

# “The 151st Field Artillery in Combat”

By

Col. William H. Donahue

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Foreword

By

Douglas A. Hedin  
Editor, MLHP

On Thursday, January 16, 1919, Colonel William Henry Donahue addressed the annual meeting of the Minnesota State Agricultural Society in Minneapolis on the battlefield experiences of the 151st Field Artillery Regiment of the famous Rainbow Division of the American Expeditionary Forces in France in 1918. The minutes of the meeting, which included Donahue’s speech, were later transcribed and published in a hard-bound book.<sup>1</sup>

Donahue was a lawyer who became a war hero. Admitted to the bar on December 23, 1902, following graduation from the College of Law of the University of Minnesota,<sup>2</sup> he entered into a partnership with George Meyer that ended with the latter’s death in 1910. Thereafter he practiced alone but took considerable time off to serve in the

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<sup>1</sup> *Annual Report of the Minnesota State Agricultural Society for the Year 1918* 244-250 (1919). Curiously the minutes do not record any applause for Donahue. Instead the president of the Society tersely remarked, “We certainly appreciate the address of Colonel Donahue” and then introduced the Minneapolis Ladies Quartette which “magnanimously offered their services free of charge.” Their “songs” were met with “heartily and prolonged applause” followed by a motion for “a vote of thanks to the girls for their entertainment.” It passed unanimously. *Id.*, at 250.

<sup>2</sup> Roll of Attorneys, Supreme Court, State of Minnesota, 1858-1970, at 65 (Minnesota Digital Library). At this time, graduates of the College of Law were automatically admitted under the “diploma privilege” law. Stat. c. 88, §6178, at 1670 (1894).

National Guard. In 1915, he placed the following biographical sketch in Henry Castle's multi-volume history of the state. Typically he devoted more space to his military service than his law practice:

**CAPT. WILLIAM H. DONAHUE.** It is characteristic of the members of the Minneapolis bar to have varied and important interests outside their profession and in the case of William H. Donahue who has practiced since his admission in 1902, his chief distinction aside from success as a lawyer is in military affairs. Captain Donahue has been for many years identified with the Minnesota National Guard and is one of the most prominent officers in that organization

William H. Donahue was born in 1879 at Gold Hill, Nevada, then an isolated and frontier mining district, when it required thirteen days to make the journey from there to Bangor, Maine, which was the old home of Captain Donahue's parents. His father and mother were William J. and Honora (Quinn) Donahue. Captain Donahue and his mother both reside in Minneapolis and he confesses an indebtedness to her gentle influence and motherly ambition for his early instruction and for much of his success since entering his profession. Another son, Frank, died in infancy at Minneapolis. Both parents were natives of Bangor, Maine.

Captain Donahue's home has been in Minneapolis since 1881 though at about the age of fifteen he returned with his mother to Bangor and was in school there for one year. Captain Donahue took preparatory work under a private tutor, and much of his early training was received directly from his mother. Before entering the University of Minnesota he studied law in the office of Louis K. Hull and was also a night student of law in the university. In 1902 he graduated LL. B. from the university, and in 1903 received the degree LL. M. Admitted to the bar in 1902 his practice

began in the same year in partnership with George W. Meyer under the firm name of Meyer & Donahue and was continued until the death of Mr. Meyer in 1910. Since that time Mr. Donahue has practiced alone, and now has a reputation and clientage which rank him among the most successful lawyers of Minneapolis. For several years Captain Donahue and his partner had offices in the Temple Court Building and for the past three years his office has been in the Palace Building. Besides his regular law practice Captain Donahue is president and treasurer of the Minneapolis Roofing and Cornice Works.

Captain Donahue first became identified with the National Guard in 1896 and was a member of the local battery at the time of the Spanish-American war but that organization was not called into active service. After six years he left the National Guard but joined again in 1908. His enlistment in both instances was with Battery B. At the second enlistment, after three months, he was made a corporal, and in six months became sergeant, and at the end of the first year was promoted to second lieutenant. In 1913 he was made captain of Battery D and appointed captain and commissary on the colonel's staff. His interests in military theory and practice have gone much beyond that of most men who take service in the National Guard, and this is indicated by his attendance for one year in the garrison school at Fort Snelling, where he secured a certificate for efficiency, and for twenty-eight days during July, 1913, he was in the Fort Riley School of Instruction in Kansas. Fort Riley is one of the largest posts of the United States army, and the school is conducted primarily for the officers of the regular forces. In 1913 Captain Donahue was elected secretary of the Officers' Association of the Minnesota National Guard.

Captain Donahue is unmarried and is devoted to the welfare and comfort of his mother, who in earlier years

sacrificed herself so uncomplainingly to give him a home and proper instruction. They reside at 1600 West Lake Street. Captain Donahue is affiliated with the Minneapolis Lodge of Elks, with the Hennepin County Bar Association, with the Knights of Columbus, the Modern Woodmen of America, the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Athletic and Boat clubs of Minneapolis.<sup>3</sup>

After the United States declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917,<sup>4</sup> his artillery unit was called to duty and became part of the Rainbow Division of the A.E.F., made up of units from many states, which arrived in France in late 1917. It was on March 5, 1918, that he came to the aid of a battery under enemy bombardment, acts of valor for which he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.<sup>5</sup> His award read:

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<sup>3</sup> Henry A. Castle, 3 *Minnesota: Its Story and Biography* 1321 (1915). The Directory of the Alumni of the College of Law of the University of Minnesota, published in 1916, has this entry:

William H. Donahue,  
J.L. B., 02; J.L. M., 03; Lawyer. 535 Palace  
Bldg., and 1600 W. Lake St., Mpls., Minn.

<sup>4</sup> President Wilson asked for a war declaration on April 2, the Senate complied on April 4, and the House followed on April 6, 1917. War was declared on Austria-Hungary on December 7, 1917.

<sup>5</sup> The Department of Defense describes the acts of valor required for the award of the Distinguished Service Cross:

#### DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

The Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) is the second highest military decoration that can be awarded to a member of the United States Army (and previously, the United States Army Air Forces). It is awarded for extraordinary heroism:

While engaged in action against an enemy of the United States;

While engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force; or

While serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.

Actions that merit the Distinguished Service Cross must be of such a high degree that they are above those required for all other U.S. combat decorations but do not merit award of the Medal of Honor. The Distinguished Service Cross is equivalent to the Navy Cross (Navy and Marine Corps, and Coast Guard when operating under the authority of the Department of the Navy) and the Air Force Cross (Air Force)

“Military Awards for Valor--Top 3,” U. S. Department of Defense website.

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, July 9, 1918, takes pleasure in presenting the Distinguished Service Cross to Lieutenant Colonel (Field Artillery) William H. Donahue, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism in action while serving with 151st Field Artillery, 42d Division, A.E.F., near Pexonne, France, on 5 March 1918. Lieutenant Colonel Donahue entered the quarry of Battery C, 151st Field Artillery, when it was under accurately adjusted shell fire, for the purpose of aiding the officers and men of that battery when he might with propriety have stayed away.<sup>6</sup>

The Armistice on November 11, 1918, ended the war. After commanding an artillery brigade in South Carolina, he returned to his law practice in Minneapolis. But in a real sense he never was mustered out of the military. He was either on active duty or involved in veterans' organizations the rest of his life, while also practicing law. His death on May 18, 1950, was reported by the *Minneapolis Star*:

### Donahue, War Hero, Dies at 72

Col. William H Donahue, for many years a Minneapolis attorney, who compiled a distinguished battle record in World War I, died today at St. Mary's hospital after a long illness. He was 72 years old.

Col. Donahue served in France under Gen. George E Leach as second in command of the 151st Field Artillery (First Minnesota) Regiment. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross March 5, 1918, for coming to the assistance of a battery under heavy enemy shelling. Then a lieutenant colonel, he was in command of three batteries.

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<sup>6</sup> War Department, General Orders No. 50 (1919).

In addition to his overseas service Col. Donahue also took part in the Mexican border campaign preceding World War I.

For many years the military was his chief love—dating back to in 1896 when he joined the Minnesota National Guard as a private.

“I have had some actual combat,” he wrote to a friend from France in March 1918, “and that is a life —if you last.”

Gen. Leach described him as “a good soldier.”

Col. Donahue was with the Minnesota Regiment in many of the now famous battles of World War I—including Château Thierry. He was one of the first Minnesota guardsmen to arrive in France.

Promoted to colonel, he returned to the United States to take command of the Thirty-eighth field artillery. With signing of the armistice he was placed in command of the artillery brigade depot at Camp Jackson, S. C.

Col. Donahue was known as an enthusiastic sports horseman. He entered his horses in numerous shows and founded the Minneapolis Park Riding Academy.

In political belief he was Republican. He unsuccessfully opposed Arch Coleman in 1919 in an election to choose a successor to the late State Senator Carl L. Wallace of Minneapolis. He had been president of the Eighth Word Republican club.

Col. Donahue maintained his interest in military affairs long after the war.

In 1923 he was ordered into active service at the army war college in Washington D.C. In 1924 he was elected president

of the Minnesota Reserve Officers Association and the next year was named commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Hennepin county council.

He was elected head of the Minnesota commandery, Military Order of Foreign Wars in 1928. He also was a member of Theodor Petersen post, American Legion.

Col. Donahue joined Hennepin Minneapolis Council 435, Knights of Columbus, in 1906 and later served as grand knight of the organization.

Born at Gold Hill, Nev., he was brought to Minneapolis, attended local schools and received his law degree from University of Minnesota. At one time he was president of the Minnesota Roofing and Cornice company.

Col. Donahue was not married. His home was at 2820 Dupont avenue S. and his law office at 525 New York Life building. He had continued active practice until recent months but much of his time was spent managing his properties.<sup>7</sup>

Donahue addressed the State Agricultural Society only two months after the Armistice, when memories of the fighting were still fresh. It follows. The title has been added by the MLHP.

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<sup>7</sup> *Minneapolis Star*, May 18, 1950, at 17 (funeral arrangements omitted). The *Minneapolis Morning Tribune* reported the story the next day. May 19, 1950, at 12 ("Services Set Monday for Col, Donahue"). A memorial by the county bar association has not been located.

# “The 151st Field Artillery in Combat”

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Col. William H. Donahue

The subject that I was to speak on is the 151st Field Artillery in combat in Lorraine, Champagne and Chateau Thierry. Of course there are many things happening in combat that we don't observe, and I merely would give you what my observation was. I was second in command in the regiment, and had an opportunity to get a good deal more than I could have had I been the commanding officer.

I probably have, in the excitement at different times, made observations that are not altogether correct, but if I state anything that don't happen to comply with your views of the war, probably taken from the Saturday Evening Post or Collier's Weekly, you must remember that the gentlemen who wrote those articles got the stories in the hospitals in the rear, and had more time to make up their minds as to what happened than I did.

It may not be out of place to tell you something of your regiment that represented you in the Rainbow Division: The First Minnesota Field Artillery was, when I joined it, two batteries,—Battery A, of St. Paul, and Battery B, of Minneapolis. Battery B had been the Swedish Life Guard, a sort of semi-private organization, organized by Capt. C. C. Bennett, who was later and for many years the captain of Battery B. I joined the organization in 1896, January 8th. I was the only old member with them and was particularly pleased to get back. The two batteries finally grew into a battalion. About four years ago the legislature saw fit to permit us to increase our battalion to a regiment; however, confining us to the expense of a battalion, so we were of no more expense to the state than if we had been a battalion. We served on the Mexican border as a regiment, and Colonel Leach made such a record on the border with his regiment that the militia bureau of the war department, through General Summerall, saw fit to select the



Minnesota unit as one of three units to compose the division of artillery of the Rainbow Division. The other two were Illinois and Indiana. The infantry units were Alabama, Ohio, Iowa and New York regiments. We had machine gun companies, signal troops and engineers from all parts of the country. That was why we were given the name of the Rainbow Division. We reflected all colors of the United States.

When we arrived in France we were sent to a little town in which there was a French training center for artillery. Our infantry was sent to a different training camp. We were told to forget everything we knew about artillery or had learned in the United States; that we were going to study French artillery and adopt French material. We did this, and every officer in the regiment from the colonel to the last second lieutenant attended all classes. We were instructed by what I considered the most efficient corps of officers that I have ever had the honor to go to school to. The French artillery officer is most efficient, as are all French officers. I never had the honor of serving with a British officer, but my service with the French has created in me the greatest respect for their science in the profession of arms. We had two and one-half months' service there, which consisted of highly technical training, and practical firing away every afternoon, at which time we fired more ammunition than we were permitted to use in the United States in any three years I ever went to training camp.

I might say at this point that we were totally unprepared for war. We know that now. Possibly some of you civilians didn't appreciate the extent of our unpreparedness. You know a certain long-haired gentleman who used to go across the country and speak at chautauqua meetings and tell you about sunrise and sunset, once said something like this:

"We place not our trust in ships of steel or forts of stone, but in hearts of oak. Southern chivalry combined with Northern valor are Invincible."

I presume when we got over on the firing line and met the Hun and had nothing to combat with—no training—if we had told him we had a heart of oak and southern chivalry he would not have stuck the bayonet in us. We certainly were conceited. If conceit could have won, there was not a nation that could have stood against us. But unfortunately, it is the bayonet properly inserted in the enemy that really is the convincing argument. Our artillery was increased from 9,000 to 369,000 in less than two years. Just think of it

An artillery officer has much to learn. The firing at targets that you cannot see; the mechanical calculations that are necessary, such as the weight of a litre of air at 500 feet in the air. That is your projective where your ammunition is going through the barometric corrections in all which affect the firing, to place the barrage in front of your man and do it without killing him. You have to be able to do those things accurately and it only comes by training. I say now again, that we were fortunate to be able to have the French officers training us in artillery.

After we had completed our training we took a train for Lorraine, which was at that time a quiet sector. The Minnesota boys coming down to the railroad yards were not over enthusiastic about traveling in what they considered horse cars. They were not really as good as some of the horse cars I have seen in this country. They certainly do not compare with any of the cars that transport the racing stock over to your state fair. But the complaint was only momentary. When we suggested to them that if they crawled up in the cars and went to the front and fought half as good as the French had four years previous, they would be tickled to death if they had to walk back (if they had enough legs), they hopped in and went down to Lorraine. I never saw young men adapt themselves to conditions as they did. These men were primarily from the Minneapolis and St. Paul regiments. We had many university men, many high school boys and youngsters who were very bright mathematically; who could sit down after they had been in France some time, and figure the correctness of an element better than some of the French officers. They were very

bright, but on that particular occasion when they got into Lorraine, they got into a place where brightness didn't count so very much. It was ability to push a shovel and throw a pick that counted, and under conditions where we had water (and icy water). They were not properly clothed; didn't have rubber boots; but it was because we were one of the first outfits that were there, and we knew the hardship that resulted was the result of unpreparedness, and didn't make much complaint. Those young men had never done such work before. They were very much disgusted when, they found they were digging up all of France. They thought it would be just loading the guns and firing, and they found very much to their disgust that most of their work was digging. Taking care of horses, and more digging.

When the Germans found we were in the sector, which had been a quiet sector, they became more active. They were very much interested in giving us a warm reception. On the 4th and 5th of March we had very active firing and many of our men were killed. But the effect was not so bad, because the young men stood right up to it. I had the honor of being present and seeing them under fire at close observation. I was more than pleased with the bravery and business-like manner in which they handled themselves under conditions that were really horrible. You cannot imagine putting gas masks on men who were wounded,—eyes knocked out and bleeding. Putting men in gas masks under those conditions is very depressing, but they stood up to it very well, and the regiment at that time was honored by our government by receiving six of the first twelve distinguished service crosses awarded to the army. After our service in Lorraine we went up to Champagne. That was the east wall of the Soissons-Chateau Thierry-Rheims salient. When we were on our way to Champagne, orders were received changing our situation to east of Rheims. These orders were the result of information that our enemy contemplated an attack. We were near a little town called Sezaune, which had been fought over and there was scarcely anything left. There were graves all around. We were going over the same ground that had been gone over before. That was a particularly depressing thing to some of the French, who wondered if the war was ever to be over.

As a diversion, let me tell you that when we first arrived in France a French field officer told me that in the fall of 1916 and spring of 1917 they were near defeat. Soldiers had fought the various wars for three years and saw they were not getting any place. All France was mobilized, and you didn't see in their little towns anything but women, children and very old men. The class I saw in 1918 were mere boys. Conditions were right for offering a return of Alsace-Lorraine for separate peace. Just think what that would have meant! Had they secured a separate peace with France and carried their combat on with Great Britain, and had they succeeded, then they would have looked for the one rich nation to pay for the war, and who would it have been. They could have come to this country and you could not have stopped those troops. This country never would have trained had we not gone into the war. That is the thing we were particularly lucky for; that we had the British and French holding the line while we prepared.

In Champagne the French had made very extensive preparations. They had contemplated an attack on the Verdun-Rheims front, and had built a most complete system of dugouts. If the Germans pressed that line down and the Chateau Thierry salient over, that would give them a little space in which to reach Paris. You cannot imagine what the excitement was to us. Probably you had it over here when you saw that enemy horde advancing and the advances that resulted in Chateau Thierry salient. But the French had contemplated the attack and had prepared for it. The dugouts were occupied in conjunction with the regimental headquarters of French artillery, and a brigade of French infantry 65 feet down in the ground. It contained thirty-five rooms. The rooms were not over six feet wide and about eight feet long. This was constructed by digging a great, deep gallery and burrowing into the ground. Then they would skip eight feet and burrow into the ground for another room. That was for the purpose of making them strong and almost shell proof. Opposite this dead space side they would put another room in. We divided those 35 rooms up between us. We had a radio station, an electric light station; our

electric light was made by the gas engine which we could run at the noon hour when we ate, and could run in the evening. We never could have any fires in the dugouts in the day time because they would attract the attention of the enemy and they would drop some heavy bombs on us, and possibly would have gotten down to us. The dugout was built as well as it was for the purpose of being a permanent home that we could not be shelled out of during the next offensive, which was to be one of the most important. That was the last German offensive, which took place on the night of July 14 [1918]. The dugout cost \$200,000 to construct, so you can imagine where some of your Liberty Loan money went to. It would not be worth \$5.00 of anyone's money after it had been used for its purpose as a dugout, but by reason of making it possible for the generals to conduct the battle, it saved all of the property back of it clear to Chalons-sur-Marne. Our outfit went into the dugout first. The colonel, myself and two other officers and our operation officers. Our batteries took out through the woods six batteries to constitute a regiment. On the first, second and third days we were there, nothing occurred outside of a little artillery firing; probably 50 or 60 shells of battle. After we were there some little time the enemy airplanes came hovering over to locate us. The guns were simply in the open with camouflage over the top. It was a light green colored arrangement made out of sacking and from the air it looked just the same as the surrounding country. Finally the Germans began to locate some of the troops in the rear areas. I remember on one certain day they fired at a barracks right behind us—probably one mile behind us—where some of our men and the Iowa men were, and killed sixty-two. That was our chaplain's first heavy burial. He assisted the Iowa regiment in burying these sixty-two. I met him in the woods a little while afterwards and he looked downcast, and when I asked him why it was, he said he never thought he would come to a place where human life was held so cheaply.

We went in there the latter part of June and hooked up all the wires. The communication was through heavy, lead cables, and it was shown how necessary was this cable arrangement, for five minutes after the

battle started all our aerals went out. You cannot conduct your batteries if you haven't connection with them.

During the time we were there fourteen different French batteries came in, and by reason of the French artillery having all they could handle on their switchboard they attached themselves to Colonel Leach, so when we commenced the battle July 14th he had 19 batteries under his command. We were a mere small unit compared with what we had all the way along the line, but those fourteen batteries represented in number one-half of all the field artillery that existed in the United States army prior to the Mexican border trouble, and here our colonel was commanding more than one-half the artillery of the United States.

We received word about 2 o'clock in the afternoon that the enemy would attack that night at 12 o'clock. You say "how did you know that?" We never knew how we knew it, except that the French told us. Their wonderful French system must have had someone in German headquarters. It was really necessary on account of the calibre of the troops opposite us. In combat you expect to take advantage of the element of surprise. The element of surprise is one of the essentials of enemy attack. The enemy figuring they had that, concentrated all their shock troops in their front line and communicating trenches, with their orders to jump off at 12 o'clock. Our orders were to start the battle at 11:30. At 11: 30 all the artillery I ever expect to hear in my life started off. We got the enemy in the trenches and we were told the next two days that we had covered the hill with dead. Notwithstanding that the shock troops had to be relieved and they had to make this change in combat, they succeeded in getting two and one-half kilometers within our line the next two days before we held it. The shock troop of the enemy was excellent and efficient in soldiering. They came through and had combatting with the seasoned French troops and the less seasoned but equally courageous American troops, and you cannot conceive of the work it was to hold that place around Chateau Thierry-Rheims. They pushed over the Marne and pushed east of Verdun. After the second day of the battle the

French were convinced that we had them held, but I cannot refrain from relating a little incident that happened down in a dugout one early morning when we were watching the map. It serves to illustrate the things that a man can do when he knows that he knows his profession, and he will take a chance. We were standing at a map with a French general officer. The radio was to the effect that the enemy was breaking through a certain part of the line and was getting behind our troops. The French officer thought a moment, and gave the command to drop the barrage on his own troops, thereby killing many of them, but it was better to do that than let the enemy through. These things are done by men who know what to do at the proper time. It was a decision that shocked me, but it showed that the general knew his business, because the attack was successfully repulsed.

We staid there until the 18th. We were to stage a counter attack on the night of the 18th at 12 o'clock. We knew that it was not very important because the enemy could not afford to occupy those positions that they had taken as it would take so much energy on their part to organize them. We knew if we gave them sufficient excuse in the way of combat they would withdraw to their cement and concrete dugouts that they had in their former positions. We had gone to bed about 11 o'clock because we didn't consider it so very important. At quarter after 11 an order came directing our regiment to turn over a commission to the French and to leave the sector before daylight, and so everybody got up and threw his stuff in bags and took it to the mouth of the dugout and got out. One of our batteries was a little slow in getting out in the morning, and as result drew the machine gun of the enemy from airplane. The orders were in such cases to draw in under the trees and operate your own machine guns.

The regiment then moved out to a little town and rested a day and then prepared to move to Chateau Thierry. When we arrived at Chateau Thierry the town had been taken. We marched through and went to a little town about five miles north of Chateau Thierry, and there engaged in combat with the enemy. The enemy was on the

retreat and was giving us a rear guard action. I will explain the rear guard action as this: The enemy contemplates retreating to favorable ground. They placed machine guns to great advantage with the intention that the machine guns shall be taken after they have succeeded in destroying as many American troops as possible. We have as a counter measure on that system, the plan of artillery preparation. You see the artillery always supports the infantry. The infantry is the arm of the service. The artillery, the air service, ammunition service and any other auxiliary are to help win the battle. Positions are organized by the infantry, protected by the artillery. The idea would be for the artillery to pile on the rear area. The artillery is switched from the rear to the machine gun ends, and after the infantry gains sufficient we direct our fire on the rear area. Unfortunately some of the generals do not call for artillery enough, and when they open and our boys are obliged to take machine gun nests that have not been properly reduced, they pay for it with their lives. The general generally pays for it by being assigned to the S. O. S., which is the Service of Supply.

There was great complaint when the fight took place along the Ourcq river, on the part of the enemy. I remember reading about it at that time. We were like the Moroccan troops, who threw down their rifles, took out their knives and started to do business in their quiet way. They took no prisoners and did not expect to be taken prisoners. I investigated that report as much as I could among the company commanders, because they were the only ones close enough to see. They said there was not much to complain of, except possibly where our men would attempt to take a machine gun nest and start out with 40 or 50, and get to the nest with only 10 or 12 live men working. They would get right up close and put their bayonets right in their mouths and we could not hear them. That might appear to you as being cruel when a man wants to surrender. I know it is contrary to the rules of war, but men will do things under great excitement that are contrary to almost all rules; and the complaint of the enemy was that we lacked discipline, which probably was well founded. Our men did lack discipline in the attack. When they got started in the attack



nothing could stop them. They knew they were being shot at by machine guns, and their idea was to get the men on the other end. I know a command given after they once started would never be heard. The Ourcq river is a little stream no wider than this table. It would not be called a creek in this country. From there on they pressed them back to the Vesle river. Going from the Ourcq river to the Vesle river, we came across a town that had probably 150 McCormick reapers. It seemed rather odd that we should find so many reapers in this town, and I thought probably an American implement concern was located here. It developed next day that the enemy had collected these reapers and were about to ship them to Germany, but were prevented from doing so by not being able to get transportation.

Another great Incident was that when the territory was held by the Germans they had planted great crops. The Americans had driven the enemy back at just the right time for the French to come in and harvest their crops. The enemy retreated with machine gun rear guard action continually to the Vesle river. After the regiment had been in action on Vesle river for six days we received orders relieving us from combat. The combat was continual and the men and horses were tired out. Many of the horses hauling up ammunition were killed by shells. It was a case of simply getting the ammunition to the guns. You have no idea of the cost of that ammunition. To get through 25 yards in wire that would protect the enemy, it would cost in the neighborhood of \$10,000, starting with well adjusted firing. In the territory our infantry operated we had 396,000 rounds of ammunition of the enemy. Some of the best ammunition I ever saw. Brass shells up to eight inches, that must have cost millions of dollars. The enemy had assembled all this ammunition with the idea of carrying it to Paris, but they were not successful, and when that last attack was not successful, the German strategists knew that their life went out,—their chance to sit in the sun was eclipsed. There never was a time in the mind of General Foch and our own General Pershing when they thought there would be another successful drive on the part of the enemy.

I will read you a little tribute the French paid to our artillery and infantry after our fight on July 15th and 16th, which was the last German offensive:

HEADQUARTERS 42d DIVISION,  
American Expeditionary Forces, France,  
18 July, 1918.

**MEMORANDUM:**

The following letter received is furnished Brigade, Regimental and separate unit commanders for publication to their respective commands:

July 17, 1918.

"21st Army Corps, 170th Division Staff, 3d Bureau, No. 1517-3-.

General Bernard, Commanding par interim the 170th Division.

To the Commanding General of the 42d U. S. Inf. Div.

The Commanding General of the 170th Infantry Division desires to express to the Commanding General of the 42d U. S. Infantry Division his keen admiration for the courage and bravery of which the American Battalions of the 83d Brigade have given proof in the course of the hard fighting of the 15th and 16th of July, 1918, as also for the effectiveness of the artillery fire of the 42d U. S. Infantry Division.

In these two days the troops of the United States, by their tenacity, largely aided their French comrades in breaking the repeated assaults of the Seventh Reserve Division, the First Infantry Division and the Dismounted Cavalry Guard Division of the Germans; these latter two divisions are among the best of Germany.

According to the orders captured on the German officers made prisoners, their Staff wished to take Chalons-sur-Marne on the evening of July 16, but it had reckoned without the valor of the American and French combatants who told them with machine gun, rifle and cannon shots that they would not pass.

The Commanding General of the 170th Infantry Division is therefore particularly proud to observe that in mingling their blood gloriously on the battlefield of CHAMPAGNE, the Americans and French of today are continuing the magnificent traditions established a century and a half ago by WASHINGTON and LA FAYETTE. It is with this sentiment that he salutes the noble FLAG of the UNITED STATES in thinking of the final VICTORY.

BERNARD."

By command of Major General Menocher:

Douglas MacArthur,

Brigadier General, General Staff, Chief of Staff.

**OFFICIAL:**

Walter E. Powers,  
Major, N. G., Adjutant General,  
Division Adjutant.

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