

James J. Cooke, *THE RAINBOW DIVISION IN THE GREAT WAR, 1917-1919* (Westport, Ct: Praeger Publishers, 1994) 97-98, 103-113.

### From Champagne to the Marne

The mission for the 42<sup>nd</sup> Division was a defensive one in Champagne, the Rainbow coming under the 4<sup>th</sup> French Army, commanded by one of the most colorful characters and experienced soldiers France produced during the war – General Henri Joseph Eugene Gouraud. He immediately took a liking to the men of the Rainbow and they to him. The one-armed general with flamboyant style and bushy beard would serve as honorary president of the Rainbow Veterans Association until his death in 1946.” (97-98)

“The Rainbows had the French 170<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division on their left and the 13<sup>th</sup> French Infantry Division on their right. They had a rectangular piece of Champagne to defend that was about five miles wide and ten miles deep. Running through the middle was the blasted macadam road to Chalons-sur-Marne. On either side of the road, Gouraud placed battle-tested French battalions. These experienced veterans, he correctly believed, would help the Americans. Gouraud trusted his National Guard doughboys; they held a critical piece of terrain that most believed would be a major German objective.

Gouraud’s battle plan called for the normal front-line trench to be abandoned, except for a few platoons of French soldiers who would deceive enemy observers into reporting that the trench was occupied as normal. The first German artillery barrage would then fall on nearly empty trenches. As the Germans moved forward, they would pass over the blasted trenches into a killing zone between the front trench (the sacrificial trench) and the second line, where unscathed infantry, heavily supported by machine guns and artillery, would be wailing. Between the sacrificial trench and the second line there would be anti-personnel mines to slow up the Germans. Once beyond the first trench, approaching the second trench line, the artillery would then pour a deadly fire onto the attackers, by that time mired down in the mines, wire, and other obstacles.

The second trench, and then the third trench, would be ready to break the battered assault waves. There were the normal wire and other obstacles, and the second and third trenches were fairly shallow, not the elaborate labyrinth the doughboys were used to at Luneville or Baccarat. This fight would be more open, but that meant less cover for the defenders.

The 42<sup>nd</sup>’s own battle plan was sound. The two brigades occupied equal pieces of ground, with the New York and Ohio troops on the left of the Chalons road, and the Alabama and Iowa soldiers on the right of the road. No one single

regiment occupied a line. On the left, in the second trench line, from left to right, were the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalions of the 165<sup>th</sup>, then the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion of Ohio's 166<sup>th</sup>. The three battalions were supported by the Wisconsin 150<sup>th</sup> Machine Gun Battalion. Two miles behind was the third trench. From left to right one found elements of the 117<sup>th</sup> Engineers ready to fight as infantry, then Donovan's 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, then the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 1<sup>st</sup> of the 166<sup>th</sup> Infantry.

Crossing the road in the second line was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of Alabamians, then the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of Iowans. Both battalions were supported by the Georgia 151<sup>st</sup> Machine Gun Battalion. There were good reasons to have only two battalions in the front line. First, it was a shorter distance from the Chalons road to the boundary between the Rainbows and the French 13<sup>th</sup> Division, and second, directly in front of the Alabama and the Iowa battalions was what was left of a small wood of shot-down trees and scrub pines. The Germans could very well use this small copse as cover and concealment as they advanced, falling on the doughboys quickly. They did just that, and it was better that the preponderance of rifles was in the third trench line. To even the odds a little, the small Maryland 117<sup>th</sup> Trench Mortar Battery, commanded by Captain Robert Gill, was slightly forward of the second trench battalions. The 117<sup>th</sup> would pour fire into the Germans in the small woods as they advanced toward the Iowa and Alabama troops.

Two miles behind the two battalions was the remainder of General Brown's brigade. From left to right, Brown had placed the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalions of Screws' "Alabama Wildmen," then the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalions of the Iowa 168<sup>th</sup>. About five miles behind this last line of infantry was the Rainbow's steady 67<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Brigade, with the Illinois 149<sup>th</sup> on the left, the Indiana 150<sup>th</sup> in the center, and the Minnesota 151<sup>st</sup> on the right. Gouraud also added a fair number of French batteries to the artillery line, with some heavier gins at Bussy-le-Chateau, about ten miles behind the 67<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Brigade. It was these French guns that disturbed Lieutenant van Dolsen so. His hospital and the main supply base for the Rainbows were on the critical crossroads at Bussy-le-Chateau.

Up went French observation balloons, and targets were plotted by all of the artillery. Since General McKinstry had been assigned to the railroad the AEF's transportation and supply system, the 67<sup>th</sup> was now under Brigadier General George Gatley. The troops remained under camouflage netting, waiting for the order to rain destruction onto the advancing German infantry. This was a well-conceived, well-coordinated artillery support plan by the staff of Gouraud's 4<sup>th</sup> French Army.

There is some luck in war, but usually success smiles on the general who plans well, understands his troops and those of the enemy, has a good, aggressive independent-minded staff, and is never content to "await events." In Gouraud's service to France, he never waited for anything. Those Germans closest to the Allied

lines would most probably be in the first assault waves, and if all went well, a prisoner might be of sufficient rank and knowledge to tell Gouraud's intelligence personnel what they wanted to know. On the night before 14 July, the French national holiday, a French patrol brought back a German prisoner who knew precisely what Gouraud needed to know-the exact time of the start of the German offensive! It would start a few minutes after midnight on 15 July.<sup>28</sup>

Gouraud's major subordinate commanders knew that the attack was coming, and a code, Francois 570, would be flashed to the waiting divisions just prior to the attack to tell the soldiers of the coming maelstrom of shot, shell, steel, and gas. Late in the afternoon of the 14<sup>th</sup> the phone heard, "Francois cing-sept-zero." He verified the message, then ended his message with "Bon chance" – Good luck.<sup>29</sup>

The alert went down to the battalions, and troops prepared the best they could for the onslaught. Gas masks were checked, rifles and ammunition were closely inspected, Corned Willie, cooked in the same old slum, was eaten, and men then waited. On the artillery gun line, the gunners checked their ammunition again to make sure that when the assault came, the cannons would be able to do their work. Sergeant Lawrence Quigley, Battery D, 151<sup>st</sup> Gopher Gunners, checked his gun one last time. It was clean and ready. Quigley, from Minneapolis, had named his 75mm howitzer Mary Ann, after the girl he planned to marry. Tonight Mary Ann, he hoped, would be a part of the artillery support that would break the backs of the Germans and bring him closer to home, to the real flesh-and-blood Mary Ann.

At a few minutes after midnight on 15 July, German guns opened up of a forty-two-mile front. The Rainbow soldiers had never seen anything like it. High explosives and gas swept the front, but in Gouraud's sector, most of the shot and shell fell on the very lightly held sacrificial trench. Doughboys and French infantry alike were awestruck by the sights and sounds of one of the great artillery displays of the war.<sup>30</sup>

Father Duffy looked at his watch. It was 12:04 A.M. when the shelling began. As he watched the sight, he was reminded of the aurora borealis in its dazzling intensity. He knew that many of his beloved 69th men would not survive another twenty-four hours. That afternoon, Private Hunt of Company E, 165th, had received a cablegram announcing the birth of his first-born child. Hunt now lay in death, struck by shrapnel, his blood staining the cablegram.<sup>31</sup> Wisconsin National Guardsmen of the 150th Machine Gun battalion took a terrible pounding, Private Walter Melchior's machine gun was destroyed and his comrades were all dead or wounded. He grabbed a rifle and rushed to a company of the 165th to fight as an infantryman. He never survived the day.<sup>32</sup>

In the second line, the Alabamians were swept by artillery. Sergeant Percy L. Atkinson had a few men and a small 37mm cannon. His gas mask failed him, and other soldiers tried to carry him to the rear. Atkinson refused to leave his men or the small gun, which helped repulse several German attacks. Two days after he had been so severely wounded he finally allowed his gun crew to carry him to the rear.<sup>33</sup>

The Minnesota artillery were not immune from the bombardment. As the Gopher Gunners ran to their guns, a German shell landed on one of the cannons, and Corporal Malcolm had an arm torn off. As he lay on the ground, the eighteen-year-old Malcolm hollered to his comrades, "Give 'em hell, boys. I guess I can't help anymore."<sup>34</sup>

The bombardment continued until dawn, and then the fire slackened. The German infantry, mainly Prussians, were advancing toward the sacrificial trench where, miraculously, some Frenchmen were still alive. As the Germans crossed the trench and advanced into the mines, the poilus came out of their holes and opened fire, confusing the Germans, who had expected to find the first trench filled with the enemy rather than almost empty. On into the minefield the gray ranks went, and then the artillery opened fire on them. From the sacrificial trench to the second line where Americans and Frenchmen stood were nearly two miles of bursting artillery shells and deadly gas.

The slaughter was the worst the doughboys had seen. The main force of the German infantry was heading directly for the small, shattered wood directly in front of the French troops, the 2nd Battalion of the Alabama 167th, and the 2nd Battalion of the Iowa 168th Infantry. As expected, the Germans drifted toward the small amount of cover offered by what was left of the little wood. The Alabams knew that they would bear the brunt of this first attack, and, with their French comrades shouting encouragement, they fixed bayonets and prepared to meet the Prussian charge. Shells smashed into the woods, and gray-clad bodies piled high. A Rainbow veteran, the sight fresh in his mind, recalled, "Direct hits from high explosive shells began piling into the attackers. But still they kept on, thousands more climbing over heaps of bodies to fill the gaps. And finally, by sheer disregard of losses, they came to the intermediate second lines-the allies' first real line of defense."

If any Alabamian had ever dreamed of being in one desperate battle, he had his wish on 15 July 1918. The Iowans knew that they, too, would have to fight for their lives as the Germans surged forward. The French, placed in the line to bolster these war novices, were shouting, and the Alabamians and the Iowans began to shout also. What was left of two German divisions was in the destroyed woods, advancing rapidly toward the waiting Allies. And then the second line opened fire. The 151st Machine Gun Battalion raked the Germans with lead. Small cannon fired directly in their ranks. Sergeant Atkinson, of Birmingham, Alabama, lying in the

bottom of the trench, lungs scorched, hoarsely encouraged his gunners to keep up the rate of fire. German infantry was only a half mile from the defenders, taking fearful losses.

That 15 July 1918 was a St. Crispin's Day for the Baltimoreans of the 117th Trench Mortar Battery. Captain Gill had selected the exposed position for the battery because the troops could fire where other artillery would be least effective. For three hours as the Germans came forward, the 117th Battery poured its devastating fire into the advancing infantry. Finally the battery's guns were either destroyed or buried, and the survivors of the 117th fell back to the next position.<sup>35</sup>

John B. Hayes of 2nd Battalion, 167th, believed that the bombardment against the forward Alabama battalion was the worst he had experienced. He was in a dugout as large shells exploded all around, literally taking the breath away from the men nearby. The dugout door was blasted to small pieces by shrapnel, and an officer sitting near Hayes said that this was the longest day he had ever seen.<sup>36</sup> Joe Romano was in the second line, his Company D being pounded just as hard as the first-line units.

The Alabamians knew that soon it would be man against man, bayonet against bayonet. Corporal M. D. Riley of Company G saw that the Germans had set up a machine gun in front of his company and had begun to fire into the poilus and doughboys. Heedless of the dangers, Riley climbed to the top of the trench and shot five German gunners before he himself fell back into the trench, killed by a bullet to the head.<sup>37</sup> All along the line, it was hand-to-hand fighting of the worst type, the first of its kind for the Americans, and the Alabamians held. Captain Julien M. Strassberger, commanding an Alabama machine-gun company supporting Companies E and F in the forward line, hastily sent a field message to regimental headquarters, "Boche dead are piled around here sky-high. Ils ne passeront pas!"<sup>38</sup>

Without formal orders, the French and the 167th counter-attacked over the ground littered by German and American dead. By platoons the troops went forward, retaking positions lost when the tidal wave of gray smashed the sacrificial trench and fell upon the first line. The German assault on the Rainbow's center right had failed to move that "impregnable .... human Gibraltar."<sup>39</sup>

Seven waves hit the second line, and each time the Americans and the French threw them back. While the most vicious fighting of the day occurred first with the 167th and then with the Irish 165th, no part of the line was immune. Second Lieutenant Hugh Thompson found himself caught up in the hurricane of gas, shot and shell. He had new men in his fourth platoon and found them huddling in a dugout with a candle burning. As he checked on these men, who had never before experienced a bombardment, the dugout was hit. A searing pain shot

through Thompson's right side and arm. In a daze, he heard the alarm for gas, and he found that the only hand that would respond to his growing panic was his left one. He somehow got his mask on as he slipped into oblivion. When he awoke he found his right arm, torn by a shell, strapped to his side, and his bloody trouser leg split open.<sup>40</sup>

Ohio's men of the 166th were also raked by fire. As they huddled in the trenches watching the great weight of German artillery firing into the sacrificial trench, they heard familiar voices announcing that the ration wagons had arrived with the usual Corned Willie Slum. Before the "Francois 570" warning had been announced, the ration wagons had left for the trenches. Caught in the bombardment, they pushed forward. As the troops hurriedly took their Slum and bread and rushed back to safety, they noted that seventeen-year-old Private Wilber Jones, who was dishing out the Corned Willie, had the body of another supply company private lying on the front seat of the wagon. Private Walter Phillips, the only supply company man to die in battle in France, had been killed by shrapnel. Jones refused to leave the body of his comrade on the road, and when the serving was over he left to take his buddy's corpse to those who would give it a decent burial.<sup>41</sup>

Martin Hogan could sense the lessening of shell fire, and he knew that the German infantry was advancing toward the 165th. A few minutes before, Father Duffy and the battalion commander had spoken to each man, telling them that they would hold this section of the line to the last man. About 9 A.M. the shells stopped, and the New Yorkers could see the mass of gray infantry coming directly at them. Hogan recalled,

They broke furiously upon our line and the line of the Sixty-ninth became a dizzy whirl of hand-to-hand combats....Clubbed rifles were splintered against skulls and shoulder bone; bayonets were plunged home, withdrawn and plunged home again; automatics spit here and there in the line; grenades exploded; while a man occasionally shot his dripping bayonet free from his enemies' body. Our front line became a gruesome mess.<sup>42</sup>

Father Duffy was in the thick of the fighting on the second line. He saw Private Joe Daly, an ammunition carrier, confront a German who had just dropped into the trench. Daly had no weapon of his own, but he quickly grabbed a rifle lying near the body of a 69th man, smashed in the helmet of the German, and rushed into the fight. Duffy was sickened at the sight of so many of his beloved Irishmen now dead or wounded in the melee in the trench.<sup>43</sup>

Even the clearly marked field hospitals were not immune. Major Frew, the Wisconsin National Guard doctor, had spent most of the night in a trench. The

shelling grew in intensity in the rear as the Germans closed with the Rainbows and the French to the front. Frew was infuriated. Many of the wounded who could not be moved were now dead, lying in tents that had been shredded by hot steel.<sup>44</sup> Lieutenant van Dolsen had worried about the ability of his nurses to withstand the bombardment, but now he had no such concerns. They remained stoic throughout the onslaught and performed excellent service. He ordered the nurses in one tent to the trench for safety, but they refused, remaining at their posts to comfort the wounded.<sup>45</sup>

By late afternoon the German tide had receded, and American and French troops moved into the first, sacrificial trench. The Alabams had repulsed seven major assaults, the New Yorkers five, and every unit in the Rainbow had suffered from the fighting that day. The Kansas Ammunition Train had left the main supply base at Bussy when the shelling started. Calvin Lambert watched in horror as an artillery round smashed into a hospital. The YMCA building was left a smoldering ruin. Lambert looked into the sky and saw a German airplane spotting for the artillery as the gunners shifted their fire and the gray infantry assaulted the front trenches. The Kansas journalist-turned-sergeant felt the ground roll under him.<sup>46</sup>

German aircraft were in the air as night began to fall, and the 67th Field Artillery Brigade recorded that over twenty German observation balloons were aloft. It was obvious that the next day, 16 July, would see a renewal of the severe fighting.<sup>47</sup> Through the night, ammunition, supply, and food wagons braved the heavy German high-explosive and gas rounds to bring needed supplies to the front trenches and to evacuate the wounded.

During the night of 15 July, 42nd Division headquarters was able to report that the lines had held. Gouraud was delighted at the performance of his 4th Army, because at no point in the line did the enemy gain a foothold. The fighting had produced horrendous casualties, especially among the German infantry. As dawn began to break the sky at about 4:30 A.M. on 16 July, Rainbow headquarters informed AEF Headquarters that it was quiet and the division was optimistic about the forthcoming combat. At noon, the Germans again opened up a terrific barrage against the 4th Army, and the troops braced for another major assault.

From captured German documents Gouraud and the 42nd knew that the number and first-class quality of the divisions in the attack make it clear that the enemy expected great results .... Chalons .... was expected to be taken at 4 A.M. on the morning of the 16th. However, the battle has so far resulted in a complete check for the enemy at all points. The three divisions of the XXI Corps aided by elements of the 42nd Division and a Polish regiment broke the attack of seven divisions of the best German troops.<sup>48</sup>

The major assault of the day fell on the left of the Rainbow and French lines with sharp hand-to-hand fighting. Majors Donovan and Alexander Anderson, commanding the 3rd and 2nd Battalions of New York's 165th Infantry, took the brunt of the massive infantry assault. To the right of the Irishmen, a battalion of Ohio infantry held the line and poured a flanking fire into the oncoming Germans. Lieutenant Kenneth C. Ogle of Anderson's Company G saw the Germans coming for the sixth time. Ogle personally led "thirty-eight wild sons of Erin, yelling and rushing .... with long, bare bayonets."<sup>49</sup> The Germans could not retreat quickly enough, and Ogle and his men were on them, killing twenty-eight in hand-to-hand fighting.

As night began to fall, it was obvious that the Germans had spent their force in the last day of their last offensive. The line had not been broken, but the Rainbows had suffered terribly. Sixteen hundred Rainbow soldiers were either killed or wounded in the two-day battle for "Lousy Champagne."<sup>50</sup>

The night of 16 July belonged to German aircraft, which bombed and strafed facilities and troops alike. Artillery continued to fire, but to the gunners from the Midwest it seemed that the great infantry assaults were over. Indiana artilleryman Elmer Sherwood noticed that there was an overwhelming stench of death in the air. One could not escape it.<sup>51</sup> Charles MacArthur recalled that as the firing slackened, the rumors started that the Rainbows were to be pulled out to rest. Immediately, the Illinois gunners packed up their tents, rolls, and knapsacks in anticipation of the move. True to form, the skies opened up and rain poured down.<sup>52</sup>

The Gopher Gunners heard that they were being taken out of the line on 18 July. While there was general rejoicing, Sergeant Lawrence Quigley sat by his gun, tears rolling down his cheeks. His gun, Mary Ann, had started the Champagne defensive cleaned and well-oiled. Now the 75mm gun was mud-spattered, scratched, and gouged from German shrapnel. After firing for seventy-two consecutive hours, Mary Ann just died, worn out, and would be left behind. Quigley was saying good-bye to an old friend.<sup>53</sup>

Leslie Langille, who had delighted in singing in his church choir, was appalled at the horrible slaughter before his eyes. He was in prayer to God "to look down upon these bleeding, mangled, dying and dead heaps of humanity." And then Langille asked Heaven, "Why?" During the fierce German counter-battery fire, Langille saw Private Einer Johnson, a company cook who had been sent forward to serve up Slum, suddenly scream that he was hit. His tunic and trousers were a mass of red, for a shell had hit near him and a very large can of whole tomatoes had spilled over the frightened cook. The last the Illinois gunners saw of Johnson was his form disappearing down the road as quickly as he could run.<sup>54</sup>

On 18 July the Rainbows began to leave the line. Everett Scott was happy to leave. He placed his helmet on his head, and it looked odd. During the first day, a large part of the rim had been cut away by a piece of shrapnel. After the shock had worn off, Scott had found a dugout where he shook for five hours as the artillery continued to pound away.<sup>55</sup>

The Rainbows came out of the Champagne Defensive with a new sense of confidence and a healthy relationship with the French under whom they fought so well. Gouraud stated, "We repulsed his offensive, we broke his morale, we made it impossible for him to attack again."<sup>56</sup> Naulin was no less effusive in his praise for the Rainbow's part in the 21st Corps. The Alabama defense and decisive counter-attack on 15 July was praised by all, and established the 167th as the best fighting regiment within the division.

The Rainbows also had developed a very real hatred for the Germans. During the bombardment, the doctors and nurses moved what wounded they could to a dugout, and the once-callow Lieutenant van Dolsen recoiled in horror at what he saw:

Well we got down into the dug out and my dear mother such a shamble I never hope to see again. A long black tunnel lighted just a little by candles, our poor wounded shocked boys there on litters in the dark, eight of them half under ether just as they had come off the tables their legs only half amputated, surgeons trying to finish and check blood in the dark, the floor soaked with blood, the hospital above us a wreck, three patients killed and one blown out of bed with his head off. Believe me I will never forgive the bastards as long as I live.<sup>57</sup>

One Alabama private who was in the thickest of the fighting on 15 July wrote to his mother, "All of you can cheer up and wear a smile for I'm a little hero now. I got two of the rascals and finished killing a wounded with my bayonet that might have gotten well had I not finished him .... I couldn't be satisfied at killing them, how could I have mercy on such low life rascals as they are?"<sup>58</sup> A good bit of this hatred resulted from Germans approaching American lines dressed in French uniforms taken from the dead in the sacrifice trench.<sup>59</sup>

The hand-to-hand fighting was especially severe for the Alabamians and New Yorkers, and many of their comrades were killed or wounded in the fighting for the second line and in the counter-attacks that followed. Adding to the confusion was the occasional round of friendly artillery that fell short and hit the Americans as they repulsed the enemy.<sup>60</sup>

Shortly after the Champagne defensive operation, and while the Rainbows were fighting in the campaign to reduce the Marne salient in July and August,

German newspapers carried accounts of atrocities committed against helpless prisoners and wounded on 15 July. The G2 of AEF Headquarters, Brigadier General Dennis E. Nolan, directed Menoher to undertake an immediate investigation of the charges. The focus of the investigation fell on the 2nd Battalion, 165th; 3rd Battalion, 168th; 2nd Battalion, 167th; and Companies E and F of the 168th.

There had always been rumors of units taking no prisoners. Donovan, in May, described to his wife the possibility of the Alabamians' capturing and killing two Germans, and he ended his letter stating, "They [the 167th] wander all over the landscape shooting at everything." <sup>61</sup>

Elmer Sherwood, the Hoosier gunner, reported the story that the Alabamians attacked a German trench with Bowie knives. "They cleaned upon the enemy," Sherwood recalled, "but it is no surprise to any of us. because they are a wild bunch, not knowing what fear is." <sup>62</sup>

While in Germany on occupation duty with the Rainbow, Lieutenant van Dolsen wrote to his aunt back in Washington, D.C., that the Alabams "did not take many prisoners, but I do not blame them much for that." <sup>63</sup>

The New York regiment was also known for fierce fighting and taking few prisoners on the battlefield. Most probably, the nature of the hand-to-hand fighting and the fog and friction of war caused a great number of deaths that could very well be questionable. The issue would again surface after the severe fighting at the Croix Rouge Farm, where the Alabamians and Iowans were heavily engaged at close quarters with a determined enemy.

A formal inquiry was held into the events of 15 July, with twenty-three officers testifying and fifteen company-grade officers required to give depositions. The testimony was uniformly a denial that atrocities were committed during the fighting that day. The findings were forwarded to AEF Headquarters and there the matter was dropped. <sup>64</sup>

Gouraud bade good-bye to his Rainbow troops, and rumors ran through the ranks that the division was to be rested for a while before being sent to another front. Martin Hogan's Shamrocks were halted after a day's march, and pup tents were pitched. A small river offered the tired and filthy troops an opportunity to wash and attack the merciless lice that had plagued them so in Champagne. Perhaps a long rest really was in order, the Irishmen thought as they cleaned themselves and their equipment.

Father Duffy was delighted to be in Vadenay, by the river that had afforded Martin Hogan so much pleasure. While making the rounds of the battalions,

however, Duffy saw that the ranks had grown thin. Colonel McCoy, now commanding the 165th, had told Duffy that time for the Irish regiment at Vadenay was short and that probably within two weeks the Rainbow would be back in battle, possibly one worse than the Champagne fight. With an urgency that he kept from the troops, Duffy organized four Masses in one Sunday to see to the souls of his men. Also, Duffy found a new chaplain, Father James M. Hanley of Ohio, waiting for him. The news that Hanley would join the 165th delighted Duffy, who continued to have premonitions of death.<sup>66</sup>

As the Rainbow soldiers enjoyed a good wash and some rest, they were joined by French soldiers from the old 21st Corps who invited many to have a drink in honor of France's national holiday, 14 July, belatedly celebrated on 19 and 20 July. On the 14th the troops, American and French, were bracing for the storm of shot and shell they knew was coming. The celebration was put off, and the champagne and wine now flowed like water.<sup>67</sup> The Rainbows and the French had developed a healthy respect for each other, from general down to private.<sup>68</sup> The 42nd Division had spent more time directly associated with the French than had any other AEF combat division, and the troops had become used to how the French operated. The French, in turn, knew the Rainbow Division well, their respect reaching a high point with the Champagne defensive operation.

While the doughboys were in Champagne resting and cleaning, the first of the great Allied offensives of 1918 had begun on 18 July. Marechal Ferdinand Foch had decided that the first Allied blow would fall against a German salient formed by the Aisne River on the west and the Marne River on the east. Foch attacked first toward the town of Soissons on the western flank of the salient, and in taking the town he cut the Germans' main supply and communication route. The Germans then decided to withdraw from the entire salient. However, the German army was not defeated, and the professional soldiers who guided her tactical and operational destiny had no intention of seeing the Aisne-Marne operation by the Allies result in a German rout.

Pershing had eight battle-ready divisions to throw into the fight: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th (Regular Army), and 26th, 28th, 32nd, and 42nd (National Guard). In typical Pershing fashion, he fretted about the lack of training of his divisions, but the time had come to commit American forces en masse. Certainly the 1st, 2nd, 26th, 28th, and 42nd were no strangers to combat, but it was clear that Pershing still distrusted all but his Regular Army units. At any rate, American forces were going to play a major role in the reduction of this German salient so close to Paris.

On 20 July, Menoher received an order attaching the 42nd Division to the French 6th Army for operations in the Marne. Orders went out to subordinate units to prepare to move by train on 21 July, with a terminus at Chateau Thierry.<sup>70</sup> At

that time the French 6th Army was under the command of General Jean Degoutte, a competent fighter who had a mixed group of French and American troops, including the 26th Yankee Division, under his command. All that was known to G2, 42nd Division, was that the land was deceptively attractive, pastoral, dotted with picture-postcard stone farms. It was also known that the New England Guardsmen of the Yankee Division were being bled to death in the rich wheat fields of the Marne.

The Rainbows had been scratched at Baccarat, bloodied in the Champagne, but now they were about to enter into a fight that Douglas MacArthur called "six of the bitterest days and nights of the war for the Rainbow."<sup>71</sup> As the trains pulled out, French civilians came down to cheer the 42nd doughboys, but that send-off was tempered by the name Chateau Thierry, a beautiful name but a frightening one because of the blood that had been spilled there. The Rainbow was off to the Marne.

## NOTES

28. MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 56-57. Pershing, *Experiences*, Vol. 2, 152-53.

29. Wolf, *Brief History of the Rainbow*, 25-26.

30. Raymond S. Thompkins, *The Story of the Rainbow Division* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1919), 54-55.

31. Duffy, *Story*, 130, 132-33.

32. *Ibid.*, 133.

33. William B. Amerine, *Alabama's Own in France* (New York: Eaton and Gettinger, 1919), 332-33.

34. Elmer W. Sherwood, *Diary of a Rainbow Veteran: Written at the Front* (Terre Haute, Ind.: Moore-Langen, 1929), 19.

35. Peter H. Ottosen, *Trench Artillery AEF* (Boston: Lothrop, Lee and Shepard, 1931), 102-04. Gouraud, "My Memories," 58.

36. Hayes, *Heroes Among the Brave*, 20.

37. Amerine, *Alabama's Own*, 125.

38. Thompkins, *Story*, 60.

39. Gouraud, "My Memories," 58.

40. Thompson, "Following the Rainbow," I April 1934.

41. Cheseldine, *Ohio in the Rainbow*, 164.
42. Hogan, *Shamrock Battalion*, 127-28.
43. Duffy, *Story*, 136-37.
44. Major Frew to Norbert Frew, np, 16 July 1918, Frew Papers, MHIA.
45. Van Dolsen to his mother, up, 17 July 1918, *ibid.*
46. Calvin Lambert Diary, manuscript, Emporia Public Library, Emporia, Kansas, 175-76.
47. G2, 42nd Division headquarters, "Summary of Events," in U.S. Army, Center of Military History, *The United States Army in the World War* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1989), Vol. 5, 166 (hereinafter, CMH).
48. G3, GHQ, 42nd Division headquarters, "Summary of Events," in *ibid.*, 166.
49. Thompkins, *Story*, 64-65.
50. American Battle Monuments Commission, *42 Division, Summary of Operations in the World War* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1944), 15-16.
51. Sherwood, *Diary*, 25-26.
52. MacArthur, *War Bugs*, 94.
53. Thompkins, *Story*, 69.
54. Leslie Langille, *Men of the Rainbow* (Chicago: O'Sullivan Co., 1933), 94.
55. Scott to his mother, and from Scott to his brother, up, 20 July 1918, Scott Letters.
56. Gouraud, "My Memories," 59.
57. Van Dolsen to his mother, up, 17 July 1918, MHIA.
58. Corporal Gary Roberts, Company B, 167th Infantry, to his mother, up, 28 July 1918, in Alabama State Historical Archives, Montgomery, Alabama, 167th Infantry Collection.
59. Thompkins, *Story*, 65-66. Many of the Rainbow unit histories and personal memoirs recount these stories of the Germans using such a ruse.
60. Cheseldine, *Ohio in the Rainbow*, 170.

61. Donovan to his wife, up, 13 May 1918, in the William J, Donovan Papers, MHIA

62. Sherwood, *Diary*, 22.

63. Van Dolsen to his aunt, Occupation Forces, Germany, 19 February 1919, MHIA. See also Stewart, *Rainbow Bright*, 70-71.

64. 42nd Division headquarters, "Report of Investigation of Reported Killing of German Prisoners of War," 22 August 1918, RG 120, carton 59.

65. Hogan, *Shamrock Battalion*, 136-37.

66. Duffy, *Story*, 146-47.

67. Thompkins, *Story*, 59.

68. Sherwood, *Diary*, 28.

69. See Pershing, *Experiences*, Vol. 2, Chap. 37.

70. 42nd Division headquarters, General Order No. 48, 20 July 1918, in CMH, *United States Army in the World War*, Vol. 5, 518.

71. MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 59.