

# Paris Turned Out and Showered Troops From Rainbow Division With Flowers and Kisses on Return From Champagne

## On Way to New Battle the Division, Selected From the Cream of All of the American States, Hurries From Gruelling Fight Before Chalons Through Paris Suburbs and Hurls Itself Upon Huns Behind Dureg River; Effects Crossing In Face of Foes' Withering Fire.

This, the fifth installment of the History of The Rainbow Division by Raymond S. Tompkins, deals with the battle of the Ourcq—the first major offensive operation of the division into which the Rainbow was thrust within a week after it had withdrawn from the Champagne front.

By RAYMOND S. TOMPKINS. FIFTH INSTALLMENT.

Paris was alive with the two great pieces of news that decisive month of July, 1918—the successful defense before Chalons and the allied advance before Soissons. The Rainbow division, defenders of the Champagne, tasted swiftly of the rewards of heroes as they rolled through Noisy-le-Sec and passed on to more fighting.

Coming by rail from Chalons, where long-range artillery reached hungrily even after the moving train, the division, in order to come to La Ferté-Sous-Jouarre, had to go close to Paris, for the Germans were in Chateau-Thierry.

Acclaimed as Heroes by Parisians.

This was the "sort of stuff you read about." Couldn't Afford a Rest. It was thus the Rainbow division went toward the Aisne-Marne offensive for what was to be the bloodiest battle of the outfit's history. For at this stage of the war it was "push while the pushing was good," and no division of soldiers with such reputations as the Rainbow for steadfastness and valor could be permitted to rest while there were such possibilities of getting the boche on the run; not even when that division had been in actual combat without rest since mid-winter.

On July 24-25 it was moving by camion from Le-Ferte-sous-Jouarre to the vicinity of Epieds. The general situation around the beautiful Marne valley, which the men of the Rainbow were now seeing for the first time, was this:

When the Germans had broken through in May and June they had been finally stopped at the Marne. Their gains from Rheims to Chateau-Thierry and to Soissons made a salient reaching out and threatening Paris. The German offensive of July 15, that the Rainbow had just helped to stop, extended down the east side of this salient to Chateau-Thierry. Down there the American Third division, supported by the 28th Pennsylvania national guardsmen—had opposed a crossing east of Chateau-Thierry and confined the boche to a gain of a few miles near Fossy.

Allies Were Striking Back. And now, with that drive definitely halted, Marshal Foch on July 18 had opened an attack on both sides and at the point of the Chateau-Thierry salient. The Germans had gotten themselves into a pocket; they had tried to broaden it and deepen it and failed. The day of the allies had come.

The First and Second American divisions had made a surprise attack south of Soissons. The Fourth

division had exerted some pressure on the western side near Lizy. The enemy recrossed the River Marne before he was attacked by the Fourth division, which followed him for eight kilometers, side by side with the 20th (Yankee) division. The 20th made the pivotal attack north of Chateau-Thierry. The rest of the attacking troops were French with a few British divisions south of and close to Rheims.

It is likely that after the reverse of July 15 in the Champagne Ludendorff regarded the Chateau-Thierry salient as a menace to his army. But Foch had realized it quicker than he; vast quantities of stores had piled up in there for use in the advance on Paris, and they could not be removed and the salient evacuated before the allies were upon him.

As the pocket shrunk under Foch's pressure, the fronts of the fighting forces narrowed; it became practicable to take out of the line divisions that had been leading the attack. So the 20th American division and the 167th French division came out for a rest, and the Rainbow took over the job that both of them had been handling.

They didn't do it purposely. This had not been a battle area for as long a time as the sectors the Rainbow was familiar with; the landscape lacked the established institutions of rusty brown camouflage screens, old trench systems and fields of barbed wire. So the colonel, the lieutenant colonel and the adjutant looking for woods where the "P. C." would be suddenly found themselves in the neighborhood of new trenches. And when they had oriented themselves it dawned upon them that they were looking upon those trenches from the wrong side.

They got back without waste motion and discovered they had gone about a kilometer too far to the north. This time the Rainbow division found its work cut out for it. So to speak, it was getting up into the war's higher seats of learning, having left behind the standstillism of the Lunerville and Baccarat sectors and the plain, old-fashioned doggedness of the Champagne. Now its job was not merely to hold what ground it had, but to get more; not merely to outfight the Germans, but to outwit them—to demonstrate that they knew more about driving the boche back than the boche knew about standing fast.

Boche Position Strong. And directly in front of the 167th and 168th infantry regiments, as the Rainbow took over the job from the Yankee division and the French

lay the boche in one of the finest little nests in France. They called it La Croix Rouge Ferme; it was in a clearing surrounded by forests on four sides, and a road ran diagonally through it from southeast to northwest. The far side of the road was lined with German machine guns; the woods on three sides were lined with them, and you couldn't see them.

The division completed all its dispositions during the day and night of July 25 and without wasting a moment of time the 168th attacked La Croix Rouge Ferme early on the morning of the 26th.

Two platoons of F company, commanded by Capt. Charles J. Casey, took it. They discovered a little ditch leading up to it and, sneaking through this in the morning mists, surprised the Germans, killed or captured them and turned the machine guns eastward upon the enemy in the woods.

All that afternoon the wooded slopes around La Croix Rouge Ferme formed the ring in which a terrific battle went on. The men of the Rainbow—Alabamians on the left of the farm, and Iowans on the right—had their first experience with those withering blasts of machine-gun fire with which the German army protected its masterly retreat during all the days that followed.

Machine Guns By Thousands. The morale of the boche was still high—as high as ever in fact. While Von Ludendorff would have liked to withdraw from the Chateau-Thierry pocket at his own will, taking his supplies with him, he was nevertheless prepared to try to delay even a dashing American effort to drive him out. And the beginning of the end of his preparation was the machine gun—hundreds and thousands of machine guns—with men behind them who knew the weapon and had high confidence in it and no small amount of courage in handling it.

These things the battle for La Croix Rouge Ferme taught the Rainbow division at the outset of its participation in the Aisne-Marne offensive. These things it had impressed upon it again and again an hour after hour in blood and death—while it struggled for new footholds always farther northwards, through yellow wheat fields where death lurked and over ridges whose crimson hue at evening was not always of the sunset.

The Rainbow gave ground that 26th of July; gave ground deliberately and retired, and it was not the lesser part of valor that they did. They got back without waste motion and discovered they had gone about a kilometer too far to the north. This time the Rainbow division found its work cut out for it. So to speak, it was getting up into the war's higher seats of learning, having left behind the standstillism of the Lunerville and Baccarat sectors and the plain, old-fashioned doggedness of the Champagne. Now its job was not merely to hold what ground it had, but to get more; not merely to outfight the Germans, but to outwit them—to demonstrate that they knew more about driving the boche back than the boche knew about standing fast.

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opposite the Rainbow division was a great natural fortress, with the village of Sergy in the valley, backed by bare hills that sloped up to plateaus 80 meters high. On the east there was flank protection for the Germans in groups of small woodlands, and there was flank protection on the west in a small creek called the Ru du Pont Brule. Meucry Farm and more woodland lay in the valley of this creek near its junction with the Ourcq, and farther up the creek was the village and chateau of Nesles. Farther to the right the village of Seringes commanded Meucry Farm and the Forest of Nesles was behind the village of that name.

It was the tried, veteran army of Imperial Germany fighting desperately near the end of its fourth year of superhuman effort and ideally situated for defense against the new and untried soldiers from the United States, with no advantage except freshness in the general matter of war, and not much of that, consisting the gruelling struggle in the Champagne. But the Rainbow division ran to it.

Over the six kilometers the Germans had given up after losing La Croix Rouge Ferme, the division moved with little trouble, disposing of machine gun fire from the advance. Only at La Croix Blanche Ferme, northeast of La Croix Rouge Ferme, was there anything much resembling a battle. On the night of July 27 the division regained contact with the enemy's new line. Machine gun fire from the north bank of the Ourcq fell upon armored cars that were reconnoitering ahead of the infantry, and the columns halted for the night about a kilometer south of the little river.

At dawn next morning the fight to cross the Ourcq began. The Germans had blown up two bridges near Sergy; the stream was swollen with rains to a width of 14 meters and a depth of four, and the men had to struggle through the little torrent. Machine guns opened on them from Sergy directly in front and Meucry farm on the flank, and the stream ran red with the blood of the Rainbow.

The men of New York's 69th, commanded then by Col. Frank McCoy, got the first foothold on the opposite bank, and before noon the other four regiments were coming over. Ohioans of the 166th on the extreme left, New Yorkers next, then the Alabamians, of the 167th, and on the extreme right the 168th, from Iowa.

Took Sergy by Storm. The struggle for Sergy and Meucry farm lasted all that day, all night and throughout the morning of July 29. Once on the enemy's side of the Ourcq, Colonel Screw's men from Alabama, and Colonel Bennett's men from Iowa rushed Sergy and took it. They were swept back to the river bank by machine gun blasts from the woods on the left. They rallied, rushed the village and this time ran into one of the best divisions in the German army, the Fourth Prussian guards.

Americans who were at home then will remember the thrilling message of M. Andre Tardieu: "Today (or words to that effect) American soldiers met and defeated on the River

### How Motion Picture Stars Develop

THERE'S a little chap in Harry Garson's "The Unpardonable Sin," who will bear watching. Some of these days his connection with "The Unpardonable Sin," how he "horned into" the cast, and the manner in which he acquitted himself will answer some person's question as to just how the real stars of the motion picture screen are developed.

The boy in question is Wesley Barry. He is one of California's younger "native sons." Los Angeles, Cal., where "The Unpardonable Sin" was made, has for a very considerable portion of its population people who are actively engaged in the production of motion pictures. Big studios by the score are located in the city or its suburbs and many a debutante picks up her pin money by working as an "extra" when something out of the ordinary is being filmed. For this reason Wesley was only playing true to form when he tried his luck around the studios, but a real gold spoon was thrust into his mouth when Marshall Neilan, the well-known director, who is accredited with some of the biggest artistic successes ever given to the

screen, decided that he showed real promise and took him under his protecting wing. Wesley had had a lot of inside tips on "how to act" before the motion picture camera, although his real opportunity did not present itself until "The Unpardonable Sin" was put in work and one of the "fatest" roles in the piece entrusted to his care. Wesley plays the part of a very little American boy who has been "put right up against it" in Belgium during the time of the German invasion. He had been a member of his Boy Scout organization back in Kansas and had learned his lessons in self-reliance particularly well. Just how, in company with a chance acquaintance from the Belgian branch of the same world-wide organization, he managed to alleviate misery and suffering by matching his wits against the more stolid ones of some adults with the wrong point of view, provides a number of lighter scenes of the big photoplay production. The Belgian Boy Scout is played by Bobby Conolly, a youngster who, it is said, has spent fully a third of the waking hours of his short lifetime before the motion picture camera, and has been starred in his own pictures.

Blind Gives Three Plays. Jacksonville, Ill.—Blind students at the State School for the Blind here participated in a recent entertainment at which three plays were given. They staged the old one-act plays entitled "The Silver Lining," "Gretta Green" and "Ashes of Roses." Part of the audience were blind. Witnesses who could see said the general interpretation of the persons portrayed were excellent. The ease with which the various entrances and exits and stage movements were accomplished was particularly commended.

Its Sunday business has been beyond all expectation, which demonstrates the fact that "A word to the wise is sufficient"—to-wit: Saving the wife as well as money and besides having a complete change of cooking. Open Day and Night. ROME MILLER. Bee Want Ads pay big profits to the people who read them.

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**SUNDAY, JUNE 1**

And the public has acclaimed it by the rapturous throngs that have flocked to the theatres in every city in which it has been shown.

"The Unpardonable Sin" can be compared only to the "Birth of a Nation"—

**N. Y. Telegraph**

Thousands turned away at the Broadway last night—

**N. Y. Times; May 3**

"The Unpardonable Sin," at the Kinema last week, set a high water mark in motion picture exhibition in this city. Never before has a big production been known to cause audiences to be turned away in the evening, but it is an established fact that thousands were unable to gain seats at the box office, the "sold-out" sign staring them in the face—

**Los Angeles Times**

"The Unpardonable Sin" has no equal. It will stand alone as the greatest motion picture masterpiece for years to come.

**Chicago Tribune**

Without question the greatest picture ever presented here.

**San Francisco Call**