were like putting a band-aid on a gunshot wound. Ultimately, although there were calls for dramatic reform the Regular Army still decided to take a haphazard approach to creating a cadre of training officers, not only at the senior levels, but also at the company and regimental levels. Therefore, when the AEF did sail to France, their ranks were filled with an abysmal number of trained officers.

---

[5] Mark E. Grotelueschen, *The AEF Way of War*, pg. 27.
[6] Richard S. Faulkner, *School of Hard Knocks*, pg. 8-9.

An even further detriment to the structure of the new American Army was the non-existent formation of new Non-commissioned Officers. Known as the "Backbone of the Army" the non-commissioned officer (NCO) was a master of many tasks and their overall duties included but were not limited to discipline, individual training methods, as well as a focusing on the health and welfare of the men they commanded. Any good officer knew that a well-trained NCO was the key to a successful organization. "The non-commissioned officers are the backbone of the army, their experience has shown that the efficiency, discipline, and reputation of a command depend to a great extent on its noncommissioned officers."[7] However, the prewar army, and even the new army, paid very little attention to the training and implementation of a proper NCO corps. Much like the prewar apprenticeship program of the junior officers in each company, the Company Commander, and Company First Sergeant pooled a list of young, enlisted soldiers who would shadow the individual platoon sergeants in each company to see if they were able to take on the additional tasks of being an NCO. As one officer put it when referring to NCOs, "valuable in their capacity as instructors, as disseminators of technical information, but they are doubly valuable as leaders, to whom the men look for moral, social, and intellectual inspiration."[8] Again, much as in the prewar army this method of training was suitable for a long duration of apprenticeship. However, as the army moved to a stance of war, a rapid succession of a new cadre of NCOs was desperately needed. The War Department still refused to reform their methods of both recommendations of enlisted men to the NCO corps, as well as, promoting those who already held the rank. There wasn't a systematic guidance on how to, or who should be promoted. Each regiment held its own version of promotions for their non-commissioned officers. In 1908 the Secretary of War received a very concerning report from the

[7] James A. Moss, *The Noncommissioned Officers Manuel,* pg. 17.
[8] Captain Frank Tebbetts, "Leadership, "JUSCA *27*, No. 111, (July 1916): pg. 19.

commander of the District of the Columbia on this very subject. He wrote, "There is no carefully thought-out system of promotion for noncommissioned officers. In one regiment it is done one way, in the next another, and even in the same regiment there may be a dozen ways of appointing and promoting noncommissioned officers depending on the idea of individual company commanders."[9] There was even a call from field officers such as Gen. William Burnham for a standard three year course of instruction to help standardize and formalize a set of recommendations for promotion within the various non-commissioned officer ranks.[10] Nevertheless, the army entered the First World War with the same adaption of this ad hoc promotion system for its enlisted ranks. A lesson that would soon bear the brunt of a lack of qualified individuals to train the everyday tasks of the newly inducted doughboys.

As a principal duty of the Noncommissioned officer, training was at the very core of their duties. Or until the officers of their command told them otherwise. Obedience and initiative became intertwined with the creed of the NCOs, again only until their initiative interfered with their obedience to their company and regimental commanders. NCOs were only to practice individual initiative when allowed by the tough regulatory guideline set forth by their superiors, this cassum was not conducive to a productive training style of men. "Whether or not you like the order is neither here nor there. Your business as a soldier… is to obey all orders, and to do so willingly, faithfully, and promptly, *without cause of explanations.*" This was from another exert of Moss's definition on what made a good NCO. He went further to say, "Remember that nine out of ten times the superior giving the order knows more about the matter than you do and is probably in possession of information that you know nothing about. If a superior makes a

[9] *War Department Annual Report, 1908,* pg. 3:178.
[10] Richard Faulkner, *The School of Hard Knocks,* pg. 16.

mistake in giving an order, it is his lookout, not yours."[11] This shared mentality throughout the ranks put a severe damper on a practical solution to the problem of training men. Due to the lack of a properly trained, and staffed NCO corps, junior officers fresh from the OTCs would have to step up and essentially fill in as micro-managers to meet the given need to trained soldiers.

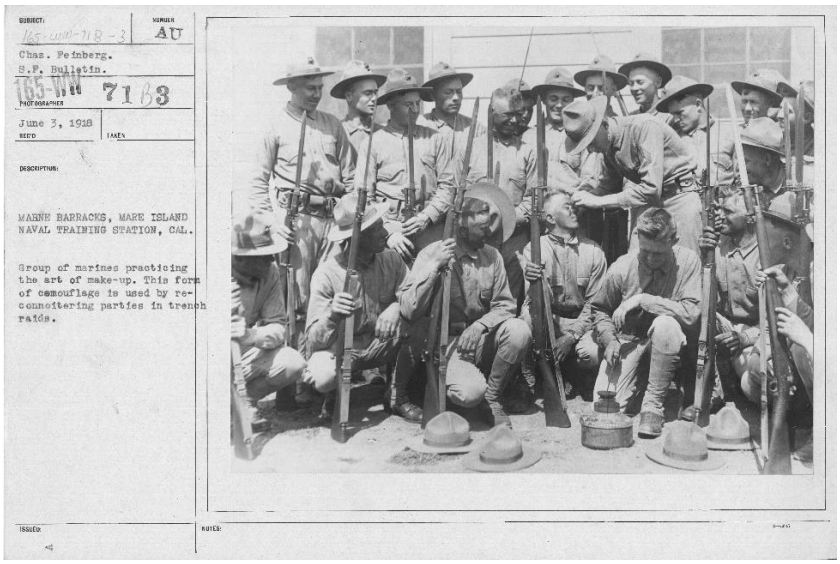


Figure 16: Marines practice camouflaging their faces. June 3, 1918.

As held back as the NCOs were, junior officers, generally in the ranks of Lieutenant and Captain also played a delicate game of obedience and initiative. Even the prestigious West Point, Citadel, Norwich, and Virginia Military Institute graduates, were schools in the traditional means of leadership and gentry still tread a find line when carrying out orders from their superiors. The *Infantry Drill Regulation* (IDR) gave a very vague prelude to how a junior officer was supposed to act if allowed to exercise initiative. The IDR states, "When circumstances render it impracticable to consult the authority issuing an order, officers should not hesitate to vary from such order when it is clearly based upon an incorrect view of the situation, it is impossible of execution, or has been rendered impracticable on account of changes which have occurred in its

[11] James Moss, *The Noncommissioned Officers Manual*, pg. 20.

promulgation."[12] Nevertheless, even though in the *Noncommissioned Officers Manual* an NCO could be warned that his officers rarely make mistakes giving orders and should obey without question, senior officers are afforded a reprieve if they make a mistake in issuing orders to subordinates. "In the application of this rule the responsibility for mistakes rests upon the subordinate, but unwillingness to assume responsibility on proper occasion is indicative of weakness."[13] The model described leaned heavily on the ideology that American military leadership at the top were immune by the notion of mistakes or misgivings. Furthermore, both junior leaders, and NCOs often paid the price for the mistakes made by those senior to them resulting in reprimands or being removed from a position. However, an interesting caveat to the leadership issues of the AEF is this, even if leaders had properly trained their subordinates, what exactly would they train them on? American military doctrine, as extensively covered throughout this project was severely lacking. Furthermore, with the wealth of knowledge at their fingertips the Army War College, War Department, and the General Staff all had decided their own methodology of fighting war was far superior. Not only did the United States Army have a training problem, but they also had a real issue with facing the reality that war had changed, and they had blatantly refused to accept that fact.

Warfare had changed on a very large scale; industrialism had played a major role in that change. At the time, U.S. tactical doctrine continued to rely on the usage of massive frontal infantry attacks supported by direct fire artillery. These viewpoints spread like wildfire in the OTCs and training camps across the country that a firepower centric doctrine would focus on the infantry's ability to dominate the battlefield. Therefore, senior leaders pelted their subordinates on that very idea that the American infantryman could win any battle they held fire superiority

[12] US War Department, *Infantry Drill Regulations (Provisional)*, 1919, pg. 99-100.
[13] Ibid.

in. In addition, the adage that if the rifle failed then just use the bayonet still held a considerable amount of favor with leaders. Lectures to the Doughboys focused on these ideologies, Captain Charles Crawford boldly stated, "The end of all warfare is attained by breaking up and destroying the enemy's forces in battle, and the chief instrument used is the small arm rifle."[14] That statement was followed up by Lt. Colonel R.K. Evans at the Army War College, who stated, "Fire action is the controlling factor in deciding battles. Over 80 percent of the men that fall in battle go down under infantry fire."[15] Above all else, these viewpoints were paramount to the rigorous training every soldier undertook in the United States. The *Infantry Journal* produced a wealth of information, albeit it was outdated the tactics within the text leaned heavily on the infantry first mentality. Its pages were full of over inflated and outdated tactics which involved mass infantry assaults and bayonet finishing moves, for example the September addition included this little heart pumping, suicidal motivation for the average American infantryman:

> One when fractions of the first line of infantrymen were unable to advance further without the support and aid of their weapons, would they leap up, come together, and form a long line which is lit up with fire from end to end. A last volley from the troops, a last rush pell-mell of the men in a crowd, a rapid making ready of the bayonet for its thrusts, a simultaneous roar from the artillery … a dash of the cavalry from cover emitting the wild yell of victory – and the assault is delivered. The brave men spared by the shot and shell will plant their tattered flag on the ground covered with the corpses of the defeated enemy. Such is the part played by infantry on the field of battle today [1914]. In real war infantry is supreme … it is the infantry which conquers the field, which conducts the battle and, in the end, decides its destinies.[16]

The emphasis on the immense killing power of artillery was not missed by those whose profession would soon be called the "King of Battle." Report after report dwelled on the singular fact that artillery had become a more decisive form of destruction on the modern battlefield,

---

[14] Captain Charles Crawford, *Weapons and Munitions of War,* Part 1, *Infantry Weapons,* (Fort Leavenworth: Staff College Press, 1907): pg. 8

[15] Lt. Colonel R.K. Evans, "Infantry Fire in Battle," *Infantry Journal,* No. 6 (1909): pg. 819.

[16] "Effect of the New Tactics on the Operations of Infantry," *Infantry Journal,* II, (September – October 1914): pg. 242-46.

especially against fortified positions. Again, a frenzy of publishing of current battlefield reports were being pushed out in the *Field Artillery Journal,* these issues focused primarily on not only the new destructive power of bigger and better howitzers, but also the severe lack of any comparable weapons in the United States Army artillery arsenal.[17] Furthermore, the European battle doctrine had also shifted from their firepower centric viewpoint of infantry over everything else, to a massed firepower centric thought process. Dubbed the "Doctrine of Destruction" European strategists laid out the following plan for future offensive operations in France, "No attack is possible until after an intense and effective artillery preparation, which has for its objects: (a) To destroy the enemy's barbed wires; (b) To Disintegrate and destroy enemy's trenches and dugouts, and to destroy or annihilate their defenders; (c) To prevent, or at least interfere with, hostile artillery action; (d) To prevent the passage of the enemy's reserves by curtain (barrage) fire; and To destroy the machine guns wherever they can be located."[18] However, even with the proven point of a paradigm shift in firepower from infantry to artillery U.S. Army strategist still believed that their infantry could prevail in the modern battlefield. The true paradox was trench warfare itself had strayed away from the strengths of the maneuverability of the infantry, therefore, a new school of thought focused on discipline of troops, and how maneuver could bring infantry back to the dominate fighting force on the battlefield. However, even with the vast number of reports streaming in from Europe (most being left in a small back office of the War College) American military officers had been ingrained in the very idea of infantry. It was a foreign idea that something other than American infantry could truly rule the modern battlefield. The *Infantry Journal* is filled with a wide-ranging number of

[17] "New Field Artillery Classification," *Field Artillery Journal 7* (January – March 1917): 29; Colonel Henry J. Reilly, "Fontainebleau in War Time," *Field Artillery Journal* 7 (April – June 1917): 190-13.
[18] "Notes on Artillery," *Field Artillery Journal* 7 (April – June 1917): pg. 179-81.

little exurbs that solidify the ideology of American infantry and mobility in warfare, "Firepower is … and aid, but only an aid… Mobility, i.e.., the ability to git [sic] thar fustest with the moistest men, is the predominant factor."[19] With no end in sight of the proven success of infantry in the past, the *Infantry Journal* doubled down on its efforts to increase the workload of infantryman on the modern battlefield, "If the intensity and range of modern fire have increased, if the difficulty of driving home an attack has become greater, so much the greater will be the demand made on the infantry for its utmost effort, for the supreme sacrifice without which victory…cannot be won.[20]

Captain Edward Eames embodied this very ideology in his strict lessons of fire discipline during classroom instructions. "Fire discipline is different from any other kind of discipline, and it is vastly more important, and much more difficult to instill into the soldier. Its goal was to get the soldiers to perform without any conscious mental activity so the very muscles may instinctively obey the word of command."[21] There was very little for questions between junior officers, noncommissioned officers, and their senior commanders. A soldier's place, both physically and psychologically was to obey within the confines of the orders they were issued. These junior leaders were experts in the adherence of orders given rather than the exercise of free will and initiative on the battlefield.[22] However, the same reoccurring theme would still be prevalent throughout the training courses being taught to the soldiers in the training camps of the American Expeditionary Force. Infantry would remain the leading source of the American Army, continuously working on ceremonial drill routines with a sprinkle of outdated combat tactics.

---

[19] Editorial Department, "The Function of Fire," *Infantry Journal* 12 (November 1915): pg. 487-91.
[20] Editorial Department, "Some General Deductions," *Infantry Journal* 11 (November – December 1914): pg. 433-36.
[21] Henry E. Eames, *The Rifle in War,* Fort Leavenworth: US Cavalry Association, pg. 57.
[22] George Baltzell, "The Proper Training of an Infantry Company," *Infantry Journal* 5, No. 5, (March 1909): pg. 646.

Even the moral high ground of the individual fighting man, "The all importance of man himself and the key to successful training was the proper disciplining of the soldiers' moral element, not making him a master of tactics, technique, or technology.[23] However, the idea of training and the methodology of leadership in the army can be forgiven, if not blindly accepted by those who received the training. The United States Army had not been in any major conflicts since the American Civil War or Spanish American War. Those who were assigned to train the new army had learned from seeing other nations fight. One such man was Major John F. Morrison, who taught at Fort Leavenworth and was a firm believer in the ideology of the infantryman. Not unlike many of his European counterparts prior to the First World War, Major Morrison believed a multitude of variables such as proper training, leadership, and superior psychological attitude could be indoctrinated into a modern tactical doctrine.[24] Major Morrison was also present during the Russo-Japanese War 1904-05, and although observed the sheer destruction of machine gun fire, and modern artillery, infantryman were still able to carry the day against entrenched positions, "the right kind of infantry can carry anything if you have enough of it. It is cheaper to do it some other way than by frontal attack if possible but frontal attacks can win." Timoth K. Nenninger understood Major Morrison's ideology of the attack of infantry, "Morrison was very much attuned to the vagaries of the human element in warfare."[25] Although Morrison at the beginning of the conflict in France would be a divisional commander, he would never lead his division in France. There are varying reports as to the main reason, however, the two most agreed upon are either his ill-health at the onset of the war, and the other being he argued against

---

[23] 1st Lieutenant James L. Frink, "Method of Training Troops," *Infantry Journal* 12 (September – October 1916): pg. 139-55.
[24] Mark E. Grotelueschen, *The AEF Way of War,* pg. 21.
[25] Quoted in Timothy K. Nenninger, *The Leavenworth Schools and the Old Army: Education, Professionalism, and the Officer Corps of the United States Army, 1881-1918,* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1978): pg. 88.

the prevailing methodology of training troops to fight in the trenches. The latter would directly conflict with General John Pershing's own guidance to the War Department which directed them to remove any commander from the AEF who did not meet his standards of vigor, youth, and health. However, another underlying factor to the mass removal of senior officers from the AEF under the supervisor of General Pershing was his belief that his rule was law, and nobody was to question his law.

Time and time again the Army leadership would be proven wrong in their presumptions of modern warfare, from a flood of doctrinal reports from the front, to allied and their own attaches' reporting on the war. The War Department refused to believe they had been left behind and had no direct influence in the development of modern warfare. Their assumptions about how war should be fought, and how war was being fought would ultimately cost the unnecessary loss of life once the United States Army first went into combat. Major Spencer Cosby, who at the time the war broke out, was an American military attaché in France and would provide a steady stream of battlefield reports back to his superiors. Even in the beginning Major Cosby expressed his opinion to the War Department about the new lethality of modern field artillery when reporting on the mass casualty reports from French units on the Western Front. His French counterpart reported that an estimate of 75 percent of French losses in the month of November were contributed to artillery fire, not rifle fire. Furthermore, he reported that the battle for Arras in May and June 1915, French losses of upwards of 60,000 to 85,000 casualties. Cosby remarked after seeing a casualty report from one of the French divisions fighting around Arras who lost 800 men, "only two were wounded by rifle bullets, all the others by shell and grenades."[26] Even if the Army War College, General Staff, or War Department received Major Cosby's reports

[26] Major Spencer Cosby, report, 4 November 1914, and "French Casualties," report, 25 August 1915, in "Reports by U.S. Military Attache in France, 1914-1917," Microfilm Fiel 8698, Roll 219, RG 165, NARA.

alone, it should had ignited a mass frenzy of reform within the Army itself, however, it proved to do little more than reinforce the ideology that European armies were no match for the American infantryman.

Another example that was largely being ignored by the War Department were the French works regarding modern warfare that were translated and stored at the War College. In November of 1915, Captain J.W. Barker submitted a report from French Captain Andre Laffargue, titled, *Study of the Attack in the Present Period of War*. Captain Laffargue's work included detailed challenges of attacks against fortified positions but even offered some antidotes to overcoming such obstacles. Furthermore, the article held great value in the training of small unit leaders, such as battalion size elements and smaller, however, even though the entirety of the article was published in the *Infantry Journal* in September 1916, there was little divergence of the already established operating procedure of the American Army.[27] A secondary work from the French, *Instructions of the Offensive Conduct of Small Units*, already discussed in this work, focus much on Captain Laffargue's point of view of conducting a new type of warfare. The latter work goes into detail of the complexity in attacking fortified positions with the new advancement of modern weapons. It details the usage of new weapon systems such as both light and heavy machine guns, hand, and rifle grenades, large caliber artillery, as well as, small 1-lb field guns, and other new advents of war. The main problem as to why this material was not better accepted was simply the United States Army did not have most of the weaponry discussed in this manuscript, therefore, it failed to make any real significant gains with American tactical

[27] Captain J.W. Barker, report, 11 November 1915, "A Study on the Attack in the Present Period of War," and Andre Laffargue, "A Study on the Attack in the Present Day of War," *Infantry Journal*, 13, No 2, (September – October 1916).

doctrine.[28] In fact, there was little deviation from traditional training that led to a total breakdown of any combination of training and leadership prior to the first engagement of American forces in France. World War I was a war of firsts, the first war to incorporate the new technologies of war on a massive industrial scale, massive manpower pools consistently feed the wheels of war. Combined arms were also a new advent of the First World War. Now, infantry assaults could be launched with artillery fire firing on pre-selected targets. These targets were selected and coordinated through the usage of aeroplanes, reconnaissance aircraft would take pictures of the enemy trenches and artillery positions and relay them to commanders who could now make tactical decision based upon fresh intelligence. Furthermore, tanks were now being introduced in 1916, although in small numbers, they posed a new segment of the combined arms strategy for commanders in France. However, between 1914 and 1917 the United States failed to adopt any of these new technologies to any great extent. Infantry still trained along the same doctrine of close-order and extended-order drills. All conducted upon open grounds where rifle marksmanship was practiced extensively. The field artillery was guilty of the same stagnant training doctrine as the infantry. Rarely did artillery units conduct live fire operations, and when they did the training was nothing as what was being conducted in France. On the Western Front artillery was being used as massed barrages, whose coordinates were based primarily on map coordinates provided by aerial reconnaissance.[29] In addition, if combined arms training did occur it was never to the extent of actual combat operations in France, the number of times both infantry and artillery units combined for any type of training could have been described as minimal at best. As Colonel Conrad H. Lanza, a career artillery officer and veteran of both St

[28] US War Department, *Instructions on the Offensive Conduct of Small Units;* Report, 22 March 1916, in "Reports by US Military Attache in France, 1914-1917."
[29] Mark E. Grotelueschen, *The AEF Way of War,* pg. 23.

Mihiel and the Meuse-Argonne stated about the pre-war tactical doctrine, "the artillery was considered and auxiliary, sometimes useful, never necessary, and sometimes a nuisance."[30] In addition, it was hard to pass any other type of training doctrine to the United States Army, even before he was the commander of the AEF Brigadier General John Pershing quoted, "the importance of well-trained infantry as the prime essential to military success can hardly be overestimated."[31]

The number of issues regarding the lack of proper tactical doctrine pales in comparison to the urgent question of, "even if the US Army had a proper military doctrine, who would teach it?" The American Army still had to grow tremendously to meet the demands of the Army War College's assessment of a four-million-man army. General Leonard Wood described it best in 1913, "I invite attention to the necessity for building up, with as little delay as practicable, a reserve of officers qualified to serve as company officers for reserves or volunteers. If we were called on to mobilize to meet a first-class power, we should require immediately several thousand officers; where are we to get them? This is a matter of vital importance, and one which should be attended to at once and not left to rush, hurry, and confusion proceeding a war."[32] Even though General Wood had a way with words, he was seldom wrong when it came to the current force structure the U.S. Army possessed in the early twentieth century. The list of officers General Wood's was mostly referring to were the junior officers, young lieutenants, and captains. These junior officers oversaw the platoon's and companies that ultimately made up the larger formations such as regiments, brigades, and divisions. They were the key component to small unit tactics on the battlefield and would need the largest amount of freedom of movement

[30] Colonel Conrad H. Lanza, "The Artillery Support of the Infantry in the A.E.F.," *Field Artillery Journal* 26 (January – March 1936): pg. 62.
[31] General Pershing's Opinion of Infantry," *Infantry Journal* 11 (July – August 1914): pg. 83.
[32] US War Department, *War Department Annual Report, 1913*, 1-:151-52.

to execute the orders of the officers over them, however, the latitude allowed to these junior officers was very limited and, in the end, proved to be disastrous when attacking the enemy.

So, the Officer Training Camps were put into place, and in a hurry. Less than a week after the initial order for a rapid expansion of the officer corps the first OTCs were training the first officers for the AEF Known as Ninety Day Wonders, hence the training at the OTCs was a total of 90 days, the newly appointment officers were a mere bare bones version of the old school regular army officers they helped augment. One battalion commander noted:

> Careful selection at the training camps has undoubtedly served to weed out the more defective material which presented itself for commissions. Three months of intensive exercise and the most superficial training in the theory of leadership have naturally failed to impress this human material, though it is of the finest quality, with the true character of officers … Their intelligence, enthusiasm, energy, and potential capacity for leadership are in no sense satisfactory substitutes for the knowledge and experience which is the main they lack.[33]

Furthermore, the reception the new officers received from their superiors was nothing short of distain and resentment for most of these senior officers received their command in the more traditional way, through one of the nation's service academies. The new officers knew from the beginning their place within the new American Army, "Every candidate realized that if he were fortunate enough to receive a commission, he would have to supplement his actual work with a great deal of further study."[34] Once the men received their commissions they were assigned their specific companies, often times their men would be a short walk across the cantonment area. These young men were eager, albeit, hesitant to take command, a great deal had zero command experience in any capacity, some were lucky enough to have graduated from a land grant college prior to attending an OTC, but even those individuals held very little

---

[33] Lt. Colonel Jennigs C. Wise, "The Soldier's Life in Battle," *Infantry Journal* 16, No. 11 (May 1920): pg. 929.

[34] Milton E. Bernet, "The World War as I Saw It," manuscript, 89th Division, WWI 2340, *WWIS*, USAMHI, pg. 35.

leadership experience. Harvard Professor and Army consultant William Hocking, wrote a very interesting piece on new army leadership:

> Those who say it is hard for an American to take orders may not realize that it is equally hard for the average American to give them…The raw commander is conscious of his individual self, and consequently realizes that the words falling out of his mouth have hardly the weight that should make men obey them…He knows he has to face, not so much the surly criticism as the more searching humor of his men…He needs the manner which only experience can justify, the manner of confidence, authority, prestige.[35]

These young men were not inferior men, nor did they take their new positions lightly, these men were the best the nation could offer who took their oaths with vigor and excitement. Many believed it was their duty to serve their country, regardless of who the enemy was. Once these men arrived at their OTCs, they were relentlessly bombarded with the latest material of officership. This material was loosely based upon a civilian leadership style of teaching and followed an unpretentious, yet overreaching set of goals:

(a) Instructor: by subjecting our future officers to the same drills and individual training that they in turn must give to their future commands, with the rigid discipline and attention to detail that they must exact when they become officers of an organization that is to be trained.

(b) Manager: by subjecting them to the same mode of life that will obtain with respect of their future commands, supplementing the same with instruction in the proper method of supplying, messing, administering, and discipling organization, and care for the health, welfare, comfort, and sanitation of their soldiers.

(c) Leader: by illustrating the tactical employment of troops and by giving each the opportunity for practice in tactical leadership. [36]

The reasoning behind the three-step process was ‘hoped’ by the War Department to bring in a new set of officer cadre that could simultaneously instruct, manage, and lead the newly

---

[35] William E. Hocking, *Morale and Its Enemies,* pg. 131-32.
[36] War Department, *Special Regulation No 49,* pg. 32-55.

formed American divisions in France. However, there was simply no other alternative to the problem facing the War Department. They had to turn over these new officers at incredible rates to meet the demand for fighting men. Each OTC curriculum was broken into three separate common core courses:

Table 6: First Month Common Core Course for All Candidates
(First and Second OTCs)

Subject/Activity Training	Hours of Training	% of total
In-processing	8	4
Conferences (lectures)	64	29.2
Evening Study	46	21
Physical Training	11	5
Practice Marches	9.5	4.3
School of Soldier and Squad	7.5	3.4
School of the Company (half close order, half extended order)	17.5	8
School of the Battalion	2.5	1.1
Bayonet Training	4.5	2
Sabre Training	1	.5
Musketry sighting practice	7.5	3.4
Signaling	20.5	9.3
Galley range practice	9	4.1
Interior guard duty	2.5	1.1
Field craft patrolling	7.5	3.4
Total Training Hours	218.5	

The first portion of the OTCs curriculum was solely based upon creating a pool of educated officers that could teach the young soldiers under their command. For example, some of the first candidates who attended the OTC at Fort Sheridan sat through hours of classroom lectures, “lectures by the instructors on American methods of warfare, continuing into the present-day methods of foreign armies to establish a comprehensive understand of the subject in

the minds of the candidates."[37] Therefore the candidates were taught current American battlefield doctrine, which still consisted of the old methodology of infantry first. Also, a large portion of training emphasized the usage of semaphore flags, as discussed in chapter 3, the United States Army relied upon mass flag signals to convey battlefield orders.

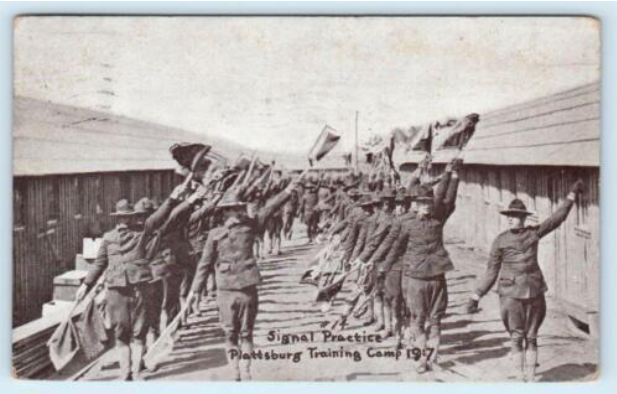


Figure 17: Semaphore flag training, Plattsburg Training Camp, circa 1917.

An outdated method which put the individual with the flags in great danger as they had to be seen by other unit commanders. This generally meant the individual holding and conducting the signaling had to stand outside the trench so their messages could be received. Countries such as Great Britain and France had utilized some new communication technology such as telegraph and wireless communications, albeit the tried-and-true method of currier pigeon was still a reliable way to send messages. Yet, semaphore flag training was a large part of these young candidates training regimen. Furthermore, these lectures were conducted in areas not conducive to a great learning environment. Usually, the instructor would start his lectures after a full day of training, the men were tired and hungry and were not well suited to absorb the information given to them, whether it was relevant or not. Gus Dittmar, who himself was a veteran of the OTC located in Leon Springs, Texas had this to recall about his OTC lectures, "The classes were held

[37] Fort Sheridan Association, *History and Achievements*, pg. 208.

in the mess halls, which were crowded and hot, and everyone was tired and full of food, and little interested in the dry language of the manuals."[38] However, very little changed when it came to these lectures, even in 1918 after the direction of the War College which set the following parameters for future lectures, "formal set lectures should be resorted to very infrequently, as they become tiresome to the student and nonproductive in results. Better results are obtained when practical work is interspersed with short informal talks or conferences. The most important prerequisite to an interesting talk is that the speaker knows his subject thoroughly,"[39] however, mandatory lectures persisted in a dry and formal manner.

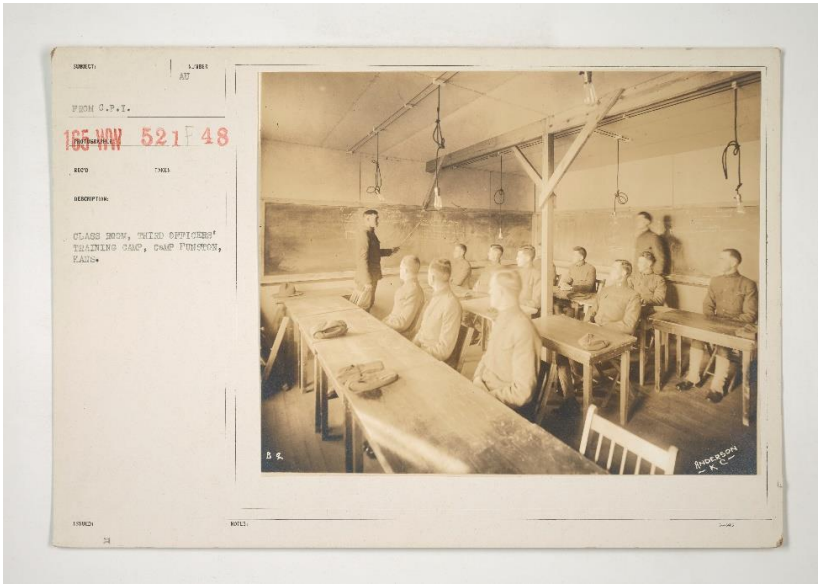


Figure 18: OTC classroom instruction. Camp Funston, Kansas.

The second and third common core training was broken down into the manager and leader's portions of the candidate's curriculum:

[38] Gus Dittmar, *They Were First*, (Austin, TX: Steck-Warlick Company, 1969): pg. 88.
[39] "Advance Extract Copy of Program of Training for Training Camps for Candidates for Commission in the Army of the United States, May 15 to August 31, 1918," "Lectures, etc., OTCs."

Table 7: Second and Third Months of Training for Infantry Candidates
(First and Second OTCs)

Subject/Activity Training	Hours of Training	% of total
Conferences (lectures)	102	25
Evening Study	64	16
Physical Training	10.5	2.5
Company Drill	21	5
Battalion Drill	10.5	2.5
Pistol Training	2.5	0.6
Tent Pitching	2	0.5
Bayonet Training	5	1.2
Range firing practice	38	9.3
Field tng: patrolling and scouting	10.5	2.5
Field tng: Battalion in attack and defense	12	3.1
Field tng: Battalion overnight camping	12.5	3.2
Field tng: Battalion in trench defense	5	1.2
Field tng: company on outpost, Advance and rear guard	5	1.2
Machine gun drill	4.5	1.1
Platoon combat firing	4	1
Company combat firing	4	1
Battalion combat firing	2	0.5
Trench warfare (included grenades Gas and trench attack and defense)	19	4.6
Three-day maneuvers	60	14.7
Lectures on infantry, cavalry, and artillery	8	1.9
Total Training Hours	407	

The sheer number of lectures engulfed the amount of time a candidate spent learning about trench warfare while an actual trench war was taking place across the ocean. However, the army continued to implement outdated training tactics such as teaching new candidates how to properly use the saber during drill and ceremony.

Figure 19: Maine Artillerymen on Review, May 1918. (Notice there are no howitzers or field guns present due to lack of equipment).

To further compound the issues of training young officers was the other major issue of training the armies NCO corps, or lack thereof. Noncommissioned officers trained in specific duties and regulations that benefited the unit as whole. However, with mass mobilization there simply wasn't enough veteran NCOs to go around, the old system of having senior enlisted men be promoted through an apprenticeship program was no longer advantageous to the War Department. Some divisions such as the 89th Division simply promoted men who were more senior. Lt. Colonel George English of the 89th Division noted the following when looking over personal records of his NCOs, "many of these men were of inestimable value in drilling the new recruits." Far too many of these men had only been recently promoted, and all the older ones had been commissioned. Lt. Colonel English went on to say, "As a class these noncommissioned officers did not accommodate themselves well to the new conditions and were not so valuable as the better educated and more highly skilled men from civil life, of which there were a number in every company or battery."[40] Just as with the OTCs and the officer candidates, noncommissioned

[40] George H, English Jr., *History of the 89th Division, U.S.A.* (Denver: Smith-Brooks Printing Company, 1920): pg. 21,

officers were being massed from all walks of life and thrown into an unknown and unfamiliar training program. In 1917 there wasn't a standard for training NCOs, nor was there any set practice on who to promote and who to retain as NCOs. Many units simply had the young officers fresh from the OTCs conduct all the training while the NCOs learned along with the new privates. In late 1918 the War Department made a feeble attempt to ascertain the reason why the NCO was not being utilized as they had in the old army tradition citing, "The noncommissioned officers are as a rule not thoroughly instructed. Many of them are noncommissioned officers simply because there were no others to make. Many corporals have only a few weeks service and many organizations have not made all their noncommissioned officers for lack of trained personnel."[41] Therefore, a culture of micromanaging become the norm in many of the AEF divisions. Junior officers simply took on more and more duties to achieve tasks given to them from their superiors. Tasks that generally fell to NCOs were now being overseen and even performed by OTC graduates. A high volatile situation emerged from this style of leadership and whether it was known to senior commanders or not, a lack of unit cohesion was forming. There had been many lessons given by French and British officers and NCOs as to the importance of training junior officers and NCOs in their armies. A large emphasis had been placed upon the proper training of these junior leaders due to the high combat losses of officers in the rank of major and below, therefore, NCOs found themselves in charge of companies and battalions during large scale attacks. However, the War Department still leaned heavily upon the idea that their OTCs would generate a set of training officers who could lead their army into battle. A French officer acting as an observer of the American military wrote in his January 1918 report to

[41] Colonel H. O. Williams, "Report on Inspection of Troops at Camp Sherman, Ohio," memorandum, 31 July 1918, AWCHS, G5 Schools, 7-51.3, box 185-A, NM-84 Entry 310, "Camp MacArthur, Texas, Infantry Training Center," RG 165, NARA.

the War Department, "The American N.C.O.'s has no authority at the present time and consequently no influence over their men…Under such conditions, they can neither second the officers efficiently nor replace them." He stated that a centralized and standardized NCO school system should be put into place immediately citing it would give NCOs "the power, confidence, and prestige which only instruction can bestow. French General Claudon, who was inspecting training at Camp Oglethorpe, Georgia said, "The American N.C.O. is non-existing…At present time they have no authority, and they have no right to punish. They are mixed with their men; they fight with them to get a piece of food, etc."[42]

Figure 20: Lewis gun training, Camp Mills 1917. (The Lewis Gun was a British light machine gun that was fed from a drum magazine from the top. It was a proven battlefield weapon and used by AEF units due to the lack of their own nations production of light machine guns.)

In fact, the War Department helped perpetuate the idea that the NCO was on the same level as privates. The main guidance an NCO had to looked towards, in regulation form, was the *Manual for Noncommissioned Officers and Privates.* There had been no regulatory reform within this manual since 1914 and only had minor revisions in 1917 after the United States declared

[42] French Military Mission, "Improvements in the Condition and Instruction of Non-Commissioned Officers," 10 January 1918, AWCHS, G5 Combat Training, Supervision by Allied Instructors, 7-56.5-56.9, Box 208, NM-84, Entry 310, File "Reports of Activities of Advisory Mission," RG 165, NARA; "Report of General Claudon on his visit to Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia," 4-6 March 1918.

war. Finally, in late 1918 the officers at Camp Devens, Massachusetts recommended to the War Department the establishment of a two-month NCO training course with the following training curriculum:

Table 8: Noncommissioned Officers Training Course

Subject/Activity	Hours of Training	% of total Training
Close-order drill	55	21
Physical training	40	15.2
Bayonet training	20	7.6
Interior guard duty	10	4
Small arms training and firing	32	12.2
Extended-order drill	15	5.7
Field fortifications	12	4.5
Minor tactics and field problems	23	8.7
Voice culture	6	2.2
Map reading	5	2
Practice marches	12	4.5
Overnight bivouac	10	4
Camp and trench experience	6	2.2
Modern weapons (machine guns, automatic Rifles, one-pound gun, mortars, Grenades, and gas)	16	6.1
Total Training Hours	262	

Even though the course was designed to give NCOs a better understanding of their individual roles within the platoon and company a large emphasis was still based upon close-order drill and less time on actual battlefield training. Twenty hours devoted to bayonet training, while only sixteen hours was given to a combined lesson of ‘modern weapon’ training. The War Department still did not understand just how much modern warfare had changed, and both the OTCs, COTs, and NCO school proved just how out of touch they were.

Whether it was the training conducted at the OTCs or the new NCO school, both trainees received antiquated training based more upon American Civil War tactics than actual World War

I tactics. Soldiers in both training camps would eventually go on and fight in France and the many 'lessons' they learned while in the United States were the first casualties they suffered; however, it was no fault of the men, it was instead an environment of hardheaded and stubborn change. The War Department, along with the Army War College and General Staff refused to believe they had been left behind in this new war. It would be their troopers who would pay the price of their unwavering devotion to traditional war. A letter written by Benson Oakly back home detailed one of his training sessions while attending Camp Hancock in April 1918. He wrote:

> During the past three days we have been very busy drilling under those ignorant officers and hiking. Yesterday morning we took a ten-mile hike, five miles each way to a lake and on the way, we had to send out snipers, advance guards etc. to watch for the enemy. I was one of the advance guards and it was surely a great gam spying around in the woods. We were supposed to be attacked by cavalry, but our companies surprised them in the woods. Our guard discovered where they were, sent one man back to the main body and they all charged down upon them. Of course, we didn't have any guns, but we all went through the maneuvers just as if we were actually engaged in the present war.[43]

If anything can be taken from the above letter it was simply these men had no idea what the present war truly was. It was not a game of spying around in the woods but rather a life and death struggle for a mere kilometer of ground, sometimes less. The Germans had become masters of the present war and the United States Army was training its soldiers, both officers and enlisted to fight a war that had already been fought. The War Department's emphasis on war games centered around cavalry ambushes goes to highlight the inaccuracies of modern warfare and how those in charge saw modern warfare. The United States had three years to get it right and when the time came fumbled as if the war had just begun. Mass mobilization and a flawed military system proved fatal to thousands of soldiers both in the United States and in Europe.

---

[43] Quoted in Richard Faulkner, *School of Hard Knocks,* pg. 132. Benson Oakley to Helen Oakly, postmarked 26 April 1918, Camp Hancock, GA.

The OTCs proved successful in only graduating human drones, obedient to their superiors and micromanagers to their subordinates. Initiative was something completely drilled out of these young officers, and they were put into impossible situations that usually either got them killed or the men around them killed. Outdated training manuals and drill regulations were spread around the camps and preached like gospel. Often units completed their training and boarded trains for the eastern seaboard with incomplete kits and some even without weapons. These men did not set out to be zombies but rather answered their nations call to arms. Believing in the training they would receive and hoped it would save their lives when in combat but rather a massive failing of tactics was what they received instead. Simply put, it wasn't the amount of training they received, it was the type of training. Antiquated tactics, mixed with an outdated core belief system, newly graduated officers of the OTCs went forth into combat. As Captain Charles Dienst stated as his unit, the 353rd Infantry Regiment, left Camp Funston in Texas for embarkation ports, "its equipment was still incomplete; its training was still unfinished; and its organization was still untried."[44] Captain Dienst's sentiment was shared by thousands of other soldiers leaving the United States for France. The American Expeditionary Force was severely undertrained, under equipped, and under led.

[44] Charles Dienst, et al., *They're from Kansas: History of the 353rd Infantry Regiment, 89th Division, National Army*. (Wichita, KS: The Eagle Press, 1921): pg. 14.

Chapter 8: So, this is modern warfare? The AEF finally arrives in France

On March 21st, 1918, the gruesome twosome, Field Marshal Paul von Hindenburg and First Quartermaster General Erick Ludendorff of the German army launched a surprise offensive against the allies. The main objective of the first offensive was to finally bring mobility back to the western front and to destroy the British army prior to the growing number of American divisions in Europe could help the war effort. A new type of soldier had been pressed into service for the Germans, known as *Sturmtruppen* or Stormtrooper to the allies, these specialized trained troops utilized the most modern advancements in weaponry to help clear trenches. Mortars, grenades, and sub-machine guns, along with flame throwers cleared out allied trenches at such a fast pace allied soldiers did not have time to fight back prior to the advancing onslaught. Known as operation "Michael" the goal of the spring offensive was to drive a wedge between the two allied forces, the French and British. Ludendorff had hoped by receiving fresh divisions from the now cold eastern front, he could push his army at the hinge of the allied forces, then drive northwestward to either eliminate the British army or to remove it from the continent. The British 5th Army was caught completely off guard and suffered 5,000 dead, and another 20,000 captured before fleeing the battlefield entirely.[1] William II congratulated his troops and even closed schools in Germany to celebrate the victory, later remaking, "if an English delegation came to sue for peace it must kneel before the German standard for it was a quest here of a victory of monarchy over democracy.[2]

---

[1] David Woodward, *The American Army*, pg. 199.

[2] Holger Herwig, "The Dynamics of Necessity: German Military Policy during the First World War" in Allan Millett and Williamson Murray (eds), *Military Effectiveness*, Vol 1, *The First World War*. (Boston, Mass: Unwin Hyman, 1989): pg. 409.

Although no English delegation would come to Germany, it certainly took a devastating toll on the British 5th Army. Only 4 days after the initial attack Major General Oliver Nugent, divisional commander of the British Ulster division wrote to his wife regarding the horror and devastation his unit and others took in the opening days of Operation Michael:

> It is a ghastly nightmare. I cannot credit that it is only 5 days ago that we were holding the trenches just in front of St Quentin … My men have had no food, some of them for 2 and 3 days. They have had no sleep for 5 nights. They are absolutely beat … This sis truly Armageddon. Unless we can finally stop the German attack soon, I fear it will be the end … I had to go up to the front and it was horrible scene of confusion. French and British retiring, guns, wagons, horse and men in most inexplicable confusion, a roar of shelling and machine guns and the very heaviest kind of German shells bursting all round us.[3]

The operation would only last for a few weeks, however, in that time frame the British 5th Army had been pushed back nearly 40 miles and bringing mobility back to France. The allied commanders took hold of what had just happened, what they believed was an exhausted German Army had literally just caused huge devastation against the British and elongated the war into an unknown future. The new offensive by the Germans caused the allied powers to come together and formulate a new plan on the Western Front. First order of business was to establish a singular commanding general for the allied forces. After some debate, General Ferdinand Foch of the French army was chosen as the supreme allied commander. General Foch would decide future operations and the dispositions of allied forces in Europe. The second portion was what to do with the American Army that was now arriving in France. Foch, Haig, Robertson, and others all thought it best for American regiments to be amalgamated into existing allied units. Their predictions of how poorly trained the AEFs officers and noncommissioned officers made their argument seem as more of a mercy rather than a necessity.

---

[3] Nicholas Perry, (ed.), *Major General Oliver Nugent and the Ulster Division, 1915-1918*, (Stroud: Sutton Publishing Limited for Army Records Society, 2007): pg. 14-15.

However, General Pershing had different ideas, and a different set of orders from his commander in chief. With the success of Operation Michael General Pershing's own beliefs of the failures of pervious operations by the allies was further cemented. "In this sort of warfare, the British were seriously handicapped on account of their long adherence to stabilized warfare. Their officers said that when the men had to leave the trenches they acted as though something were radically wrong in that there was not another trench somewhere for them to get into."[4] However, General Pershing was quick on his assessment of British forces after Operation Michael. What Pershing and other AEF senior staff failed to grasp was just how much war had changed. British forces, much like the other allied armies on the western front, grew accustomed to trench warfare as a way of staying alive. So, of course if British troops were "radically wrong" because another trench was not readily available for protection, they felt vulnerable. American doctrine vaguely covered trench warfare, it still emphasized maneuver and mobility, backed by the dominance of American infantrymen. What the American Army was about to receive in France was a baptism by fire, a fire that would burn for a very long time.

Training and doctrine remained largely ineffective amongst the American troops. Pershing, even more bolstered on his open warfare concept after the success of the recent German spring offenses insisted the AEF could rely on maneuver rather than defensive tactics. General Pershing's head of training, or G-5, Major Harold Fiske helped embody Pershing's beliefs of open warfare. Major Fiske admired the stoutness of the German Army, while on the other hand perpetuating the idea of the elite American infantry. His continued belief in open warfare would further solidify the belief to other AEF officers of the ability of existing battlefield doctrine to remain relevant for the current war. In 1917, Major Fiske delivered several

[4] Pershing, *My Experiences,* Vol. 1, pg. 354-55.

lectures at Fort Leavenworth on the current atmosphere of the American Army and its current training doctrine. Fiske stated, "Will our drill regulations require radical modification to conform to the experience of the Great War? It seems to me the answer is No. The formation contemplated, and the principals taught in our drill regulations have been proven to be in the main correct."[5] Like other officers of the AEF, to include Pershing, Fiske's only real recommendation to the alteration or reform of the *Drill Regulations* was the expansion of the actual size of each unit. To deal one more shot to the ever-growing ego of American officers and their fighting men, now Colonel Fiske stated the following regarding the American allies,

> In many respects the tactics and techniques of our Allies are not suited to American characteristics or the American mission in this war. The French do not like the rifle, do not know how to use it, and their infantry is consequently too entirely dependent upon a powerful artillery support. Their infantry lacks aggressiveness and discipline. The British infantry lacks initiative and resource. The junior officers of both allied services, with whom our junior are mostly closely associated, are not professional soldiers, know little of the general characteristics of war, and their experience is almost entirely limited to the special phases of war in the trenches.[6]

A very bold statement which came from the American Expeditionary Forces head of training, who had not seen combat, nor had even considered the possibly of just how much modern warfare had changed over the last 3 years. Major General William Sibert, the 1st Division's commander disagreed with Colonel Fiske's assessment of American troops: "Over fifty percent of the soldiers in the division are recruits almost entirely without training. Practically all of the officers below the grade of captain have been appointed less than six months … it is essential that the training of the troops shall be limited for the next four weeks, at

---

[5] Maj. Harold B. Fiske, "Notes on Infantry", Lecture Delivered to Provisional Second Lieutenants on January 29,1917 at Ft. Leavenworth, KS (Army Service Schools Press): pg. 28.

[6] Col. Harold B. Fiske, "General Headquarters, American Expeditionary Forces, Memorandum to the Chief of Staff, Subject: Training" (July 4, 1918)), United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919: Reports of the Commander-in-Chief, the Staff Sections and Services (vol. 14) (Washington, D.C., Center for Military History, 1988): pg. 303

least, to elementary work and the development of a proper military discipline spirit."[7] General William Sibert was the 1st Division commander, he was the first divisional commander to set foot in France, his division was the first to occupy trenches in a quiet sector of the Western Front. Indeed, the 1st Division was truly a division of firsts, however, not all the achievements attributed to the 1st Division were great, they were also the first division to suffer casualties, including the first dead American doughboys in France.

In October 1917, single battalions from each of the four infantry regiments of the 1st Division started rotating into the trenches to be taught and trained by the veteran French 18th Division. The section they were to occupy was located north of Luneville, just to the east of Nancy. Once there, the French commander, General Paul Emile Bordeaux troops were to help teach American soldiers how to survive and fight in the trenches. However, from the very beginning the overall command and control broke down between both sides. First off, General Sibert, and most of his senior staff were not permitted to accompany their men, instead having to stay behind at Gondrecourt. To Pershing, and other senior commanders, this looked more like amalgamation rather than an independent American fighting force. Furthermore, only a single artillery battalion from the 1st Division was able to move forward with the infantry battalions, and only provide supplementary fire support for French artillery.[8] Another shortcoming was General Bordeaux himself, a very competent commander but still did not trust American officers or men. Although the 1st Division's senior staff had to stay behind, Battalion officers and below were moved into the line along with their troops. General Bordeaux wanting to keep full command and control over his and the American troops prohibited the American's from

[7] Department of the Army, Historical Division, *United States Army in the World War, 1917-1918*, Vol. 21 (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1948): pg. 426.
[8] *History of the First Division,* pg. 28.

conducting any trench raids or patrols. The negative effects of merely sitting in your trenches became apparent on the eve of November 2-3, 1917. 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment was hit with a devastating barrage of German artillery or as described by the men, "a blinding flash and a crash and a roar that seemed to upset and blot out the very earth itself."[9] The barrage pinned the battalion in place, a common tactic utilized by German gunners, which left commanders unable to withdraw units or reinforce them. German sappers approached the barbed wire and destroyed them with Bangalore torpedoes, a long tube packed with explosives used specifically to destroy obstacles, especially barbed wire.[10] Once the shock troops were through the wire, they attacked the isolated unit with a variety of weapons to include grenades, pistols, trench knifes, and bayonets. Within a few short minutes it was all over, and the Germans fell back to their own lines with eleven American prisoners, including a sergeant. In their wake they left three American troopers dead, Corporal James B. Gresham, Private Thomas F. Enright, and Private Merle D. Hay. These were the first combat losses suffered by the AEF in France.[11] The next day all three American soldiers were buried at the small French town of Bathelemont, a stone's throw from where they were killed. General Bordeaux conducted the service:

The death of this humble Corporal and these Privates appeals to us with unwanted grandeur. We will, therefore, ask that the mortal remains of these young men be left with us forever. We will inscribe on their tombs, "here lie the first soldiers of the United States to fall on the fields of France for justice and liberty." The passerby will stop an uncover his head. The travelers of France, of the Allied countries, of America, and the men of heart, who will come to visit our battlefields of Lorraine, will go out of their way to come here to bring to these graves the tribute of their respect and gratitude. Corporal Greshma, Private Enright, and Private Hay, in the name of France I thank you. God receive your souls.[12]

---

[9] Ibid., pg. 30.
[10] John S.D. Eisenhower, *Yanks*, pg. 83.
[11] *History of the First Division*, pg. 31. NOTE: Strangely, the Americans were slow to realize what had happened. In the confusion of the night before, many, including the company commander, thought that the fourteen men had become lost in the relief and would turn up. Geroge Marshall, who was the first officer on the scene to investigate, discovered the white tape that had guided the German patrol into American lines. Marshall, *Services*, pg. 47.
[12] *History of the First Division*, pg. 31.

These disillusions both Pershing and his staff shared led to the senseless slaughter and fumbling of American soldiers. Each new American division that would arrive in France would have to take a tactical pause before entering the trenches to ensure they received proper training. The training was overseen by French and British advisors who did their best to help the American's understand trench life. As Lieutenant Kenneth E. Walser, who was an artillery officer of the 101st Field Artillery Regiment, attached to the National Guard's 26th Division noted in his journal about trench life, "Such desolation I have never seen. Everything that is used in war, strewn over the landscape, piles of shells, and grenades, overcoats, lots of pitiful helmets with great jagged holes through the top wire … there are dugouts here which have never been cleared out, and I shudder to think what it will be next spring. It is bad enough to walk out now after lunch and run across a skull with the flesh and hair still on it."[13] Trench life did not sit well with General Pershing, who openly despised the idea of sitting and waiting to be attacked. On April 10 and 12th, 1918 the Germans launched a trench raid in the area south of the Saint-Mihiel salient against the American 26th division. Throughout the month the Germans continuously probed the American forces who were learning the hard way about warfare.

April 20th, 1918, marked a point in the war that would bring great criticism against the commander of the 26th Division's by the AEFs supreme commander and his policy of open warfare versus defense in depth tactics. During the 20th of April German stormtroopers launched a surprise raid against two companies of the 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry regiment, 26th Division (Army National Guard Division formed out of New England and referred to as the Yankee Division). During the raid hand to hand combat ensued not long after a box-barrage kept reinforcements at bay, as well as pinning defenders within their trenches. During the melee the

[13] Walser diary entry, February 19, 1918, IWM 80/25/1.

Americans lost 81 killed, 187 wounded, 214 gassed, and 187 missing or prisoners, with a total of 669 casualties,[14] however, they had been able to acquit themselves quite well, driving off over 3,000 attackers in the process. Ludendorff was not impressed with his armies first action with the Americans, "the individual American fought well, but our success had, nevertheless, been easy."[15] Pershing somewhat echoed Ludendorff's viewpoint of the American showing on the 20th of April, in a memorandum dated 30 April 1918, Pershing's distain for defensive warfare was noted, "quietly in trenches during a heavy fog allowing a surprise attack to be spring upon them. This inexcusable conduct was not going to be tolerated."[16] It would be apparent from early on in the AEFs attempts to hold the line in France that a serious issue with unit size and cohesion would be a lasting problem from all levels of unit leadership.

From the very beginning of the American Expeditionary Force's mobilization the sheer size of their units were going to cause problems with command and control. American infantry divisions were inherently larger than any of their European counterparts, to include those of the Germans. A staggering 28,000 men comprises each American infantry division, the size comparison was roughly the size of a French and British corps. An example of a typical German infantry division was roughly 11,500 in 1914 to just over 6,500 by 1917. French divisions also saw a decrease in numbers from 1914-1917 which a standard infantry division roughly mirroring that of a German division.[17] Two conclusions were made regarding the larger AEF division, although neither were justified both assumptions made for interesting reasoning regarding the ideology behind Pershing's decision. The first assumption was due to Pershing stating that a

---

[14] David Woodward, *The American Army,* pg. 204-05.
[15] Erich Von Ludendorff, *Ludendorff's Own Story: August 1914-November 1918.* 2 Vols. (New York: Harper Brothers Publishers, 1919): pg. 243.
[16] Michael Shay, *The Yankee Division in the First World War,* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2008): pg. 88-89.
[17] Elizabeth Greenfield, *The French Army and the First World War,* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2014): pg. 252.

larger American division had more 'staying' power behind it, once an American division pushed a German division from its defensive positions it could 'stay' longer and sustain itself from numerous German counterattacks. Second, and a more personal reason was Pershing's own self-doubt of the character of some of his divisional officers, and their lack of leadership potential that would allow for smaller individual divisions within the AEF.[18] Major George Shelton wrote about the American infantry Division in the 1912 *Infantry Journal*, stating, "The division is a fighting unit, and the infantry rifle is the fighting arm. The fundamental thing to be determined in the creation of the division is the number of infantry rifles that through it as a tactical unit we can put on the firing line."[19] The pivotal school of thought many AEF commanders still believed was their division infantrymen with their rifles were the supreme equalizer on the battlefield. Every other piece of equipment was merely an afterthought of conceptional warfare.

Furthermore, with each division centered around four infantry regiments under two infantry brigades there was little room for modularization of the units. The AEF command structure was so centralized machine gun units were kept close to the brigade and only pushed out to regimental commanders if a great concentration of fire was needed for an objective much how the American artillery was utilized.[20] This type of mindset allowed for a very restricted usage of a great killing weapon of trench warfare, it did not allow for unilateral command of each regimental commander. The regimental commander would have to request the usage of machine guns at the expense of others not being able to utilize this great asset and only if the brigade commander authorized it. Even the French, as early as 1916 recognized the great

---

[18] Millett, "The General," pg. 336.
[19] Major George Shelton, "The Organization of the Land Forces of the United States," *Infantry Journal,* Vol. 9, No. 1 (July-August 1912): pg. 28.
[20] Brigadier General Perry L. Miles, *Fallen Leaves: Memories of an Old Soldier,* (Berkeley, Ca. Wuerth Publishing Co., 1961): pg. 260.

destructive power of machine guns and reconfigured their infantry battalions to have one machine gun company amongst three infantry companies.[21]

The large American divisions created an enormous number of problems for the overall command and control of the AEF. Issues that could have and should have been foreseen by General Pershing. Such large divisions made them very unwieldy and unable to adapt to quick maneuvers, such was a common practice of shifting divisions from one section of the front to another in anticipation of upcoming operations. Furthermore, due to the late arrival of the American Expeditionary Force, road usage was already reserved for French and British units, therefore leading to the American's only being able to use certain transportation lines. The large divisions created enormous roadblocks and traffic jams with disastrous consequences. Tasker Bliss wrote to Army Chief of Staff Hugh Scott saying, "I believe that our division is too large and unwieldy."[22] The 'staying' power of the large American divisions, as defended by General Bullard after the war, was nothing more than a bloated overestimation of the fact AEF commanders not seeing the inexcusable reasoning behind having such large divisions. As previously stated, many commanders believed the large size of American divisions was a necessity of modern warfare, "It was so made because, on account of unsuitable recruiting and replacement plans, it could not be hoped that a command once depleted or reduced below a proper fighting strength could be promptly filled up again. It was necessary to fill it very full in the start, that it might go long without the need of refilling."[23] AEF planners did not account for combat fatigue, nor did they take into consideration the number of replacements that were

---

[21] Ibid. NOTE: The habit of over-centralization persisted into World War Two, with higher formations controlling he numerous non-divisional units (such as tank battalions, artillery battalions, and engineer battalions) required by combat divisions to function effectively. See Peter R. Mansoor, The GI Offensive in Europe: The Triumph of American Infantry Divisions, 1941-1945 (Lawrence, KS, University of Kansas Press, 1999): pg. 37.

[22] Tasker Bliss to Hugh Scott (May 4, 1917) in Palmer, pg. 149.

[23] Bullard, *Personalities and Reminiscences of War*, pg. 75-76.

needed to refill these large organizations. They relied upon the divisions being able to sustain themselves during long periods of fighting without the need for refitting, that included replacement of men and materials.

Even though throughout the course of the Selective Service Act and other avenues the US government undertook to grow the US Army it simply wasn't enough to cope with the tempo of modern warfare in France. Each division took time to build and train, however, mounting losses in France and the urgency of both French and British pleas for help fast tracked American replacements to the front. More needed to be done to fill the ranks of the vast American divisions, not only in France but also the ones in transition from the United States.[24] Soon after the first American divisions arrived in France and took their place within the trenches replacement depots were established in the United States and France to help supplement losses, however, the losses soon outweighed the amount of men in these replacement depots. Eventually, divisions were broken apart and hurried to front line units who needed to be painstakingly brought backup to combat strength. Of the fifty-eight divisions that were shipped to France, sixteen had to either be broken up or converted to replacement depot units, furthermore, some divisions were completely stripped of nearly all their personnel to be used as immediate replacements for combat losses.[25] A manpower crises soon ensued in the United States and many replacement divisions found themselves crossing the Atlantic Ocean with as little as two weeks of training and virtually zero marksmanship practice.[26] The illusion of the American marksmen was soon fading into the past, and the United States Army was evolving

---

[24] Col. James Logan, "Organization of Replacement Battalions, 1st Section General Staff, AEF HQ (June 26, 1918)" in A.E.F. Policy Documents (vol. 1) (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1949): pg. 484.
[25] Edward J. Drea, Unit Reconstitution – A Historical Perspective (Ft. Leavenworth, KS, Combat Studies Institute of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1983): pg. 7.
[26] Ibid., pg. 8.

into a meatgrinder for the Western Front. It was becoming evident that the methods of training the AEF was not suited for modern warfare, or as United States Marine veteran Elton Mackin wrote, "The fallacy of the American method of close-order drill was evident. Danger caused them to bunch up close instinctively when subject to command."[27] Macklin further writes about the advance against the German held village of Torcy, "a close packed line of frightened men."[28] These formations made easy targets for the awaiting German machine gunners. Training, as mentioned in chapter 7 formulized on a central thesis of firepower with infantry rather than adopting to modernize warfare:

> The problem was that these tactics and assumptions had long been proven invalid on the battlefields of France. The building up of skirmish lines and attempts to gain infantry fire superiority before assaulting had been shown only to stall attacks short of their objectives and thus subject the attacker to higher casualties as units remained for longer durations in areas swept by artillery, machine gun, and rifle fire. This point was not lost on officers who later commanded in combat. Looking back on his officer training, one combat veteran noted, "Our army had learned no lessons of modern warfare as developed in Europe in the two years that the war had been going on. This was again in evidence in the 1st Training Camp for officers… Much time [was] wasted in learning methods… which were useless in Europe." The lack of realism at the Camp Root OTC led F.L. Miller to dismiss his training as "three months spent… learning wig-wag and semaphore signaling and reenacting Civil War combat problems through the mosquita [sic] filled swamps of Arkansas.[29]

Whatever issues the AEF faced during its initial training phases had to be put aside, it was time for the AEF to take its place in the trenches. The AEF was poised in 'quiet' sectors of the front, not expected to see much action, and definitely not to launch any large-scale operations, for the inexperience troopers, the name of the game was raids, and more raids. However, not all who were in the trenches thought much of their German counterparts a mere couple hundred meters away. As one 35th Division sergeant wrote, "The enemy were Bavarian

---

[27] Elton E. Mackin, *Suddenly We Didn't Want to Die: Memoirs of a World War I Marine* (Novato, CA, Presidio Press, 1993): pg. 77.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Richard Faulkner, *School of Hard Knocks,* pg. 43-44.

Gebirgstruppen and they were too easy on us. They generally behaved like amused adults indulgently watching the antics of mischievous children until the little monster stepped too far out of line. When we would really annoy them, we'd get a stinging slap on the wrist that actually didn't hurt much but was clearly recognizable as 'no, no'."[30]

No matter what happened during the opening months the AEF were in the trenches, eventually they would have to get out and fight the Germans they opposed. However, General Pershing was still not satisfied with his new army. He pushed for more training with an emphasis on open warfare, refusing to take heed to the French perception of defensive warfare. Pershing was quick to ostracize any of his officers who did not embrace his way of thinking. An early example was Major General Sibert of the 1st Division, who unlike Pershing, listened to his French counterparts and started evolving his division to mirror French tactics and organization. These changes included the attachment of machine guns from the brigade level to the individual infantry battalions which directly countermanded AEF doctrine.[31] Still even with these new advents, Sibert would incur the wrath of General Pershing after witnessing the 1st Division's 26th Infantry Regiment perform an attack against simulated enemy trenches. Pershing openly berated Sibert in front of his command staff for relying too heavily upon French tactics. Shortly after Sibert received a memorandum stating the following, "the AEF training section sent the division an order which gave the division no latitude in its training schedule and stressed the use of American "open warfare" tactics and discipline."[32] If there was a singular characteristic that all AEF commanders knew of their commander it was his unwavering ability to replace leaders that

---

[30] William S. Triplet, *A Youth in the Meuse-Argonne: A Memoir, 1917-1918,* (edited by Robert H. Ferrell) (Columbia, MO, University of Missouri Press, 2000): pg. 75.
[31] Historical Division, War Plans Division of the General Staff, A Study in Battle Formation (Monograph No. 6) (Washington, DC, Government Printing Office, 1920): pg. 9.
[32] Millett, *The General,* pg. 322.

did not believe in his open warfare tactics. Major General Sibert was one such victim for soon after the "failed" exercise of the 26th Infantry regiment he was replaced by General Robert L. Bullard. General Bullard led the AEF's first operation near the German held area of Montdidier. Their objective would be the recapture of the French village Cantigny which had only recently been captured by the Germans during Operation Michael. On the 1st of April 1918 the 1st Division was replaced by the 26th Division which then was transported to an assembly camp north of Paris. There General Pershing oversaw another demonstration by the division. Seemingly satisfied with the operation General Pershing addressed the officers of the 1st Division:

> I have every confidence in the 1st Division. You are about to enter this great battle of the greatest war in history, and in that battle, you will represent the mightiest nation engaged … Centuries of military tradition and of military and civil history are not looking towards this first contingent of the American Army as it enters this great battle. You have behind you your own national traditions that should make you the finest soldiers in Europe to-day [sic]. We come from a young and aggressive nation. We come from a nation that for one hundred and fifty years has stood before the world as the champion of the sacred principles of human liberty. We now return to Europe, the home of our ancestors, to help defend those same principles upon European soil.[33]

On the 24th of April, the American 1st Division sandwiched itself between the French 45th and 162nd Division. Poised for the upcoming assault, the Americans held ground with only assault style defensive trenches, not very deep or well prepared these trenches were only meant to help keep troops covered from incoming artillery fire. However, even these trenches were not suited for high explosive and gas shells, both in which the Germans had a readily supply. In fact, Germany's pre-war industrial had monopolized gas shell production. The most potent of all the gases released by the German, mustard gas was a severe burn/blister agent that attacked the moist areas of the human body and could hang around in the low grounds of the trenches for

[33] Pershing, *My Experiences,* Vol. 1, pg. 394.

days after the initial applications.[34] The 1st Division experienced their first application of mustard gas during the build up to the attack on Cantigny. Major Ray Austin of the 6th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Division wrote to his mother saying the following about gas attacks, "Two men of the Infantry foolishly washed their faces in the water from a shell hole which happened to contain 'mustard' and six hours later they were scarred and burned terribly as with a hot iron. I have seen a Frenchman who was burned from sitting in the grass where a mustard shell had burst."[35] It's evident that gas training was something not extensively covered by American training doctrine. As Major General Menoher, who was observing a 'gas' drill being conducted by the 42nd Division's (Rainbow Division) 168th Infantry Regiment can attest to:

> Practice in gas discipline was conducted by lining up one-half of a company thirty-five yards away from the other half and at a signal one side would run to the other, mimicking rolling gas and estimated to reach the waiting side in six seconds. The journey took about eighth seconds, and those who masks were not adjusted in time were "gassed." The Alabamians were a rather seedy looking crowd, thought alert in the drill.[36]

G-3 (Division Operations) Lieutenant Colonel George Marshall of the 1st Division, with permission from General Bullard began planning the assault on Cantigny village. The village occupied a large bulge in the lines, approximately 1,000 meters deep and 1,500 meters wide. The German 82nd Reserve Corps occupied the area. Largely comprised of healed veterans, raw new recruits, and an ad hoc amount of support troops the 82nd Reserve Corps was considered a non-front-line unit who had just recently been activated from the Russian front a few months prior.[37] General Bullard, although a supporter of General Pershing decided to go against General Headquarters policy and embraced some of France's hard earned experience into his planning for

---

[34] David Stevenson, *With Our Backs to the Wall: Victory and Defeat in 1918,* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011): pg. 200-02.
[35] *WWIS.*
[36] Entry of January 13, 1918, in Robert Ferrell (ed.), *In the Company of Generals: The World War I Diary of Pierpont L. Stackpole,* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2009): 21.
[37] Allen R. Millett, "Cantigny, 28-31 May 1918," in Charles Heller and William Stofft (eds.), *America's First Battles, 1776-1965,* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986): pg. 167.

the attack. First, he reduced the size of his infantry company's so he could organize support groups for each battalion. Second, he utilized foreign advisors in his infantry battalions to act as subject matter experts on large scale operations.[38] General Bullard understood that the key to any success on the battlefield was the accomplishment of fire superiority with massed artillery. For this operation he amassed over 234 pieces of artillery, to include small French 75mm, and larger 220mm, and 280mm heavy howitzers respectively. Sadly, all the guns utilized by the attack were from French units on loan to the Americans. The infantry battalions of the 28th Infantry Regiment were picked for the main assault. Their sister battalions from the remaining three infantry regiments would take up defensive and support by fire positions on their flanks. The attack was set for the 28th of May 1918. Each man in the assault battalion carried a hefty amount of gear with him which included 220 rounds of rifle ammunition, small arms ammunition, two hand grenades, one rifle grenade, one Bengal flare, four sandbags, two day's reserve rations, two canteens of water, marking panel and either a heavy pick or a heavy shovel. Each company within the battalion also carried a single stokes mortar, 37mm gun, and a machine gun company.[39] At 0645am the 2nd Battalion of the 28th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division went over the top for the first time, led by American officers, and closely watched by their foreign allies.

Prior to the main attack on the village the division artillery let loose its thunderous artillery barrage to help destroy obstacles and kill as many German defenders as possible. One of the AEF observers stated, "It was a remarkable sight – great clouds of smoke rolling up from the

[38] Ibid., pg. 170.
[39] H. E. Ely, "Report on Capture of Cantigny and Consolidation of Position," June 2, 1918, *USAWW,* Vol. 4, pg. 321.

shelled districts, against which the flashes of bursting shells stood out."[40] Major Ray Austin, 6th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Division recounts his experience of the battle in the *World War I Survey*, (WWIS):

> At the same time as the barrage left the line of departure (our front-line trenches) the infantry suddenly appeared on the slope of the ride close behind our barrage – a long brown line with bayonets glistening in the sun. They seemed to have sprung from the earth, as in reality they had when they went over the top. They walked steadily along behind our barrage accompanied by the tanks which buzzed along with smoke coming out from their exhaust and their guns.[41]

The doughboys acquitted themselves quite well and took the village in only fifteen minutes. 1st Lieutenant Daniel Sargent, Battery F, 5th Artillery Regiment, who was assigned to the French batteries noted, "how easy it had been."[42] Even General Bullard had stated, "I know that it was so carefully prepared that it could not have failed, but it it's a fact also that the execution by the troops was very good."[43] However, there was one person who seemed to brood over the entire affair, General Pershing, although relieved the attack was a success still emphasized the holding of the ground in a memorandum to General Bullard who recalls General Pershing's words, "he impressed upon me in most earnest, emphatic terms his order to hold the position that we had taken, and under no conditions, under no pressure, to quit it."[44] Bullard could only equate this to a possibility of other allied commanders expressing their doubt to General Pershing of the American's being able to hold the ground, especially since the French had both taken and lost the village twice in previous actions.

However, the exuberance of the AEF's first true test in battle would be short lived. The German battlefield doctrine at the time was to counterattack any ground they had lost in an allied

---

[40] W.S. Grant, "Account by an Eyewitness of the Attack on Cantigny," May 29, 1918, *USAWW,* Vol. 4, pg. 321.
[41] R. Austin, *WWIS.*
[42] Ibid.,
[43] Bullard, *Personalities and Reminiscences*, pg. 197.
[44] Ibid., pg. 198.

operation. Soon after Cantigny fell into American hands German counter-battery fire, and box barrages fell on the American positions. However, it wasn't the 2nd Battalion that came under heavy fire, but rather its support Battalions the 1st Battalion on the southern flank and the 3rd on the northern flank. The fire was so intense that the 3rd Battalion was driven back which created a new salient within the larger salient.[45] The counterattack was vicious and quick with German heavy guns, stationed only a few kilometers away at Montdidier, shelling the entire 28th Infantry Regimental lines. Other regiments of the 1st Division were quickly brought onto line to help reinforce the 28ths now precarious position. Corporal Jesse Evans, of L Company, 18th Infantry Regiment recalled the attack, "The Germans had all their heavy guns at Montdidier, a few miles away, and they turned them all loose on us. Cantigny had not a wall left standing as we went through. Two of our men went insane from the intense fire."[46] If the officers of the AEF were to stand tall in the face of devastating fire, Colonel Ely, the 28th Infantry Regiments commanding officer would be a great example of this persona, however, even he or his regiment couldn't withstand the devastation they were facing in Cantigny and surrounding area. In the evening of the 28th of May, Colonel Ely sent the following report to Brigadier General Buck, the 2nd Infantry Brigade Commander, and Colonel Ely's superior stating, "1st and 3rd Bns., 28th Inf. Reported falling back under heavy fire artillery and M.G. [machine guns] … Unless heavy artillery can give us support it will [be] necessary to withdraw for entire front line is battered to pieces with artillery."[47] A few hours after the above message, Colonel Ely sent a second, more urgent message to brigade headquarters, "Front line pounded to hell and gone, and entire front line must be relieved tomorrow night [or] he would not be responsible."[48] However, there would

[45] Millett, "Cantigny, 28-31 May 1918, pg. 173.
[46] Article by Evans, n.d., 2007.65.5.1, McCormick Research Center, Cantigny.
[47] *USAWW*, Vol. 4, pg. 307
[48] Ibid., pg. 319.

be no massive artillery support from the Americans or French. The Germans has launched an attack near the Chemin des Dames and French General Petain pulled all available artillery support from other areas of the front to stem the German tide. This meant, all the heavy guns on loan to the Americans were now being moved to another sector of the front. The French took two full artillery regiments away from the Americans, leaving them with mostly short ranged, low trajectory 75mm guns.[49]

For the next three days the Americans held the ground around Cantigny and the village itself, with the ground fighting dying down it was time to replace the shell shocked and battered 28th Infantry Regiment, so on the night of the 30th of May, the 28th Infantry Regiment was relieved in place by her sister regiment, the 16th. At the end of the battle the American's 28th Infantry Regiment had lost thirty-four officers and 903 men, either killed, or wounded. Most had been killed by lethal German artillery and machine gun fire. A few more had been killed by German airplanes who had been unmolested by French planes, and which the Americans had none of their own to counter. When questioned on why his regiment could not stay on the line a little longer Colonel Ely abruptly replied, "Let me tell you one thing and you put it down in your notebook. These men have been fighting three days and three nights and have been successful, but five of them are not worth now what one of them we when he came in … It is an injustice not to relieve the men who have been fighting so long."[50]

Lack of organic artillery and the virtual absence of an American Air Force cost the AEF valuable men and experience. Their inadequate assessment of German counter offensives doctrine also put the entire 28th Infantry Regiment in a position of being overrun. However,

---

[49] Donald Smythe, *Pershing: General of the Armies*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986): pg. 127.
[50] Smythe, *Pershing:* pg. 128.

Cantigny was not a strategic objective but rather a moral obligation by Pershing to President Wilson. For there to be an independent American Army in France, Pershing knew that any operation the AEF launched would have to be successful, or as Lieutenant Colonel Marshall stated, "this was our first offensive which had been ordered primarily for the purpose of its effects on the moral of the English and French armies. For the First Division to lose its first objective was unthinkable."[51] General Pershing followed up with his own assessment to the War Department about the Cantigny operation, "This action illustrates the facility with which our officers and men learn and emphasizes the importance of organizing our own divisions and higher units as soon as circumstanced permit. It is my firm conviction that our troops are the best in Europe and our staffs are the equals of any."[52] Although the American troops fought very hard to make the bold claim that they were the best was still yet to be tested. If Pershing or the War Department had any inclination to evaluate modern warfare and to adapt its numerous techniques perhaps the battle of Cantigny would have lesser casualties, or even a further advance into German occupied territory.

The only true testament that could be equated to the attack on Cantigny was the actual reversal of General Pershing's open warfare model. In fact, it wasn't a massed assault by bayonet wielding American infantrymen but a well-rehearsed artillery plan, laid out by General Bullard and executed by experience French gunners with novice American gunners helping. While the infantry assault did clear the village of resistance, the counterattack with massed German artillery and machine guns nearly routed the entire regiment.[53] The French tactics of well-prepared plans of attack with overwhelming firepower from artillery was not a new concept to

[51] Marshall, *Memoirs of My Service*, pg. 97.
[52] Pershing to Adjutant General, June 1, 1918, *USAWW*, Vol. 2, pg. 434.
[53] David Woodward, *The American Army*, pg. 232.

American officers, to include General Pershing. The French tried before the war and even during the war to help American planners adapt to modern warfare, and their ideology of open warfare was suicide for their men. A French lecturer had warned American officers at the AEF's General Staff:

> Never venture Infantry in an attack against organized positions without having carefully prepared this attack. And when I say organized positions, I do not only mean trenches and wire entanglements. I also mean strong points, hastily organized as they may be every possible strong point which has to be attacked or outflanked must be taken under strong artillery fire. It is the only way for preventing tremendous and useless losses.[54]

An even better assessment of the unwillingness of AEF commanders, especially Pershing to adapt to modern warfare can be found with Millett, "once against that infantry of the Western Front could not fight – they could only die – without massive, accurate, properly timed artillery support."[55] No matter what had happened at Cantigny, it was only a warm up to the major operations of the AEF which included the operations of Chateau-Thierry and Belleau Wood, St. Mihiel, and ultimately the Meuse-Argonne.

By early June, the 1st Division was joined by several other Regular Army Divisions, most notably the 2nd and 3rd Division, as well as the 42nd, 35th, and 26th Division of the National Guard had all completed their in-country training and occupied sectors of the front line. The 3rd Division had been rushed to help stem the tide of another German offensive which saw extensive fighting all the way to the initial start points of the war, to include the Marne River. Even today, the 3rd Division's credo is "Rock of the Marne," and patch of honor all division member's wear. However, it would be the 2nd Division that would steal the glory of the early summer operations. A unique division, the 2nd Division was the only Army division in France that was comprised of one Army infantry brigade, and one United States Marine Corps infantry brigade. These two

---

[54] Quoted in Grotelueschen, *Doctrine Under Trial,* pg. 23-24.
[55] Millett, *Cantigny, 28-31 May 1918*, pg. 185.

brigades would win glory back home for their campaigns in the renown Belleau Wood and Chateau-Thierry. The capture of these important woods would allow the American forces to provide enfilade fire down onto German defensive positions thus dictating future offensive operations in the immediate area. The 4th Marine Brigade would launch a frontal attack on the woods with both its regiments the 5th and 6th moving on-line. However, unlike the assault on the village of Cantigny the artillery preparation plan for the attack on Belleau Wood was sorely inadequate. "While this weak fire-support plan might have been the result of the brief time allowed to coordinate the artillery effort, it nevertheless appears that General Harbord intended for his Marines to make the attack with a minimal amount of artillery support."[56] At 5:00 p.m. on the 6th of June, both Marine regiments, made their head long advance into the woods. Little information had been afforded to General Harbord, the commander of the 4th Marine Brigade, who instead of gaining more valuable information as the ascertain of enemy troops positions decided anyway to make the attack.

It would not be long for the open warfare doctrine adopted by the AEF would soon get a lesson from the German military. In fact, when the commander of the 2nd Division, General Omar Bundy sent his initial report to GHQ he was misleading General Pershing, which only embolden his optimism of open warfare. General Bundy cabled the following to Pershing regarding the initial movements of the operation, "In the afternoon at 5 p.m., the entire Marine brigade attacked in the direction of BOURESCHES-TOURCY, driving the enemy back, capturing many prisoners and inflicting heavy losses."[57] However this could be the furthest from the truth. As taught by the outdated *Infantry Drill Regulations* the Marine brigade advanced in

---

[56] Grotelueschen, *Doctrine Under Trial,* pg. 37.

[57] Gen. Omar Bundy, "G-3. GHQ: C-in-C Rept. File: Fldr. 112-C2: Operations Report (June 6, 1918)" in The United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919: Military Operations of the American Expeditionary Forces (vol. 4), pg. 153 (151-54).

dense aligned formations across a wheat field that led to the entrance of the woods. The Marines soon found out that this type of formation only made the German machine gunner's job a lot easier and by the end of the first night although there had been a 'toehold' established 1,087 Marines were either dead or wounded. During this time in the war the American divisions were still held under and overseen by veteran French and British Divisions. The 2nd Division fell under the battle hardened French XXI Corps, whose commander, General Joseph Degoutte was disgusted at the commander of the 2nd Division. General Degoutte tried several times to help General Bundy understand how to advance his troops in such terrain with little success.[58] Infantry without artillery support did not have the capability to take entrenched German positions, regardless of which country they hailed from. Finally on the 8th of June, after two days of hard fighting with little success and even higher casualties, General Degoutte issued a new order to the 2nd Division, "in view of the strength of the hostile points of support in that area, this advance will be conducted methodically, by means of successive minor operations, making the utmost use of artillery and reducing the employment of infantry to the minimum necessary."[59] A new offensive, this time supported by XXI Corps artillery was planned, the operation would take place on the 10th of June, however, the Marines still believed they knew warfare better and continued to attack on the 8th, the same day General Degoutte's orders were issued to General Bundy.

The renewed attacks on the 8th still barred the same fruit. Major Berton Sibley, who was assigned to the 6th Marine Regiment expressed a large concern of finding more and more

---

[58] Grotelueschen, *Doctrine Under Trial*, pg. 39.
[59] Gen. Joseph Degoutte, "3rd Section, General Staff No. 97/P.C. (June 8, 1918)" in The United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919: Military Operations of the American Expeditionary Forces (vol. 4): pg. 403.

German machine guns firing at his advancing men than had been expected earlier.[60] Major Sibley's message just a mere four hours after the initial assault began painting a very fluid and confusing situation, "They are too strong for us. Soon as we take one M. G., [sic] the losses are so heavy that I am reforming on the ground held by the 82d Co. last night. All the officers of the 82d Co. wounded or missing and it is necessary to reform before we can advance. Unable to do much with trench mortars because of being in the woods. These machine guns are too strong for our infantry."[61] However, it was what came after this from Sibley that really broke down the fatalistic mindset of American officers and their push of open warfare. Major Sibley, who had suffered horrendous losses added, "We can attack again if it is desired."[62] As per the status quo, it would be another fruitless frontal assault by the Marines in Belleau Woods before the French had to step in and show the Americans just how much warfare had changed.

On June 10th at 3:30 a.m., the 2nd Field Artillery Brigade of the American 2nd Division, along with French assistance launched a thoroughly planned artillery barrage against German positions within the woods. The barrage included both large caliber and smaller caliber guns, both utilized according to French doctrine, this tactic included larger 155mm guns to attack the trench lines, and the 75mm guns to provide a rolling barrage for the Marines to follow. During the attack the French launched over 40,000 shells at the German positions, once the barrage lifted the Marines advanced behind the rolling barrage at a rate of fifty meters per minute.[63] The main objectives of the assault on the 10th of June, as well as subsequent attacks on the 11th showed the significant difference between American and French battlefield tactics. While the

---

[60] 2d Div.: 6th Marines: 202-32.16: Field Message (June 8, 1918)" in The United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919: Military Operations of the American Expeditionary Forces (vol. 4): pg. 405.
[61] "2d Div.: 6th Marines: 202-32.16: Field Message (June 8, 1918)" in The United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919: Military Operations of the American Expeditionary Forces (vol. 4): pg. 406.
[62] Elton E. Mackin, *Suddenly We Didn't Want to Die: Memoirs of a World War I Marine* (Novato, CA, Presidio Press, 1993): pg. 61.
[63] 819 Groteluesche*n*, *Doctrine Under Trial*, pg. 40.

Americans wanted to rely on their infantry assaults German machine gunners and artillery were simply able to overwhelm them. On the other hand, carefully planned French artillery doctrine helped to suppress the enemy during the initial barrage, and then were able to provide a level of cover for the advancing infantry behind the rolling barrage. By the time the barrage had ended, and the enemy had come from their dugouts the American troops were already on top of them and able to subdue them with much lesser casualties. There is no comparison between the AEF led assaults on the 6th through the 8th and those led by French assistance on the 10th and 11th. What truly remains an absolutely mystery was the willingness of both Bundy and Harbord to continuously send frontal assaults against well entrance German positions. Their devotion to General Pershing's open warfare methodology caused the senseless loss of thousands of AEF troops. Their blind reluctance to see the truth about modern warfare was astounding, as General Harbord told one his new battalion commanders that German positions could still be assailed through sniper fire and stiff infantry attacks.[64] Even Erick Von Ludendorff stated the following of the American operations in the Chateau-Thierry and Belleau Woods area, "At Chateau-Thierry, Americans who had been a long time in France had bravely attacked our thinly held fronts, but they were unskillfully led, attacked in dense masses, and failed."[65]

Although the AEF was 'successful' in capturing most of the woods and stemming the line in the region the huge loss of life was concerning. Furthermore, future operations for each of the now veteran division of the AEF would see a repeat of their command-and-control issues, especially those of 2nd Division in the late summer operations. Now, the French looked to cut off many of the salient that had been left in their lines from the large German Spring offensives. The

[64] Grotelueschen, *Doctrine Under Trial*, pg. 43.
[65] Ludendorff, Ludendorff's Own Story, pg. 269 NOTE: Presumably Ludendorff is referring to the "failure" of the 2nd Division to advance much beyond the wood itself.

objective was to take and hold the town of Soissons and prevent German counter attacks from retaking the area. For this operation General Pershing offered both the 1st and 2nd Division, two veteran divisions of the AEF. However, an issue had arisen within each division, both had new commanders assigned to them. The 1st Division commander was now Major General Charles P. Summerall, a competent artillery commander, but a little rough around the edges when it came to his subordinate. Threatening to relieve them for even questioning his orders, Summerall was a man who was a conflicted officer.[66] The 2nd Division commander was none other than General Harbord, who at Belleau Wood had been the commanding general of the 4th Marine Brigade. General Harbord had learned very little between Chateau-Thierry and Belleau Wood, and the future operations of Soissons. Both divisions were accompanied by the French elite 1st Moroccan Division. The unit was made up of French colonial troops as well as elite French Foreign Legion regiments. When the Moroccan Division staff noticed the difficulty Major General Harbord was having getting his advance regiments into position prior to the jump off date of 17-18 July, they offered to help prepare the attack orders. General Harbord refused due to his pride being hurt.[67] Harbord's pride would have devastating consequences throughout the battle.

All three divisions belonged to the French XX Army commanded by General Mangin. An iconic leader of the old French system of warfare, much to the likely of Pershing, considered his battle plans to only include a rolling barrage for his infantry to march behind. However, General Mangin did infuse with his plans the usage of 156 tanks for the main assault. There would be no initial crescendo of artillery prior to the jump off point. To make matters worse for the AEF units was the formation of the American Army III Corps, commanded by General Bullard, the

---

[66] Conrad S. Babcock (edited by Robert H. Ferrell), *Reminiscences of Conrad S. Babcock: The Old U.S. Army and the New, 1898-1918* (Columbia, MO, University of Missouri Press, 2002): pg. 92.
[67] Douglas Johnson II, and Rolfe L. Hillman Jr., *Soissons, 1918*, (College Station, TX, Texas A&M Press, 1999): pg. 59.

previous 1st Division commander, and even though he was in command of the American units, overall command of the operation would still fall under the French XX Corps. This rapid succession of command changes and command arrangements played havoc on the lower levels of the organization, unit commanders at the Battalion and Regimental level were only learning of their new assignments and command structure mere hours prior to the attack.[68] As evident from previous French interventions upon American operations, the plan of attack had all three division attacking east in a line abreast, however, the 1st Division (AEF) would be in the north, the 1st Division (Moroccan) would be in the middle, while the 2nd Division (AEF) would be in the south. French commanders wanted a veteran French unit in between the American division to help guide the pace of battle.

[68] Conrad S. Babcock (edited by Robert H. Ferrell), *Reminiscences of Conrad S. Babcock: The Old U.S. Army and the New, 1898-1918* (Columbia, MO, University of Missouri Press, 2002): pg. 73.

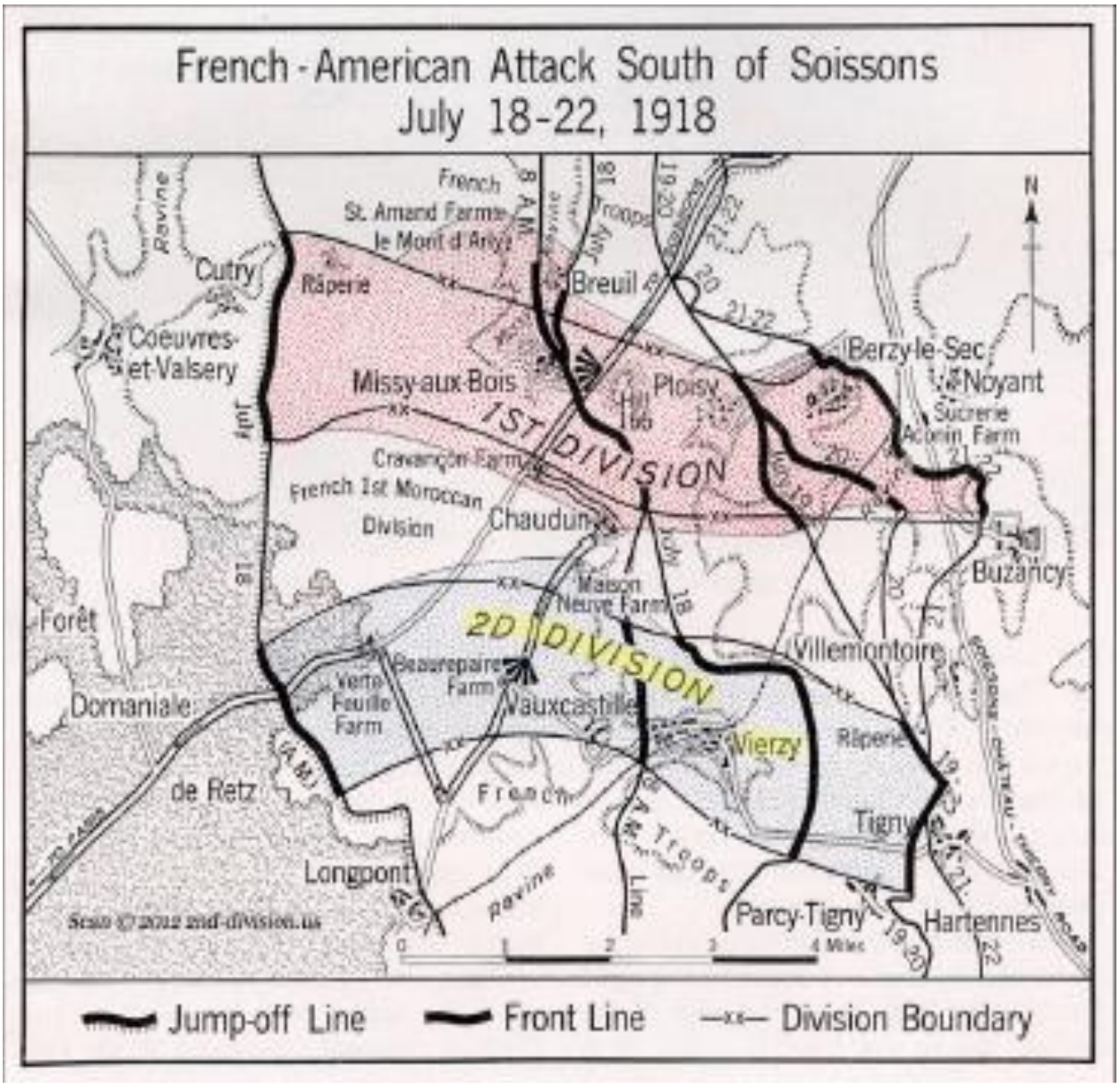


Figure 21. Map of the Divisional attack of the American 1st and 2nd Division (AEF), with the 1st Moroccan (French) division in the middle. Battle of Soisson, France July 18-22, 1918.

In the beginning the battle went quite well for the allies, the rolling barrage allowed for a swift advance of troops, and they were able to take the front trenches of the Germans quite quickly. A further edge the allies had was the incorporation of tanks into this battle. These slow-moving armored tractors provided excellent assault capabilities and were able to provide not only massed machine gun support, but also small caliber artillery support. However, it would

soon be apparent that the initial success of the allied attack would come under serious German machine gun fire. The 28th Infantry, the same unit that led the assault against Cantigny in May 1918 was driving eastward with its 2nd Battalion into the Missy Ravine when it was raked by machine gun fire. By the end of the day the Battalion had been reduced to a handful of platoons led only by sergeants, all the company officers had been killed or wounded.[69] American commanders still emphasized the killing power of German machine guns, even saying they were more deadly than German artillery. General Bullard wrote, "But artillery fire is not what kills men: it is the machine guns, and these were in operation."[70] However, this only leads to the psychological effect of German machine guns on the battlefield, statistics provided during and after the war still placed artillery casualties far above any other type of weapon for most casualties produced. Even though there is some truth to the ideology of machine gun and their effectiveness on the battlefield, the German doctrine for their machine guns was merely to pin down allied troops and then call their devastating artillery down upon them. An interesting observation that Bullard made during the war was how the French deliberately undertook the eradication of German machine gun nests far more than American troops did. "In this they were most skillful. Long experience had taught them how to save themselves. American troops, doing the same thing beside them, lost twice as many men," writes Bullard.[71] American doctrine at the time called for only two types of attacks against machine gun nests, the first being the all-out suicidal frontal attack, while the second instructed troops to flank the machine gun positions. The result of the frontal attack is self-explanatory, however, the second, to flank would have been an adoptable idea, however, there was no flank for the troops to attack.

[69] Johnson & Hillman Jr., pg. 47.
[70] Bullard, *Personalities and Reminiscences of War*, pg. 218
[71] Ibid., pg. 245.

The Germans had learned early on to not place all their machine guns in a single line, but to stack them so as to provide flanking or overlapping fields of fire for each position. The French had learned this lesson early on and so adapted a different approach, for example they would utilize overwhelming fire support with their automatic rifles (Chauchats) and rifle grenades. When the target had been suppressed a small unit of French infantry would flank in a narrow area, so they did not cross into the overlapping field of fire of the other machine gun positions. It had taken months and the loss of countless French soldiers to learn these hard lessons, while the Americans simply saw these actions as fruitless borderline cowardice. However, not all the American commanders though this way and some started to adapt these methods in attempts to save more of their trooper's lives. An American officer from the 1st Division noted after observing the 1st Moroccan Division operate in the Soisson operation, " It was by observation of the Moroccans in this action that the regiment learned the method of advance ordinarily used by European veterans, whereby the assault line, having lost the barrage, progressed steadily forward, individuals, under the eye of their squad leaders, moving at a run from shell-hole to shell-hole. When stopped by resistance, - usually a machine gun, - the squad, section, or platoon engaged it by fire from the front, while flankers immediately worked around with rifles and grenades to take it from the flank."[72] However, not all lessons that the French had learned in the previous three years of war took hold with the Americans. Even though the first day of the operation when quite well for the allies there were still issues that arose from disorganization. Not uncommon on the First World War battlefield, units regularly became separated either due to terrain or unit cohesion. The French had adopted a reoccurring or periodically halt during a set time in each operation. These halts gave the attackers time to reorganize their lines, and more

[72] Edward S. Johnston in Mark Grotelueschen, *The AEF Way of War: The American Army and Combat in World War 1,* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007): pg. 101-102.

importantly, relay and reestablish communications with the artillery. The French XX Corps had standing orders to all its commanders at Soisson, to include the two American division commanders, Harbord and Summerall, "The necessary steps are taken in each first line division to reorganize its units, reconstitute reserves, supply the troops and prepare to continue the prescribed offensive."[73] Again, particularly the 2nd Division refused to be told by the French how to wage war. Major General Harbord instead planned on a steady rate of uninterrupted advance throughout the day without accounting for enemy resistance or terrain.[74]

The next day of the attack would not go off as the first, with missed timetables, and even worse, underwhelming artillery support both the 1st and 2nd Division attacked headlong into the waiting defenders. The French had given the 1st Division its orders far too late, with only an hour to prepare and to reach their jump off points, the division's regiments did not question the orders or asked for an extension. So, the artillery fired based upon the afforded timetable that had been established, with the infantry well behind the rolling barrage. The results were unquestionable and more American infantrymen lost their lives. As historians Johnson and Hillman stated, "This unfortunate error, repeated all too often, demonstrates a systemic rigidity in American thinking."[75] The issues of the OTCs and their rigorous effort to erode initiative was well in effect on the Western Front. Lines of communication were clear, orders went down the chain and the only response wanted was, "yes sir." As Colonel Badcock recalled during his assault with the 28th Infantry Regiment, 1st Division as they advanced beyond their French counterparts. The French units had stalled on the American's left flank. German machine guns, now free to fire on the Americans poured devastating fire into them. As Badcock called for repeated artillery

[73] Conrad Babcock, pg. 76.
[74] Johnson & Hillman Jr., pg. 59.
[75] Ibid., pg. 93.

support he was refused by General Summerall stating the French will catch up and take the positions. There was no room for initiative of American commanders on the battlefield.[76] However, against orders Badcock did not advance any further until the French realigned with his unit. Together both the French and the Americans advanced forward. General Summerall was outraged at Badcock's blatant decision to use his own judgement on the battlefield which eventually led to Badcock's dismissal.[77] The attack eventually reached the outskirts of its objective, the village of Berzy-le-Sec, the American troops were so exhausted and disorganized that a well time German counterattack drove them back 1,200 yards. By the afternoon of the 19th of July, the 2nd Division needed to be replaced, and General Harbord requested for this to take place. However, the French commander of the XX Corps, General Berdoulat had already come to the same conclusion much earlier in the day. He issued the following orders, "This relief will be made progressively beginning on the evening of July 19, bearing in mind the degree of fatigue of the units of the American division."[78] The 2nd Division had suffered greater losses than its entire infantry strength, replacements had to come in greater numbers than originally expected, however, General Harbord stayed true to his mentor's ideology of open warfare. General Harbord was a favorite of General Pershing and it had showed in Harbord's battlefield planning. Without the usage of overwhelming artillery barrages no infantry attack could succeed on the Western Front. However, General Harbord refused to believe such tactics could work and sent his men headfirst into the fray. As historian Mark Grotelueschen stated, "Harbord was one of Pershing's favorites, and he repaid his mentor with his decision to return to the infantry-focused

[76] Conrad Babcock, pg. 94.
[77] Lief A. Torkelsen, "Battles Were Not Fought In Lines, pg. 220.
[78] 3rd Bureau, XX Army Corps (French), "Special Orders No. 235 (July 19, 1918)" in The United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919: Military Operations of the American Expeditionary Forces (vol. 5): pg. 299

attacks, after the previous failures with that method and the successes of the artillery-centered approach, that most convincingly demonstrated that he was steeped in the doctrine and style of warfare that Pershing advocated."[79]

Finally, American commanders were learning that larger isn't necessarily better. This equated to the large American divisions, whose original size was meant to establish more 'staying' power. However, their unwieldy nature left them very difficult to control therefore leading to a loss of initiative on the battlefield. Combat fatigue and combat losses made the American divisions harder to replenish with replacements. Divisions who had just arrived in country, and some still in the United States saw their ranks diminished due to the lack of replacements for front line units. Sometimes, the divisions in America saw little to no real combat training prior to being sent overseas.

Eventually, the town of Berzy-le-Sec was taken by the allies and a clear view was given to artillery observers of the road between Soisson and Chateau-Thierry. This vital road system was an important logistical route for the Germans and from the 21st of July on, Allied artillerymen would shell the supply lines of the Germans. So, in contrast the Germans started to pull their units out of the Marne salient, this was a welcome reprieve for the battered 2nd Division who had been relieved, along with the 1st Moroccan Division. However, issues with the 15th Scottish Division (British Army) leaving from their reserve depot caused the 1st Division (AEF) to stay in place a few days longer. Finally, the 1st Division (AEF) was relieved, General Bullard's old regiment the 26th Infantry had been reduced to just 200 survivors with a captain in command.[80]

---

[79] Grotelueschen, *Doctrine Under Trial*, pg. 71.
[80] Millett, *The General*, pg. 383

Ultimately, the assault on the Marne salient at the towns of Soisson and others was a success, however, it did not result in a breakout. The French XX Army commander, General Mangin had hoped that such a breakout would occur that he had an entire French cavalry corps in reserve just for this occasion. However, it never happened. General Bullard of the American III Army Corps stated, "I would have risked all upon a dash by every cavalryman in my command. I longed for one single American cavalry division, led by an American cavalryman that I knew: he would have gone through or lost all."[81] General Pershing had shared the same sentiment about the usage of American cavalry in an article written after the war in the *Journal of the United States Cavalry Association*, he stated, "The American theory for the employment of cavalry is correct, and Allied cavalry would have been of even greater use in the early months of the war if it had been trained as American cavalry is trained."[82] These two points alone still drove home the American commanders resistance to change and their insatiable tendencies to drive up the casualties of their own men just to prove their antiquated ideology of warfare.

It had become apparent to those in the lower echelons of the American Expeditionary Force that there was something seriously wrong with the command structure, and even worse the battlefield doctrine being pushed by the command structure. Time and time again American commanders pushed their infantry forward without the usage of proper heavy artillery with the same consequences. This type of behavior would constitute insanity. However, when junior officers raised concerns, such as Colonel Badcock about the usage of artillery or diverting from the original battleplans they were immediate relieved. There was no room in the American Army for officers who disobeyed or disagreed with their superior officers. Senior command, to include

---

[81] Bullard, *Personalities and Reminiscences of War*, pg. 220.
[82] Gen. John J. Pershing, "A Message to the Cavalry" in Journal of the United States Cavalry Association Vol. 29 No. 119 (April 1920): pg. 6

General Pershing still toyed with the ill-fated reality of the omnipotent American riflemen, where their superior marksmanship could still carry the day. This was a delusional sentiment given that many infantry regiments left the United States for France rarely received any rifle training at all. The very ideology of open warfare was to have mass amounts of soldiers capable of maneuvering freely in open terrain, a consistent wheel of motion. However, in France the idea of free mobility was nonexistent. Even though the Spring offenses by the Germans did bring back some mobility to the front, it did not take long for that momentum to be stopped and the norm of trench warfare to return. General Pershing was emboldened by Ludendorff's offensives and the return of mobility, however, what Pershing failed to grasp was the amount of artillery that was used to push the front line. It was not the German infantry that made the front lines move, but the number of shells dropped on British and French troops that allowed for the movement of German Stormtroopers.

Other issues arose with the usage of American artillery on the battlefield, the most prevalent was the sheer absence of American guns. The United States had failed to properly develop a howitzer for the Western Front, therefore, they had to rely upon the French and British for guns. Furthermore, if you fail to properly develop your own modern guns, you fail to overhaul and reform artillery doctrine and, in a fire centric war, artillery was king. Again, the Americans found themselves wanting, "Generally, the field artillery did not have the capabilities to provide such support. Even though commanders established observation posts manned by forward observers, attached field artillery liaison officers to the infantry, and used telephones, radios, and other means of communications, the unreliable technology, and inadequately trained officers and men hampered artillery and infantry coordination."[83] Without adequate fire support

[83] Dastrup, pg. 168

from artillery, the almighty American infantry had to rely upon their own means to advance into enemy territory, often with terrible, albeit, predictable results. The large size of the American infantry company, which comprises 250 soldiers, of which 200 where riflemen, minimized the potential for modulization. Both the French and Germans had downsized their infantry companies and adapted them to trench warfare. Such adaptations included both trench mortar units, small automatic riflemen, and grenadiers. All items and specialties the American infantry companies failed to utilize in any real numbers. Although the French Chauchat was as described by Colonel Badcock as, "this easily jammed and complicated piece of mechanism was soon discarded by the automatic riflemen,"[84] was at least something that could be used to help suppress German machine gun positions. Having something that worked sometimes was always better than not having anything at all. Eventually, American units would trade in their French weapons for the better and more reliable British Lewis Gun. It wasn't until late 1918 did American units start being equipped with the American made Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR) but it was never massed produced and saw little action in World War I.

As discussed in Chapter 7 the Officer Training Camps developed a big problem of micromanagement. Without an established Noncommissioned Officer school, and the rush to produce officers based upon outdated doctrine created a pool of unqualified, albeit dedicated officers who oversaw daily tasks that could have been delegated and handled by subordinate NCOs. Furthermore, the persistence of junior officers not being able to question orders given by their superiors continued to cause the unnecessary death of thousands of Doughboys. For example, the motto of the 165th Infantry Regiment, 42nd Rainbow Division (National Guard) was, "Never disobey and order, never lost a flag," these words were spoken to all the Company

[84] Conrad Babcock, pg. 75

commanders as they prepared an infantry assault with bayonets across a valley without artillery support.[85] Although the ground had been taken, almost all those company commanders were either killed or wounded at the end of the day.

During the Summer and into the Fall campaigns there would be no real serious reconsideration of American doctrine. In fact, even after the battles of Cantigny, Chateau-Thierry, Belleau Wood, and Soisson, close order drill was still a top priority of American officers. The II Corp Adjutant General published the following memorandum to each of the training battalions, "In compliance with previous instructions you will train all available men in your command in close order drill. physical exercise, gas, rifles, and bayonet instruction. Precision in drill, neatness in appearance, cleanliness in the camp, and strict discipline are of particular importance."[86] Any such re-evaluation of current doctrine and the number of losses suffered by American divisions would mean there was something fundamentally wrong with the AEFs commanders, especially General Pershing. Instead, blame would be pushed down to commanders who did not show enough 'aggression' on the battlefield, regardless of if they suffered 50% casualties and were without properly artillery support. Sentiments amongst the other allied nations was simply the Americans were crazy for fighting the way they did and continued to refuse proper help based upon their own national pride.

All the above issues would culminate in the deadliest battle the American Army would face both past and present. The Meuse-Argonne campaign would test the existing American doctrine and create a culture divide between senior officers and their subordinates. The continued

---

[85] Francis P. Duffy, *Father Duffy's Story: A Tale of Humor and Heroism, of Life and Death with the Fighting Sixty-Ninth*, (New York, George H. Doran Co., 1919): pg. 166.
[86] James J. Love, "230-50.5: Letter: Training of II Corps Replacement Battalion (August 8, 1918)" in The United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919: Training and Use of American Units with the British and French (vol. 3): pg. 170 (170-171).

social constructs between both would mean that the upper ranks of the command would remain unchanged as new units started rotating into France. New divisions that had arrived too late for the earlier campaigns would be the first ones that would fight in the Meuse-Argonne campaign. These divisions were unable to learn from their counterparts, unlike the now veteran AEF divisions, these green units were still heavily under the guise of old American doctrine. The terrain the AEF had been given was a labyrinth of forests, stamps, and almost impassable obstacles. Sergeant William Langer described his section of the front as, "The forest itself is a stretch of wild country some seventy kilometers long and about fifteen wide, consisting of thickly wooded steep hills and deep ravines or gullies, the whole being wonderfully adapted to ambuscades and machine-gun work."[87] Unlike previous sectors of the front, the area ahead of the AEF was well defended, a 'defense in depth' as the Germans called it. Consecutive lines of defenses and interlapping firing dominated the front. American Doughboys would have to earn every inch of ground they assaulted, and the price was blood. However, no matter how the average American trooper described the ground ahead of him to General Pershing it was a matter of national pride that would be taken, and at a ridiculous pace. His initial plan was divided into three separate phases with a near suicidal timeline. The German officer in charge of the sector directly adjacent to the AEF was General Max von Gallwitz who had built his defense well. The first line of defense was called the Etzel-Giselher Stellung, which included the fortified heights of Montfaucon. Four miles behind this was the second, and main line of resistance, the Kriemhilde Stellung. The final, and weakest, line of defense, five miles beyond the second line, was the Freya Stellung.[88] General Pershing believed his Army could advance and destroy the

[87] William L. Langer & Robert B. MacMullin, With "E" of the First Gas (Brooklyn, NY, Holton Printing Co., 1919): pg. 53
[88] Lief A. Torkelsen, "Battles Were Not Fought In Lines, pg. 237.

first set of entrenchments, the Etzel-Giselher Stellung within thirty-six hours, this phase included the taking of the Montfaucon heights. The second phase would encompass ten miles of ground and open a breakout through to the Sedan. As historian Edward Lengel rightly stated of Pershing's attack plan, "Confident that American soldiers were capable of deeds well beyond the reach of Europeans, he devised an attack timetable fit for an army of supermen."[89]

Pershing's most veteran divisions were still recovering from their summer campaigns and trying to regain their strength from employing outdated doctrine Pershing himself pushed upon them. Therefore, only three of the nine divisions (4th, 28th, and 77th) had seen real combat prior to the Meuse-Argonne. Furthermore, some of the divisions that were to be in the lead assaults had never worked with division artillery before leaving a huge command vacuum between who would be responsible for fire support once the attacks began.[90] As if these issues weren't enough and the AEF planners didn't have their hands full with battle preparations, Brigadier General Fiske (G-5) recalled 233 staff officers to attend the AEF staff college at Langres on the eve prior to the battle. Of those 233 staff officers, sixty-seven were from front line divisions slatted to be in the first wave of attack.[91] Colonel Badcock, who at this time in the war had become an exception to the rule in the mind of his superiors was given such an order prior to his unit fighting at Soisson. He stated once he received the order, "Imagine a training system that contemplated training officers who had just completed five days of most exacting and practical combat fighting, at a corps school where the instructors were totally ignorant of real fighting. In my half-starved exhausted condition, I think I tore that order to pieces."[92] The AEF hierarchy

---

[89] Edward G. Lengel, To Conquer Hell: The Meuse-Argonne, 1918 (New York, Henry Holt & Co., 2008), pg. 61.
[90] American Battle Monuments Commission, American Armies and Battlefields in Europe, pg. 173.
[91] Steven Rabalais, General Fox Connor: Pershing's Chief of Operations and Eisenhower's Mentor (Philadelphia, Casemate, 2017): pg. 126
911 Cooke, pg. 124.
[92] Conrad Babcock, pg. 103.

had created within itself a set piece of statistically beliefs that they knew better than the combat troops they were teaching. That somehow practical experience trumped theoretical training. One of the few standout and masterful pieces of planning came from Colonel Marshall, who had very little time to plan and execute the movement of the assault divisions from St. Mihiel to the Meuse-Argonne. By the night of the 25th of September 1918, the AEF was ready to step off behind massed artillery and for the first time, as an independent American Army.

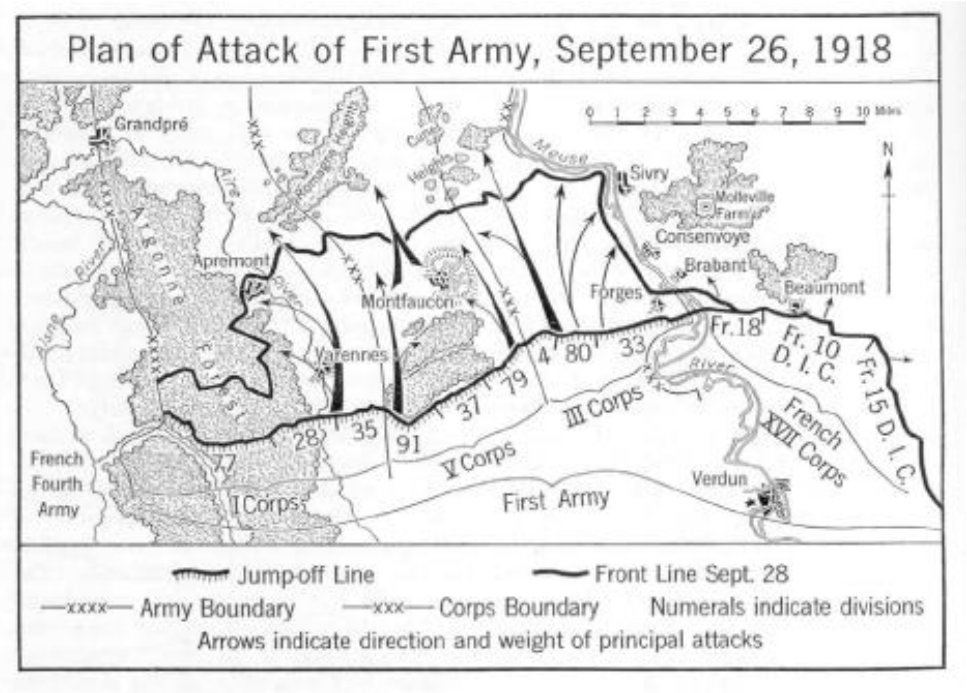


Figure 22. AEF plan of attack of First Army, Meuse-Argonne, 26 September 1918.

On the morning of the 26th of September more than 3900 guns began their barrage of enemy positions, and at 5:30am the infantry surged from their trenches behind the scheduled rolling barrage. Almost immediately problems in communication, timetables, and ineffective leadership between infantry and artillery started to hinder the advancement of troops:

> The barrage ran away from the infantry at times because the foot soldiers had difficulties moving. Commenting on this, Major General William S. McNair, First Army, AEF, Artillery Chief, exclaimed in December 1918 that the rate of four minutes per one hundred meters was too rapid for crossing the broken terrain. This forced the field artillery to shell points that had already

been fired on by the rolling barrage. Although the field artillery had observers and liaison officers attached to the infantry, it usually received no information from the front line or obtained it too late because of poor communications. As a result, gun crews depended upon rigid map firing. This reduced the field artillery's ability to adjust to changing conditions and limited its usefulness.[93]

However, the men of the AEF did make considerable gains within the first few hours of the operation, that was until they reached the Montfaucon heights. Here the resistance of German defenders and the green soldiers of the 79th Division started to unravel themselves. Some units advanced quicker than others and had bypassed hidden German machine gun positions which gladly opened fire on these units' flanks, as well as the support units sent to assist in the advance. Furthermore, individual regiments of the division started intermingling with each other and soon their commanders could not control their individual companies and battalions, as one French liaison to the 79th staff noted, "the division was not a body of troops but a mob."[94] On the 79th right was the veteran 4th Division who had advanced much further than the 79th even surpassing Montfaucon. Furthermore, on the left of the 79th was the National Guard 36th Division who was by nightfall in a position to assist, however, a German counterattack had pushed the Buckeyes back leaving only the 4th Division in a position to help the stalled 79th. General John L. Hines, the 4th Division commander like Colonel Badcock, was a real tactician and decided the only way to help the 79th Division was to break from AEF standing orders and detach one of his brigades to attack west and cut-off the Germans at the heights. However, his plan went against a long-standing AEF order for units assigned to different Corps to not pass prescribed boundary lines. And since the 4th Division belonged to III Corps and the 79th belonged to V Corp General Hines solution was denied.[95] The denial for this maneuver came from III Corps Chief of Staff General

[93] Dastrup, pg. 172.
[94] Maj. Paul Allegrini in Fax, pg. 213.
[95] American Battle Monuments Commission, American Armies and Battlefields in Europe, pg. 172.

Alfred W. Bjornstad. He much like Pershing and Bullard were firm believers in the old system of infantry in the attack. Even so much that General Bjornstad was one of the authors of the *Field Service Regulation* and even taught at the General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth prior to the war. He did not believe in the fluidity of warfare and therefore denied any adaptation of standing orders. Instead, he instructed General Hines to press his attack forward and not to deviate from what had already been given. What ultimately saved the 79th from advancing against the heights was the German commander ordered his troops off the summit due to reports of being surrounded by American soldiers.

Although a small victory for the doughboys it was nothing short of laziness by Pershing standards. His impossible timeline was being stretched to the limits and officers were to pay the price. Hugh Drum, First Army Chief of Staff would say the following regarding General Pershing's attitude towards the attack, "[T]here should be no delay or hesitation in going forward… All officers will push their units forward with all possible energy. Corps and division commanders will not hesitate to relieve on the spot any officer of whatever rank who fails to show in this emergency those qualities of leadership required to accomplish the task that confronts us."[96] Unfortunately, the troopers of the battered 79th Division would linger on for the next several days, losing over 5,000 casualties it was rumored after it was relieved that instead of rebuilding the division it would be easier to dissolve it. In true fashion another green division, the 35th Division (National Guard) would simply rinse and repeat the same failed formations in their attack. A division soldier wrote this about the formations used during the 35th Division attack, "The formation of the battalion in attack bore a strong resemblance to the Macedonian phalanx

[96] Col. Hugh A. Drum, "191-32.13: Letter (September 27, 1918)" in The United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919: Military Operations of the American Expeditionary Forces (vol. 9), (Washington, D.C., Center for Military History, 1990): pg. 138-40.

or Roman legion, a block of men in rigid formation eight deep… Like our ancient predecessors our objective was to punch holes in our adversaries with our points. Our only concession to the power of modern weapons was dispersion[.]"[97] Commanders were starting to understand if they played this game of war by their prewar standards more and more of their men would be slaughtered, there was room for improvement, but none really dared to seek it.

The initial timeline of thirty-six hours to complete the first phase of General Pershing's plan had now turned into four days with still no end in sight. The large American divisions were becoming more and more entangled and hard to handle. Not only did commanders face issues on the front, but also their rear echelons fell victims to the unforgiving terrain of the Meuse-Argonne. Historian Edward Drea described the scene in the 4th Division's rear area:

> Chaos ensued as everyone tried to use the few trafficable routes between the front and rear. Battlefield evacuation of wounded was a special problem. Each division had a sanitary train with a field hospital section and ambulance section consisting of 12 mule drawn ambulances and 36 motor vehicles. These not only proved wholly insufficient for offensive operations, but also clogged resupply routes as they competed for the same routes as the trucks carrying supplies forward to the advancing troops.[98]

As the troops of the American divisions trudged through the forest and swamps of the battlefield day and night, progress was being made. However, the strict code of not crossing divisional boundaries plagued unit commanders and inhibited them from helped stalled or stranded comrades. Finally, the commander of I Corps, General Hunter Liggett had enough and issued an order to all his division commander to help their neighbor division if able, which in all respects spit in the face of General Pershing ideology. For another painstakingly twelve days the

---

[97] Triplet, pg. 19.

[98] Edward J. Drea, Unit Reconstitution – A Historical Perspective (Ft. Leavenworth, KS, Combat Studies Institute of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1983): pg. 10.

soldiers of the American army pressed forwarded with little gains but mounting losses. General Bullard wrote after the October 4th attacks:

> Daily I heard reports of attacks by corps and divisions, but the gains were small and irregular and the losses too great for the results. In most of these attacks, both general and local, our infantry, on account of difficult ground, trenches, wire, and enemy machine gun nests, were unable to or did not follow closely our rolling barrage. These barrages did not annihilate the enemy. The enemy had learned to bury himself and, our barrage having passed over him, to rise from his pits and, with the skill of the old trained soldier, stop or slaughter our advancing infantry, coming too far behind the barrage. This is how in almost every instance our advances had come to a halt.[99]

It was even becoming apparent to Pershing allies that the old way of conducting war was no longer conducive to saving American lives. However, Pershing knew that his role as the senior commander of the American Army was in jeopardy, although he had brought over two million men to fight in France there was very little to show for his efforts. There was nobody above him so the blame for failures ultimately rested in his lap. It wasn't until late October that General Pershing reorganized the American Army and put some of its best commanders in roles that would ultimately lead to a success in the Meuse-Argonne. Once such move was to have General Hunter Liggett command 1st Army which in turn let Pershing assume the role of Army commander. Liggett set out to work immediately in reorganizing 1st Army and putting veteran commanders in charge of its divisions. Unlike his predecessors, Hunter Liggett did not believe in the invincibility of the American infantrymen, a further rare trait in an AEF commander, Hunger Ligget could learn from his mistakes. "I am under no patriotic illusion that one good American can whip any ten foreigners. I know, on the contrary, that one well-trained, well-led foreigner is much more likely to whip ten good but untrained Americans."[100] One of Liggett's first command decision was to coordinate a tactical 'pause' in the fighting. Each division was to hold the ground

---

[99] Bullard, *Personalities and Reminiscences of War*, pg. 275

[100] Hunter Liggett, *A.E.F.: Ten Years Ago, in France* (New York, Dodd Meade & Co., 1928): pg. 211

it had taken and take time to reorganize their units. This allowed for valuable resupply and the reassessment of current held lines for the artillery to analyze. Also, during this pause Liggett traveled to each of his divisions to take a firsthand account of their dispositions, "My staff and I traveled constantly among the troops, making every effort to profit by past mistakes[.]"[101]

Much like Liggett, General Bullard was starting to see the failings of the old school way of fighting. He had been promoted to command the 2nd Army and worked to restore that organization to a proper fighting strength. Bullard also took a personal look at the logistical infrastructure of this army and knew a rapid buildup of supplies and other materials was needed. Furthermore, he had his engineers work night and day to improve the dismal road network that was needed to carry the supplies of war to his divisions. Innovations from Liggett, Bullard, and other senior commanders started to flood into the division level. Soon battlefield doctrine was reformed into a more modern warfare stance. Unit sizes were reduced to allow for quicker and easier controlled attacks. Artillery doctrine was practically rewritten during the tactical pause which allowed for greater usage for the next big push.

> An innovation in the employment of the heavy artillery was introduced: Prior to the commencement of the attack, all sensitive points, known batteries, dumps, crossroads, etc., were systematically bombarded as usual. However, as the attack started, the mass of the army and corps artillery was employed in successive concentration fires which preceded the barrage fire of the divisions of the V and III Corps. The combination of these fires resulted in a danger zone of the front of these corps of 1,000 meters in depth. This fire was intense and extremely effective.[102]

[101] Ibid., 137.
[102] Army War College, "Report of First Army: The Second Operation, November 1-11, 1918 [Extract]" in The United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919: Military Operations of the American Expeditionary Forces (vol. 9): pg. 367

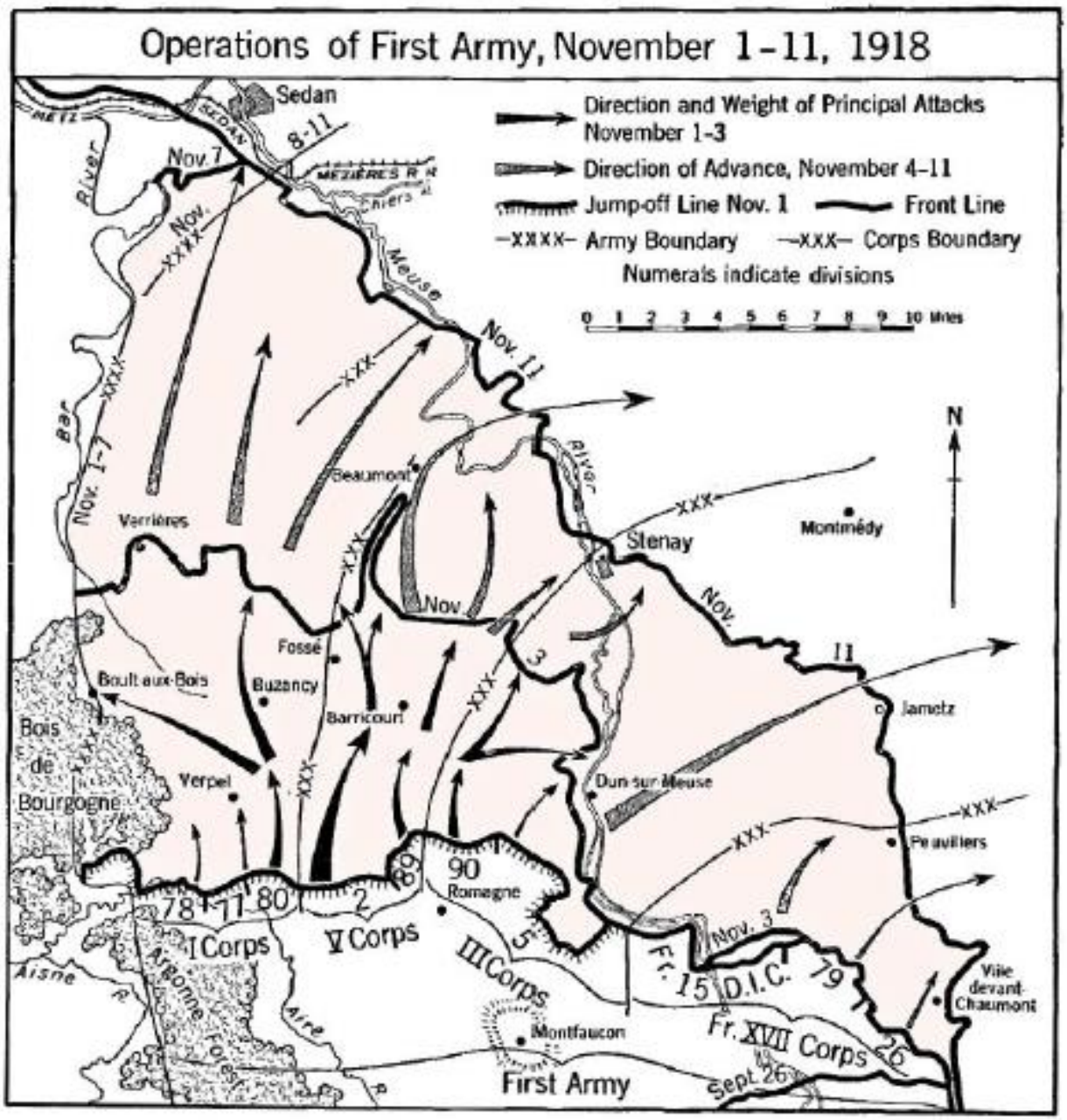


Figure 23. Operations of 1st Army 1-11 November 1918. Meuse-Argonne Campaign.

As the American Army again pushed against the German Army on November 1st the gains were more successful than the entire last month and a half of fighting. V Corps drove an astounding six miles on the first day and pushed the now depleted German Army back. By November 4th the German Army was in full retreat and had been effectively routed by the rejuvenated American Army, as Hunter Liggett stated, "And for the first time the army

functioned surely and smoothly as a unit."[103] In truth the American Army was able to bring more men to the fight, had they started to fight in 1914 like the Germans the outcome of the Meuse-Argonne campaign could have ended very differently. Pershing was able to succeed merely because he had more men to feed into the German meat grinder. It took considerable loss of men for Pershing to realize (although some say he never did) that change was needed if he wanted to win the war. Pershing was more than willing to sacrifice the men of the AEF to achieve his war goals, "He wanted leaders who were willing to push men forward, knowing that war was a matter of will above all, and that victory, in all its appalling carnage, goes to the side with the last push[.]"[104] It was no secret in the AEF that if officers failed to show gains for their attacks it could mean immediate dismal from the commander. This sentiment was carried by many of Pershing's senior officers, an example was Bullard's statement to one of his division commanders Major General Cronkhite whose 80th Division had suffered horrible losses trying to capture the German position of Bois des Ogons. When Cronkhite tried to protest another assault General Bullard berated him, "Give it up and you are a goner; you'll lose your command in twenty-four hours."[105] Reluctantly Cronkhite sent his men back in and was eventually successful in capturing the ground, Bullard rewarded Cronkhite with a promotion to Corps commander but the accolades to the men who fought for the ground was forever unknown.

There are many stories like the above of commanders unwilling to argue and go against standing orders from their superiors, often at the cost of thousands of lives. However, the attacks were made, and some were successful, but at what measure is still yet to be determined. Although the Meuse-Argonne is listed as a victory in the anvils of American military history it

[103] Liggett, pg. 224.
[104] Johnson & Hillman Jr., pg. 138.
[105] Bullard, *Personalities and Reminiscences of War*, pg. 276.

stands in contrast to the determination of a single man's policy to drive to victory regardless of the cost of human lives. The shinning parallel was the eventual rewriting of prewar doctrine during the chaos of the Meuse-Argonne and other campaigns of the Western Front. Officers such as Liggett, Badcock, and others dared to question the sense of their commanders intent and try to preserve life instead of foolishly sending young boys to die. These individuals were the true architect of future doctrine of some which is still utilized in today's Army.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

How do you measure the success or failure of a certain thing? Are failings/successes held to the individual, individuals, or a collective group? It has always been a paradox between World War I historians as where the actual blame for the high casualties and inability of leadership to adapt their doctrine to modern warfare. Of course, the key person who oversees adapting doctrine would fall upon the shoulders of General John J. Pershing, and to not be remise, some of the blame should stop with him. However, to put the entire blame on General Pershing would be a wholeheartedly dishonest assessment of his overall role as AEF commander. There were plenty of examples of top AEF leadership who both propitiated Pershing's ideology and a few officers chose to oppose it. General Pershing was a man of his time, raised and lectured on the ideology of American militarism. The once undisputed reputation of the American infantrymen was found wanting on the World War I battlefield. Their persona has been replaced by large caliber artillery and machine gun fire. What once was an iconic foundation of American military doctrine was just another casualty buried in the mud of the trenches of the Western Front.

AEF historian, David Trask, writes the following regarding General Pershing's leadership prowess, "Pershing's stubborn self-righteousness, his unwillingness to correct initial misconceptions such as those that marred the doctrine and training of the AEF, and his stormy relationship with Allied military and civilian leaders hurt the AEF."[1] A very straight pointed statement and accusation that even until this day is still largely perpetuation as the truth of the failings of the AEF. However, a single man can hardly take the entirety of the blame, in fact, a system of shortcuts and limitations at the upper levels of the War Department also led to the

[1] Donald F. Trask, *The AEF and Coalition Warmaking, 1917-1918* (Lawrence, KS, University of Kansas Press, 1993): pg. 176.

great loss of life in the AEF. A key aspect to General Pershing's attitude was his unwavering concept of holding onto the past and not being able to adapt his army to modern warfare. The American Expeditionary Force and ultimately the United States Army was successful in France due to their large number of fresh troops they were able to funnel into the trenches. Make no mistake, the men of the AEF fought valiantly and ferociously in the trenches as even described by not only their French allies, but also the Germans as well. Two points of view from the German perspective point to a great flaw within the hierarchy of the AEF leadership:

> Aside from their limited combat experience, the combat value of the Americans suffers from faulty and too brief training … Exercises involving the combined arms and employing units larger than battalion have not even conducted in any division. In most divisions the exercises were only in company strength. In the battles so far, little was noticeable of the influences of the command, of systematic employment of reserves for counterattack or of coordinated action of infantry and artillery.[2]

> The American advance…betrayed a great lack of skill in the movement of the support waves following in dense formations over the terrain…. The command is extremely bad and without initiative. The enemy has obviously many officers, but they all lack an aptitude of command.[3]

The French understood the absolute power the American Army could had been if properly training and supplied. The French would continuously try to help the AEF to better understand just how much warfare had changed, however, they were usually met with the same ridiculous tyrant of AEF officers and the notion of how superior their organization was. "The troops were very courageously led [by officers] with a total misunderstanding of the war, but [with] absolute bravery."[4] The Americans seemed to go into battle with a mystical understanding of what warfare was compared to what it factually was. However, it wasn't the fault of the average American soldier, these young men did exactly what they had been trained to do. They

---

[2] Report of Section for Foreign Armies, German General Staff, 31 July 1918.
[3] Intelligence Officer, German Army Detachment C, St. Mihiel, Sept 1918.
[4] Report of French Liaison officers assigned to the 77th Division, 24 August 1918.

had embodied the whole total concept of the invincibility of the American infantryman and never had a doubt that victory would be achieved by them on the battlefield. Therefore, when the Americans finally entered the trenches, they were totally shocked at what was truly expected of them. A report from another French Liaison officer, this time assigned to the 6th Division stated the following of the American illusion of victory, "Morale is very high and everyone, in this sphere, expresses the will to win. Almost everything seems to be carried by a certain mystical faith in victory. They are convinced that they are fighting for the freedom of the whole world, and that they must punish the Boche crimes. This high-level idea of the US Army's mission is a powerful lever for training, and leadership in battle."[5] Nothing can be as close as this statement when it comes the average American fighting man, they believed they were "making the world safe for democracy."

However, that still doesn't explain the total lack of judgement of the senior AEF officers and their ultimate decision to wage a war of mobility rather than to adapt the methods of the French and British. Stubborn leadership only scratches the surface, therefore, leading to other major fundamental breakdowns across the entire spectrum of military planning. Although the United States did not enter the war until April 1917 the Army War College, War Department, and General Staff had been flooded with a plethora of knowledge of modern warfare which all unanimously decided to ignore. Military planners never fully understood that they would have to change the methods of military planning to adopt this new type of warfare. However, an interesting impasse seen of the Western Front was its seemingly singular point of view when it came to warfare. Stalemate fighting and trench warfare was not a new concept within in greater spectrum of war, however, the inability to flank the enemy was. The Eastern Front represented

[5] Report of French Liaison officer assigned to 6th Division, 19 August 1918.

what prior warfare had been, large moving armies all attacking strategic points on the battlefield. Furthermore, prior to the First World War the advent of the same type of weapons, i.e., machine guns, large caliber artillery, etc. was something that had been utilized in other conflicts to great success without having a trench atmosphere. Furthermore, trenches were not new either, for as long as there had been warfare, trenches were a great part of it all. Finally, military planners had seen mobility return to France after the German Spring offenses of 1918, therefore, only solidifying their beliefs that open warfare far exceeded their allied counterpart's battlefield doctrine.

However, where the AEF planners broke down and ultimately sealed the fate of thousands of American soldiers was their inability to project future war planning within the confines of the Western Front. Leaders, especially Pershing, should have seen that even with the marginal successes of the Spring offenses that even they were stopped with the adaptation of trenches with reinforced massed artillery. They had been no pre-war doctrine discussion, no revisions, and certainly no reforms within the American military model prior to 1918 except a few minor changes with very little warfare significance. For example, the Root Reforms of 1903 were meant to bring a new progressive way of thinking into the War Department. With the creation of the War College as the pinnacle of military education and serve as the frontier of military knowledge and forethought. Along with the General Staff, the War College failed to recognize the changing times, moreover, and perhaps even a greater detriment these two entities failed to assimilate the latest information on modern warfare from both the French and British. However, it wasn't always this bad, and it could even be seen that the United States Army prior to World War I was built exactly how the nation needed it. A small constabulary army that was able to cope with the conflicts they found themselves in. Training and doctrine were heavily

centralized under the direction of a single commander, it had worked in the American Civil War and in the Spanish-American War so why were any changes needed? The inherent handicap of such a system did not allow for a vast amount of modulization within the military structure itself, therefore, leading to slow progression amongst the individual units of the military.

During the time the AEF was in France a radical change was needed to help bridge the gap between what war truly was, and how the senior leaders of the AEF thought war was. Doctrine and training still prevailed against the idea of the frontal assault with little artillery support, therefore leading to a strengthening of pre-war army doctrine. Men of the AEF were immediately indoctrinated with the same type of training their ancestors who fought in wars a mere 50 years prior. It led to deficiencies, faulty training, and above all, a senior command willing to send their soldiers into combat with the vigor of appeasing their leadership. These men were not hardened veterans with years of training and experience, they were young volunteers eager to fight for their country, they had been betrayed by the ideology of their senior command. After the war was over the War Department and War College began looking at all the battlefield data to help comprise and reform the American Army's post-war doctrine, however, it served to only sustain the pre-war doctrine of open warfare and to perpetuate the American way of conducting wars in the future. "The AEF's brief, intense period of combat did not generate the wholesale changes in doctrine or organization that occurred in the European armies but, instead, served to reinforce the concept of the "American Way of War" brought to Europe by the AEF. The U.S. suffered from a case of "victor's syndrome" that tended to ignore many of the difficulties that the AEF encountered and dwelt on the triumph of American arms. This attitude adversely affected the Army when it began to evaluate the combat experiences from the war."[6]

[6] Kenneth Finlayson, *An Uncertain Trumpet: The Evolution of U.S. Army Infantry Doctrine, 1919-1941* (Westport, CT, Greenwood Press, 2001): pg. 51.

Just as with Keeneth Finlayson's quote above military historian William Odom stated in his book, *After the Trenches:* "American battlefield victories and Germany's relatively quick capitulation after the reintroduction open warfare methods seemed to confirm the superiority of the so-called 'American doctrine'"[7] However, with thousands of dead in fruitless attempts to take a German machine gun from the front tends to beg a different approach to what the American doctrine truly accomplished.

However, as previously stated, the blame cannot lay on the shoulders of a single individual or even a single institution, but rather a collection of individuals or institutions played their part, either significant or not. For their part the United States government handicapped the US Army in its preparation for war, giving military planners very little time once war was declared to get an army capable of fighting in Europe ready for such an endeavor. President Woodrow Wilson continually told the people of the United States that the country would continue its policy of isolationism, however, as discussed that was merely in word but not deed. President Wilson continued to move war material to the allied powers but would have been willing to give those same materials to the Central Powers if it weren't for the British blockade. Furthermore, President Wilson, along with others in his cabinet continuously fought against the growing of the army. Any such provisions for preparedness would come at the expense of 'defense' of the nation rather than an offensive army going to Europe. Continued back and forth diplomacy only furthered the distance the United States government and the prospect of war in Europe. Therefore, the War Department continued business as usual, it created a professional, albeit small class of soldiers and officers whose main interest was focusing on a professional career in the military. It was a great fallacy that the US government did not allow for future

[7] William O. Odom, *After the Trenches: The Transformation of U.S. Army Doctrine, 1918-1939* (College Station, TX, Texas A&M University Press, 1999): pg. 25.

conflicts to be more closely looked at by the War College or War Department. However, given the latter two's track record of forwarding information and formulating new doctrine perhaps the status-quo would have stayed the same. President Wilson wanted to be the great peacemaker in the world. When giving his left and right limits to General Pershing the main theme was the establishment of an independent American Army. The idea of working closely with the other allied armies had been mentioned but barred very little emphases as the creation of the American Army. If these men were to truly fight for making the world safe for democracy, did it really matter if their army fought as an independent unit or not?

One item that could never be questioned was the bravery of the individual fighting man of the American Expeditionary Force. These men were poorly trained, and even more poorly led, but still they rose out of the trenches and fought the German army face to face. The men of each battalion, regiment, brigade, and division had performed their duty to the best of their knowledge and training. Eventually winning great victories, however, at the cost of thousands. Ernst Junger, a German infantry officer wrote in his journal in July 1918 about the arriving American soldiers, "Today as I stood in front of my hut and B. ended a long talk with these words – 'The show is up. You can be sure of that. Now it is the Americans' turn and they will go for it as we did in 1914' – I had a peculiar feeling. I can say that without hesitation for the first time in the war the thought came to me without disguise, 'Suppose then we lose the war…'"[8] Their moral was high, they wanted to fight for their country, they felt obligated to fight which is why the Selective Service Act was such a huge success. However, it was their willingness to adapt to the changing environment that each of the doughboys found themselves that enabled them to win. One of Colonel Walter Witman's company commanders of the 325th Infantry Regiment stated this after

[8] Ernst Jünger, *Corpse 125: A Chronicle from the Trench Warfare of 1918* (New York, Howard Fertig Inc., 2003 (orig. 1930): pg. 171-72.

the war, “The military government of the United States has nothing to be proud of because of victories won on the Meuse-Argonne Front[.]” Rather, victory was “because of the courageous and unskilled heroic efforts displayed by her soldiers, and that her numerical strength was greater than the effective bullets of the enemy.”[9] The victory in France for the American soldier rests upon their shoulders, however, far too many times their superiors would take all the credit and disperse all the blame. Time after time, attempts to introduce American pre-war doctrine into modern war resulted in an enormous loss of life for American soldiers. It was the lower enlisted and junior officers who time and time again rewrote doctrine, often under fire, that saved countless American lives. Innovation and adaptation to French and British tactics, the usage of allied weaponry such as artillery, tanks, planes, and machine guns all helped propel the American Army into a fighting force capable of continental fighting.

Although the victory doesn’t rest upon a single man in the AEF, and by no small measure did senior AEF commanders try to embody the hard-earned victory as their own, however, these young men were shown just how important they were. These young men were treated as mere cannon fodder and simple tools of diplomacy. Their senior commanders and government officials continuously utilized the average doughboy as a political or tactical football. Countless men were thrown upon German machine guns and all their commanders could do was simply order the next wave of men forward. The very ideology of the American Army was to never disobey the orders of those appointed over you, the very cultural strands of the professional officer were shrouded in an invisible field of righteousness. Or so they believed at least.

The truth was the individual assigned to the highest levels of command with the AEF couldn’t see past their own failures and merely blamed the junior officers and men for not being

[9] Edward G. Lengel, *To Conquer Hell: The Meuse-Argonne, 1918* (New York, Henry Holt & Co., 2008): pg. 373.

able to accomplish the orders and tasks given to them. The success of the different campaigns in France resulted in a plethora of self-congratulations that made any looking back or true in-depth examination of the fighting or methods used inconsequential. In no small comparison the French's point of view stood only to bolster the ego of American officers, "No doubt, we will be able to sustain the shock, but to regain the lost ground and to triumph definitively, we need the help of the American army … They are at the front and fighting like lions; they lack a bit of experience, but still, they will be of great service to the cause of the Allies because they are brave."[10]

However, there would be little doubt about just how much the American Army had learned in France and the new reforms they undertook after the First World War. Once home the Army War College and War Department looked at what had happened in France and wondered if their pre-war doctrine needed to be altered to include valuable lessons learned in France. It was soon apparent after the publication of the 1924 *Field Service Regulation* that nothing had changed, and the War Department, along with the General Staff and War College agreed that the superior fighting of the American infantryman along with his insatiable zeal in offensive combat could carry any foreign army and their defensive positions. Although some advocates in the upper ranks of the AEF still pushed for firepower over infantry, the 1924 *FSR* failed to deliver any real advantageous doctrine for them:

> Infantry is essentially the arm of close combat. This role rather than the nature of its armament distinguishes the infantry as a combatant arm … Infantry fighting power rests upon the basis of moral … It is the special duty of the higher command to stimulate and cultivate the fighting spirit, aggressiveness, and initiative of the infantry soldier.[11]

---

[10] The French Soldier's opinion of the Americans, 15 May to 15 June 1918," French Army Censor Department.

[11] US War Department Document, *Field Service Regulations, United States Army, 1923,* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1924): pg. 11.

"Infantry alone thus possesses the power to close with the enemy and enforce the decision in battle. Its forward movement is the indispensable condition of victory."[12]

It is hard to argue the senior staff of the Army still previewed the infantry as the sole arm of the military, everybody else was just an auxiliary, used to augment the infantry in battle. However, there was a respite from the above statements that gave firepower, other than infantry weapons, a greater role within the Army, however, it would fall short due to its reliance on senior staff to utilize this firepower to its full devastating potential:

> No one arm wins battles. The combined employment of all arms is essential to success … It is the task of higher commanders to coordinate and direct the action of each army with a view to the most efficient exploitation of its powers and the adoptions to the ends sought … The special mission of the other arms are derived from the powers to contribute to the execution of the infantry mission.[13]

The war ended just a year and a half after the entrance of the American Army. The United States was able to field an army of over four million men and sent just over two million to France. At its finale the war had claimed roughly 320,000 casualties of the American Army, with an approximate 53,000 killed in action and a further 63,000 deaths related to non-combat incidents, to include deaths related to the Spanish Influenza. While the deaths of the American army pale in comparison to other nations it stands to say the United States Army was in no way capable of fighting a continental war. Most of the losses could be attributed to the poor leadership of the senior staff of the AEF, furthermore, driving the specific open war ideology, junior officers bred a culture of questionless control over their organizations. However, the standouts who chose to question the practicality of pre-war doctrine stood in contrast to their zombie-like peers. Understanding that war had changed in a very dramatic way, these officers understood the complexity of a fluid battlefield and even further incorporated different methods

[12] Ibid., 12
[13] Ibid., 11.

of fighting. These men and many like them were the true victors of France, they understood that war had changed and in order for them and their men to survive they had better change as well. In the end American doctrine, as previously mentioned, changed very little between both wars. However, the one ideology the American Army had on its side was nothing more than sheer determination of its fighting men to fight for what they believed in. Regardless of the situation these men of the American Army went willingly into the fray, they fought like animals and continued to fight until the war was over. When they returned home another fight was waiting for them, this time a fight of benefits they believed they had earned, and rightfully so they had. Known as the Bonus Expeditionary Force or Bonus Army, returning veterans from France were not compensated for their service to the country. Soon, demonstrations in major cities across the nation involving the nations veterans demanded their justified compensation. President Coolidge stated, "patriotism … bought and paid for its not patriotism."[14] The budget conscience congress eventually overruled Coolidge began a payout to veterans; however, the payout was in bonds rather than cash as previously promised. Many returning soldiers, who had left good jobs prior to the war found themselves being homeless and struggling to survive all over again. It wouldn't be until 1936 that veterans of the First World War would finally be granted their cash bonuses and only after the Great Depression had devastated the nation.

[14] David Woodward, *The American Army*, pg. 388.

Bibliography:

Archival Sources:

"A Colloquy with a Group of Antipreparedness Leaders," May 8, 1916, *Papers of Woodrow Wilson,* vol. 36.

Aitken to mother, April 16, 1918, *WWIS.*

An Account of my Personal Experience in World War I," April 1, 1963, as recorded in the World War I Survey (WWIS).

An Officer Abroad, "Notes on the European War" in *Journal of the United States Cavalry* Association Vol. 26. No 107 (July 1915).

André Tardieu, Notes sur les États-Unis : la société, la politique, la diplomatie (Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1908) "L'Américain a le sentiment que son pays est [must be "est"] un monde et que ce monde peut se suffire à lui seul. Ce que se passe au loin sur le champ rétréci de la vielle Europe ne l'intéresse guère."

Bliss to Baker, May 25, 1917. Papers of Tasker Bliss, Library of Congress.

Bliss to U.S. Army Chief of Staff Hugh Scott (May 4, 1917).

Bridges to Kuhn, 1917.

Capt. Ernest D. Scott, "Notes on the German Maneuvers" in *The Field Artillery Journal* Vol. 2 No 2. (April-June 1912).

Col. Harold B. Fiske, "General Headquarters, American Expeditionary Forces, Memorandum to the Chief of Staff, Subject: Training" (July 4, 1918)), United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919: Reports of the Commander-in-Chief, the Staff Sections and Services (vol. 14) (Washington, D.C., Center for Military History, 1988).

Col. James Logan, "Organization of Replacement Battalions, 1st Section General Staff, AEF HQ (June 26, 1918)" in AEF Policy Documents (vol. 1) (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1949).

Committee on Military Affairs, January 10, 1916, quoted in "Report of the Chief of Staff," in *War Department Annual Report,* 1916, vol. 1.

Congressional Record, Folder 7, Pershing Papers. Manuscript Room, Library of Congress.

David Lloyd George, *War Memoirs* (n.d.), vol II.

Edward Mandell House to Walter Hines Page, August 4, 1915, *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson Digital Edition.* Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, Rotunda, 2017. Vol. 34, July 21 – September 30, 1915.

Fort Sheridan Association, *History and Achievements.*

Green to W.T. Sherman, March 13, 1878, W.T. Sherman Papers, Library of Congress, Box 47A.

Hugh S. Johnson, memo to Pershing. Pershing Papers, Manuscript Room, Library of Congress.

Immigrants in the Progressive Era, Library of Congress.

Instructions on the Offensive Conduct of Small Units (translated from the French and edited by the U.S. Army War College) (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1917).

Intelligence Officer, German Army Detachment C, St. Mihiel, Sept 1918.

Maj. Clyde Sinclair Ford. "The Balkan Wars: Being a Series of Lectures Deliver at the Army Service Schools, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas." Ft. Leavenworth, KS, Press of the Army Service Schools, 1915.

Maj. Harold B. Fiske, "Notes on Infantry", Lecture Delivered to Provisional Second Lieutenants on January 29,1917 at Ft. Leavenworth, KS (Army Service Schools Press).

Major George Shelton, "The Organization of the Land Forces of the United States," *Infantry Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (July-August 1912).

Memoranda by Grey to Bertie, February 17 and 22, 1916, FO 800/181, NA.

Memorandum from Pétain to House.

Memoranda by Grey to Bertie, February 17 and 22, 1916, FO 800/181, NA.

Ministry of Munitions, Phipps to Foreign Office, July 4, 1917, Public Records Office, Foreign Office 371/3115/133535/29503.

"Officer's European Expenses" in *Army and Navy Register* Vol. 56. No 1791 (November 14, 1914).

Papers of Woodrow Wilson, Digital Edition. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, Rotunda, 2017. Vol. 36, pg. 321.

Papers of Woodrow Wilson, Digital Edition. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, Rotunda, 2017. Vol. 41, April 17 – July 21, 1915, pg. 111-112.

Papers of Woodrow Wilson, Digital Edition. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, Rotunda, 2017. Vol. 40, April 17 – July 21, 1915, pg. 67-70.

Papers of Woodrow Wilson, Vol. 31, *Digital Edition.* Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, Rotunda, 2017. Vol. 33, April 17 – July 21, 1915, pg. 227-28.

President Woodrow Wilson to Herbert Bruce Brougham, May 10, 1915. *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson Digital Edition.* Vol. 33.

President Theodore Roosevelt, State of the Union Address, 1905. Library of Congress.

Scientific American Sept 15, 1914.

Report of Section for Foreign Armies, German General Staff, 31 July 1918.

Report of French Liaison officers assigned to the 77th Division, 24 August 1918.

Report of French Liaison officer assigned to 6th Division, 19 August 1918.

Second Report of the Provost Marshal General to the Secretary of War on the Operations of the Selective Service System to December 20, 1918, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1919).

"Study of the Cost of the Army of the United States as Compared with the Cost of the Armies of Other Nations," November 1915. War College Division 9053-120 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1916).

Squier, "Memorandum for the Ambassador, Subject: Interview with Field Marshal Earl Kitchener, Secretary of State for War, London, April 27, 1916," Baker Papers.

Tasker H. Bliss, draft of an article, Jan. 1923. Bliss Papers, Library of Congress, Box 274.

Tasker Bliss Papers, Stanford University Archives Box 1 & 2 M2123.

Thomas Hutchison. "An American Soldier Under the Greek Flag at Bezanie: A Thrilling Story of the Siege of Bezanie by the Greek Army, In Epirus, During the War in the Balkans." Nashville, Greek American Publishing Co., 1913.

The History of the Ministry of Munitions (H.M.S.O., 1924) for the dismal story of tank production in 1915-18.

The Important Elements in Modern Land Conflicts, Tasker Bliss Papers, Stanford University Box 1. M2123.

Walter Hines Page to Woodrow Wilson, July 15, 1915, *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson Digital Edition.* Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, Rotunda, 2017. Vol. 33, April 17 – July 21, 1915.

War Committee, February 22, 1916, CAB 42/9/3.

Walser diary entry, February 19, 1918, IWM 80/25/1.

Wilde, Oscar. *Impressions of America* (edited by Stuart Mason) Sunderland, Keystone Press, 1906.

William G. McAdoo to Woodrow Wilson, July 10, 1917, in Aruther Link, ed., *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson* 69 vols. (Princeton, N.J., 1966-94).

Woodrow Wilson speech, Jackson Day, January 8, 1915.

Woodrow Wilson to William Jennings Bryan June 6, 1915, *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson Digital Edition.* Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, Rotunda, 2017. Vol. 33, April 17 – July 21, 1915, pg. 349.

Viscount Northcliff to Arther James Balfour, July 31, 1917, Public Record Office, Colonial Office 687/34.

Primary Sources:

2d Div.: 6th Marines: 202-32.16: Field Message (June 8, 1918)" in The United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919: Military Operations of the American Expeditionary Forces (vol. 4).

3rd Bureau, XX Army Corps (French), "Special Orders No. 235 (July 19, 1918)" in The United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919: Military Operations of the American Expeditionary Forces (vol. 5).

American Battle Monuments Commission, American Armies and Battlefields in Europe.

Army War College, "Report of First Army: The Second Operation, November 1-11, 1918 [Extract]" in The United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919: Military Operations of the American Expeditionary Forces (vol. 9).

Ayres, Leonard P. *The War with Germany: A Statistical Summary.* Washington: Government Printing Office, 1916.

Captain Joseph Dickman, "Experiences in China" in *Journal of the United States Cavalry Association,* Vol. 13 No. 45 (July 1902).

Captain William Wallace, “Our Military Decline” in *Infantry Journal* vol. 9 No. 5 (March-April 1913).

Capt. Carl Reichmann, 17th Infantry, “Chances in War,” *Infantry Journal* III, (July, 1906).

Carl von Clausewitz (trans. By Michael Howard and Peter Paret), On War (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1984).

Charles Seymour (ed), *The intimate Papers of Colonel House,* (Boston, Massachusetts.: Houghton Mifflin, 1926-28), Vol. 2.

Colonel H.A. Toulin, *With Pershing in Mexico*. Harrisburg, PA. The Military Service Publishing Co., 1935.

Colonel James Regan, “Remarks Upon Tactics, With Reference to Our Infantry Drill Regulations” in *Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States* Vol. 36 No. 135 (May-June 1905).

Col. Hugh A. Drum, “191-32.13: Letter (September 27, 1918)” in The United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919: Military Operations of the American Expeditionary Forces (vol. 9), (Washington, D.C., Center for Military History, 1990).

Compton, T. E. "VERDUN and the Somme." *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution* 62 (Feb 01, 1917).

Duffy, Francis P., *Father Duffy’s Story: A Tale of Humor and Heroism, of Life and Death with the Fighting Sixty-Ninth.* New York, George H. Doran Co., 1919.

Editorial, “The Turco-Balkan War” in *Infantry Journal* Vol 9. No. 4 (January-February 1913).

Elihu Root quoted in “Mr. Root at Canton” in *Army and Navy Register* Vol. 33, No, 1206, (January31, 1903).

General Headquarters, AEF, “The General Principles Governing the Training of Units of the American Expeditionary Forces (April 9, 1918)” in AEF Policy Documents (vol. 2)

Gen. John J. Pershing, “Memorandum (September 5, 1918)” in AEF Policy Documents (vol.1).

Gen. John J. Pershing, “A Message to the Cavalry” in *Journal of the United States Cavalry Association* Vol. 29 No. 119 (April 1920).

Gen. Omar Bundy, “G-3. GHQ: C-in-C Rept. File: Fldr. 112-C2: Operations Report (June 6, 1918)” in The United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919: Military Operations of the American Expeditionary Forces (vol. 4).

Gen. Joseph Degoutte, "3rd Section, General Staff No. 97/P.C. (June 8, 1918)" in The United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919: Military Operations of the American Expeditionary Forces (vol. 4).

Francis V. Greene, *Our First Year in the Great War* (New York, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1918).

Ferrell, Robert. (ed.), *In the Company of Generals: The World War I Diary of Pierpont L. Stackpole,* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2009.

Five Years of the War Department Following the War with Spain's 1899-1903.

Haldane, Richard Burdon. *Viscount Haldane, an Autobiography.* Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc. Garden City, New York 1929.

H.B. Fiske, "Notes on Infantry: Lecture Delivered January 29, 1917, at Ft. Leavenworth. Kansas." Ft. Leavenworth, KS, Army Service School Press, 1917.

H. E. Ely, "Report on Capture of Cantigny and Consolidation of Position," June 2, 1918, *USAWW,* Vol. 4.

Herbert B. Swope. "Inside the German Empire in the Third Year of the War." London, Constable & Co., 1917.

Hermenegild Wagner. "With the Victorious Bulgarians." Boston, Hughton Mifflin., 1913.

Historical Division, War Plans Division of the General Staff, A Study in Battle Formation (Monograph No. 6) (Washington, DC, Government Printing Office, 1920).

Hunter Liggett, *AEF Ten Years Ago in France* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1928).

Infantry and Cavalry School, Department Military Art, Course in Organization and Tactics, 1904-05. Lecture No. 5. Subject: Cavalry in the Offensive. By Captain Malin Craig, 10th Cavalry.

Infantry and Cavalry School, Department Military Art, Course in Organization and Tactics, 1904-05. Lecture No. 8. Subject: Artillery in the Attack by Captain R.H.C. Kenton.

Infantry Drill Regulations, United States Army. Washington Government Printing Press 1911.

Infantry Drill Regulations, United States Army. Washington Government Printing Press 1912.

Infantry Drill Regulation, US Army, 1911, with corrections to February 1917. Changes No. 18, (New York: Military Publishing Co., 1972).

International Rifle Shooting: in *Army and Navy Journal* Vol. 13 No. 3 August 28, 1875.

Joffre, Marshal Joseph Jacques. *The Memoirs of Marshal Joffre.* 2 Vols London: Geoffrey Bles, 1932.

Ernst Jünger, Ernst. *Corpse 125: A Chronicle from the Trench Warfare of 1918* (New York, Howard Fertig Inc., 2003. (orig. 1930).

Langer, William L., & Robert B. MacMullin. *With "E" of the First Gas*. Brooklyn, NY, Holton Printing Co., 1919.

Lester V. Chandler, *Benjamin Strong, Central Banker* (Washington, D.C., 1958).

Literary Digest (June 16, 1917), Vol. 54, pg. 1831.

Love, James T., "230-50.5: Letter: Training of II Corps Replacement Battalion (August 8, 1918)" in The United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919: Training and Use of American Units with the British and French (vol. 3).

Ludendorff, Erich Von. *Ludendorff's Own Story: August 1914-November 1918.* 2 Vols. New York: Harper Brothers Publishers, 1919.

Lt. Col. Oliver Wood, "A Week at Port Arthur," in *Army and Navy Register,* Vol. 38 No. 1344 (September 16, 1905)

MacArthur, Douglas. *Reminiscences.* New York. McGraw-Hill 1964.

Mackin, Elton E., *Suddenly We Didn't Want to Die: Memoirs of a World War I Marine.* Novato, CA, Presidio Press, 1993.

Maj. George H. Shelton, "The Organization of the Land Forces of the United States" in *Infantry Journal* Vol. 9 No. 1 (July-August 1912).

Major General Robert L. Bullard, *Personalities and Reminisces of the War* (New York, Doubleday, Page & Co., 1925).

Major J. W. McAndrew, "The Chief of Staff: His Duties Within the Division and the Field Army in the Field:" in *Infantry Journal* Vol. 9 No. 2 (September-October 1912), pg. 183.

"Military Observers in Europe" in *Army and Navy Register* Vol. 56 No. 1780 (August 29, 1914).

Major General William H. Carter, *The life of Lieutenant General Chaffee,* Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1917.

Morgan, Studies in British Financial Policy.

New York Times, May 5, 1915.

Palmer, Frederick. *Newton D. Baker: America at War*. Vol 2. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1931.

Pershing to Adjutant General, June 1, 1918, *USAWW.*

Philip Gibbs & Bernand Grant, *The Balkan War: Adventures of war with Cross and Cresent* Boston, Small Maynard & Co., 1913.

Pierre Guinard, Jean Claud Devos, and Jean Nicot, Inventaire sommaire des Archives de la Guerre, Serie N: 1872-1919, vol. 1: *Introduction* Troyes, 1975.

"The Cavalry" in *Journal of the United States Cavalry Association* Vol. 28 No. 117 January 1918.

"The Mexican Situation" in *Army and Navy Register* Vol. 49, Nov. 1630 (March 18, 1911).

The French Soldier's opinion of the Americans, 15 May to 15 June 1918," French Army Censor Department.

Roosevelt, Theordore. *The Foes of Our Own Household.* New York: George H. Doran, 1917.

Seymour, Charles (editor), *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House* (Vol. III): Into the World War, April 1917 – June 1918 (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1926).

Sullivan, Mark. *Our Times: The United States*, 1900-1925, vol. 5, *Over Here, 1914-1918.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933.

United States Navy Department. *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy, 1908*. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1908. [The report begins by commenting on the world cruise.]

U.S. War Department, Division of Militia Affairs, Manual for Privates of Infantry of the Organized Militia of the United States, Government Printing Office, Washington 1909.

U.S. Army Military History Institute. U.S. War Department. *Field Service Regulations, United States Army*, 1907.

U.S. Army Military History Institute. U.S. War Department. *Field Service Regulations, United States Army*, 1908.

U.S. Army Military History Institute. U.S. War Department. *Field Service Regulations, United States Army*, 1909.

US War Department Document, *Field Service Regulations, United States Army, 1923*, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1924).

W.S. Grant, "Account by an Eyewitness of the Attack on Cantigny," May 29, 1918, *USAWW*, Vol. 4.

Secondary Sources:

Journal Articles:

Bisson Kaili. “Frances WW1 Plan XVII,” *Owlcation.* (November 30, 2022).

Cothren, S. E., & Barnes, A. F. (2015). “Long Distance Logistics: The Mexican Expedition: Army Logistician.” *Army Sustainment, 47*(3).

Dalessandro, Robert J. “Creating the Modern Army: Building the American Expeditionary Force, 1917.” *Hampton Roads Military History (2008), 2*, 11.

Esposito, David M. "Woodrow Wilson and the Origins of the AEF." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 19, no. 1 (1989): 127-140.

For statistical data on Percentage of World Exports see, International Trade Statistics 1900-1960 Tables XI, XII, XXII and XXIII.

Hall, Brian N. “The American Expeditionary Forces, Communications and the First World War: A Case Study in Inter-Allied Learning.” *Militärgeschichtliche Zeitschrift.* 80, no. 2 (2021): 288–315.

Hoffer, Jeffrey A. "Coalition Warfare: Lessons from the American Expeditionary Force." *Air Force Journal of Logistics* 30, no. 1 (2006).

Lief A. Torkelsen, “Battles Were Not Fought In Lines,” Nationalism, Industrialism and Progressivism in American Military Discourse, Ph.D. Dissertation, 1865-1918, Ohio State University, 2018.

Odom, William O. "Under the Gun: Training the American Expeditionary Forces, 1917-1918." *Military Review* 80, no. 4 (Jul 2000): 100-6.

Setzen, Joel. “The Doctrine of the Offensive in the French Army on the Eve of World War I,” Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1972.

Stout, Mark. 2015. “G-2 From the Ground Up.” *MHQ: Quarterly Journal of Military History* 27 (4): 78–82.

Wainwright, John D. "Root Versus Bliss: The Shaping of the Army War College." *Parameters (Carlisle, Pa.)* 4, no. 2 (1974): 52-65.

Monographs:

A.H. Farrar-Hockley, *The Somme.* 1964.

Babcock, Conrad S., (edited by Robert H. Ferrell), *Reminiscences of Conrad S. Babcock: The Old U.S. Army and the New, 1898-1918.* Columbia, MO, University of Missouri Press, 2002.

Barnett Correlli. *Britain and Her Army, 1509-1970: A Military, Political and Social Survey.* Allen Lane The Penguin Press, London, 1970.

Beaver, Daniel. *Modernizing the American War Department.* Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2006.

Beaver, Daniel. *Baker and the American War Effort.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966.

Bidwell Shelford & Dominick Graham. *Fire Power, British Army Weapons and Theories of War 1904-1945.* London George Allen & Unwin, Boston, Sydney, 1982.

Chambers, John. *To Raise an Army: The Draft Comes to Modern America.* New York: Free Press, 1987.

Chickering, Roger, and Stig Förster. *Great War, Total War Combat and Mobilization on the Western Front, 1914-1918*. Edited by Roger Chickering and Stig Förster. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Coffman, Edward. *The War to End All Wars.* Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. 1986. Millett, Allan R. *The General: Robert L. Bullard and Officership in the United States Army, 1881-1925.* Westport, CT, Greenwood Press. 1975.

Coffman Edward. *The Regulars: The American Army, 1898-1941.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007.

Dalessandro, Robert J., Gerald Torrence, and Michael G. Knapp. *Willing Patriots: Men of Color in the First World War.* Atglen, PA: Schiffer Military History. 2009.

Dastrup Boyd L., *King of Battle: A Branch History of the U.S. Army's Field Artillery*. Fort Monroe, VA. Office of The Command Historians – United States Army and Doctrine Command, 1992.

Drea, Edward. J., *Unit Reconstitution – A Historical Perspective.* Ft. Leavenworth, KS, Combat Studies Institute of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1983.

Eisenhower, John, S.D. *Yanks. The Epic Story of the American Army in World War I,* Simon & Schuster, New York, 2001.

Eisenhower, John, S.D. *Intervention! The United States and the Mexican Revolution, 1913-1917.* New York, W. W. Norton & Co., 1993.

Encyclopedia of the American Military (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1994), vol. 1, pg. 183.

Falls, Cyril. *The Great War, 1914-1918*. New York: Capricorn, 1959. Paschall, Rod. *The Defat of Imperial Germany, 1917-1918.* Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 1989.

Faulkner, Richard. *Pershing's Crusaders: The American Soldier in World War I.* Lawrence, KS, University Press of Kansas, 2017.

Faulkner, Richard S., *School of Hard Knocks. Combat Leadership in the American Expeditionary Force.* Texas A&M University Press, 2012.

Ferrell, Robert H., *Collapse at Meuse-Argonne: The Failure of the Missouri-Kansas Division.* Columbia, MO, University of Missouri Press, 2004.

Ferrell, Robert. *Woodrow Wilson and World War I, 1917-1921*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1985.

Ferro, Marc. *The Great War an Imperial History.* London; New York: Routledge, 2002.

Finlayson, Kenneth. *An Uncertain Trumpet: The Evolution of U.S. Army Infantry Doctrine, 1919-1941*. Westport, CT, Greenwood Press, 2001.

Finnegan, John. *Against the Specter of a Dragon: The Campaign for American Military Preparedness, 1914-1917.* Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1975.

Foster Rhea Dulles, *America's Rise to World Power, 1898-1954*, New York: Harper Collions, 1955.

Greenfield, Elizabeth. *The French Army and the First World War*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Gutierrez, Edward, A. *Doughboys on the Great War: How American Soldiers Viewed Their Military Experience.* University Press of Kansas, 2014.

Grotelueschen Mark., *Doctrine Under Fire: American Artillery Employment in World War I.* Westport, CT, Greenwood Press, 2001.

Harries, Meirion and Susie Harries, *Last Days of Innocence: America at War, 1917-1918.* New York: Vintage Books, 1998.

Hermann Wendt, *Verdun 1916: Die Angriffe Falkenhayn im Maasgebiet mit Richtung auf Verdun also strategisches Problem.* Berlin, 1931.

Herwig, Holger H., *The First World War: Germany and Austria-Hungary, 1914-1914.* London, Arnold, 1997.

Horne Alistair, *The Price of Glory: Verdun 1916.* London, 1973.

Hurst, James W. *Pancho Villa and Blackjack Pershing the Punitive Expedition in Mexico*. Westport, Conn: Praeger, 2008.

Janiak-Jasinska, Agnieszka: Bloch, Jan Gotlib, in: 1914-1918-online. *International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, ed. by Ute Daniel, etc. 2014-10-08.

Jessup, Philip. *Elihu Root.* New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1938.

Johnson, Douglas II, and Rolfe L. Hillman Jr., *Soissons, 1918.* College Station, TX, Texas A&M Press, 1999.

Kastenberg, Joshua. 2017. To Raise and Discipline an Army: Major General Enoch Crowder, the Judge Advocate General's Office, and the Realignment of Civil and Military Relations in World War I. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Keene, Jennifer. *Doughboys, the Great War, and the Remaking of America.* Baltimore, Maryland, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.

Knock, Thomas. *To End All Wars: Woodrow Wilson and the Quest for a New World Order.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.

Lane Jack, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood.* San Rafael, California.: Presidio Press, 1978.

Lengel, Edward G., *To Conquer Hell: The Meuse-Argonne, 1918.* New York, Henry Holt & Co., 2008.

Lentz-Smith, Adriana Danette. *Freedom Struggles: African Americans and World War I.* Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press. 2009.

Link, Arthur *Wilson: Campaigns for Progressivism and Peace, 1916-1917.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965.

Link Arthur, *Confusion and Crisis, 1915-1916* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1964.

Link, Arthur. *The New Freedom* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 195).

Meigs Mark. *Optimism at Armageddon: Voices of American Participation in the First World War.* New York: New York University Press, 1997.

Menninger, Timothy. "The Army Enters the Twentieth Century," in Kenneth J. Hagan and William R. Roberts (eds.), *Against All Enemies: Interpretations of American Military History Form Colonial Time to the Present.* Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1986.

Miles, Brig. Gen. Perry L., *Fallen Leaves: Memories of an Old Soldier*. Berkeley, CA, Wuerth Publishing Co., 1961.

Millett Allan R., *The General: Robert L. Bullard and Officership in the United States Army 1881-1925,* Westport, Ct. Greenwood Press, 1975.

Millett, Allen. "The American Military as an Instrument of Power," in John Jessup and Louise Ketz (eds.), *Encyclopedia of American Military.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1994.

Millett, Allen R. "Cantigny, 28-31 May 1918," in Charles Heller and William Stofft (eds.), *American's First Battles, 1776-1965.* Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986.

Millis, Walter. *Road to War, American 1914-1917.* Boston and New York, Houghton Mifflin Company, The Riverside Press, Cambridge, 1935.

Muehlbauer, Matthew S., and David J. Ulbrich. *Ways of War: American Military History from the Colonial Era to the Twenty-First Century*. Second edition. New York; Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2018.

Odom, William O., *After the Trenches: The Transformation of U.S. Army Doctrine, 1918-1939.* College Station, TX, Texas A&M University Press, 1999.

Perry, Nicholas. (ed), *Major General Oliver Nugent and the Ulster Division, 1915-1918.* Stroud: Sutton Publishing Limited for Army Records Society, 2007.

Rabalais, Steven. *General Fox Conner: Pershing's Chief of Operations and Eisenhower's Mentor*. Havertown: Casemate Publishers & Book Distributors, LLC. 2016.

Roesser, Marie. *The Spanish-American War*. New York, NY: Gareth Stevens Publishing LLLP, 2019.

Schaffer, Ronald. *America in the Great War: The Rise of the War Welfare State.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Shay, Michael. *The Yankee Division in the First World War.* College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2008.

Showalter, Dennis, *Great War, Total War Combat and Mobilization on the Western Front, 1914-1918*. Edited by Roger Chickering and Stig Förster. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Smythe, Donald. *Pershing: General of the Armies.* Bloomington, Indiana University Press. 1986.

Spiers, Edward. *The Late Victorian Army 1868-1914. In The Oxford History of the British Army,* edited by David G. Chandler & Ian Beckett, New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Stevenson, David. *With Our Backs to the Wall: Victory and Defeat in 1918,* Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011.

Thomas, Robert, S. and Inez V. Allen, *The Mexican Punitive Expedition Under Brigadier General John J. Pershing, United States Army, 1916-1917.* Washington, D.C. War Histories Division (U.S. Army), 1954.

Travers, Tim. *The Army and the Challenge of War 1914-1918. In The Oxford History of the British Army*, edited by David G. Chandler & Ian Beckett, New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Tuchman Barbara, *The Zimmerman Telegram.* New York: Macmillan, 1966.

Triplet, William S., *A Youth in the Meuse-Argonne: A Memoir, 1917-1918*. (Edited by Robert H. Ferrell) Columbia, MO, University of Missouri Press, 2000.

Weigley, Russell F. *History of the United States Army.* New York: Macmillan, 1967.

Weigley, Russell, F. *The American Way of War. A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy.* Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis. 1973.

Woodward David, R., *The American Army and the First World War.* Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Other Materials:

Map of Verdun, 1916 – Retrieved from agefotostock.

Map of Somme Battlefield, 1916 – The National Archives gov.uk

Map of Punitive Expedition – Lief A. Torkelsen, "Battles Were Not Fought In Lines."

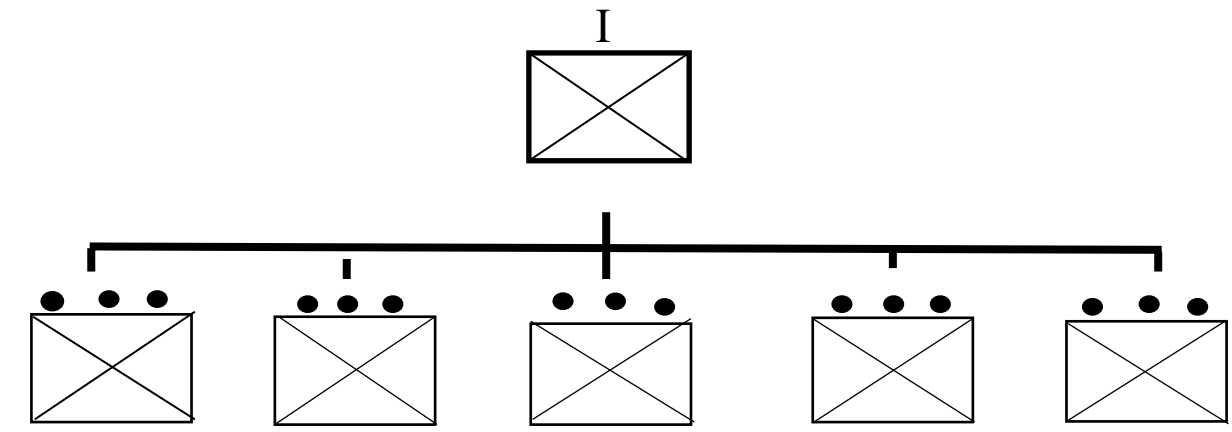
Map of Division attack of the American 1st and 2nd Division, Battle of Soisson - Lief A. Torkelsen, "Battles Were Not Fought In Lines."

Map of first attack of AEF Divisions in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive - Lief A. Torkelsen, "Battles Were Not Fought In Lines."

Map of final AEF operations in First World War, Meuse-Argonne Offensive - Lief A. Torkelsen, "Battles Were Not Fought In Lines."

Appendix A
Organization of AEF Infantry Rifle Companies and Platoons:

Infantry Rifle Company, 26 June 1918 AEF
Table of Organization and Equipment:

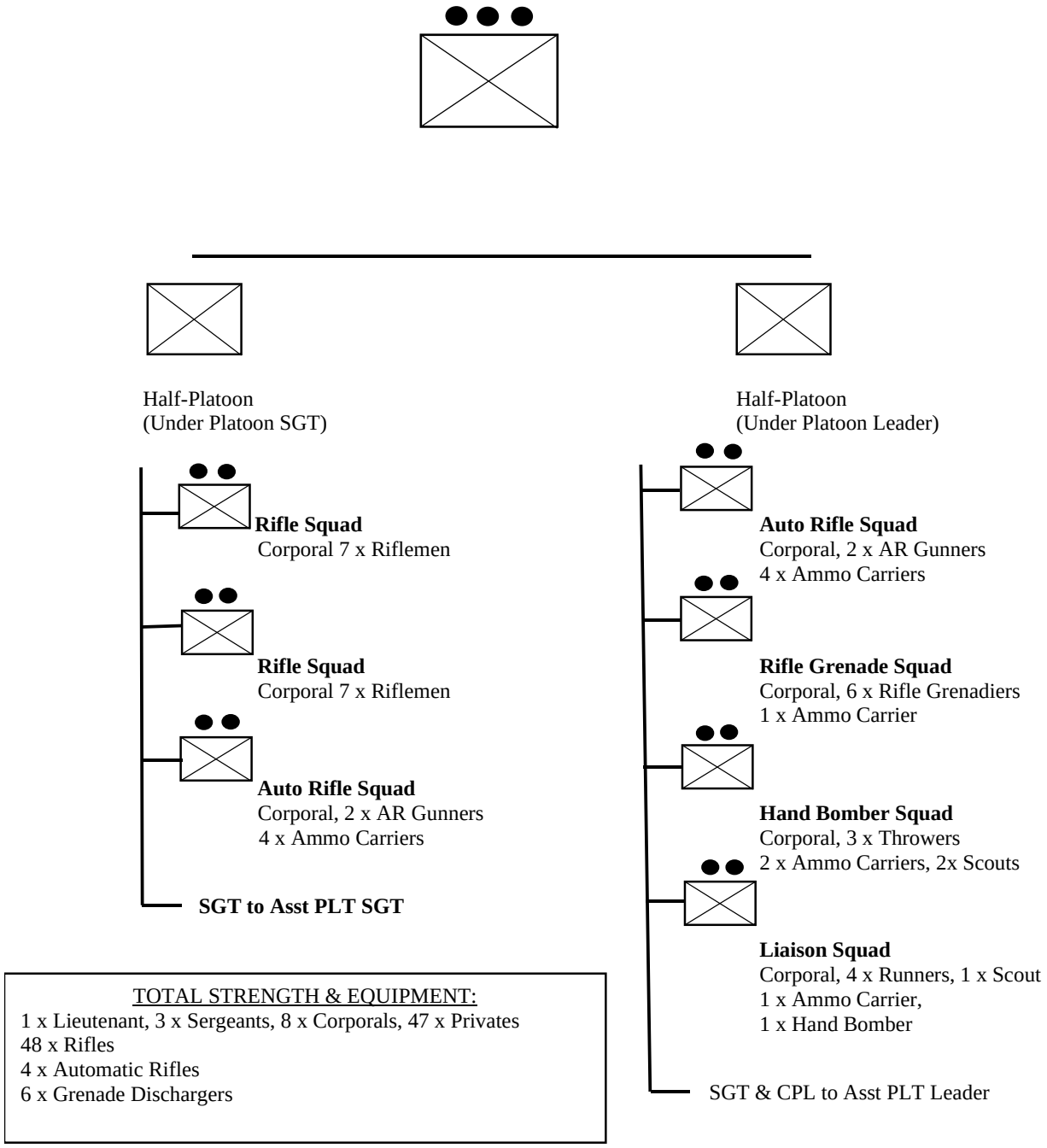


HQ PLT	1st Rifle PLT	2nd Rifle PLT	3rd Rifle PLT	4th Rifle PLT
CPT	LT PLT LDR	All line platoons followed same guidelines as first.		
1LT XO	PLT SGT			
1SGT	2 x SGT			
Supply SGT	8 x CPL			
Mess SGT	15 x PFC			
4 x Cooks	32 x PVT			
Co. Clerk				
4 x Mechanics				
2 x Buglers				
4 x PFC runners/ Signalmen				
5 x Waggoners				
(From Regi. Supply Co.				

Appendix B

Organization of AEF Infantry Rifle Companies and Platoons:

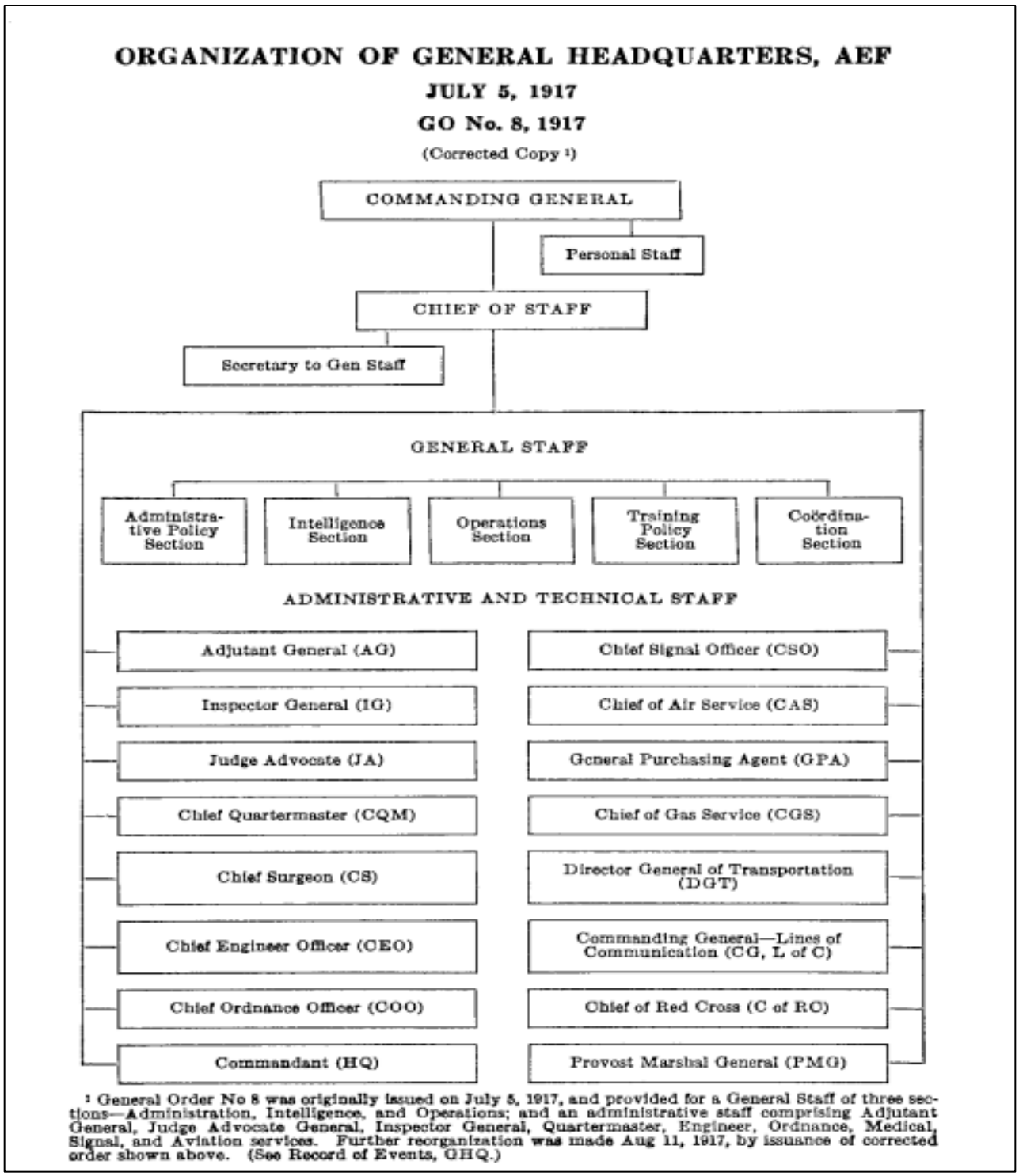
Infantry Rifle Platoon, 26 June 1918 AEF
Table of Organization and Equipment, Formed as Half-Platoons



Appendix C

Organization of General Headquarters of AEF Pre-1918 Deployment in France

General Staff Organization of the American Expeditionary Force



Appendix D

Organization of General Headquarters of AEF November 11, 1918

General Staff Organization of the American Expeditionary Force