AMERICAN VOICES
OF WORLD WAR I

PRIMARY SOURCE DOCUMENTS
1917–1920
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Edited by Martin Marix Evans
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First published 2001 by Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers

Published 2013 by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY, 10017, USA

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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British Library and Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication Data are available


Designed by Adrian Hodgkins Design, Oxford
Typeset by Joshua Associates Ltd, Oxford

Cover design by Philip Lewis
Cover Illustration: YMCA Headquarsers, Bathelémont. USAMHI/
USASC 2353.
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With enduring gratitude to the man who guided my first steps in historical research, and encouraged a fair scepticism, David F. Trask and to the college that made it possible for me to meet him, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut.
The archives of the United States Army Military History Institute at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, hold the materials of the World War I Survey. These were collected to preserve a record of the experience of veterans of the war and consist of a large number of standard questionnaires which were sent out in the 1970s and 1980s. Some 7,000 were returned, but the respondents, and some of the widows and children of deceased veterans, also sent letters, diaries, books and photographs. The archive contains all of these. It is limited, of course, to what the appeal brought in. It does not pretend to be complete, but it can lay claim to an amazing richness of information, opinion and emotion.

As an Englishman descended from an American grandfather, a French grandmother and two English grandparents from the north of the country, I have been surprised by the differing views of World War I taken by the various countrymen of my forebears. In particular the lack of knowledge and the mistaken ideas of that war in the USA that, as far as I have been able to determine, are prevalent have been hard to understand. After all, 48,909 Americans were killed in the two years concerned and another 50,000 or so died of disease, mostly influenza—an average of 50,000 dead a year. The impact on America must have been enormous, but goes unremarked. The questions of why people died, of was it for a good reason, and of what became of the missing still preoccupy minds today in respect of Vietnam. Some 60,000 Americans died in a decade in this more recent conflict—at 6,000 per annum too many, far too many. But compare and consider. As to the British and the French, they, for the most part, either neglect the American contribution entirely or dismiss it as trivial. They, too, are mistaken.

There is something compelling about first-hand testimony. It may not be historically accurate, it may not be fair, it is rarely objective, it may not be reasonable, it may not be socially acceptable today, but it is honest. When I was writing my first book on the Americans in this war, an illustrated narrative, I was obliged for practical reasons to omit much I yearned to include. I thought this larger canvas would solve that problem; it did not. There is still more left out than I could get in, but I trust that I have been able to present enough to allow the reader to follow a near-complete narrative in the words of those who were there.

I have tried to keep the editorial matter to a minimum because this is intended to be a book of American voices. The editorial notes set a context or introduce individuals. Because the editorial text is by an Englishman I have used British spellings, as well as a different type, to make a distinct voice.

The quoted text is reproduced as it was written, with only evident typing errors, spelling slip-ups or factual mishaps corrected. Square brackets enclose my inserted text. Where the material is wildly idiosyncratic I have left it as I found it. Handwritten documents are given in italic text, in part because my opportunity to mistranscribe them is greater. Many of the letters in the archive are typewritten copies, probably because they were reproduced for circulation amongst family and friends. These are given here in regular type.

A chronology, with page numbers of relevant material in the body text, is given both to set events in a world-wide context and to give readers an alternative way to access the material. The brief introduction is intended to raise broad issues of which the reader should be aware and which can be followed up in other works. It is not definitive history. Some materials relevant to the war are also available at the USAMHI but are not strictly part of the World War I Survey. I have selected what I consider the most important for representation in the appendices. The illustrations consist of some excellent diagrammatic maps by the American Battle Monuments Commission and of photographs which have useful factual content.

My wife and co-researcher, Gillian, and I were made to feel wonderfully welcome not only by Dr Richard Sommers and the staff of the Archives but also by everyone else there with whom we came into contact. In particular we were the fortunate recipients of detailed advice and guidance from Mr David Keough and the book would have been a poorer thing without him.

I have no idea how much material we examined. Of that material we made a preliminary selection by copying over 1,800 pages and taking more than 700 photographs. The final selection was made, within the limitations of the archive content, with a view to giving a fair chronological coverage, to including major battles, to achieving a balance between the drama of the fight and the treadmill of routine and to allowing individuals to explain the technical content of their work. The words are those of individuals. They may be mistaken in what they say. They are, on occasion, demonstrably prejudiced. But they are, I think, speaking their minds, and this is what their minds held at that time, we, as students of their time and experience, are obliged to listen and learn and strive to understand.

Martin Marix Evans
CHRONOLOGY

1914

Sunday, 28 June Archduke Francis Ferdinand assassinated at Sarajevo.
Tuesday, 14 July Austrians decide to deliver ultimatum to Serbia.
Thursday 23 July Ultimatum delivered, 48 hours to reply.
Saturday 25 July Serbia and Austria order mobilization. Russia prepares to mobilize.
Tuesday 28 July Austria declares war on Serbia.
Friday 31 July Germany declares imminent state of war and issues ultimatums to France and Britain.
Saturday 1 August Germany declares war on Russia and mobilizes. France mobilizes.
Sunday 2 August German ultimatum to Belgium demanding passage.
Monday 3 August Belgium rejects German demand. Germany declares war on France and Britain.
Tuesday 4 August Germany declares war on Belgium and invades.
Wednesday 5 August Austria declares war on Russia. Montenegro declares war on Austria. US President Wilson offers to mediate.
Thursday 6 August Serbia declares war on Germany. Battles of the Frontiers [of France] begin.
Sunday 9 August British Expeditionary Force (BEF) lands in France.
Monday 10 August France declares war on Austria. German/American weekly The Fatherland launched in New York.
Wednesday 12 August Austria invades Serbia. Britain declares war on Austria.
Saturday 15 August US Secretary of State Bryan declares loans to belligerents are contrary to neutrality.
Thursday 20 August Fall of Brussels.
Sunday 23 August Battle of Mons. Japan declares war on Germany.
Tuesday 25 August French General Joffre orders Allied retreat.
Wednesday 26 August Germans defeat Russians at Tannenberge. British delay German advance at Le Cateau.
Wednesday 2 September Germans reach River Marne.
Saturday 5 September First Battle of the Marne begins.
Monday 7 September Gallieni sends reinforcements in Paris taxis.
Wednesday 9 September French and British force German retreat.
Thursday 10 September First Battle of Marne ends; allied victory.
Saturday 12 September First Battle of the Aisne begins.
Friday 18 September Allied advance halts. Mutual attempts to outflank north west of Paris begin. "The Race to the Sea".
Thursday 1 October BEF starts move to Flanders (French/Belgian border).
Saturday 10 October Antwerp falls to Germans.
Sunday 10 October Battle of Flanders to control ports on English Channel begins; lasts six weeks.
Thursday 15 October Belgians anchor front at Nieuport on North Sea coast. Western Front formed.
Monday 19 October First Battle of Ypres begins. US Marines land in Haiti.
Thursday 22 October US and Spanish Ambassadors set up Committee for Belgian Relief.
Sunday 22 November First Battle of Ypres and Battles of Flanders end. Western Front stabilizes from North Sea to Swiss border.
Tuesday 15 December Serbs reoccupy Belgrade. American hospital has 3,000 Serb and Austrian patients.
Thursday 17 December US Marines seize Haiti's last half-million dollars.
Sunday 20 December First Battle of Champagne begins; ends mid-March.
Thursday 24 December Unofficial Christmas Truce in Flanders; German and British troops cease fire and exchange cigarettes.

1915

Friday 8 January Battle of Soissons begins, lasts to 14 January.
Sunday 31 January Germans make first use of poison gas at Bolimow, Poland; weather renders it useless. Russians do not tell Allies.

Friday 26 February First use of flamethrowers by Germans at Bois de Malancourt, near Verdun.
Monday 1 March First issue of grenades to French troops.
Wednesday 3 March 1st Canadian Division enters front line near Armentières.
Wednesday 10 March  Battle of Neuve Chapelle begins; ends 13 March in stalemate.
Sunday 14 March  Joffre proposes attacking St Mihiel Salient.
Wednesday 17 March  First Battle of Champagne ends with heavy losses and little progress.
Thursday 25 March  Brusilov Offensive in Carpathians gains ground from Central Powers.
Sunday 28 March  US citizen killed when SS Falaba (British ship) sunk by German submarine U28 in Irish Sea.
Monday 5 April  French attack on St Mihiel Salient begins.
Friday 9 April  French storm Les Éparges, St Mihiel Salient.
Wednesday 21 April  French take Tête du Vache trenches, St Mihiel.
Thursday 22 April  Second Battle of Ypres begins. Germans use poison gas.
Sunday 25 April  British landings on Gallipoli Peninsula.
Saturday 1 May  Austro-German Offensive in Galicia begins.
US ship SS Gullflight torpedoed by U30 off Scilly Isles, three die.
Friday 7 May  Lusitania sunk by U20 off Old Head of Kinsale; 1,198 die, including 124 Americans.
Sunday 9 May  Allied Spring Offensive begins.
Monday 10 May  US President Wilson says "There is such a thing as a man being too proud to fight."
Sunday 23 May  Italy declares war on Austria.
Tuesday 25 May  Second Battle of Ypres finishes; 16,648 British and 5,800 German casualties.
Wednesday 30 May  Italians launch attack at Battle of the Isonzo.
Thursday 2 June  Banker W Pierpont Morgan shot and Senate reception room bombed by German Cornell University tutor.
Sunday 18 July  Second Battle of the Isonzo begins.
Thursday 29 July  US lands 2,000 Marines on Haiti.
Friday 6 August  British attempt Sulva Bay landings at Gallipoli.
Tuesday 10 August  Plattsburg NY State military training camp opens to civilians.
Sunday 15 August  NY World reveals German espionage in USA.
Thursday 19 August  SS Arabic sunk by U24; three Americans die.
Saturday 9 October  Austrians enter Belgrade and invade Montenegro.
Thursday 14 October  Bulgaria invades Serbia.
Saturday 16 October  France declares war on Bulgaria.
Monday 18 October  Third Battle of the Isonzo begins.
Thursday 4 November  Third Battle of the Isonzo finishes; Italy 67,000 and Austria 42,000 casualties.
Wednesday 10 November  Fourth Battle of the Isonzo begins.
Friday 26 November  US credit of $50 million to eight London banks.
Tuesday 23 November  Mitrovica and Pristina fall; 200,000 Serbs start retreat to Albania.
Friday 3 December  Montenegro.
Monday 15 December  Sir John French resigns as C-in-C of BEF to be succeeded by Sir Douglas Haig.
Saturday 3 June  US National Defense Act expands army and National Guard.
Wednesday 7 June  Fall of French Fort Vaux, Verdun.
Sunday 11 June  Mexicans attack at Laredo and San Ugnavo, Texas.
Wednesday 14 June  Preparedness Parade in Washington D.C.
Sunday 18 June  80,000 US Militia to police Mexican border.
Wednesday 21 June  Mexicans capture a troop of US 10th Cavalry at Carrizal.
Friday 23 June  Last major German attack at Verdun.
Nivelle orders “Il ne passera pas” – they shall not pass.
Saturday 24 June  British bombardment on the Somme begins.
Saturday 1 July  Battle of the Somme begins; on first day British casualties 57,470 of which 19,240 killed. US Marines defeat rebels in Santo Domingo.
Sunday 2 July  Falkenhayn orders cessation of attacks at Verdun.
Tuesday 4 July  American poet Alan Seeger, French Foreign Legion, killed (rendezvous with Death) at Belloy-en-Santerre.
Saturday 15 July  South Africans begin Battle of Delville Wood.
Saturday 22 July  Preparedness Parade in San Francisco bombed; nine killed.
Sunday 23 July  Australians capture Pozieres Ridge, Battle of the Somme.
Friday 28 July  Brusilov Offensive resumes on Eastern Front.
Sunday 30 July  Munitions explosion at Black Tom Island, New Jersey, said to be sabotage.
Friday 4 August  Sixth Battle of the Isonzo begins.
Wednesday 10 August  Sixth Battle of the Isonzo suspended after satisfactory gains; Italians 51,250 and Austrians 49,000 casualties. J. P. Morgan Bank makes $250 million loan to Russia.
Friday 15 September  Battle of Fiers-Courcelette; British make first use of tanks.
Saturday 16 September  Hindenburg orders construction of defensive line to rear of present positions.
Sunday 1 October  British launch attacks on Transloy Ridges and Ancre Heights on the Somme.
Monday 9 October  Eighth Battle of the Isonzo begins.
Tuesday 24 October  French attack at Verdun and regain positions held in May.
Saturday 4 November  Battle of the Isonzo ceases.
Tuesday 7 November  Wilson re-elected to Presidency of US.
Monday 13 November  Battle of the Ancre, Somme, begins.
Saturday 18 November  Battles of the Somme cease.
Thursday 7 December  Lloyd-George succeeds Asquith as British Prime Minister.
Tuesday 12 December  Joffre succeeded by Nivelle as Chief of French forces. Germany makes vague peace proposals.
Friday 15 December  Large French offensive at Verdun.
Saturday 30 December  Allies reject German peace note.

1917

Tuesday 9 January  Kaiser orders resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare.
Wednesday 17 January  US purchases Virgin Islands. British Royal Navy Room 40 partially deciphers the Zimmermann telegram.
Monday 22 January  US President Wilson addresses Senate; states objective is “peace without victory.”
Wednesday 31 January  Unrestricted submarine war declared by Germany.
Thursday 1 February  German-American newspaper The Fatherland renamed American Weekly in New York.
Saturday 3 February  USS Housatonic sunk by U53 off Scilly Isles. USA breaks off diplomatic relations with Germany. Portuguese Expeditionary Force arrives in France.
Sunday 4 February  Germans begin retirement to Siegfried Stellung (aka Hindenburg Line).
Sunday 25 February  Cunard liner Laconia sunk off Fasnet, four Americans die.
Tuesday 27 February  John M. Browning’s short recoil, watercooled machine-gun demonstrated.
Wednesday 28 February  US Marines land at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.
Friday 2 March  Jones Act makes Puerto Rico a US Territory.
Monday 12 March  President Wilson authorizes arming of merchant vessels. USS Algonquin sunk without warning. First Russian Revolution.
Thursday 15 March  Russian Tzar abdicates.
Friday 16 March  35 German divisions withdraw to Hindenburg Line. Sinkings reported of USS City of Memphis, Illinois and Vigilance.
Wednesday 21 March  Standard Oil steamer Headon sunk in safe zone off Dutch coast, 20 die. President Wilson calls special session of Congress and declares German submarine war “warfare against mankind” and that the USA would join the war because “The World must be made safe for democracy.”
Sunday 1 April  British shipping losses reach new monthly high.
Wednesday 4 April  War Resolution passed by Senate 82–6.
Friday 6 April  War Resolution passed by House 373–50.
USA declares war on Germany.  5

Saturday 7 April  USA declares war on Austria-Hungary.
Sunday 8 April  Lenin and some 20 Bolsheviks begin journey from Switzerland to Petrograd in sealed train through Germany.

Monday 9 April  Battles of Arras begin.
Saturday 14 April  Canadians take Vimy Ridge. President Wilson sets up Committee on Public Information.

Monday 16 April  Nivelle launches Second Battle of the Aisne. First French tank attack. French losses approx. 100,000 men.

Tuesday 17 April  French Army mutinies start.
Friday 20 April  Second Battle of the Aisne ceases. French have lost another 34,000 men.


Tuesday 24 April  Liberty Loan Act authorizes sale of public bonds in US to fund war purchases by allies.

Saturday 28 April  Pétain appointed C-in-C French forces.

Wednesday 2 May  First Liberty Loan, target $2 billion, raises $3 billion.


Saturday 12 May  Tenth Battle of the Isonzo begins.
Tuesday 15 May  Nivelle dismissed.

Wednesday 16 May  Trotsky arrives in Petrograd from Switzerland to Petrograd in sealed train through Germany.

Friday 18 May  Selective Service Act provides for conscription, the draft, in USA.  7
Saturday 26 May  First US troops arrive in France.
Sunday 27 May  French mutineers riot at Fère-en-Tardenois.

Tuesday 5 June  Draft Registration Day; 9,586,508 Americans enrolled. Some 3,000 flee to Mexico.  9

Thursday 7 June  Battle of Messines Ridge. British set off 19 mines and take ridge.

Wednesday 13 June  Pershing lands at Boulogne, travels to Paris.  16

Friday 15 June  US Espionage Act passed. Sentences up to 20 years possible. Seditious literature excluded from mails.
Tuesday 19 June  Lawrence and 500 Arabs begin march on Aquaba; sabotage Amman-Deraa railway.

Thursday 28 June  14,000 US regulars and Marines land in France.

Sunday 1 July  Second Brusilov Offensive begins on Eastern Front.

Wednesday 4 July  Pvt Donald D. Kyler, 2nd Bn, 16th Infantry, takes part in march through Paris to Picpus Cemetery.  16–17

Thursday 12 July  Germans make first use of mustard gas near Ypres; Allies call it Yperite. Captain Benjamin O. Davis, 9th Cavalry, arrives in Manila, Philippines.  21

Saturday 14 July  First AEF casualty; Lt Louis I. Genella receives shell wound.

Tuesday 17 July  Preliminary British bombardment begins at Ypres. First 678,000 Americans drafted.

Thursday 19 July  Kerensky becomes Prime Minister in Russia.

Saturday 28 July  US War Industries Board established.

Tuesday 31 July  Third Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele) begins. Lasts until 18 November.

Sunday 5 August  National Guard drafted into US Army.

Saturday 18 August  Eleventh Battle of the Isonzo begins.

Sunday 19 August  British tanks and infantry take pillboxes near St Julien, including Springfield, for 26 casualties.

Monday 20 August  Second major French offensive at Verdun.

Saturday 25 August  Haig replaces Gough with Plumer at Ypres.

Tuesday 28 August  French regain last of territory lost to Germans at Verdun.

Saturday 1 September  AEF HQ at Chaumont opened.

Saturday 9 September  Mutiny of 2,000 British at Etaples Infantry Base Depot.

Sunday 23 September  US Tank Corps formed.

Saturday 29 September  Germans form first tank unit.

Wednesday 3 October  US War Revenue Act introduces graduated income tax.

Thursday 4 October  Battle of Broodseinde (Ypres) begins.

Saturday 6 October  Pershing and Bliss promoted to full generals. US Trading with the Enemy Act sets up War Trade Board and Alien Property Custodian.

Tuesday 9 October  American all-colored divisions approved.

Friday 12 October  First Battle of Passchendaele (Ypres) begins. US sets up Censorship and War Trades boards.

Friday 26 October  Second Battle of Passchendaele begins in Ypres Salient. Lloyd George decides to send two British divisions to reinforce Italians at Isonzo.

Saturday 27 October  Italian retreat ordered at Isonzo.

Thursday 1 November  Battle of Malmaison ends; outflanked Germans abandon Chemin des Dames.

Saturday 3 November  Three men of F Company, 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry, US 1st Division killed in action. Italians decide to stand on River Piave.  50

Tuesday 6 November  Canadians capture Passchendaele.

Thursday 8 November  Bolshevik Revolution in Russia.

Saturday 10 November  Battle of Passchendaele ends.

Monday 19 November  Captain Patton joins US Tank Corps.
**CHRONOLOGY**

Tuesday 20 November  
Battle of Cambrai. First massed tank attack; 389 machines. Initial British success not exploited. US 11th, 12th and 13th Engineers in action.

Thursday 22 November  
Italians hold Austrian attack on Piave.

Sunday 25 November  
Bolsheviks win only 25% of votes in last free elections until 1989.

Friday 30 November  
Germans start moving 42 divisions to west from Eastern Front.

Monday 3 December  
Escadrille Lafayette (formerly Américaine) to be under US command from February 1918.

Brest-Litovsk talks start between Russia and Central Powers.

Friday 7 December  
US 42nd Rainbow Division lands in France.

Saturday 15 December  
Armistice between Russia and Central Powers.

Tuesday 18 December  
Prohibition (18th) Amendment to US Constitution approved by Congress.

Wednesday 26 December  
US President Wilson takes railroads under government control.

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**1918**

Wednesday 2 January  
US Outlook magazine protests against the forcing of German-Americans to kiss the flag and other persecutions.

Tuesday 8 January  
US President Wilson sets out his fourteen points for peace in Congressional address. Captain Patton opens US Tank School at Langres.

Tuesday 5 February  
British troopship Tuscania sunk by U-boat. 166 American soldiers and 44 crew killed. 19-20

Friday 8 February  
Weekly newspaper of the AEF, Stars and Stripes, launched.

Saturday 9 February  
US War Secretary Baker reorganises War Department into five divisions.

Saturday 16 February  
US Services of Supply established at Tours.

Monday 18 February  
Germans resume war on Eastern Front.

Sunday 3 March  
Peace of Brest-Litovsk between Germany and Russia. 161

Monday 4 March  
US President Wilson appoints Bernard Baruch to head War Industries Board.

Tuesday 5 March  
Peace terms between Rumania and Central Powers agreed. British Royal Marines land 130 men at Murmansk.

Wednesday 6 March  
YMCA takes over AEF canteens.

Monday 18 March  
Czech Legion begins journey east.

Tuesday 19 March  
US Daylight Saving Act.

Thursday 21 March  
German Spring Offensive (Kaiserslacht) begins with Operation Michael and Battle of St Quentin. US 42nd Division attacked with mustard gas. 71

Monday 25 March  
Scratch formation, Carey's Force, formed to reinforce resistance to Germans; includes US Engineers.

Tuesday 26 March  

Thursday 28 March  
Pershing places AEF at Foch's disposal. Admiral Knight of US cruiser Brooklyn reports Allied munitions taken by Red Army in Siberia. German advance halted before Arras.

Sunday 31 March  
US Daylight Saving in force.

Tuesday 2 April  
Pershing agrees AEF can be brigaded with British and French.

Wednesday 3 April  
US 1st Division pulls out of line to move west; 26th Division takes over.

Friday 5 April  
German Operation Michael advance halted in front of Amiens. 500 Japanese marines and 50 British Royal Marines land at Vladivostok, Siberia to protect foreigners.

Monday 8 April  
US National War Labor Board created to settle labor disputes.

Tuesday 9 April  
Second German offensive, Operation Georgette, begins with Battle of the Lys.

Thursday 11 April  
US I Corps Observation Squadron and 94th Aero Pursuit Squadron operational. Latter shoot down two German aircraft.

Saturday 13 April  
Germans take Helsinki.

Sunday 14 April  
Foch appointed Allied Generallissimo.

Tuesday 16 April  
US War Secretary Baker strengthens War Department administration and appoints Peyton C. March Chief of Staff.

Saturday 20 April  
US 26th Division mauled in German attack at Seicheprey but line regained. 56-57

Tuesday 23 April  
US 1st Division takes over line at Cantigny. 71

Wednesday 24 April  
Semenoff's White Cossacks defeat Hungarian prisoners of war in Manchuria. First tank-to-tank action at Villers-Bretonneux won by British.

Monday 29 April  
Battle of Lys and Operation Georgette end.

Wednesday 1 May  

Thursday 2 May  
US state of Montana bans German language teaching and textbooks.

Friday 3 May  
Germans fire gas shells on US 1st Division, Cantigny.

Tuesday 7 May  
Peace of Bucharest between Rumania and Central Powers.

Friday 10 May  
German gas attack on US 26th Division, Meuse front.

Thursday 23 May  
British government decide to send force to Murmansk, North Russia. 161

Monday 27 May  
Third German offensive, Operation Blücher-Yorck, and Third Battle of the Aisne begins. 78

Tuesday 28 May  
US 28th Infantry, 1st Division, take Cantigny. First offensive operation of AEF. 72-78
Wednesday 29 May  Germans take Soissons, cross River Ourcq.
Thursday 30 May  7th Machine-Gun Battalion, 3rd Division, ordered to Château Thierry and River Marne.  
Friday 31 May  First battlefield action of French Renault light tank in Retz Forest.
Thursday 6 June  Battle of Belleau Wood begins; 4th US Marine Brigade attacks.  
Sunday 9 June  Fourth German offensive, Operation Gneisenau, on River Matz, Noyon/Montdidier; US 1st Division in action.  
Tuesday 11 June  French under Mangin, with US 2nd and 3rd Divisions, counter-attack.  
Wednesday 12 June  Mangin attacks again; Germans abandon the operation.  
Friday 14 June  Battle of the Matz finishes.  
Saturday 15 June  Second Battle of the Piave. Austrian attack held after initial advance.  
Sunday 23 June  British forces advance in North Russia.  
Monday 24 June  Austrians retreat over Piave.  
Tuesday 25 June  Battle of Belleau Wood ends; AEF suffer 5,200 casualties.  
Saturday 29 June  Czechs overthrow Vladivostok Soviet.  
Monday 1 July  US 2nd Division take Vaux.  
Thursday 4 July  British, Australians and US 131st and 132nd Infantry, 33th Division, take Hamel, Somme front, in textbook combined operation. US I Corps takes over from French III Corps on Marne front.  
Saturday 6 July  Vladivostok made an Allied Protectorate. US President Wilson suggests 12,000 Japanese troops sent to rescue Czechs.  
Monday 8 July  First American casualty in Italy; Red Cross driver Ernest Hemingway severely wounded.  
Sunday 14 July  Germans shell US 3rd Division with gas.  
Monday 15 July  Fourth Battle of Champagne and Second Battle of the Marne begin. AEF heavily involved in stopping Germans.  
Tuesday 16 July  Ex-Tsar and family murdered at Ekateringburg.  
Wednesday 17 July  US terms on intervention in Siberia include political non-interference.  
Thursday 18 July  Allies counter-attack: at Soissons US 1st, 2nd and 4th Divisions from west, on Marne 26th and 3rd.  
Monday 22 July  US 3rd Division cross the Marne.  
Thursday 25 July  Czechs take Ekaterinburg and form a government.  
Sunday 28 July  US 3rd, 4th, 26th, 28th, 32nd and 42nd Divisions attack Germans on River Ourcq.  
Wednesday 31 July  Allies take Archangel, North Russia.  
Saturday 3 August  British and Japanese troops land at Vladivostok.  
Sunday 4 August  Corporal Hitler awarded Iron Cross 1st Class for bravery.  
Monday 5 August  French troops land at Vladivostok.  
Tuesday 6 August  AEF takes Fismes on River Vesle. Second Battle of the Marne ends.  
Thursday 8 August  Battle of Amiens begins. British (mainly Australian and Canadian troops) advance six miles. German rout called "The Black Day" by Ludendorff.  
Friday 9 August  Germans regain Chipilly, US 33rd Division assists British in taking it back.  
Saturday 10 August  US First Army becomes operational. Czechs and Cossacks defeat a Red force in Siberia.  
Monday 12 August  Pershing asks Haig for return of US divisions.  
Friday 16 August  Foch mediates and British retain US 27th and 30th Divisions, 33rd, 78th and 80th join US First Army.  
Saturday 17 August  US Marine Band play 2/10th Royal Scots through Archangel.  
Wednesday 21 August  Allied offensive on Somme front resumes; Second Battle of Albert.  
Friday 23 August  Allies win Battle of Dukhovskaya, Siberia.  
Monday 26 August  General retreat of Germans back to Hindenburg lines begins.  
Tuesday 27 August  First cases of "Spanish" influenza in Boston, Massachusetts, USA.  
Friday 30 August  US 32nd Division takes Juvigny.  
Saturday 31 August  Czechs now control whole Trans-Siberian Railway. Australians take Mont St Quentin and enter Péronne.  
Monday 2 September  US Major-General Graves lands at Vladivostok.  
Wednesday 4 September  US troops land at Archangel, North Russia.  
Thursday 12 September  Battle of St Mihiel; first independent US operation. Battles of the Hindenburg Line begin at Cambrai.  
Friday 13 September  First use of Browning Automatic Rifle in action, by US 79th Division.  
Monday 16 September  St Mihiel Salient eliminated.  
Tuesday 17 September  French and Serbs make breakthrough on Macedonian front.  
Wednesday 18 September  British and Greek troops attack Bulgars at Lake Doiran on Salonika front.  
Thursday 19 September  British under Allenby defeat Turks at Megiddo, Palestine.  
Friday 20 September  British 13th Cavalry Brigade take Nazareth, Palestine.  
Saturday 21 September  Bulgar army retreating from Salonika. In Siberia Admiral Kolchak and Czech commander leave Vladivostok.  
Sunday 22 September  US First Army takes over Argonne front from French.  
Monday 23 September  British cavalry take Acre and Haifa.  
Thursday 26 September  Battle of Meuse-Argonne begins. French and Americans attack on 40 mile front.  
Friday 27 September  Red forces halt Allied advance from...


Sunday 29 September Hindenburg Line broken on St Quentin Canal. British 46th (North Midland) Division break through. US 27th and 30th Divisions attack at Bony and Bellicourt with Australians. 137-141

Monday 30 September AEF advance in Argonne slowed by transport problems and German resistance.

Tuesday 1 October Damascus falls, either to Lawrence and the Arabs or to British.

Wednesday 2 October So-called “Lost Battalion” (308th Infantry, 77th Division) surrounded in Argonne.

Thursday 3 October AEF advance boggs down against Giseler Stellung through Apremont. US 2nd Division attack Blanc Mont, Champagne. Prince Max of Baden becomes Chancellor of Germany. 136-137, 142-146

Friday 4 October American advance in Meuse-Argonne resumes with taking of Hill 240. Germany and Austria send request for armistice to US President Wilson. 147-149

Saturday 5 October Germans retire from Escaut Canal in face of British 25th Division.

Monday 7 October US 339th Infantry wins at Borok, North Russia, but Allies falling back.

Tuesday 8 October Second Battle of Cambrai: three-mile advance by British. Argonne, Private Alvin C. York captures 132 Germans after turkey shoot of 15. President Wilson seeks clarification of German armistice request. 149-151

Thursday 10 October US Second Army formed under Bullard. AEF holds 101 miles of front. US 2nd, 6th, 36th, 81st and 88th Divisions to be released from French armies to American.

Saturday 12 October Liggett appointed to command US First Army. Germany accepts, in principle, Fourteen Points conditions of President Wilson.

Sunday 13 October French Tenth Army advances 11 miles in 36 hours to take Laon.

Monday 14 October US First Army attacks Kriemhild Stellung in Argonne. Turkish peace proposals delivered to Americans in Washington, D.C. 151-154

Wednesday 16 October French cross River Aisne. US First Army breaks Kriemhild Line. Liggett assumes command of First Army; orders pause.

Thursday 17 October British reoccupy Lille. Czech Republic announced in Prague.

Friday 18 October French Tenth Army break through on River Serre, north of Laon.

Sunday 20 October Germany sends acceptance of US conditions and orders withdrawal of U-Boats. Whole Belgian coast back in Allied occupation.

Monday 21 October French Prime Minister Clemenceau demands Pershing’s resignation; Foch refuses.

Wednesday 23 October British advance six miles breaking German line of the Selle. US President Wilson proposes to Allies that armistice terms are drafted.

Thursday 24 October Battle of Vittorio Veneto (Third Piave) begins. 146


Saturday 26 October Ludendorff resigns. Kaiser declines Hindenburg’s offer to resign.

Sunday 27 October US 78th Division takes Grandpré in the Argonne. French attack on the Aisne. British and Italians secure bridgeheads over the Piave. Austria and Germany ask for armistice.

Monday 28 October Austrian army ordered to retreat from Piave.

Tuesday 29 October Austrians seek armistice in Italy.

Tuesday 30 October Turks sign armistice aboard British battleship Agamemnon. US 37th and 91st Divisions in hard fighting in Flanders near Audenarde.

Thursday 31 October Uprisings in Vienna and Budapest.

Friday 1 November Serbs liberate Belgrade. In Battle of Valenciennes British turn German positions and advance. Co-ordinated French-American attack in Aisne-Argonne sector. US 5th Division crosses Meuse. 156

Sunday 3 November Australians sign armistice with Italians.


Tuesday 5 November British break Germans on Sambre and pursues.

Wednesday 6 November Americans cut German east-west railway communications on Meuse. Canadians enter Belgium. French take Vervins and Rethel.

Thursday 7 November US 29th Division link with French 10th Colonial near Meuse.

Friday 8 November Erzberger leads German delegation to Foch’s Headquarters. Allies continue to advance on all fronts; British occupy Avesnes.

Saturday 9 November Kaiser abdicates. Revolution in Berlin.


Monday 11 November Armistice signed in railway carriage at Rethondes in Compiegne Forest at five minutes past five a.m., to come into force at 11 a.m. AEF numbers 1,981,701 men in Europe, of which 1,078,222 are combat troops. 159-160, 183-188

Saturday 16 November Allies begin march into Germany. 189-192

Monday 18 November Admiral Kolchak proclaimed White Russian ruler at Omsk. 165

Wednesday 20 November AEF enters Luxembourg. First US-built tank landed in France.

Sunday 24 November BEF and AEF on German border.
**CHRONOLOGY**

<table>
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<td>Monday 25 November</td>
<td>German forces in East Africa surrender.</td>
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<td>Wednesday 11 December</td>
<td>AEF take possession of Koblenz. 190</td>
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<td>Wednesday 25 December</td>
<td>US President Wilson spends Christmas at AEF Headquarters, Chaumont.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 30 December</td>
<td>Allies capture Kadish, North Russia. Kolchak takes Birsk.</td>
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**1919**

Friday 3 January  Food Council under Herbert Hoover set up in Paris to feed former Central Powers. Feisal-Weizmann Agreement signed in London; Jewish settlement in Palestine agreed. Rutherford splits the atom at Manchester University, UK.

Sunday 5 January  In Germany Spartacist Revolutionaries rise. Anton Drexler founds German Workers’ Party; later to be Nazi Party.

Saturday 18 January  Peace Conference opens in Quai d’Orsay, Paris. 188

Sunday 19 January  Red Sixth Army forces Allied retreat in North Russia in extreme cold. 175–176

Tuesday 21 January  Sinn Fein Dublin Congress declares Irish independence and hostilities continue until July 1921.

Friday 14 February  League of Nations Covenant accepted.

Saturday 15 February  US President Wilson leaves for America.

Tuesday 4 March  British government decide to evacuate North Russia. In Siberia Kolchak’s Ufa offensive begins.

Monday 17 March  Red forces defeat French near Bolshe Ozerki.

Monday 31 March  Red uprising in Murmansk put down. Red attack on Archangel repulsed.

Tuesday 8 April  US Brigadier-general Wilds P Richardson arrives in Murmansk. 179

Thursday 10 April  Canadians with armoured train take Urossozero on Murmansk railway. 181

Thursday 17 April  White Russians rout Reds at Lake Vigo, North Russia.

Friday 25 April  3rd North Russian Rifle Regiment mutinies, fights British and joins Reds. 181

Monday 28 May  Red Fifth Army counter-attacks Kolchak; start of White retreat.

Thursday 1 May  German troops retake Munich from Spartacists.

Tuesday 6 May  Sixth Plenary session approves draft peace treaty.

Tuesday 27 May  British 238th Relief Brigade lands at Archangel.

Monday 9 June  Red forces take Ufa. 181

Friday 13 June  Czechs mutiny at Irkutsk, Siberia.

Sunday 15 June  British pilots Alcock and Brown complete first trans-Atlantic flight.

Saturday 21 June  German High Seas Fleet, held by British, scuttled by Rear Admiral Reuter’s order at Scapa Flow.

Wednesday 25 June  Romanovka Massacre in Siberia; Company A, US 31st Infantry attacked. 168

Saturday 28 June  Treaty of Versailles signed despite German protests. Foch describes it as 20-year armistice, not a peace treaty.

Tuesday 1 July  Red forces take more key towns in Siberian campaign.

Saturday 5 July  British and Whites take Kapaslega on Murmansk Railway.

Tuesday 15 July  Reds retake Ekaterinburg in Siberian campaign.

Saturday 19 July  British Victory Parade in London, UK, led by General Pershing.

Tuesday 22 July  White Russians mutiny at Murmansk; British Hampshire Regiment sent out.

Sunday 10 August  Battle of Troitsa, North Russia; Allies defeat Reds and secure positions for evacuation.

Monday 23 August  Last of Americans, General Richardson, leaves North Russia. 182

Monday 1 September  Belov’s White Russians surrender to Reds in Siberian campaign.

Tuesday 9 September  British retreat to Archangel begins.

Saturday 27 September  Last of British evacuate Archangel.

Monday 29 September  Evacuation of Czech Legion from Siberia ordered.

Wednesday 1 October  Allied evacuation of Murmansk begins.

Friday 10 October  French and Serb troops leave Murmansk.

Thursday 13 November  Kolchak leaves Omsk with Russian Imperial gold reserve.

Friday 14 November  Reds take Omsk.

Wednesday 19 November  US Senate votes down ratification of Versailles peace treaty. America makes separate peace with Germany.

Sunday 7 December  Kolchak arrests his army C-in-C Sakharov who is immediately released.

**1920**

Thursday 1 January  American FBI arrest 4,000 alleged Communists.

Saturday 3 January  Rising against Kolchak in Irkutsk.

Sunday 4 January  Kolchak resigns.

Wednesday 7 January  Red Fifth Army captures 60,000 Whites.

Saturday 10 January  US 37th Infantry capture Red Armoured Train near Lake Baikal, Siberia. 170–171

Thursday 15 January  Czechs hand Kolchak over to Political Centre who hand him on to Reds.

Friday 16 January  US Senate votes against joining League of Nations. Prohibition begins in USA.
Sunday 25 January Revolution at Vladivostok.
Tuesday 3 February Whites invest Irkutsk and demand Kolchak's release.
Saturday 7 February Czechs make evacuation agreement with Reds, Kolchak shot.
Saturday 21 February Reds occupy Archangel.
Tuesday 24 February Hitler addresses public meeting of 'Workers' Party in Munich beer-hall.

Friday 5 March Red Fifth Army in Irkutsk.
Saturday 13 March Red 1st Division occupies Murmansk.
Friday 19 March US Senate formally rejects Versailles Peace Treaty.
Thursday 1 April American forces evacuate Vladivostok, Siberia. 173-175

1921

Friday 29 July Hitler becomes leader of the Nazi Party.
Wednesday 24 August US signs peace treaties with Austria, Germany and Hungary. US troops evacuate Koblenz. Unknown soldier repatriated for burial in Arlington Cemetery on 11 November.

INTRODUCTION

The United States and World War I, 1914–1920

When, in April 1917, the United States of America took the important decision to enter World War I on the side of the Allies against the Central Powers a number of difficulties had to be overcome before active participation was possible. Some of these are mentioned by the people whose words appear in this book and the brief summary given below is intended to give a context to their comments, but is no substitute for proper study of more substantial scholarly sources.

First, there was the fact that the American army was very small indeed. Only about 130,000 men were in the Regular Army, and of these many were spread around on the American borders, in Panama and in the Philippines. The crisis in relations with Mexico meant that part of the 67,000 men of the National Guard were mobilized as well. The scale of the problem may be seen by considering that a European infantry division was supposed to number some 17,000 men (it varied somewhat between countries and often the units were under strength) and in early 1918 Germany would have about 250 divisions on the Western Front – more than four million men. A massive recruitment problem thus had to be solved very quickly.

Second, the recruits had to be trained. This raised the question of by whom they could be trained and what skills and understanding their training should give them. The Commander-in-Chief of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF), John J. Pershing, thought that the Europeans had lost their zest and settled for defensive, trench-bound warfare. He favoured "open" warfare; battles of position and movement. As a man whose experience was of fighting in the Americas against lightly-armed adversaries, this is scarcely surprising. That it proved to be mistaken equally comes as no shock.

Third, the army had to be equipped with the weapons the training taught it to use. The factories of the USA were already turning out certain armaments for the Allies; indeed, the value of this business was a major factor in going to war, as losers do not settle their debts or repay their loans. However, these were weapons which the Americans had no experience in using or in opposing. Hiram Stevens Maxim may have been born in Sangerville, Maine, in 1840, but he invented and exploited his machine-gun in Europe where there was a ready market for things that could, in the words of a friend, "enable these Europeans to cut each other's throat with greater facility." Colonel Isaac Newton Lewis, another American, found the same with his, much lighter, machine-gun, offered to the USA in 1911 but rejected and then taken up by the Belgians and the British. Nor had the American Army experience in depth with modern artillery. Of the guns acquired by the AEF in World War I only 12.4% would be of American manufacture and almost all of them were of European design. What was more important, none of America's previous enemies had employed such things against them. Newly invented was the tank. The British had been the innovators and first deployed the new device in September 1916. The French developed their own heavy, medium and light tanks and it was mostly in their light, two-man Renaults that Americans were to fight, although the US Tank Corps had some heavy British Mark Vs as well. Last, but not least, was air warfare. Balloons for observation and the registration of artillery fire were already decades old, but entirely unproven in warfare in 1914 was the aeroplane which still, in 1917, was strange to the American army.

Fourth, the objective to be attained was not merely to help the Allies defeat the Central Powers, but, by taking a leading role in that achievement, to place the United States and its President, Woodrow Wilson, in a dominant position in arranging the peace. To do that the AEF had to remain distinct and separate rather than diffuse its identity in British or French formations. Pershing was given express orders that the formation of an American Army under American command was required of him.

Fifth, it was necessary to select a sector of operations within which the AEF would be, and could be seen to be, fighting. Here it would have not only combat troops but also the full apparatus of support; supply and hospital services, communications and transport units, welfare and commissariat facilities. Under-utilized seaports were found in the south west and south of France and energetic building would bridge the missing sections of railway needed to support the AEF in the east, Lorraine, leaving the British their logical position close to home in the west and the French sheltering Paris in the centre.

These were amongst the factors that would bear upon the decision-makers in the coming months and influence actions and events experienced by those whose views form this book.
The Progress of the War

After the declaration of war on 6 April 1917 the first Americans were hurried across to France to show the flag and boost morale, but the build-up was, inevitably, slow. Headquarters, 1st Division, arrived in France on 26 June, the 2nd Division was formed in France of regiments sent over in that same year and the 26th Division HQ arrived on 28 October, the 42nd on 1 November and the 41st on 31 December to complete the arrivals for the year; five of the forty-three that would eventually come to Europe. They arrived in a world of loss and suffering of which they had small understanding. Here in France almost every family had already sustained grievous loss – a father, a brother, a son. In February 1916, a year and a half into the war, the Germans had invited France to bleed herself to death in the defence of Verdun but were then drawn deeply into an attritional conflict that lasted until December. In part to relieve the pressure the British mounted a huge attack, using her newly minted volunteer army, the so-called “Kitchener’s Army”, on 1 July on the Somme. In that first day alone nearly 20,000 British were killed and an additional 40,000 wounded or missing. This battle lasted until November.

The Germans themselves had precipitated America’s entry into the war. They calculated that resuming unrestricted submarine warfare would render them dividends in the damage they could do to the Allies’ supply lines more swiftly than America’s contribution would do them harm. If this was coupled with their persistence in a defensive posture on the Western Front, allowing the Allies to smash themselves on the Somme. In that first day alone nearly 20,000 British were killed and an additional 40,000 wounded or missing. This battle lasted until November.

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The collapse of ordered government in Russia and civil wars between various factions led to Allied intervention both in North Russia and in Siberia in 1918. These ventures achieved little and ended in October 1919 and April 1920 respectively.

The German perception of the situation in France in early 1918 differed from that of the Allies. What they saw was a steady and increasing build-up of American manpower and materials of war. The convoy system had given significantly greater security from U-Boat attacks and the rate of growth of the American presence would grant the Allies superiority of numbers by 1919, by which time the AEF might also have raised its competance to become an army to be feared. They therefore decided to attack with great force to break their enemies in the immediate future.

The British Prime Minister, Lloyd George, had been horrified by the losses of 1917 and developed the curious idea that to weaken his army would save lives, refusing reinforcements on the scale demanded by Sir Douglas Haig, the British Commander-in-Chief. The German attack of 21 March, Operation Michael, thus fell on thinly-held lines through which they cut with dizzying speed. It was brought to a halt on 5 April outside Amiens, more through its own exhaustion than Allied military might. A second attack, Operation Georgette, the Battle of the Lys, began on 9 April and was, eventually, held as well. Two major changes in the Allied arrangements followed. For the first time an overall commander, albeit with somewhat limited authority, was appointed to the armies of the Allies in the person of Ferdinand Foch, the fiery French general, and Pershing volunteered to brigade his divisions with French or British formations. The AEF emphasised its commitment with the successful taking and courageous holding of Cantigny, a minor matter in military terms but a great one in upholding the alliance.

The German assaults continued. As the Battle of Cantigny was about to begin Operation Blücher-Yorck was launched, the start of the Third Battle of the Aisne. This succeeded as much as Operation Michael; within days the Germans were on the River Marne at the end of excessively extended supply lines, and here the machine-gunners of the US 3rd Division had a major part in halting them. Prominent also were the US Marines of the 2nd Division. They were thrust into action at Belleau Wood where, on being advised to withdraw, one of their officers is said to have exclaimed, “Retreat, Hell! We just got here!” It took almost three weeks for the wood to fall to the Americans. A fourth German effort was made on the River Matz towards Cantigny in Operation Gneisenau, and this time it was stopped more quickly and the French counter-attacked to roll it back.

The Allies themselves were not sitting waiting; preparations
for the offensive were in hand. On 4 July a British force commanded by the Australian General Monash ironed out a salient east of Amiens. To Pershing's annoyance troops of the US 33rd Division took part. In an action that was to become recognised as a classic of combined operations, infantry, armour, artillery and aircraft worked together to complete their task on time and with minimal casualties. It was a lesson that others were slow to learn.

German aggression was not yet spent. On 15 July the Fourth Battle of Champagne and Second Battle of the Marne began. The attack was expected and Allied artillery opened fire on enemy troop concentrations just before they went into action. None the less the fighting was bitter with both the 42nd Division and the 3rd bearing a heavy share of the load. The Germans failed to take Reims and although they crossed the Marne the 3rd threw them back. Almost immediately the Allied counter-attack went in to gain control of the rail centre of Soissons. Under French command the US 1st and 2nd Divisions alongside the French 1st Moroccan Division smashed into the western flank of the Aisne-Marne salient on 18 July. The inexperience of the Americans caused them heavy casualties, but their courage and determination was undeniable. Further south the 4th Division, deeply inexperienced, also substituted raw courage for skill; to good effect but at a high price. Ten days later the Americans were in action north of the Marne on the River Ourcq where they again distinguished themselves. Abandonment of the salient was the only option open to the Germans.

The next Allied blow, a massive one, fell on the line east of Amiens. On 8 August the Battle of Amiens opened with minimal preparatory artillery fire and with the infantry attacking with close tank support. Its effect was so impressive that the German commander Ludendorff characterized that date as "the Black Day of the German Army." Haig declined to let his success tempt him to permit his force to outrun its support and he halted them after an eight-mile gain in ground. The need to regain the losses of the Lys was satisfied when the Germans withdrew and the third requirement to prepare for a general Allied offensive, the elimination of the St Mihel Salient, was the business of the AEF, using the newly constituted First Army.

For all Pershing's ambition and his government's directives, the First Army was not an independent army. French support included 99 batteries of 75mm guns, 50 of howitzers and 21 squadrons of aircraft. What Pershing had in mind was the taking of the salient prior to a drive towards Metz, but that idea was frustrated by the far more ambitious plan developed by Foch. The initial passage of arms of World War I had left a huge salient driven into France with one side running broadly south from Lille and the other curling away west from Verdun, and it was the steady reduction of this that Foch intended. The British would hit the western flank from Arras to St Quentin, the French would pressure the centre on the Oise-Aisne front and the Americans on the right and the French on the left would operate astride the wooded hills of the Argonne on the east. Exactly how this last undertaking would be structured was a difficult matter, eventually settled by keeping the Americans as a single, independent force on the west of the Meuse River. All this had to begin in time to achieve results before the rain and snow of winter boggled operations down.

Pershing had no intention of giving up St Mihel. He had to make his, and the American First Army's, mark. The major attack went in along the southern flank of the salient while a second thrust was driven down from the north-eastern corner. The Germans were all too sensitive to the vulnerability of their position and orders were given for withdrawal. These were followed slothfully, and when the assault was made on 12 September many of the German troops were still in place. However, resistance was not robust and many Americans were well aware that they had not been truly tested. Even so many deficiencies in AEF staff work and officering were revealed. What did go much better than expected was the change of front. The St Mihel Salient was eliminated by 16 September and immediately the AEF started moving to take over their new front in the Meuse-Argonne sector. By 26 September they were in place and the final great battle or series of battles of this war began.

The first and most striking success was in the west. The British, a term that includes the Australians and Canadians, and the two US divisions brigaded with them, the 27th and 30th, smashed through the Hindenburg Line in the space of four days. Artillery, aircraft, tanks and infantry, as well as rafts and boats to cross canals, played their allotted parts. On the American left, beyond the Argonne Forest, the French Fourth Army rolled forward, helped by the US 2nd Division at Blanc Mont and by the little-noticed regiments of the unformed 93rd Division, "colored" troops. The main American attack went well at first, but again inexperience showed. Opportunities were not exploited and the commander of the Tank Corps did not help matters by becoming so involved in front line action that he was wounded and evacuated – Colonel Patton's impulsiveness and passion had proved to be a handicap and would do so again, though not in this war.

After five days the Americans were still short of their second-day objectives. Their lines of supply were in a terrible state of confusion. Their ability, at a tactical level, to deal with the well-dug-in Germans was woefully insufficient. The advance halted, staggered forward a little, and halted again. Pershing was under pressure from Foch and Foch was actually asked to secure the American C-in-C's replacement by the French Prime Minister. In a previous crisis in the development of the AEF Pershing had had the sense to accept that he had to share the burdens of command and he had then appointed General Harbord to the Services of Supply and agreed to let General Bliss handle political liaison. Now he appreciated that field command of the First Army had to be closer to operations and he made Major General Liggett commander of the First Army while Major General Robert Bullard was appointed to the newly formed Second Army. After taking up his post on 16 October, Liggett chose to pause. For two weeks no new operations were undertaken in the Argonne. The artillery was moved into new positions, levels of training checked and tactics tightened and crack units were retrieved from the Allies.

While the British progress in the west continued, Liggett rearranged, reorganised and consolidated the First Army.
On 1 November they went into action afresh, with vastly improved results. Meanwhile the politicians were moving towards peace talks and as the Americans finally thrust their way across the Meuse an armistice was signed. Only one curious event marred the story of these last days. In a murky episode the 1st Division was given to understand that Pershing wanted them to be first into Sedan. The town had a totemic significance to the French, and to pre-empt them was, at the very least, ill-mannered. None the less a detachment of the 1st Division struck left across the lines of the 42nd Division in an attempt to liberate the city most closely associated with the loss of the Franco-Prussian war. Fortunately they were halted before they could do so.

There is no question that the doughboys, the enlisted men of the American armies, fought with a courage and determination that, at least, matched their allies and that won the respect of their adversaries. The very presence of the Americans had forced the hand of the Germans into attempting the succession of attacks that so fatally depleted their strength. Equally clearly the AEF was not a sufficiently trained or well-commanded force to make a claim of having won the war for the Allies credible. It was the Alliance, of which the Americans were a vital part, that prevailed.

Now, of course, everyone wanted to go home. It was not until 24 August 1919 that the last of them began that journey, having been in occupation of a sector of Germany while peace negotiations plodded on. They left behind a country in which a small, populist political group, the Worker’s Party, had just acquired a new leader. He was a former corporal, decorated for valor, called Adolf Hitler.
The United States was not unaware of the war in Europe and the Middle East for, by 1916, it had been consuming lives at an unprecedented rate. American lives not excluded. The British navy, together with the navies of her allies, had imposed a blockade on Germany and claimed the right to inspect the cargoes of neutral ships, including American ships. At the same time American ships were carrying supplies, including munitions of war, to France and Britain, so the Germans responded with submarine attacks. The major preoccupations of American land forces were, however, elsewhere.

Since 1898 the United States had maintained a military presence in the colony of the Philippines which had been acquired from the Spanish and in which, by 1902, local independence movements had been suppressed at considerable cost to both sides. A significant number of fully-trained soldiers would remain on the far side of the Pacific Ocean for the duration of World War I. Farm boy Richard Johnson had enlisted at Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania on 30 June 1901 at the age of nineteen years and six months and, as the army became his career, served in various infantry units. In early 1916 he was on the way to the Philippines for a fourth time, now with the rank of corporal in a medical unit.

We made a two-day stop at Honolulu with the usual shore leave and the 25th Infantry from Schofield Barracks gave a social reception for the regiment at the Honolulu Armory—a big feed and dancing. Here I met several old acquaintances of yesteryears. I had spent three years—1901 to 1904—with this regiment, and of course many men of those days were still with the outfit, so this was a little like “old home-coming day” to me. As a whole this was quite a grand affair, but it was somewhat marred by the regrettable conduct of a few rowdy ruffians of the 9th Cavalry who, while prowling through the “redlight” district, started some trouble which almost reached the stage of a riot. A large military guard was sent out to round up all men of the regiment found on the streets, passes were suspended and the 9th Cavalry left there with an uncreditable reputation that was not soon forgotten... We arrived in Manila Bay...February 1st 1916...

The whole of the medical detachment accompanying me on this trip was assigned to Camp Stotsenburg, along with the 9th Cavalry; this was a brigade post in the central part of Luzon, about fifty-five miles from Manila... The rumors I had heard mostly concerned its isolation, and restrictions imposed upon the soldiers; also this was known as a heavily infested malarial district, so with these things in mind I had sought to escape this station in all of my previous moves and had hoped to do so now. So it may easily be imagined that this assignment did not overwhelm me with pleasure. But I could have drawn a less desirable station, and at any rate it was far preferable to the dreary duty of the Mexican border patrol which I had just left... The 9th Cavalry had come here to relieve the 7th Cavalry. The 7th was now returning to the States, and in all probability would take up patrol duty on the Mexican border.

Those US forces not concerned with the Philippines or in camp at home were involved with Central America. The Spanish-American War of 1898 had brought not only the Philippines under American rule, but Guam and Puerto Rico as well and Spain had been obliged to grant Cuba her independence. On 19 October 1914 the US Marines had landed in Haiti, it was said to restore order, and they were there again, 2,000 strong, in July 1915. In January 1916 General Francisco (Pancho) Villa had eighteen American mining engineers shot at Santa Isabel and two months later Brigadier-general Pershing was leading 6,000 men into Mexico on the Punitive Expedition; presumably to the relief of bored US cavalrymen. In May 1916 the Marines were undertaking another policing foray in Santo Domingo and in the same month another 4,000 men were moved to the Mexican front. These demands on manpower, coupled with a growing realization that involvement in the European war was becoming increasingly likely, led to the National Defense Act which allowed for the increase of the army to a strength of 175,000 men and the National Guard to 450,000 over the next five years. The scale of these numbers may be evaluated by comparing them with the numbers of French dead in the fighting of the same year, 1916. The fatalities were: infantry, 221,920; cavalry, 2,830; artillery, 16,800; engineers, 5,475 and airmen 620. A total of 247,645 excluding the wounded, prisoners, those missing in action and civilians.

On 18 June 80,000 militia were called up. Corporal Ludwig Schmidt, a member of one of the well-regulated militia contemplated by the Constitution, received the following letter.
Station Company A, Engineers, Ok. Nat'l Guard
Norman, Okla. June 19, 1916
Corp. Schmidt,
Company A, Engineers, has been ordered to recruit to war strength, and to mobilize for active service, presumably in Mexico. We can use only those who will take the United States oath for three years service, or for the balance of their unexpired enlistment in the Oklahoma National Guard, and three years in the U.S. Reserve. However, you are in no way bound to enter this contract. If you will voluntarily do this, communicate with me at once, and report here immediately.
Jas. J. Tucker, Captain, Commanding.

In Sapulpa, south-west of Tulsa, Oklahoma, the local newspaper commented:

There are a good many saddened homes today in Sapulpa and all over the United States with the departure of militiamen for the mobilization points. For years belonging to the militia was to many a merely social clublike affair giving a fellow some exercise and a chance to go on a camping trip every summer without much cost.

The spectre of war that has called the militia to the Mexican border is a big surprise to many and to some not altogether a pleasant one. Men who had not thought of what the membership in the organization meant were brought up sharply and their accustomed paths of work and play broken off by this sudden call. The worst part of it is that there is no telling when the militiamen will get to come back. Probably not until their enlistment expires.

Among those who went from Sapulpa today was Ludwig Schmidt, the boyish son of Louis Schmidt. Ludwig, who is a sophomore in Oklahoma university engineering department, belongs to that most necessary arm, the engineers. He had a summer job at the refinery and was figuring on several years of training for his life job in the best colleges of the country. Instead of going to school now he will be showing captured greasers how to dig trenches.

A few days later Ludwig wrote home to his mother.

ARMORY CLUB
OKLAHOMA NATIONAL GUARD
Fort Sill, Okla., July 2, 1916

. . . They have given me a squad to train and besides this I am to help the Quartermaster. A squad is compound of eight men and I have fine fellows under me. Most them are Lawton boys and one or two have autos. It certainly makes things nice for me.

American troops on exercise in Texas in 1916. (USAMHI/WWI, Coll. Ludwig Schmidt, 544th Engineers, MME 16/10)
So far we have had very little work to do, only getting our camp in order. It looks like an all summer siege. This writing is poor but it is done by candle light . . .

Tonight I walked over to the new Fort, all of the regulars have gone to the border and the guards are compound of men from the School of Fire and the School of Musketry. I got well acquainted with one of the men who had belonged to Battery F. He took me into one of the houses and showed me a six inch gun. All of the heavy guns were left at the Fort, only the Four point Seven guns were sent to the border. I thought that the Regulars would be down on us but they seem to do everything that they can for us. I have been up to the old Fort several times and have gotten acquainted with several of the men . . .

There were, however, Americans already in France and already facing the dangers of war. They were volunteers. Some had gone to Canada in order to enlist in the Canadian army and journey on from there; others had made their way to Europe independently or even before the war broke out and joined the forces of the allies. The poet Alan Seeger had joined the French Foreign Legion and had died on the battlefields of the Somme, at Belloy-en-Santerre, on 4 July 1916. In April 1916 the Escadrille Américaine was formed, a squadron of aircraft with seven American pilots under French command. The Germans protested the use of the name of a supposedly neutral nation, and it was changed to the Escadrille Lafayette. Eugene Bullard, born in Columbus, Georgia, the grandson of a slave, had made his way to Europe in 1906, at only twelve years of age, in search of a place in which he would not be dismissed as a “nigger”. He found that place was Paris and volunteered for the Foreign Legion as soon as war broke out. He was to distinguish himself first as a machine-gunner and then as a fighter pilot with Escadrille N93 of Groupe de Combat 15. He was not recognised as the first African American fighter pilot until thirty-one years after his death in 1961. Tom Bosworth was serving with the American Ambulance Field Service when he wrote to his aunt Harriet from Bordeaux on 1 February 1917.

Two nice letters from you this week in different mails, both of them long and like a talk with you; I was immensely glad to hear from you; just about now, you ought to be getting the first of my letters from England; I sent Will a cable, when I got to Paris, and hoped that he would remember to let you know of my arrival in France. Twenty-two of us, have been sent down here to drive back to Paris, some new ambulances which have just arrived from America; we came down, last night from Paris, in a train filled with “permissionnaires” (men on leave from the front) in a carriage so cold that the frost congealed on the windows, and fell off like snow. Every one thinks we are English, as our uniforms are very much like the English officer’s uniforms.

We start back to Paris, this morning and take three days on the journey; I don’t know yet when I shall be sent to the front, or where;

I’ve been very busy doing repair work, and unloading cars.

Aside from being blue with cold, night and day at Passy, I am well and happy.

I’ll write you again when I have time; This letter must remain as kind of an expanded post card.

Your letters were not even opened by the “censor”.

With a world of love to my best aunt ever her
Tom Bosworth.

Hotel Continental, Paris, February 6, 1917

. . . Last Friday night with twelve others of the ambulance, I left Paris under orders to go to Bordeaux, and drive some chassis, newly arrived from America, back to Paris; In charge of a young Belgian, who has been in the Paris service, we took the night train from Paris, and went through one of the coldest, most cheerless journeys by train, I have ever taken. The whole of France, has been in the grip of a stiff cold spell for two weeks, below zero most of the time; that night was one of the coldest of the spell; we were jammed, (fortunately in a first class compartment) with a lot of “permissionnaires” officers, on leave from the front, and left to warm ourselves by personal contact and numbers; frost formed on the windows, and fell on the floor like snow; even the officers, complained of the cold. My companions, like birds on a twig, twittered all night, as they breathed through chattering teeth. Cold, cross, and limp, we fell out of the train at Bordeaux at 7 a.m. and piled on to a wretched little street car, filled with women coming back from early market; one had to dodge their enormous loaves of bread, at the street car bumped along the tracks. In our khaki uniforms, we were a source of considerable speculation to the natives; several of them called after us “Anglais” and we let it go at that.

After going what seemed to be endless miles, but was in reality a few blocks, we arrived at our headquarters; a big tourist hotel, built on the foundations of an ancient monastery.

The house would in normal times have held two or three hundred, but save for a handful of transients, like ourselves, was deserted.

As coal is difficult to get, only one room (into which we packed ourselves) was heated. After a decent and very un-French breakfast of coffee, eggs and ham, we went to the military park where our cars had been assembled, and looked them over, oiled them, and tried them out. Each car had had built a seat strapped to the frame made of boards from the cases in which the cars had come from America.

Even riding about the town one’s breath froze on
one's muffler; after a lot of fuss and a good night's sleep in icy rooms, the whole procession of nineteen cars fled through the streets of Bordeaux the next noon. Stretched out in a row in front of the old xii century Cathedral we had our photographs taken, then headed out across the Gironde, for the north; first came our chief, then the Belgian; he has been in the Paris service for six months, doing yeoman service for us; twenty years old; he was at Louvain University when the war broke out. Every member of his family, male and female, was killed by the Boche at Namur, and he himself wounded in both legs; soon after his enlistment, he told us one night, that his chum at Louvain was fighting at his side, during one of the early engagements, on a piece of land to which the troops had been forced back in which they had not had time to dig themselves in, so that they were practically, sitting on the ground, firing at the Germans. The Germans rushed at them, and both his friend's arms, were shot away, part of one arm lying on the ground by his side; still sitting up, the friend, threw up what was left of his arms, in signal of surrender; a German soldier, deliberately took aim and fired at the man; a shot going through his neck.

He was left on the field, but later escaped to England, and is now in France. Our Belgian is very lame, but not at all rancorous in his criticism of the Boche. – Mile after mile of level road, on the Route Nationale to Paris, a road as straight across country as an arrow, we went on to Angouleme, an old town with an ancient Cathedral set on a hill. The cold was intense, but one got used to it; the dust was so thick that at times we couldn't see the car in front. The villages looked like Italian towns, with narrow streets, white houses, and red tiled roofs.

As we passed along the people came out and looked at us aghast; from time to time, we passed placid old women with wooden shoes, and fantastic white caps, arms folded, staring at us, with the peace which only cows have.

At Angouleme, we stopped at a huge hotel, built round a court, which we filled with our cars; where there was no coal, and not a single heated room. We were told that in peace times, the town numbered thirty thousand, but that twenty thousand had evacuated. There was a lively market going on, opposite the hotel, abandoned when we started with a great roaring of motors (many of which had to be thawed out). With a fellow who showed an interest in such things, I went and looked at the Cathedral, a gem of its century, set on the crest of the hill.

That day I began to think I hadn't enough clothes on; not carrying any luggage, I had slept in everything save my outside things; as the water turned to ice in the bowls, washing was out of the question; I wore an aviator's hat I bought in Paris, with ear flaps, and buttons, under the chin, heavy goggles, a muffler wrapped twice round my neck and pulled up over my face, woolen underwear, khaki shirt, the sweater and socks you made, an army sweater, and uniform coat, under a heavy lambs wool coat, re-inforced in places, and “Fido”, and the cold went through all that.

We were told we would see German prisoners, working on the roads, but not a one did we see.

The next night we stopped at Poitiers, and after endless red tape in getting military permission for more gasolene from the authorities went through rather interesting country to Tours. Being further north, the cold was worse, and there was snow on the ground. At Poitiers, the man woke me, and left a can of hot water on the wash-stand spilling a little on the floor; when I got up a few moments later, I slipped on the ice!

Endless mishaps due to the hob nails, collected in the tires of the party, delayed our arrival in Tours till 10.30. What we suffered the last two hours I can't tell.

When we came into the military garage where we left our cars that night, two officers told us (in French) that Wilson had broken with Germany. Everybody cheered again and again.

The next morning in the barracks, mess hall, where we were given tea, at eleven o'clock, one of the officers proposed a toast to America, “Our ally, now”.

In a driving snow storm, we arrived late last night in Chartres, to find our first warm dinner, and warm water, and warm rooms. I was woken at six by the heavy booming of a great bell got up and dressed quickly, and followed the sound. In a pale green light I could just make out the two tall towers of the Cathedral, above the house-tops; out of a side street came a whole flock of little boys, with long black capes, pointed hoods blacker than the shadows, clattering away up the street over the cobbles with wooden shoes.

Inside the Cathedral low mass was going on, in a side chapel, and only three lights in the body of the church. Through the silence, now and again, a heavy “Amen” rolled out silence, the darkness, and a little bell rang somewhere in the blackness.

I went back later, when the light was stronger, to see the sunlight through the windows, the finest in all Europe.

A verger, a little timid over my strange uniform when he found I was an American, said in very slow, ringing French “Our Ally”, and begged me to see that the Germans in America, were shot away before they had a chance to do us harm; “Look what they have done to us in France”, he said, “Think of Rhiems, a beautiful thing like this church, and think of all the village churches in our country, they have ruined forever; they are not like other human beings, they are like the beasts, these Boche”.
Back in the town square I had to wait for a regiment, carrying packs and guns, and wearing the blue of the French armies, and the blue trench helmet, going heavily across the snow to the train to take them to the front.

Back in Paris, I was told that I should be sent to the front, in a day or two, my destination is kept secret.


. . . I've been having some enormously interesting experiences lately, as we are in the very midst of things, and see nearly everything that goes on; what I see however, makes me more and more convinced, that this method of settling international differences is utterly inadequate, but the best means devised for destroying life and property, and making existance a hell on earth.

We evacuate from three "posts de secours" in two utterly smashed villages, just behind the lines, part of the time in full view of the trenches, and all of the time in range of the Boche guns; I arrived the other afternoon, in one of these villages, to begin 24 hours duty, and stopped my car in front of an an abri, or shelter; suddenly there came a sickening whine in the air and a shell burst not twenty feet away; two men were slightly wounded, and the other had his ear torn off by hits of the case — "eclat d'obus" — and his arm so torn, that it was cut off as soon as he reached the hospital.

The French batteries replied, and for the rest of the afternoon, the air was full of the whine of shells, "arrivés et deparnts;" I sat in the abri until five, when I was called to take three slightly wounded to the hospital 8 miles away; I was glad that the sound of the motor made it impossible to hear the whining of the shells. Going up the hill outside the town, shrapnel was bursting in a field beside the road.

The other day I refused to carry a Boche prisoner, so he went by horse, in a vehicle ambulance; one hears tales every night, of what they do which removes all necessity for even slight humanitarian courtesies.

One night I was called to the most advanced post of all, and started out in a mist so thick I could not see my radiator; star shells were going up over the lines, showing from through the mist, the most devilish light you could imagine; I could see the flash of the German guns not a mile away, like eyes, through the mist; coming back I carried a "grave blessé", who moaned as the car bumped in the shell holes. These poor dumb "blessés"! They are packed into one's car in total darkness, smelling evilly, many of them one carries on one's back, and never a murmur. When you reach the hospital, and you know the long ride has been a torture for them, they solemnly shake hands and say, "Merci, mon Camarade" and you turn them over to other hands. One is never away from the sound of the guns, day or night; sometimes a "tir de barrage" goes off (a curtain of fire) the most awful sound of all; It usually means the beginning of an attack, and one listens for the call for cars to bring the men in. Think of a whole hillside of batteries firing on a dark night, something over a hundred shots a minute! Near or far, there is no other sound like it on earth. The Germans send in gas shells from time to time. The other day in one of the villages I told you of, a man ran down the street blowing a fish-horn, (the gas alarm — one carries a gas mask, day and night) the other American on duty, and myself, were ordered into an abri with a Lieutenant and four others; the door was sealed up, sprinkled with a liquid, and we all put on our masks and waited.

Just over an hour afterwards, the signal came that the danger was over . . .

The wind had carried the gas up another valley so we were actually in no danger.

Back in our headquarters, one night, we had a similar alarm but no gas came.

In the USA the pressures to join the allies against the Central Powers were becoming irresistible. In London the American ambassador, Walter Page, pointed out not only that the future of the American economy depended on an allied victory but also that German Foreign Minister Dr Alfred von Zimmermann was attempting to enter into an alliance with Mexico against the USA. In a chilling calculation, the German High Command came to the conclusion that if unrestricted submarine warfare was unleashed against allied and neutral shipping once more, the war could be won before the Americans could mobilize sufficient strength to tip the balance against them in France. On Monday 2 April 1917 President Woodrow Wilson addressed Congress and on Friday 6 April the resolution for the declaration of war was signed. The 28th Infantry, 1st Division was in the Canal Zone, Panama and Private Hyman Rosenberg wrote to his home in Brooklyn on 17 April.

Dear Brother Sol

I have received the razor and the handkerchiefs. I thank you very much. I am in the best of health and hope to hear the same from you. Sol, don't thing [think] that I am angry at you if I was angry at you I would write and tell you. Sol, I am know [now] a first clas [class] Private for the last 6 months, that is $3 a month more and I am a marksman, that is $2 a month more and I got a good chance for Corporal or mor [more] than that. Sol, what I thing about the war, U.S. will have to be transferd or not. Sol, you ask me how I like Panama, war is heal, Panama is next thing to heal. Sol, there is one of every hundred in 3 years in Panama that haven't got some kind of
sickness, so you ought to know what kind of a place this is. Sol, I tell you why I am not write home very many letters. Every time I write a letter I thing of home and it all most makes me sick. You no know Sol why I dont write very many letters home.

My Best Regards to very dozy [everybody] at home, your loving Brother, Hyman Rosenberg.

It is remarkable how accurate Rosenberg's predictions were. There would be about one million Americans in Europe before the tide was to turn, and it did take a year to achieve that. Given the task before them, a year was not long.
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Research and Bibliographic Information

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with numerous maps in colour combining historical data with
tourist routes on the roads of that time, most of which
survive;

the maps in this book are from American Armies and
Battlefields

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Books Express, PO Box 10, Saffron Walden, Essex CB1 4EW,
UK. Telephone: (01799) 513726.

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