

On the
Trail
Of the
Kaiser



With
"B" Battery
1st Anti-
Aircraft
Battery

Western
Front
France
1918

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1919

EMBLEM OF "B" BATTERY

G. W. Edwards
Corporal "B" Battery

Osborn H. Bradley
May 5, 1919.

ORGANIZATION

IN November, 1917, on orders from Washington, D. C., three anti-aircraft batteries—"B", "C" and "D"—and a Headquarters Supply Company, were organized from regular Coast Artillery companies, stationed on San Francisco Bay, each battery being rounded out to war strength by the addition of Coast Artillery troops from the California National Guard.

These organizations, including "A" Battery (which had already been formed on the Atlantic Coast, and sent to France) became the 1st Anti-Aircraft Battalion (C. A. C.).

"B" Battery was based on the 10th Company, Fort Winfield Scott, Cal.; was organized at Fort Miley, Cal., and consisted of 3 officers and 104 enlisted men.



On The Trail With "B" Battery

IT was a highly elated Battalion which "pulled stakes" November 30th, 1917, and with the post artillery band playing a farewell "There's a Long, Long Trail", marched to the Ft. Scott dock, and commenced the 7,000-mile journey to the Western Front, to do its bit in making the world safe for democracy, and unsafe for Kaiser Bill and Co.

After a merry trip across the continent, during which a glimpse of both borders was obtained, the Battalion arrived at Camp Merritt, New Jersey, December 8th, leaving again December 12th for the Hoboken docks, New York harbor, and there boarded the U. S. N. transport Susquehannah on the same day.

On the evening of December 14th the ship got under way, and next morning found her well out on the Atlantic, being one of a convoy of six transports—Susquehannah, DeKalb, Antigone, Covington, President Lincoln, and Mount Vernon—all former German liners, the last three of which have since been torpedoed. These vessels were escorted by the armored cruiser North Carolina.

The trip across the Atlantic was uneventful until December 25th, when a much appreciated Christmas gift appeared, in the shape of eight of Uncle Sam's destroyer escort. The North Carolina now left the convoy, and the destroyer guard took up strategic positions on either side of the group of transports, zigzagging here and there in their vigilant search for possible enemy submarines.

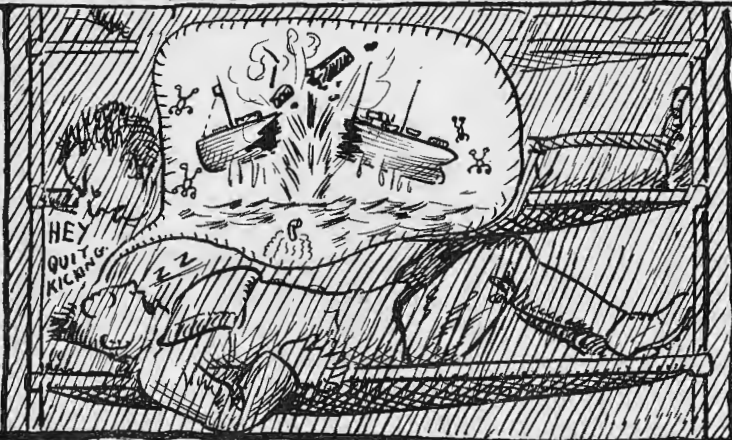
On the next day the fleet was split, three of the transports and four destroyers taking a northerly course for Brest, the remainder heading for St. Nazaire.

Shortly after sighting Belle Isle (off St. Nazaire) on the morning of December 27th, some of the joy was taken out of life when suddenly the guns of the destroyers and transports began to bark furiously, and shrill ship sirens gave warning that a sub had been sighted. All soldiers were immediately sent below, to give the crew a better opportunity of handling the life-saving apparatus, in case of need. Some of us, however, had the opportunity of seeing the nearest destroyer almost jump ahead as the full speed signal was given. She spun around on her "heel" and raced along at terrific speed, bow almost clear of the water, her guns spitting fire, as she headed for a periscope which showed a foot or two above water about 1,000 yards off our port bow.

One or two depth bombs were dropped where the sub disappeared, with evidently good results, as she failed to re-appear.

GOING ACROSS THE ATLANTIC.

BAD
DREAMS
IN
THE
SUB
ZONE.

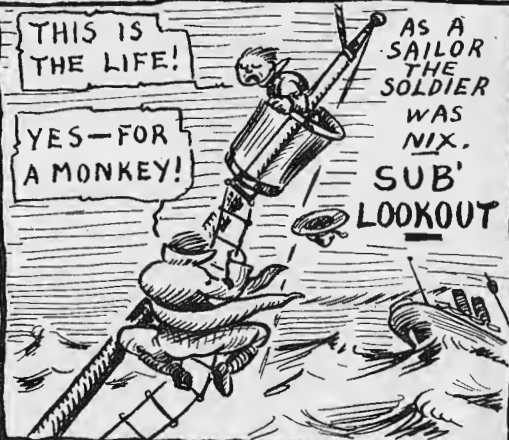


THIS IS
THE LIFE!

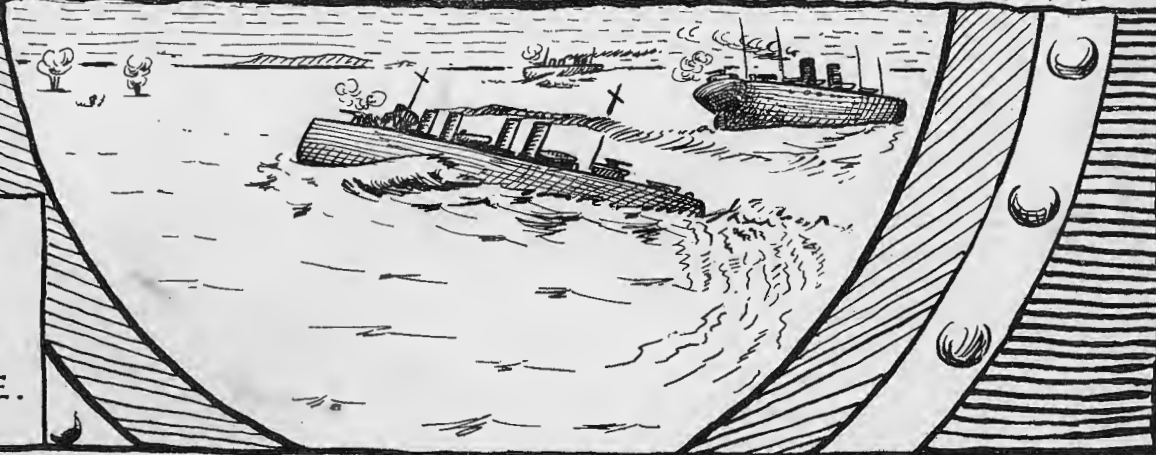
YES—FOR
A MONKEY!

AS A
SAILOR
THE
SOLDIER
WAS
NIX.

SUB'
LOOKOUT



SUB'
ATTACK
AS SEEN
THROUGH
A
PORTHOLE.



After about fifteen minutes suspense below decks, the "all clear" signal was given, and we came on deck to find that the good ship Susquehannah was a "lame duck." At the time of the alarm she was leading the fleet, and now, in fifteen minutes' time, the other two transports were far away in the lead, in the race for safety having greatly out-distanced our spy shocked ship, which could only deliver about twelve knots at the critical moment.

A short time after the sub attack, the convoy was welcomed to the shores of France by several aeroplanes, which flew out to look over the scene of battle for traces of the sub.

The ship arrived in the harbor of St. Nazaire in the evening of December 27th.

The Battalion disembarked January 2nd, 1918, and boarded a train for Langres. This train was composed of dilapidated French box cars, the side of each bearing the now famous legend: "40 Hommes 8 Chevaux", meaning that their official capacity was 40 men or 8 horses. The car the writer joy-rode in contained 42 men, had one flat wheel, the other three being apparently square; it was also a good observation car, having numerous large cracks in the sides through which the scenery could be observed en route. The weather happened to be bitterly cold, ice forming on the canteens inside the box car, and it was a case of "mark time" in an effort to keep warm most of the seven-mile-an-hour trip to Langres, where the train arrived January 4th.

On arrival the Battalion was quartered in Ft. De la Bonnelle, near Langres, where a welcome opportunity to thaw out was obtained.

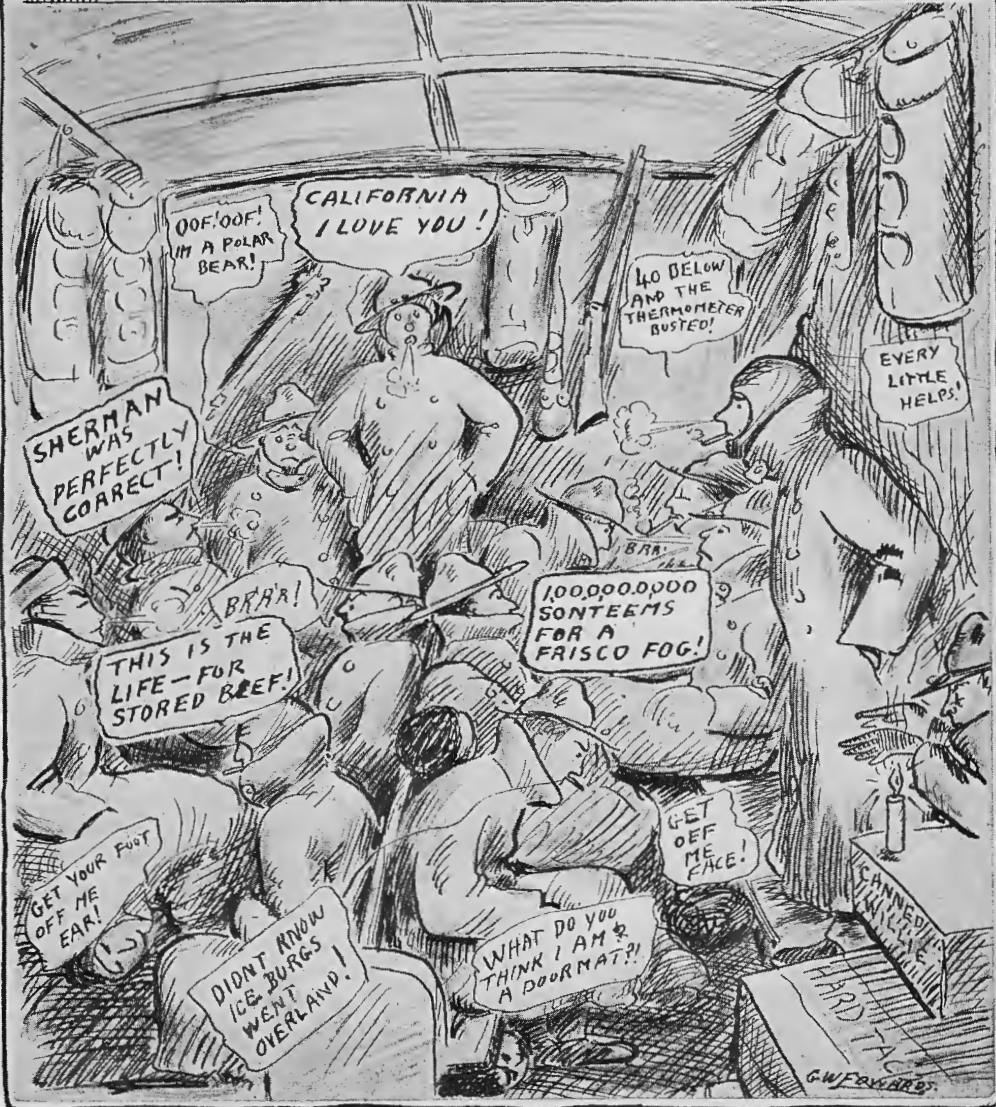
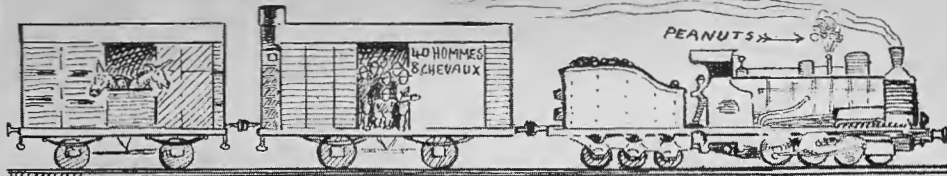
January 25th, orders were received to leave for Ft. De Stain, near St. Dennis. The Battalion arrived there January 26th, and at once took up intensive training in the use of French anti-aircraft guns, the fire control system of which was complicated and contained many strange mechanical devices.

After a strenuous battle with these instruments, in which many a drop of perspiration rolled down a much puzzled brow, the Battalion was adjudged proficient, and on April 15th the batteries were sent to various positions on the front to finish instruction in a practical way.

"B" Battery arrived in the Verdun sector April 17th, and took over a French battery for a six-week period.

The first shot (a trial shot) was fired May 3rd, and a day or two later the first enemy plane ventured into range. It was an Albatross, D-3, and received such a terrific reception of high explosive from our highly enthusiastic gunners, that he departed hastily for Germany, probably reporting a concentration of anti-aircraft guns on that part of the line. The weather on the whole was poor for aviation, and there was little activity during our stay in

ST. NAZAIRE-LANGRES EXPRESS.



the Verdun sector, except on the part of hordes of large rats, which infested the numerous dugouts in this vicinity. These ravenous rodents devoured all eatables obtainable and occasionally sampled a shoe for dessert.

On the day before the battery's departure, the enemy shelled the woods in which the men were billeted, but did no damage except to muss up the kitchen and an outhouse.

On May 28th the Battery left for Ft. De Stain, here to come into proud possession of a complete new set of equipment for an anti-aircraft battery. The outfit was French manufacture, with the exception of a Ford car and a motorcycle, and consisted of 2 auto-mount 75 m.m. guns, 2 caissons, 4 camions, 1 camionette.

With this equipment "B" Battery set out from Ft. De Stain, June 5th, for the front, being attached to the 6th French Army, and took up position at Lizy (Chateau-Thierry region), June 5th.

On June 6th the first shot was fired,

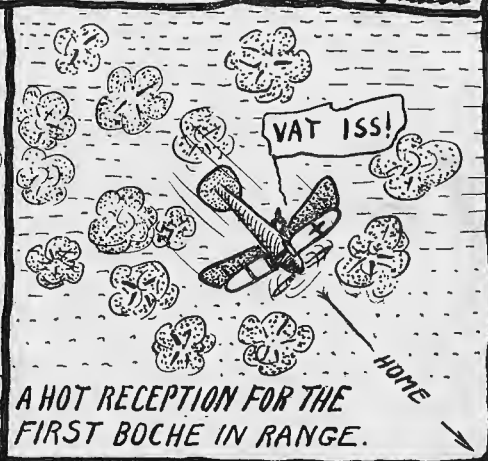
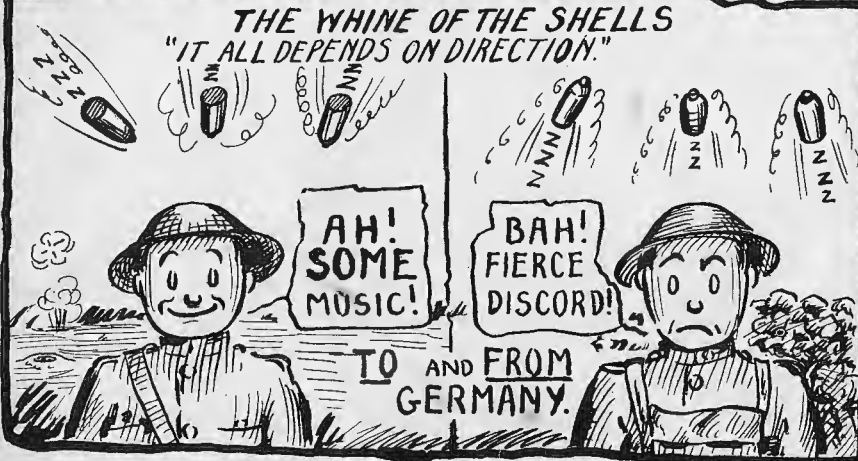
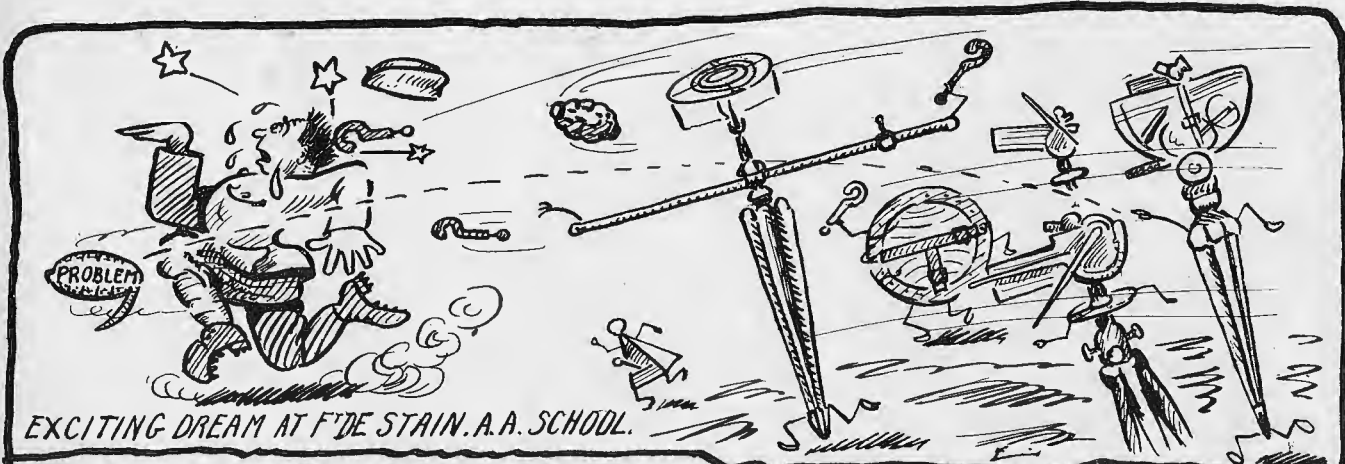
The next position was Montreuil-aux-Lions, which was used as a base from June 9th until July 17th, when the Battery shifted over to the east side of Chateau-Thierry, and set up position near the small town of Verdon, July 17th.

The second battle of the Marne was now commencing, and there followed a quick succession of changed battery positions as the enemy was driven northeastward. Several thousand rounds of shells were fired by the Battery during this advance, in driving off enemy planes—Photographing Rumpler, D. F. W., and Albatross "Regulators" which did a lot of spotting for the Boche artillery; Fokker and Albatross on various missions—destroying observation balloons, machine-gunning trenches and road traffic, observing and putting up interference with the work of our own planes. These "birds" all had the undivided attention of the Battery, and a few of them hit the earth close enough for the Battery to get official credit for their destruction, and no doubt many of them went home in a more or less shell-shocked condition.

At Le Bouleaux (Chery) the Battery was treated to its first experience with sneezing gas, and was shelled out of position, one of the caissons being damaged by shell fire.

On August 15th the caisson was sent to La Ferte for repairs, and the Battery withdrew to Provencheres, a small, quiet town in the back areas. Here a welcome rest was enjoyed until September 3rd, when the Battery left for Toul, on the outskirts of which city a stop of one week was made, when orders came to start for the front to take part in the St. Mihiel drive, "B" Battery now being attached to the American 1st Army, under General Pershing.

September 12th found the Battery set up for action near Rupt-en-Woevre, close to the northern end of the drive.



September 24th, a move was made to Montauville, near Pont a Mousson, on the southern pivot of the drive. Here the Battery operated until October 8th, when a switch was made to the Meuse-Argonne front, Chattencourt being the first position. Here was witnessed the greatest concentration of aeroplanes we saw during the war. The sky was fairly darkened with squadrons of bombing Brigquets, each squadron being protected by several Caudron battle planes and a number of speedy Spad chasse planes. They flew over our battery position on their way to clean the enemy out of a particularly tough position. It was a remarkable sight, there being about 300 planes in all, 125 of which could be seen at one time, the combined hum of their engines amounting to almost a roar. It was a superb demonstration of the Allies' control of the air, for not a German plane ventured to dispute their flight.

On October 11th the Battery moved to Brabant, where some of the equipment was damaged by shell fire, which was heavy here. This position was held until October 22nd, when the Battery moved up to Consenvoye, the last position. This vicinity at times was shelled very heavily with all varieties of projectiles—Whiz-bangs (a high velocity 88 m.m.), Shrapnel, and all types and sizes of ordinary high explosive shells came over, the climax being reached when three of the famous 42 c.m. (16-inch) shells dropped from the sky, two of which exploded close to the Battery. However, numerous ex-German dugouts were handy and no casualties resulted to the Battery personnel.

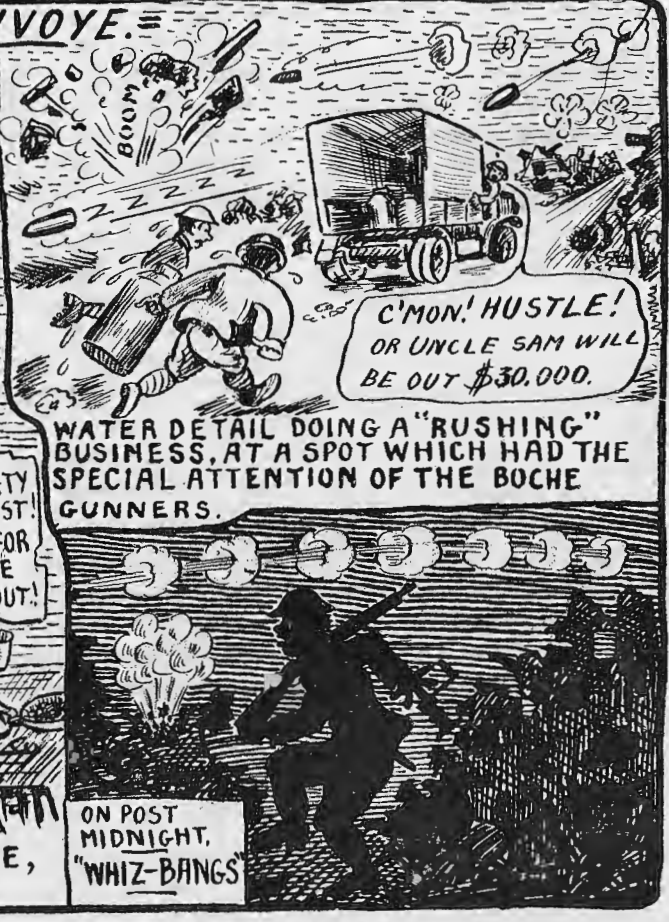
On November 11th, the glad news came of the signing of the armistice, and shortly after "B" Battery pulled out for the back areas, there to patiently await orders to return to "God's country."

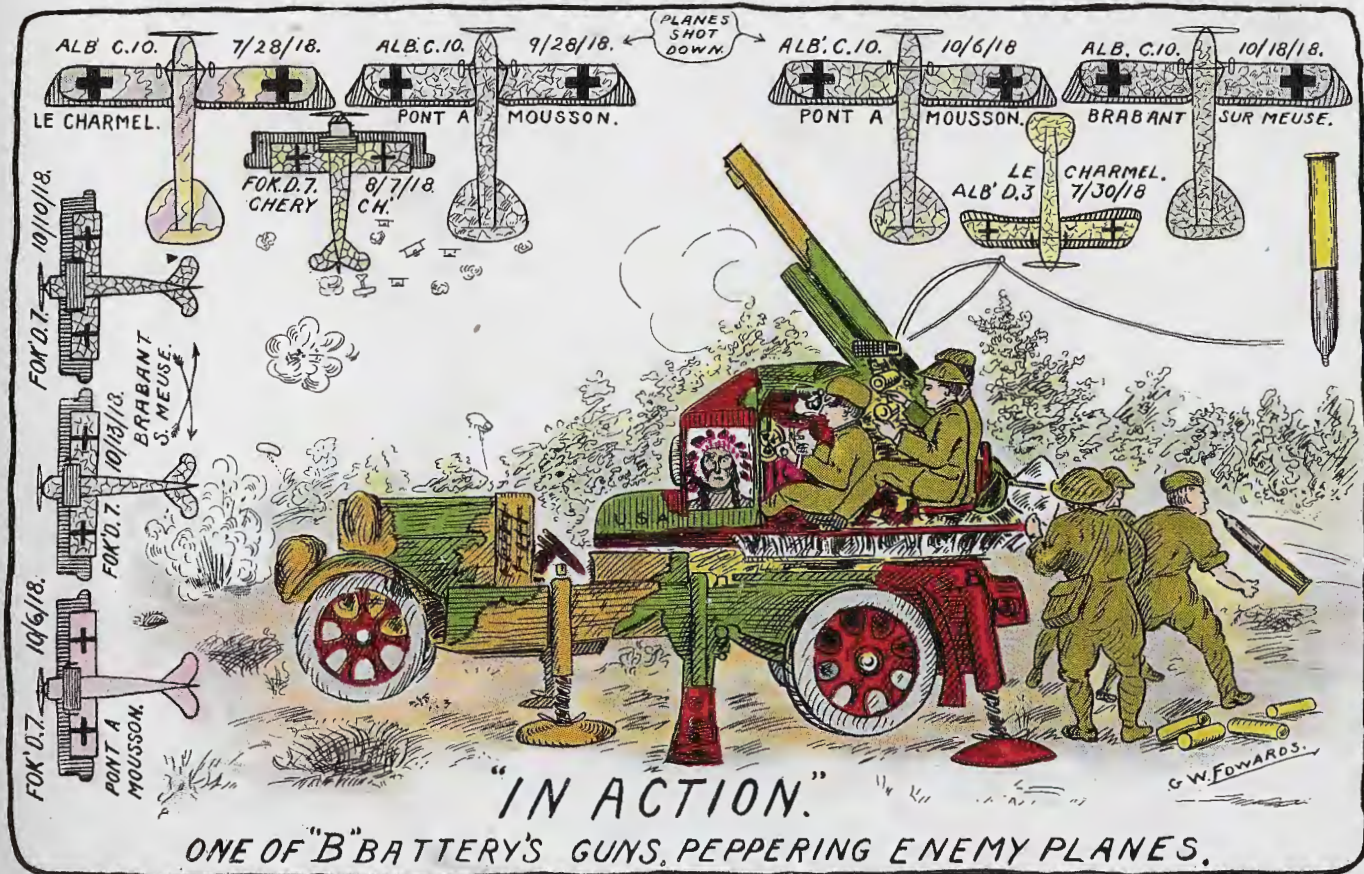
"B" Battery has been officially credited with shooting down nine enemy aeroplanes in five months service (with its own equipment) on the Western Front. This is a record for the war, and probably means that many more planes were actually shot down, or at least put out of action.

The enemy planes were in the habit of flying within, or near, their own lines most of the time, and if forced down usually landed in their own territory, and therefore gave little opportunity for official confirmation of their destruction.

"B" Battery was the only American anti-aircraft (artillery) battery to have its own equipment, and consequently had the edge on the other United States batteries, which did not have as good an opportunity to display their real worth.

HOT STUFF AT CONSENVOYE.



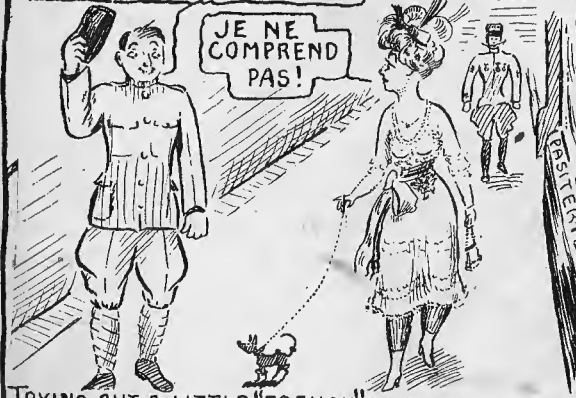


F U N N Y S T U F F .



FAMOUS SHOE BARRAGE OF PROVENCHERES.

VOOLEY VOO PROMENARDE A-VEC MA—
DOWN THE BOULEVARD.



TRYING OUT A LITTLE "FRENCH" IN PAREE.

OUR SENTIMENTS
FEED THEM FLIES,
UNTIL THEYRE DIZZY,
BURY FRESH MEAT,
AND SERVE CORN WYLLY



CLEANING UP
THE KITCHEN.

WHEN THE 420 MM'S FELL
AT CONSENVOYE.



G. W. E.

ALB. C. 10. 7/28/18.
LE CHARMEL.

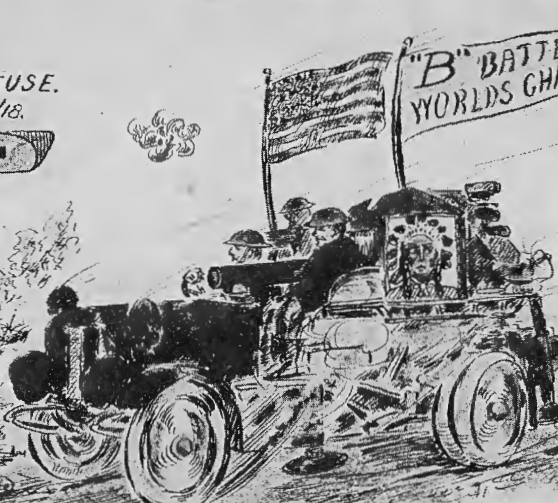
ALB. C. 10. 9/28/18.
PONT A MOUSSON.

ALB. C. 10. 10/6/18.
PONT A MOUSSON.

BRABANT
FOK. D. 7. 10/10/18.

BRABANT
ALB. C. 10
SUR MEUSE.
10/18/18.

CHERY CH.
FOK. D. 7. 8/7/18.



9
PLANES
LOST

GOTT
STRAFE
DOT
BATTERY

FOK. D. 7. 10/6/18.
PONT A MOUSSON

ALB. D. 3.
7/30/18.
LE CHARMEL.

FOK. D. 7. 10/13/18.
BRABANT SUR
MEUSE.

"A HARD JOLT."

G.W. FORDWARDS.

"ROUTE ORDER"; AND THE NINE ENEMY PLANES "B" BATTERY HAS OFFICIAL CREDIT FOR SHOOTING DOWN, IN FIVE MONTHS, (A RECORD) IN FRANCE 1918.



Toast To

To you, now famous Indian Head,
Proud emblem of Battery "B",
Whose colors gleamed out from our rigs
For all the world to see.



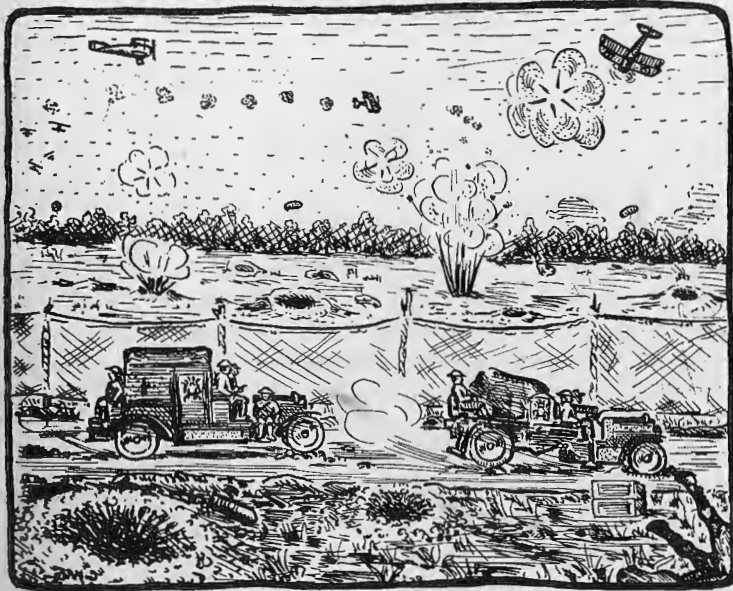
The Emblem

From every gun and camion,
The caissons, and our Ford,
Your eagle eye stared out as though
To seek the Boche War Lord.



A TOAST TO THE EMBLEM—Continued

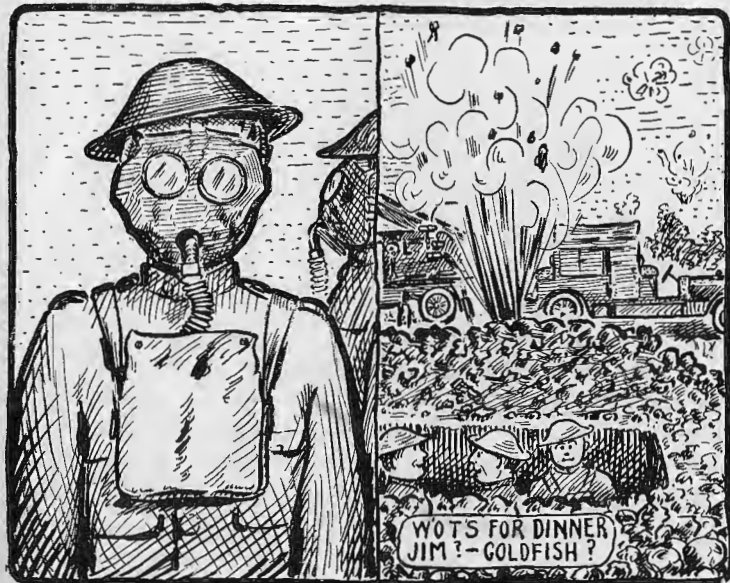
Though often caked with mud and dust,
You rode, with no dissenting grunt,
Over many miles of war-torn roads
Along the Western Front.



From Montreuil to Consenvoye,
Through months of hard campaign,
Your stern visage has held its place
Though shells may fall like rain.

A TOAST TO THE EMBLEM--Continued

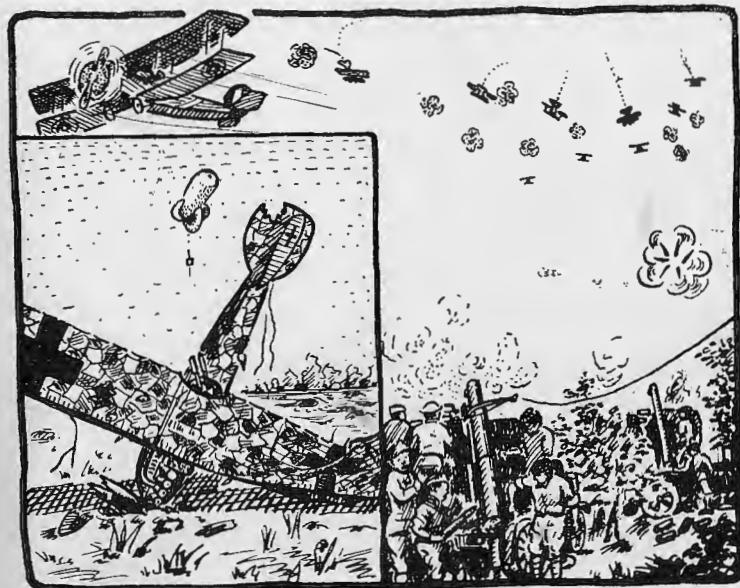
Your eagle plumes have held their poise
When Fokker came en masse;
Through storms of shot and shrapnel,
"Whizz-bangs", bombs, and gas.



Nor did you flinch at Chery, when
All night the sneezing gas was strong;
And in shelling us, the enemy
Shot off a part of our caisson.

A TOAST TO THE EMBLEM—Continued

At least nine planes you saw shot down,
And many formations scattered;
Fokker, Rumpler, and Albatross,
Their plans at least, all shattered.



Many thousand rounds of high explosive
We hurled right past your ear,
When "Jinks" and "Jonah", speaking fast,
Chased off the Boche in fear.

A TOAST TO THE EMBLEM—Continued

At Consenvoye you did not squirm,
Nor even blink an eye,
When Boche four-twenty H. E. shells
Came hurtling from the sky.



Nor did you even crack a smile
At poor old "Stormy Jim",
When we had to dodge a shoe barrage
To save our life and limb.

A TOAST TO THE EMBLEM—Continued

You've been a symbol of good luck,
Helped make the Boche much wiser;
Now who can say we did not have
The "Indian Sign" on the Kaiser?



Gun Positions of "B" Battery

CHATEAU-THIERRY FRONT

At or near:

Lizy—June 5th to 9th.
Montreuil—June 9th to July 4th.
Germigny—July 5th to 17th.
Haute Feuille—July 17th to 18th.
Comblizy—July 18th to 20th.
Monthodon—July 20th to 22nd.
St. Eugene—July 22nd to 23rd.
Crezancy—July 23rd to 24th.
Janvier Farm—July 24th to 26th.
Franquete Farm (Moulins)—July 28th to Aug. 3rd.
Chamery—August 3rd to 4th.

Chery—August 4th to 13th.

Montaon Farm—August 13th to 18th.

ST. MIHIEL FRONT

At or near:

Mouilly—September 12th to 15th.
St. Remy—September 15th to 24th.
Montauville—September 25th to October 7th.

MEUSE-ARGONNE FRONT

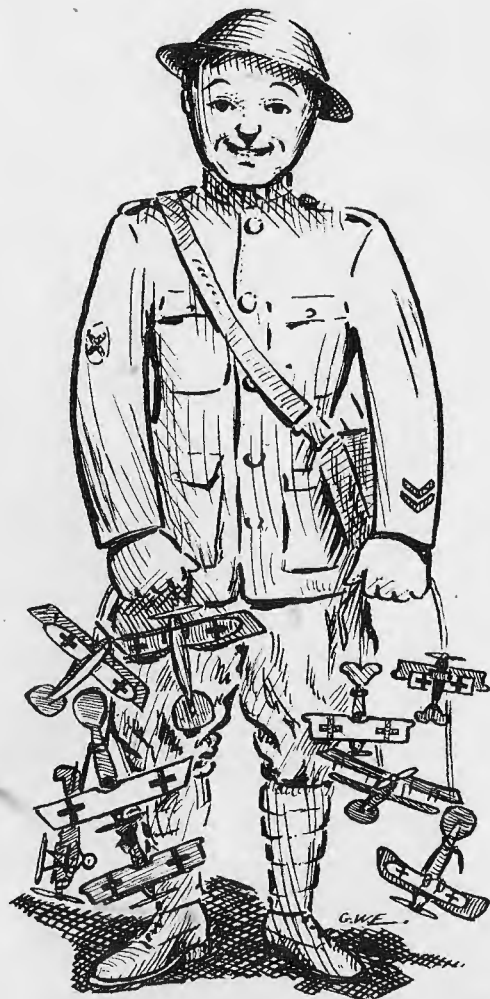
At or near:

Chattencourt—October 8th to 11th.
Brabant—October 11th to 22nd.
Consenvoye—October 22nd to November 11th.



ON TARGET! "COMMENCE FIRING."
(A PLEASANT DREAM, NEVER REALIZED.)

Fisis



La Guerre

Roster of "B" Battery

(APRES LA GUERRE)

Captain Joseph A. Dias

2nd Lieutenant Brown L. Meece

1st Sergeant Watkins	Wagoner Chamberlain	Private 1 cl. Timmons
Supply Sergeant Hatfield	Wagoner Krhut	Private 1 cl. Yeck
Mess Sergeant Brenan	Wagoner McDermott	Private Anderson
Sergeant Smith	Wagoner Pederson	Private Boss
Sergeant Moran	Wagoner Sage	Private Bright
Sergeant Osborn	Wagoner Schryer	Private Burgue
Sergeant Townley	Wagoner Stevens	Private Creighton
Sergeant Tipton	Wagoner Theobald	Private Finka
Sergeant Thorpe	Private 1 cl. Bliven	Private Hennessey
Corporal Haynes	Private 1 cl. Bradley	Private Hess
Corporal Wagner	Private 1 cl. Chamberlain	Private Hildreth
Corporal Peterson	Private 1 cl. Christensen	Private Little
Corporal Beaty	Private 1 cl. Cisney	Private Melaas
Corporal Uppinghouse	Private 1 cl. Cottrell	Private Myers
Corporal Pugh	Private 1 cl. Crawford	Private O'Connor, F. J.
Corporal Landon	Private 1 cl. Ferrier	Private O'Connor, L. W.
Corporal Cleavenger	Private 1 cl. Gillogly	Private Peterson
Corporal Dewey	Private 1 cl. Green	Private Reposa
Corporal Holt	Private 1 cl. Kakovski	Private Rothschild
Corporal Edwards	Private 1 cl. Kimsey	Private Saben
Bugler Cope	Private 1 cl. Newell	Private Stout
Bugler Arnold	Private 1 cl. Pratt	Private Willey
Mechanic Ramsey	Private 1 cl. Seachord	Private Wood
Mechanic Zeleny	Private 1 cl. Tanner	

The cartoon in center of bottom is Dad when he fell out of the 70 + 8 car on way to Brest to come home.

He finally caught up with his detachment and came back aboard with the "gang"!

= **HOMeward BOUND** =



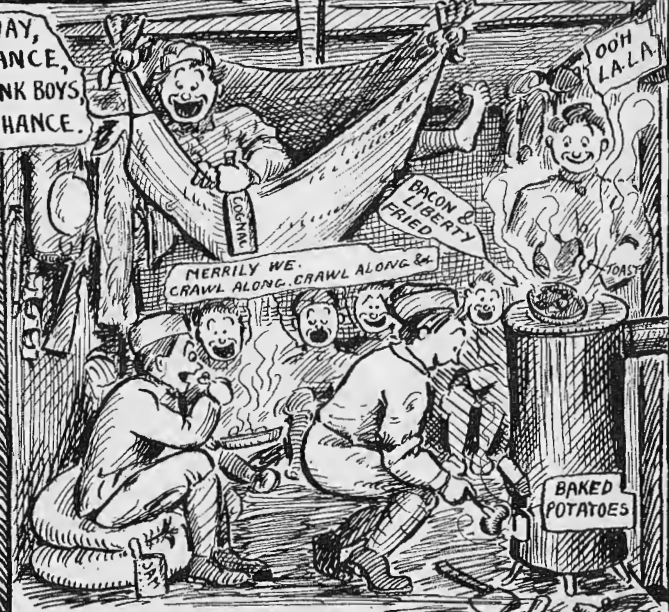
COME IN!

FAVORITE PASTIME AT BEHONNE



HELLO BROADWAY, GOOD BYE FRANCE, HAVE ANOTHER DRINK BOYS, WHILE THERES A CHANCE.

POP TIME FINALLY DRAGGED AROUND TO BEHONNE, WITH ORDERS FOR THE BATTALION TO LEAVE FOR BREST.



BREST.—
RAIN, CHOW LINES, & TENTS.



WHO SAID 'FALL OUT!'



B — DID A, SIDE SLIP, NOSE DIVED, AND MADE A BAD LANDING, TEMPORARILY OUT OF CONTROL. FUSELAGE SLIGHTLY DAMPED.

WE WERE HEADED WEST, FOR THE PORT OF BREST, AT TWENTY FIVE MILES PER DAY; BUT MILE AFTER 'MILE, WE WORE A GLAD SMILE AND COOKED ON A STOVE ALL THE WAY.

HOT STOVE SPECIAL. BAR LE DUC TO BREST.

Homeward Bound

FATHER TIME finally dragged around with the much delayed "orders home" and the Battalion left Bayonne for Brest January 30th.

The old familiar French box cars were used for the journey, but there was plenty of good "chow" and each car sported a stove, which was kept busy throughout the entire trip turning out short orders of every description, according to the whim of the men, each of whom tested his own ability in the cooking business.

The train arrived at Brest February 3rd, and the Battalion was introduced to Camp Pontanezen, with its myriads of tents, hustling "chow" lines, and rain.

February 17th found the Battalion on board the U. S. S. Ohio, a battleship of rather ancient design. A number of casualties were also assigned to this vessel for the trip home, making about 800 soldiers on board.

February 20th the anchor was hove up and our blunt nosed old war horse was soon pushing a goodly part of the Atlantic Ocean before her, as she plowed her course for the U. S. A.

The ship ran into heavy weather for the first few days, making only 75 miles in one 24-hour period. The "going home smile" faded temporarily from the weather-beaten faces of some of the men as they succumbed to the attack of General Mal de Mer.

After going through some strenuous contortions in the battle with the elements, during which the Ohio seemed to be persistently diving for a dugout, it was found necessary to put into the Azores, on March 1st, for coal, 800 tons being taken on board.

A start was again made for the United States on March 4th, and very fine weather was enjoyed for most of the remainder of the trip, which was made in comparatively fast time, (350 miles being the greatest day's run), and March 13th found our battle wagon with her highly delighted passengers and crew in port in the good old U. S. A.



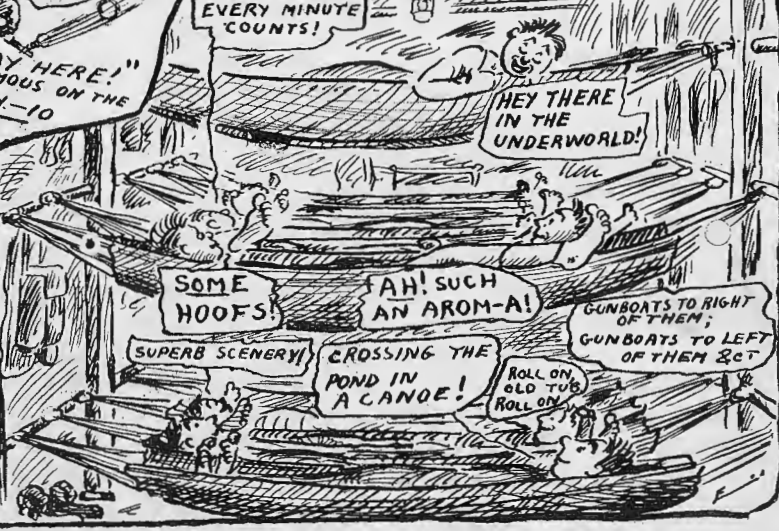
JUST WAIT UNTIL I GET ASHORE!
I WONT GO "OVER SEA" NO MORE;
I'LL TAKE TO THE TALLEST TIMBER,
MY 45-90 ILL UNLIMBER,
AND IF THEY COME FOR ME A-GEN,
I'LL TELL THEM ALL TO GO TO-SEA.

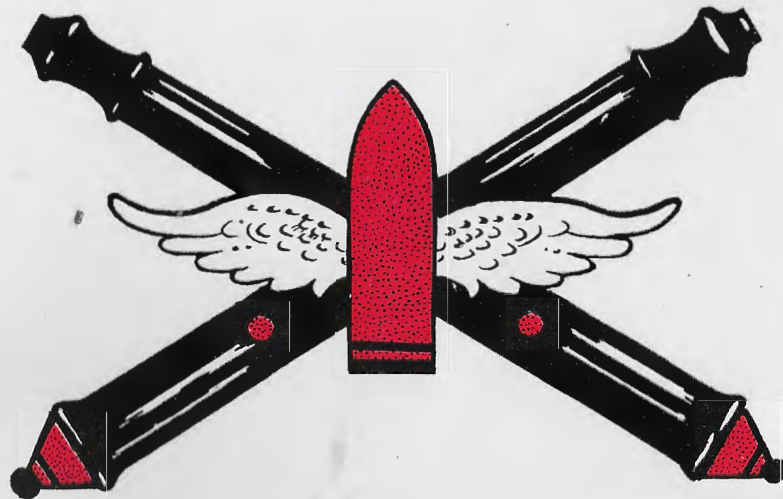


HOMeward BOUND. ON THE BATTLE SHIP OHIO.



"HEAD AND TAIL" ON THE OH-10.
EVERY MINUTE COUNTS!





INSIGNIA OF U. S. ANTI-AIRCRAFT ARTILLERY