

My Experiences in the World War

By General John J. Pershing

Copyright, 1931, in all countries by the North American Newspaper Alliance. All rights reserved, including the right of translation. Reproduction in whole or part prohibited.

W. N. U. Service

CHAPTER XXIII—Continued

I objected to these back-door methods of making complaints and emphasized the necessity of frankness and directness in all our dealings. I asked him to give instructions if there was any fault to be found with my personal attention. He eagerly agreed with me and expressed a great surprise that any other officer should have followed. On the other hand, however, that both complaints were made for the purpose of finding out just the extent of my independence of authority.

Gets Apology from Petain

I took occasion a few days later to let Petain know very politely what I thought of the impudence of his sort of thing and also criticized him in French for talking anybody

our expeditionary forces, it was a question whether we ought to organize higher units by using regular regiments, with a proportionate number of new officers, or utilize the permanent commissioned personnel of the line for suitable assignment to the citizen contingents and leave our regular organization to be completed from the relatively raw material at our disposal and thus build up all categories of the army simultaneously.

I recommended that regular regiments at Honouin and elsewhere be relieved for this purpose by National Guard regiments. These regular troops would more nearly approximate the standards of our allies at the start and, more important still, their use would diminish the chances of excesses during our first encounters with the enemy. The acting chief of staff at home, Major General John

then readily to increase the number of divisions until the divisions should become wholly American.

Having to combat the British difficulties on the question of a strategy which would be that of the "back door" I had not of course, sufficient discussion to the plan, and even approved some of the features, especially those pertaining to the earlier part of the proposed training, but for the moment the situation was still over my further conference.

Causes King to Wait

That British headquarters they at once in a letter to the Belgian king to pay my respects to the king and queen. As Sir Douglas was off to London my car was attached to his train and we traveled together to La Loupe, where I boarded the special train and I took a special, consisting of my car and one other, and proceeded on my way.

We were in Valenciennes, my destination, at a fixed hour, but to my surprise the train pulled in ten minutes ahead of time. I was changing into my best uniform—in fact, was just putting on the light boots—when my aid, Colonel Boyd, struck his head in at the door of my compartment as said breathlessly: "General, we have arrived."

I knew it only too well, as the train had stopped and the royal band outside was playing "The Star-Spangled Banner" in the mournful cadence common to foreign bands. It was an embarrassing thought that I should be late. In another minute, when the orderly and myself were struggling, this time with the left boot, Boyd again appeared and said in a stage whisper that was no doubt heard by the entire escort outside: "Sir, the King is out there standing at the salute."

That was so much the humor of the situation overcame me, and for an instant all of us, including the orderly, who rarely smiled, were convulsed with laughter. That did not help matters of course, and meanwhile the band outside, which had already played the national air through three times, was dolingfully humming on the fourth, when I hurriedly descended the steps of my car opposite his Majesty, buttoning my overcoat with one hand and saluting with the other.

At my appearance the band started afresh and, as though they had just begun, ran through our national anthem rather more vigorously, checked up no doubt at last, to see me in evidence. A few months later I had the courage to relate the incident in all its details to their majesties and they both seemed to enjoy it immensely.

King Decorates Pershing

After inspecting the escort in company with the King he said I drove to their residence, where the queen, in her most gracious manner, received us at the entrance. We had a very enjoyable luncheon, which Boyd thought was quite good, especially when I became bold enough to surmise, in my French, that the King King Albert, to my surprise, said he wished to bestow upon me the Order of the Grand Cordon of Leopold, and as I hesitated, saying that he was not permitted to receive foreign decorations, he insisted that I should accept it conditionally, which of course was the only thing to do. Boyd was decorated also.

In the afternoon the king, with his chief of staff, took me to his G. H. Q. and then to the front-line trenches explaining the disposition of the limited force with which their positions were held. It consisted of only the six divisions which had survived the retreat in 1914 in the face of overwhelming odds. It was then being recreated by Belgians escaping from within the German lines at the risk of their lives.

While we were driving King Albert related with much amusement some incidents of a recent visit by a party of our Congressmen, and inquired whether it was customary in our country for them to be on familiar terms with the President. He said some of them had called him, Albert and one had slapped him on the back, saying, "King, you're the right sort of fellow and everybody in America admires you." I explained to him that our congressmen were more or less privileged characters at home and that they only meant to be friendly. As a matter of fact, I think their familiarity did not offend him at all.

During my brief visit I was particularly impressed by the extreme simplicity of the home life of the king and queen, living there, as they were, in a very modest country place within sound of the enemy's guns and almost within range! The queen often went into the trenches to cheer the troops, and the fine bearing of their majesties through it all made them the outstanding heroic figures of the World War.

CHAPTER XXV

Returning to my headquarters at Chaumont December 31, 1917. I was not surprised to receive the following cable from Secretary of War Baker, in view of the numerous suggestions that had come to me regarding various plans for training our troops with the French and British:

"Both English and French" are pressing upon the President their desires to have your forces amalgamated with theirs by regiments and companies, and both express the belief in impending heavy drive by Germans somewhere along the lines of the Western Front. We do not desire loss of identity of our forces, but regard that as secondary to the meeting of any critical situation by the most helpful use of troops at your



Bishop Charles E. Brent.

command. The difficulty of course is to determine where the drive or drives of the enemy will take place and in advance of some knowledge on that question any reorganization of your forces would be difficult.

The President, however, desires you to retain full authority to use the troops in your command as you deem wise in conjunction with the French and British commanders in chief. It is suggested for your consideration that possible places might be selected for your forces nearer the American of the British and the French lines, which would enable you to show strength in whatever direction seemed most necessary.

This suggestion is not, however, pressed by you whatever merit it has in your judgment, the President's sole purpose being to acquaint you with the representations made here and to authorize you to act with entire freedom to accomplish the main purpose in mind. I am hopeful that complete unity and co-ordination of action can be secured in this matter by any conference you may have with French and British commanders and line of action that may be agreed upon.

The following cable also was received from Washington which showed the determination of the French to carry their policy.

The French ambassador called on the Secretary of War today and read me a dispatch from M. Clemenceau to the effect that General Pershing and General Petain had conferred as to the wisdom of sending American troops by attaching their regimental units to the French division before committing a part of

the line to an American division made up of troops not accustomed to special combat operations.

"M. Clemenceau's cable is to the effect that General Pershing had received the French ambassador's proposal for an agreement after conference with the President and the Secretary of War. The agreement was to the effect that the American Government would send to the French Government 100,000 men to be trained in France, which was my right and my duty in order to give them the benefit of the French experience, which the Secretary of War has accepted their view and commending it to you. This the Secretary of War is not willing to do, desiring to leave the matter wholly within your discretion after full consideration of the important elements of the matter."

Pershing Replies to Baker

The following extract from my cable of January 8 conveys the main points to my reply:

The French have not been entirely frank, as official information indicates they really want to incorporate our regiments into their divisions as they desire. As to our instruction, a certain amount of work with French troops is beneficial, and this we are leaving to expect to have. Have expressed a willingness to do in any way in an emergency, but no such good reason exists for us to break up our divisions and scatter regiments for service among French and British, especially under the guise of instruction.

It thus appeared quite clear that the French were so intent on their plan that Premier Clemenceau presented to cable Washington as to how our units were to be handled. Upon the receipt of the cable from Washington about the disagreement between Petain and myself I wrote at once to M. Clemenceau, quoting the cable and adding:

"May I not suggest to you, Mr. President, the inexpediency of communicating such matters to Washington by cable. These questions must all be settled here, eventually on their merits, through friendly conference between General Petain and myself, and cables of this sort are very likely to convey the impression of serious disagreement between us when such is not the case."

Clemenceau's Reply

M. Clemenceau's reply, translated

into English, follows:

"My dear General: I hasten with this answer to you, to which I refer, dated January 7, 1918. I regard it as the position of matters in the light of the two important agreements which you and I have reached in the past. First, the one which provides for the sending to France of 100,000 men to be trained in France, which was my right and my duty in order to give them the benefit of the French experience, which the Secretary of War has accepted their view and commending it to you. This the Secretary of War is not willing to do, desiring to leave the matter wholly within your discretion after full consideration of the important elements of the matter."

"I need not conceal that I played a full conference in the American Government with regard to this. However, it was not to the American Government that I addressed myself. I called to the attention of France, which was my right and my duty in order to give them the benefit of the French experience, which the Secretary of War has accepted their view and commending it to you. This the Secretary of War is not willing to do, desiring to leave the matter wholly within your discretion after full consideration of the important elements of the matter."

"I am giving you here the explanation which I owe you and I am going to exercise all the patience of which I am capable in awaiting the good news that the American commander and the French commander have finally agreed on a question which may be vital to the outcome of the war."

As the French were dead set on getting our troops under their control it is more than probable that the French premier, feeling that their plans were not working out, sought to create some distrust in the minds of our administration at Washington against my management of things in order to pave the way for insisting that we were entirely wrong in not consenting to amalgamation. However, at later meetings with Clemenceau and Petain the alleged differences were seemingly settled amicably, as indicated in my cable of January 14, which follows:

"For chief of staff. Have now definite understanding with French satisfactory to them and to me that our divisions now in France shall complete their training as already begun. In the future divisions arriving in zone of French armies are to have period of training with French, each regiment in a French division, when sufficiently experienced by training in a quiet sector with French and divisions are to be attached under their own commander and will be placed in our own sector."

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK



Red Cross Canteen Girls.

even Mr. House, as he had done, about the plan to attack the St. Mr. and sailed as the first officer by the American army. I was pleased with Petain's apology and his statement that there would be no further action of this kind on his part.

As a matter of fact, I think the French arrogantly regarded House as a sort of special ambassador, and thought that they could lay the foundation for an agreement through him to the question of the amalgamation. Just before his return to the United States House and to me that he entirely agreed with me, and that he was satisfied. President and the Secretary of War believed to leave the whole question regarding the dispatching of our troops in my hands. As a consequence of this was in no sense necessary, as I had full confidence that this was the case.

During his stay in France I formed a firm opinion of his character. We formed an agreement in the beginning which enabled us to discuss all matters most freely and frankly. Before he left for home he and I arranged for confidential communication by cable should it become necessary to reach Mr. Baker or Mr. Wilson.

The Missing Turkeys

Immediately upon my return to headquarters at Chaumont December 7, 1917, General Harbord reported there had been a shortage of turkeys and other essentials of a many American Thanksgiving dinner, and in a fabulous manner deplored the want of a staff at Washington that would so neglect our troops.

He stated that the shortage was due to their supplies, which had been ordered in September for delivery November 1, being fitted under a large cargo that could not be unloaded in time. The following cable was sent as written by Harbord:

"On September 18 supplies for Thanksgiving were ordered. Your cablegram stated mince-meat shipped on Montanan. There was no mince-meat on Montanan. Mince-meat arrived November 26 on Powhatan, underneath heavy cargo, which it was necessary to discharge before mince-meat could be unloaded. Result was mince-meat aboard ship Thanksgiving day. Sweet potatoes arrived on Dakotan and could not be unloaded until November 22, result some troops did not have sweet potatoes. It was necessary to buy geese to fill requisitions on account of part of turkeys did not arrive, notwithstanding the fact that Thanksgiving supplies were ordered to arrive in France on November 1."

Although we had treated this matter lightly, I really felt regret that some of our troops had been deprived of a homelike Thanksgiving dinner, and at the same time I was not at all pleased to have further evidence of careless loading of ships.

Need Two Regular Divisions

In considering the composition of the progress of our preparation at home at this time (December, 1917) was far from being satisfactory, as units of newly arrived regiments showed that their instructions were not up to our standards in France. It was evident that my recommendations were being disregarded. This faulty training was being done in an extra outdoor upon us at Chaumont officers and men after their arrival.

CHAPTER XXIV

I had urged that we should follow our own conception of training, emphasizing the rifle and bayonet as the supreme weapons of the infantry soldier, and insisted upon training for open warfare.

The training of officers for the general staff, which also necessarily had to be undertaken in France, was well under way at the general staff school at La Fere, 40 miles south of Chaumont, under the able direction of Major General McAndrew.

We were confronted with the task of housing up an army of millions that would require as many trained staff officers as we had officers in the whole regular army at the beginning of the war. To meet this urgent demand Washington was asked to send over in advance a small percentage of officers from each division for instruction, but only a few ever came. My diary notes the following:

Chaumont, Wednesday, Jan. 2, 1918—Both French and British pressing us for amalgamation.

Went to Marshal Haig's headquarters Friday by rail, accompanied by Colonel Wagstaff, and spent the night. Motored through heavy snowdrifts out from Etaples; gangs of "conscientious objectors" opening up roads. Discussed with Sir Douglas possible shipment by and training of the American troops with British.

Visited King and Queen of Belgium and their army at Adenkirke on Saturday.

As we have seen, there had been some talk of the British providing shipping to bring over American troops for training behind their lines. During the evening I spent with Sir Douglas Haig, as noted in the diary, he presented his plans for training our troops. His idea was to place the battalions as they arrived, one to the brigade, in selected British divisions, preferably those serving on the southern part of their front, and

SAVE with SAFETY at

BOONE DRUG CO.

YOUR REXALL DRUG STORE



BEAUTY is

1/4 Nature and 3/4 Care

This June Toilet Goods Sale provides the means for proper care at greatly reduced prices

<p style="font-weight: bold;">25c Rexall Shaving Cream and 25c Rexall Shaving Lotion 50c Value</p>  <p style="font-size: 8px;">Try this combination if you want a fast, smooth shave and a face free from all after-shaving irritation.</p> <p style="font-weight: bold;">Both for 29c</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold;">25c Klenzo Liquid (Mouth Wash) FREE with the purchase of 50c Klenzo Dental Creme 75c Value</p>  <p style="font-size: 8px;">With this combination you can promote the natural whiteness of your teeth and the healthful purity of your mouth and breath.</p> <p style="font-weight: bold;">Both for 50c</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold;">25c Gentlemen's After-Shaving Powder FREE with the purchase of 49c Harmony Bay Rum</p>  <p style="font-size: 8px;">This combination will assure you of a face that feels as smooth, well-groomed and comfortable as it looks.</p> <p style="font-weight: bold;">Both for 49c</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold;">35c to \$1.00</p> <p style="font-weight: bold;">Just Arrived! New 1931 Swim-Kaps</p> <p style="font-size: 8px;">For real style in mermaid millinery, wear one of these head-fitted, Krinkle-Krepe bathing hats. See the latest styles today.</p> <p style="font-weight: bold;">At Home or On Vacation! The Handy Lord Baltimore Portfolio 50c</p> <p style="font-size: 8px;">50 linen sheets mounted on pad—24 envelopes to match. Takes up little room in desk or bag.</p>
---	---	---	---

CARA NOME

Three Beauty Creams for the Price of Two





Vanishing Cream Cleansing Cream

Just what you need to keep your skin clean, smooth, firm and unblemished. Select three.

ALL 3 for \$2.00