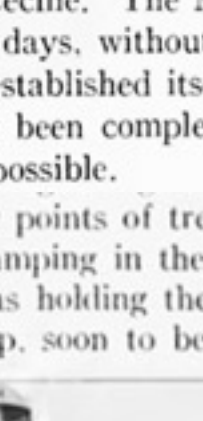


ILLINOIS in the WORLD WAR

An Illustrated Record Prepared with the Cooperation
and Under the Direction of the Leaders in the
State's Military and Civilian Organizations

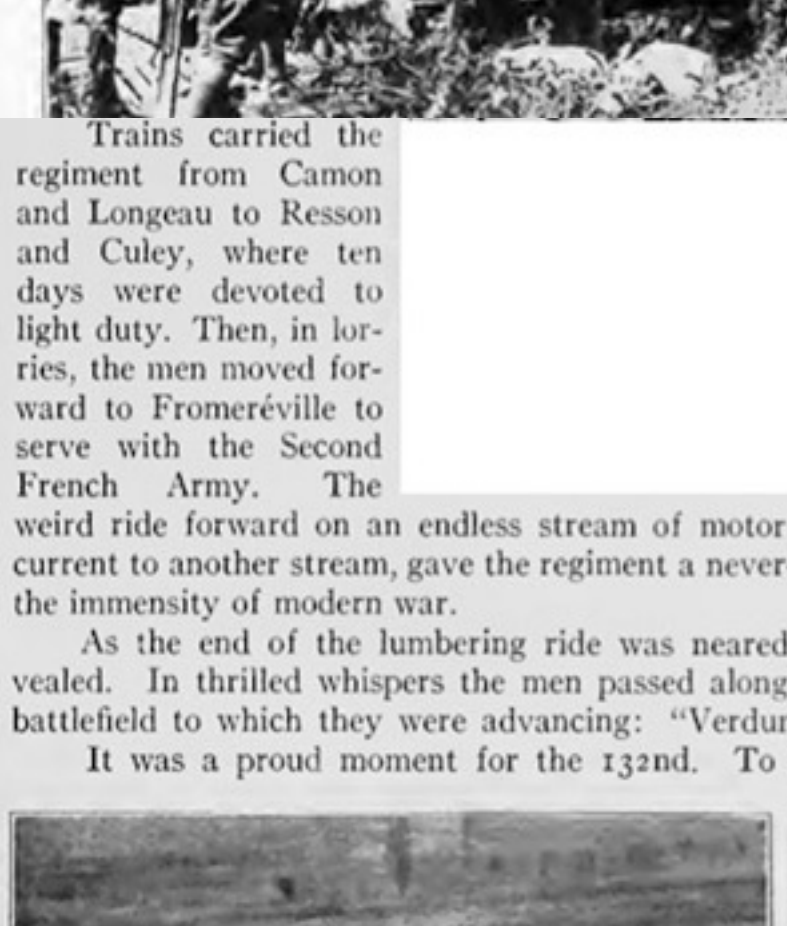
Volume One



CHICAGO
STATES PUBLICATIONS SOCIETY
1920

Orders to leave Camp Logan came late in May. The 132nd entrained, moved to Hoboken, N. J., and there boarded the transport Mount Vernon, formerly the Kronprinzessin Cecilie. The Mount Vernon sailed May 24, and the passage was made in six days, without incident. On May 30 the regiment debarked at Brest and established itself in the famous Pontanezen barracks. The quarters had not been completely fitted up, but the men made themselves as comfortable as possible.

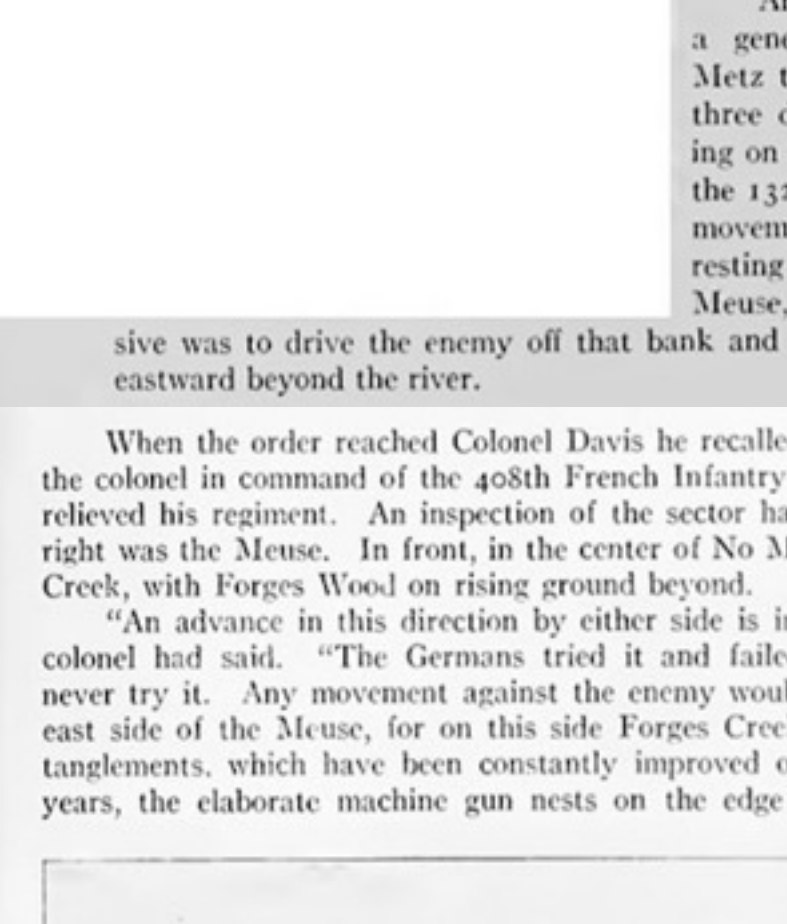
course of training in the finer points of trench fighting. Then the regiment moved to Mollens-au-Bois, camping in the woods near the front line. The Fourth Australian Brigade was holding the sector. Between the Illinoisans and the "Aussies" a friendship, soon to be cemented in battle, was formed.



THE CENTURY-OLD BARRACKS AT PONTANEZEN
These stone barracks were built in the days of the great Napoleon.

Following the battle at Hamel the regiment was attached to the 173rd British Infantry Brigade, then occupying the front line at Albert. The men at first went into the trenches by platoons, then by battalions, and finally, on August 6, as a regiment.

This was the 132nd's first opportunity to serve as a unit in the front lines. The men took advantage of the opportunity in a manner that won favorable comment from veteran British officers. The British were surprised



Trains carried the regiment from Camon and Longeau to Resson and Culey, where ten days were devoted to light duty. Then, in lorries, the men moved forward to Fromeréville to serve with the Second French Army. The weird ride forward on an endless stream of motor trucks, running counter-current to another stream, gave the regiment a never-to-be-forgotten picture of the immensity of modern war.

As the end of the lumbering ride was neared, the destination was revealed. In thrilled whispers the men passed along the name of the famous battlefield to which they were advancing: "Verdun!"

It was a proud moment for the 132nd. To hold the line in a sector that had withstood the utmost strength of the enemy, a sector where so many heroes had laid down their lives to stop the foe, was an honor appreciated by every man.



AWAITING THE GERMAN ATTACK
The 132nd in the trenches at Alexandre, before Verdun. From this trench could be seen the valley of the Meuse, where 70,000 Frenchmen lie buried.

The joint battle, giving the 132nd its first experience under fire, came, appropriately enough, on July 4. Companies A and G were sent into the line with the Australians and with Companies C and E of the 131st Infantry to participate in an attack upon the town of Hamel. Vaire Wood and Hamel, held by the Germans, formed a salient in the line to which

The regiment was relieved on August 11 and sent to the Bois de Querrieu, where the Fourth Australian Infantry Division was holding the line. A sector near Harbonnières was assigned to the 132nd and was held until August 19, when the long-awaited order to join the American army on an American front was received by the divisional commander.

On the morning of September 10 the regiment moved into the front line at the historic Dead Man's Hill to relieve the 408th French Infantry and take up the task of guarding the approach to the battered but indomitable fortress of Verdun.

An order that gave warning of a general attack, extending from Metz to the North Sea, was issued three days in advance of its opening on September 26. It designated the 132nd as the pivot for the whole movement, for the regiment was resting against the west bank of the Meuse, and the object of the offensive was to drive the enemy off that bank and to force him northward and eastward beyond the river.

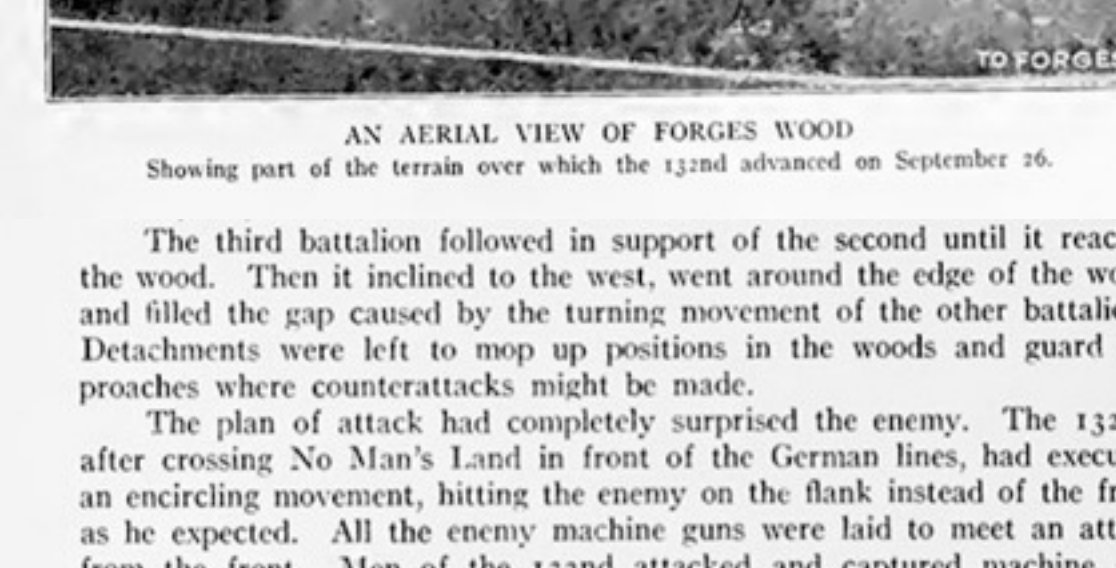
When the order reached Colonel Davis he recalled the words spoken by the colonel in command of the 408th French Infantry at the time the 132nd relieved his regiment. An inspection of the sector had been made. To the right was the Meuse. In front, in the center of No Man's Land, was Forges Creek, with Forges Wood on rising ground beyond.

"An advance in this direction by either side is impossible," the French colonel had said. "The Germans tried it and failed. Probably we shall never try it. Any movement against the enemy would have to be from the east side of the Meuse, for on this side Forges Creek, the barbed wire entanglements, which have been constantly improved on both sides for three years, the elaborate machine gun nests on the edge of Forges Wood, and

the whole scheme of the German defense would make an attack quite impossible."

He had called it impossible, yet the orders for September 26 called for an advance across Forges Creek, an attack on the enemy's defenses in the woods, capture of the town of Forges, a sharp turn to the right and establishment of a line a little more than a mile long on the west bank of the Meuse, facing the enemy on the east bank.

It was decided that the first and second battalions should lead the attack, the first, under Major Brendan J. Dodd, on the right, and the second, commanded by Major Paul C. Gales, on the left. Major John J. Bullington and the third battalion were to support the attacking troops.



WOUNDED MEN OF THE 132ND CARRIED BY GERMAN PRISONERS
Near Chattancourt, September 26. In the background rises the top of Dead Man's Hill.

He had called it impossible, yet the orders for September 26 called for an advance across Forges Creek, an attack on the enemy's defenses in the woods, capture of the town of Forges, a sharp turn to the right and establishment of a line a little more than a mile long on the west bank of the Meuse, facing the enemy on the east bank.

It was decided that the first and second battalions should lead the attack, the first, under Major Brendan J. Dodd, on the right, and the second, commanded by Major Paul C. Gales, on the left. Major John J. Bullington and the third battalion were to support the attacking troops.



AN AERIAL VIEW OF FORGES WOOD
Showing part of the terrain over which the 132nd advanced on September 26.

The third battalion followed in support of the second until it reached the wood. Then it inclined to the west, went around the edge of the wood, and filled the gap caused by the turning movement of the other battalions. Detachments were left to mop up positions in the woods and guard approaches where counterattacks might be made.

The plan of attack had completely surprised the enemy. The 132nd, after crossing No Man's Land in front of the German lines, had executed an encircling movement, hitting the enemy on the flank instead of the front as he expected. All the enemy machine guns were laid to meet an attack from the front. Men of the 132nd attacked and captured machine gun crews which were firing blindly to the front in blissful ignorance of the fact that there were no troops there. Many have called this one of the most successful operations of the war.

The regiment's objectives were reached by 10 o'clock, after an advance of five kilometers. More than 800 prisoners were captured and great quantities of arms and ammunition were taken, and the casualties of the 132nd were one officer and fifteen men killed and seventy-two men wounded. The captured ordnance and stores included four 6-inch howitzers, with large quantities of ammunition; ten field pieces, with ammunition; ten trench mortars; one hundred and nine machine guns and a great deal of ammunition; two anti-tank guns; quantities of small arms ammunition, grenades, and pyrotechnics; a dump of engineering material; a wagon load of signal apparatus; eight railroad cars, and miscellaneous stores.

The regiment held its position on the west bank of the Meuse until October 4, when it was withdrawn to Malancourt to act as a reserve to the corps. The time was spent in strengthening the defenses and reconnoitering in expectation of another attack. Scouts covered the entire regimental front, from Consenvoye to Brabant, obtaining information to be used when the time should come for crossing the Meuse. The enemy kept up a steady fire on the trenches, causing many casualties but failing to dislodge the 132nd.

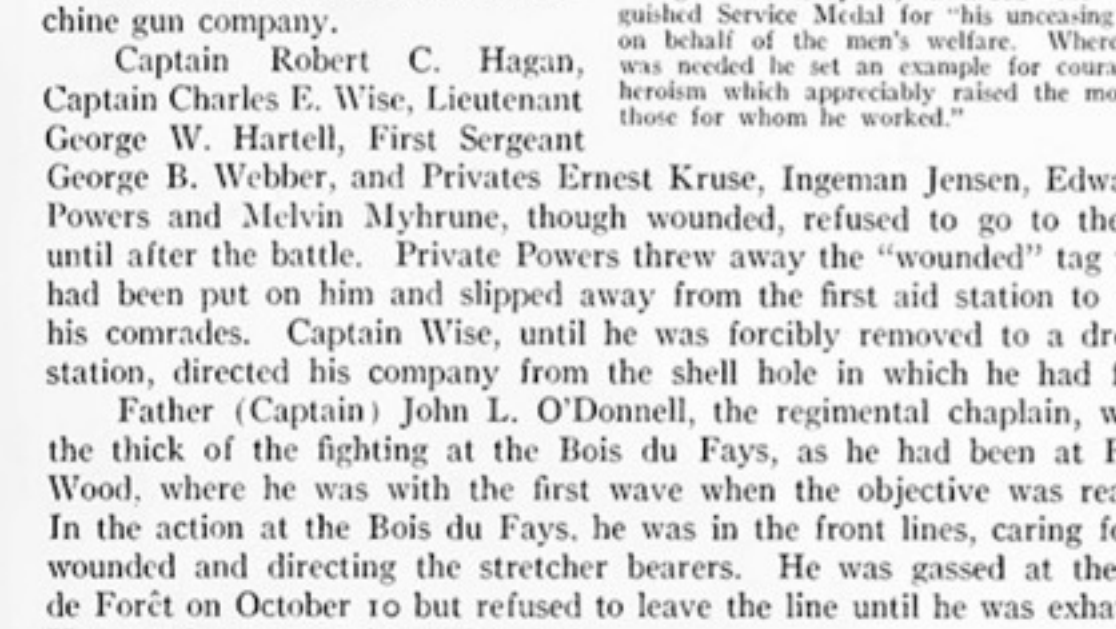
After the withdrawal, the third battalion and the machine gun company were sent back to the Meuse to participate in a projected attack on the Bois de Chaume, the Bois du Plat Chêne and Consenvoye, to be launched October 8.

While the first and third battalions had been engaged in the attack around Consenvoye, the third battalion, under Major Bullington, and the machine gun company, under Captain Harry R. Chadwick, which had been attached to the Fourth Division, had seen equally as severe fighting west of the Meuse.

Immediately after its transfer, the third battalion, accompanied by the machine gunners, had relieved parts of the Fifty-eighth and Fifti-ninth Infantry Regiments in the Bois du Fays, taking over a horseshoe-shaped salient there. As the enemy was strongly entrenched on both sides of the salient, the battalion was exposed to intense artillery and machine gun fire and frequent gas attacks from both flanks.

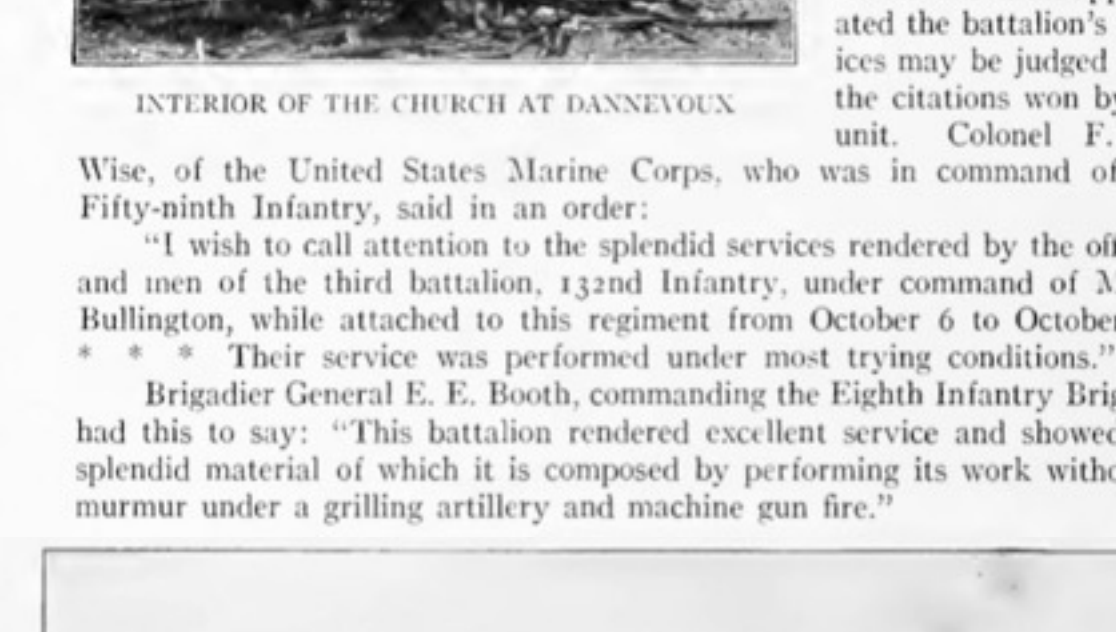
The battalion went into the line on October 6. The next morning a strong combat patrol from Company M penetrated 300 yards into the enemy's position, determined the strength of the German defenses and located an observation post. Later in the day another patrol was sent out. So annoying did these patrols become that on the morning of October 8 the enemy withdrew from the eastern side of the salient.

With one side of the line relieved, portions of the Fourth Division launched an attack on the morning of the 9th to clear the Bois de Malancourt and reach the northern edge of the Bois de Forêt.



GERMAN OFFICERS' QUARTERS IN BOIS DE FORÊT
The type of construction indicates that they were intended for long occupancy.

When at last the objective had been reached, Major Bullington and all company commanders were casualties; one officer and thirty-seven men had been killed, and eleven officers and three hundred and fifteen men had been wounded or gassed. But the objective had been reached on scheduled time and the woods were clear of Germans. A first lieutenant, Harry Yagle, was in command of the battalion when it left the lines and the ranks had been terribly depleted, but the only comment of the men was: "We gave 'em hell and captured 400 of 'em!"



PANORAMA OF THE TOWN OF BRIELLES
The principal town in the sector in which the third battalion fought from October 6 to 10.

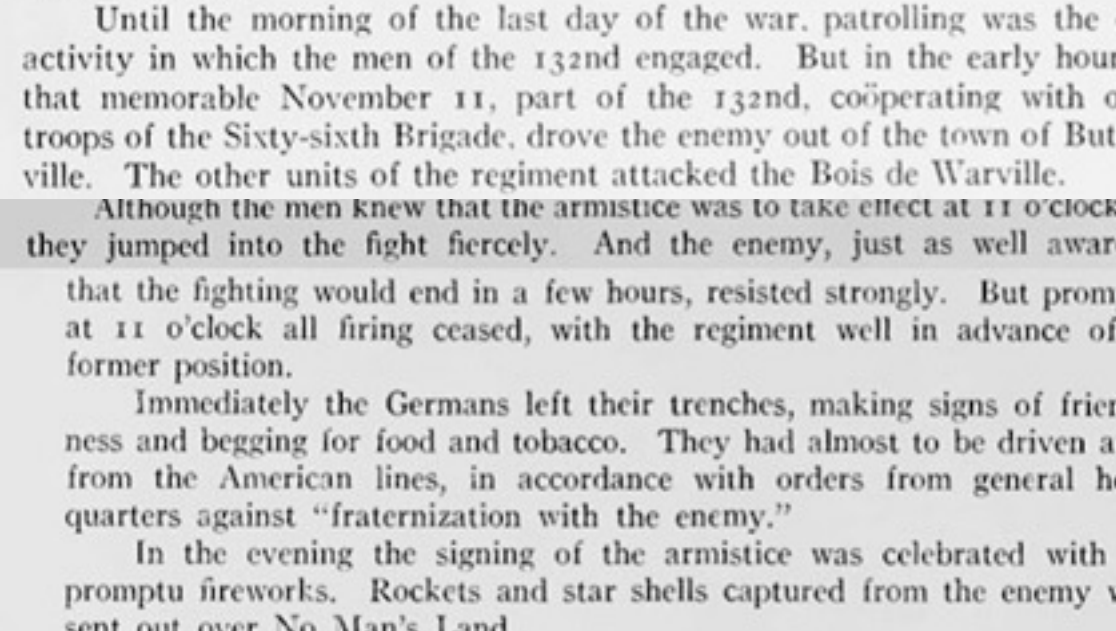
The enemy's resistance was stubborn. On the night of October 10 the men of the 132nd were ordered forward to assist the troops then in position. The battalion advanced through the Bois de Malancourt and at daylight of the next day renewed the attempt to clear the wood.

The advancing lines were subjected to terrific artillery fire, gas shells especially causing many casualties. Hand-to-hand fighting occurred frequently. Machine gun nests were numerous and were strongly placed. Every foot of the way was contested.

To add to the difficulties of the attack, the enemy's fire virtually cut the lines of communication. So many casualties were suffered by carrying parties that in one or two instances all efforts to get rations up to the fighting men had to be abandoned. All along the line rations were insufficient.

The battalion, nevertheless, forged ahead. The line was disorganized several times by artillery fire, but never routed. Each time the attacking waves were reorganized and the stubborn progress was resumed.

When at last the objective had been reached, Major Bullington and all company commanders were casualties; one officer and thirty-seven men had been killed, and eleven officers and three hundred and fifteen men had been wounded or gassed. But the objective had been reached on scheduled time and the woods were clear of Germans. A first lieutenant, Harry Yagle, was in command of the battalion when it left the lines and the ranks had been terribly depleted, but the only comment of the men was: "We gave 'em hell and captured 400 of 'em!"



IN THE FOURTH DIVISION'S SECTOR
Showing the territory covered by the advance of the third battalion, 132nd Infantry.

Instances of great personal heroism in this advance were common, officers and men alike overcoming desperate odds to win their way through the woods.

Lieutenant Homer C. Darling, Lieutenant Albert H. Stout, and Sergeant John Francisco, of Company M, distinguished themselves in hand-to-hand encounters with the enemy and led their men with skill and bravery. First Sergeant Geoffrey L. Hubbard of Company L behaved with similar gallantry, taking command of the company after every officer had been killed or wounded and leading it until the objective had been reached. Lieutenant Earl Wall and Lieutenant Ross L. Williams lost their lives while leading their men. Lieutenant Williams sacrificed himself in an effort to recover wounded men of the machine gun company.

Captain Robert C. Hagan, Captain Charles E. Wise, Lieutenant George W. Hartell, First Sergeant George B. Webber, and Privates Ernest Wrede, Ingemar Jensen, Edward J. Powers and Melvin Myhrum, though wounded, refused to go to the rear until after the battle. Private Powers threw away the "wounded" tag which had been put on him and slipped away from the first aid station to rejoin his comrades. Captain Wise, until he was forcibly removed to a dressing station, directed his company from the shell hole in which he had fallen.

Father (Captain) John L. O'Donnell, the regimental chaplain, was in the thick of the fighting at the Bois du Fays, as he had been at Forges Wood, where he was with the first wave when the objective was reached. In the action at the Bois du Fays, he was in the front lines, caring for the wounded and directing the stretcher bearers. He was gassed at the Bois de Forêt on October 10 but refused to leave the line until he was exhausted. He was then removed to a hospital.

Others whose heroism helped make the advance possible were Corporal Thomas P. Tibbets, of Company L, who led a reconnaissance patrol through the German lines; Sergeant James Reynolds, also of Company L, who cleaned out three machine gun nests; and Privates Irving B. Torfin and Adolph Prushek of the same company, who carried messages through heavy fire.

How well the Fourth Division appreciated the battalion's services may be judged from the citations won by the unit. Colonel F. W. Wise, of the United States Marine Corps, who was in command of the Fifty-ninth Infantry, said in an order:

"I wish to call attention to the splendid services rendered by the officers and men of the third battalion, 132nd Infantry, under command of Major Bullington, while attached to this regiment from October 6 to October 10. * * * Their service was performed under most trying conditions."

Brigadier General E. E. Booth, commanding the Eighth Infantry Brigade, had this to say: "This battalion rendered excellent service and showed the splendid material of which it is composed by performing its work without a murmur under a grilling artillery and machine gun fire."

INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH AT DANNEVOIX

Wise, of the United States Marine Corps, who was in command of the Fifty-ninth Infantry, said in an order:

"I wish to call attention to the splendid services rendered by the officers and men of the third battalion, 132nd Infantry, under command of Major Bullington, while attached to this regiment from October 6 to October 10. * * * Their service was performed under most trying conditions."

Brigadier General E. E. Booth, commanding the Eighth Infantry Brigade, had this to say: "This battalion rendered excellent service and showed the splendid material of which it is composed by performing its work without a murmur under a grilling artillery and machine gun fire."

NESTLING IN THE VALLEY, THE TOWN OF DANNEVOIX

After the battalion had rejoined the regiment in a rest area, replacement troops were sent forward to fill the ranks. To these men great credit is due, for they learned with amazing rapidity and served well, though many of them had never fired an army rifle. Some of the new men, unfortunately, were not physically fit for the rigors of hard campaigning, but the majority became good soldiers.

The regiment was ready for action again by October 14 and was ordered to the front lines near Dannevoix. The enemy kept up a continuous fire of gas and high explosive shells, but the 132nd's gas discipline was so good by this time that little damage was done. A quiet week was spent at Dannevoix. Then the regiment was transferred to the Troyon sector, about thirty miles southwest of Metz. It went into the line there on October 24

IN THE STREETS OF TROYON
These men were not unwilling to have their photographs taken.

and immediately encountered greater enemy activity. The 132nd's patrols maintained the upper hand, however, engaging the enemy nightly and taking many prisoners. In this valuable work Lieutenant Howard B. Gregory, who had won recognition as a patrol officer at Dead Man's Hill, again distinguished himself. On three occasions he took out patrols and returned with prisoners.

Until the morning of the last day of the war, patrolling was the only activity in which the men of the 132nd engaged. But in the early hours of that memorable November 11, part of the 132nd, cooperating with other troops of the Sixty-sixth Brigade, drove the enemy out of the town of Butgnéville. The other units of the regiment attacked the Bois de Warville.

Although the men knew that the armistice was to take effect at 11 o'clock, they jumped into the fight fiercely. And the enemy, just as well aware that the fighting would end in a few hours, resisted strongly. But promptly at 11 o'clock all firing ceased, with the regiment well in advance of its former position.

Immediately the Germans left their trenches, making signs of friendliness and begging for food and tobacco. They had almost to be driven away from the American lines, in accordance with orders from general headquarters against "fraternization with the enemy."

In the evening the signing of the armistice was celebrated with impromptu fireworks. Rockets and star shells captured from the enemy were sent out over No Man's Land.

The 132nd remained in the Troyon sector until December 7, when the march into Germany was begun. Some of the men were without proper shoes, but in all other respects the regiment was fit for the journey and made it easily. The route led through the Metz and Briey regions, thence into Luxembourg, and finally into Germany.

The regions through which the regiment passed presented an astonishing contrast to devastated France. The well-tilled fields and pretty villages seemed untouched by war.

The Illinoisans reached Germany on December 15, but were ordered back to Luxembourg five days later because of lack of billeting space. In the pretty duchy the regiment went into winter quarters, scattered in billets in many little villages. At one time, so small were the hamlets, the 132nd occupied no fewer than fourteen villages.

Although the fighting had ended, training was continued and the regiment kept itself in fine condition. But the winter was not spent entirely in work. Amateur theatricals, athletics, horse and motor transport shows, and other amusements kept the men contented.

At last came the long-awaited order starting the regiment toward home. On May 10, 1919, it boarded its last French train and started toward Brest. The men rode in the "40 Hommes, 8 Chevaux" cars, but no one complained now. To be homeward bound in any kind of conveyance compensated for the inconvenience.

A short stop was made at Pontanezen barracks, where the regiment was "decoated" and fitted with new clothing. Then it embarked on the same ship which had carried it to France and sailed away toward the west.

As the transport steamed into New York harbor on the morning of May 24, it was met by Governor Lowden and the Illinois welcoming com-

THE COLORS ADVANCE FOR DECORATION

mittee. The Governor and his associates accompanied the regiment to Camp Mills, where they formally welcomed the men back and assured them of Illinois' pride in their record.

From Camp Mills the men who had joined the regiment as replacements were sent to their home camps for discharge. Then the rest

of the men, nearly 2,200 of them, started on to Illinois. After two years' absence they were returning to their home state with a record of which any regiment might be proud. They had fought hard and gallantly. Ten officers and two hundred and fifty-two men had been left lying in France; thirty officers and one thousand and eighty-seven men had been wounded. Such was the price in blood the regiment had paid for its victories.