

A HISTORY OF
THE 90TH DIVISION

BY
MAJOR GEORGE WYTHER
DIVISION HISTORIAN



APPROVED BY DIVISION AND BRIGADE COMMANDERS
PUBLISHED BY

THE 90TH DIVISION ASSOCIATION
COMMITTEE

MAJOR SYLVAN LANG
CAPTAIN OSCAR A. SEWARD, JR. CAPTAIN DANIEL H. KIBER, JR.
SERGEANT-MAJOR ARTHUR J. REINHART
SERGEANT-MAJOR O. A. PATRIDGE

COPYRIGHT 1920, BY
THE NINTIETH DIVISION ASSOCIATION

CONTENTS

FRONT MATTER.....	SECT 01
CONTENTS	
ILLUSTRATIONS	
FRONTISPIECE	
DEDICATION	
FOREWORD	
THE FORMATIVE PERIOD	
FORMATION OF THE DIVISION AND TRAINING AT CAMP TRAVIS.....	SECT 02
THE PERIOD OF MOVEMENT	
MOVEMENT OVERSEAS AND TRAINING IN FRANCE.....	SECT 03
THE BATTLE PERIOD	
I. CUTTING THE ST. MIHIEL SALIENT	
A. PREPARATION.....	SECT 04
B. THE ATTACK.....	SECT 05
C. STABILIZATION.....	SECT 06
II. OPERATIONS ALONG THE MEUSE	
A. INITIAL OFFENSIVE.....	SECT 07
B. 90TH DIVISION PARTICIPATION.....	SECT 08
III. THE SYSTEM OF SUPPLY.....	SECT 09
IV. "KEEPING IN TOUCH".....	SECT 10
V. THE ENGINEERS.....	SECT 11
VI. THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.....	SECT 12
VII. THE 165TH ARTILLERY BRIGADE.....	SECT 13
PERIOD OF OCCUPATION	
I. COLLECTING SURRENDERED MATERIALS OF WAR.....	SECT 14
II. THE MARCH INTO GERMANY.....	SECT 15
III. ADMINISTRATION OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORY.....	SECT 16
IV. WAITING TO GO HOME.....	SECT 17
MISCELLANY	
ANNEX NO. 1 STATISTICS.....	SECT 18
ANNEX NO. 2 DECORATIONS.....	SECT 19
ANNEX NO. 3 ROSTER OF OFFICERS.....	SECT 20
ANNEX NO. 4 CASUALTY LIST.....	SECT 21
ANNEX NO. 5 COMMENDATIONS.....	SECT 22

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Sect 01

Major-General Henry T. Allen

Sect 02

View of Camp Travis

Sect 04

A blockaded camouflaged road guarded by Americans on the outskirts of Pont-à-Mousson

Bridge over the Moselle River connecting Mousson and Pont-a-Mousson, France

Metz Bridge

View of Rue Victor Hugo, Pont-à-Mousson

Map – Aug. 14, 1918 - Oct. 10, 1918

Street scene in Villers-en-Haye

View of Villers-en-Haye and Griscourt

Dugouts at Mamey

Sect 05

View of the region which was No Man's Land before the attack on September 12 - 19

Trenches north of the village of Fey-en-Haye captured September 12, 1918

Vilcey-sur-Trey

The 315th Engineers building roads across No Man's Land, north of Fey-en-Haye

Men of the 315th Engineers and the 357th and 358th Infantry, building roads over

old No Man's Land near Fey-en-Haye

View of Bois des Rappes and Côte 327

Men of the 2d Battalion, 358th Infantry, passing through Vilcey-sur-Trey

View of Villers-sous-Prency

German dugout in the Stumpflager, used for a dressing station

German dugouts in the Stumpflager, captured by the 357th Infantry

Sect 06

View of Bois des Rappes

Map – Area of Operations

Two views of concrete machine gun emplacements built into the wall around Prency

Concrete machine gun emplacement, part of the defenses of the Hindenburg Line west of Prency

French tanks passing through Rampont

View of Esnes

Sect 07

Machine Gun Company, 359th Infantry, going up into the lines in the Argonne sector

Main street of Blercourt

Signal Corps men stringing wires in Malancourt

View showing the shell-ruined town of Cuisy

Dugouts at Cuisy

Looking from Cuisy across the valley toward Septsarges

Shells bursting near Cuisy

Y. M. C. A. secretary giving chewing-gum to the men on duty at Cuisy

The town of Montfaucon

General view looking north, showing part of town of Nantillois

Ferme de la Madeleine

Looking northeast from Madeleine Farm, showing Bois des Ogons

Type of balloon observing for the 90th Division

Brigadier-General Joseph P. O'Neil, U. S. A., commanding the 179th Infantry Brigade

Sect 08

Village of Bantheville. Heavy shelling by American artillery

Map – Oct. 11, 1918 - Nov. 2, 1918

“Chow” detail, Company D, 358th Infantry, 90th Division

Former German headquarters building at Cunel

Brigadier-General Ulysses G. McAlexander, U.S.A., commanding the 180th Infantry Brigade

Grand Carré Farm

Bantheville being shelled

P. C. Sterling of the 359th Infantry

Boche machine gun nest and dead gunner, Villers-devant-Dun

Map – Nov. 3, 1918 - Nov. 11, 1918

Bridge across the Meuse River, between Laneuville and Stenay

Bridge over the Meuse River

Section of flooded area between Sassey and Stenay and trees felled by the Germans

German prisoners of the 92d Regiment, 20th Division, being questioned by Lieutenant Deschler,

Corps of Interpreters, at Sassey-sur-Meuse

Street scene showing American soldiers in Stenay

French civilians gather at the city hall of Mouzay to receive food and supplies from the Americans

Exterior view of the Château des Verdier, the home in Stenay of the German Crown Prince for thirty-two months

Major-General Henry T. Allen and a portion of his staff at Mouzay

Sect 09

Railhead scene

Views of the 60-cm. railroad system used by the Division

Horse and motor transportation passing through Dun-sur-Meuse

The cross-roads Auberge-St, Pierre

Division small-arms ammunition dump east of Mamey, and camp of Company A, 315th Supply Train

A 3d Corps ammunition dump

Sect 12

Field hospital established near Béthincourt

Sect 14

German artillery left at Longuyon and taken over by the 90th Division

Sect 15

The 360th Infantry crossing into Germany at Remich, Luxemburg

The 315th Field Signal Battalion passing through Beuren, Germany

Map – France, Lorraine, Alsace

Towns of Berncastel and Cues on the Moselle River

Colonel Howard C. Price presents General U. G. McAlexander to Brigadier-General J. P. O'Neil for decoration

Sect 17

Major-General Charles H. Martin

Major-General Charles H. Martin and staff, in front of Division Headquarters at Berncastel, Germany,

April 28, 1919

General John J Pershing reviews the 90th Division at Wengerohr, Germany

Dedication ceremonies at Pershing Stadium, near Paris, on June 22, 1919



Organizer of the Division and
Its Leader in Battle

Henry T. Allen
Major General

DEDICATION

THE soul of any fighting unit lies in the courage and devotion of disciplined officers and men. It is for this reason that there has been set forth in this history the incidents of the death and wounding of practically every officer, as this is the means on which to “hang our tale,” and such events are generally landmarks in the organizations to which these officers belonged, definitely identifying the particular action or phase of operations. Not space alone, but the frequent lack of definite information, has rendered it impracticable to include herein similar data for all the men who have so gloriously laid down their lives or sacrificed their limbs in their heroic devotion to duty.

To those unsung heroes, to each and every officer and man who paid the supreme sacrifice that liberty should not perish from the earth, this book is reverently dedicated.

May those rude crosses, not alone in the poppy fields of France, but amid the battle-scarred and shell-pitted regions of St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne, as well as those placed later along the vine-clad Moselle Valley, be white fingers of warning pointing upward from the living dead, – a warning that their sacrifices must not be permitted to have been made in vain: a warning to Americans that the principles of liberty, freedom and enlightenment, justice and patriotism must, to be preserved, be continually safeguarded, fostered and maintained. Their sacrifices cannot – shall not – have been in vain.

PUBLICATION COMMITTEE.

FOREWORD

The purpose of this book is to record the principal achievements of the 90th Division in France. Any history written at this time will, of necessity, be incomplete. No attempt to pronounce judgment has been made, therefore, the aim being to preserve for the future certain facts, figures and dates which will have to be interpreted at some later time in the light of further discoveries and with the help of a wider perspective.

The twenty-second division of the A. E. F. to arrive in France, the 90th Division stands tenth in amount of artillery captured, thirteenth in number of machine guns captured, and fourteenth in both prisoners captured and total advance against the enemy. It was picked as one of the nine combatant divisions in the original Army of Occupation in Germany along with the most veteran organizations of the Expeditionary Forces. It did not fall to the lot of the 90th Division to play a spectacular part in the war. It cannot boast that it was the first to carry the Stars and Stripes to the Western front. Fate did not decree that the Division should have a part in stopping the German rush for Paris. The reputation of a division is largely a matter of length of battle experience, coupled with opportunity. The missions assigned to the 90th Division were difficult, prosaic ones, and the Division can be paid the highest military tribute – that it fulfilled every task which it was called upon to perform. Every objective was taken; not an inch of territory was yielded to the enemy; not a man straggled from his organization.

Every organization won the right to participation in the credit for the brilliant record of the Division. First of all, there was the indomitable courage of the doughboys, who knew no turning back, no shrinking from danger or hardship. Back of them was the bravery of the company and battalion officers, and the indomitable will of the higher commanders, as well as the determination and indefatigable industry of the staff. Then there were the drivers of the trains who evacuated the wounded through shell-fire, or stuck to the steering-wheel on dark nights over almost impassable roads, long after their senses had been dulled by fatigue and loss of sleep, in order that the fighting troops might have fresh bread to eat, or ammunition for their guns. Communication was established and maintained by the ceaseless efforts of the Field Signal Battalion; while the Engineers labored day and night, from putting up wire in front of the outposts to repairing roads in the rear and building them over No Man's Land. It was the blending of all these qualities that formed the spirit of the 90th Division.

A short time after the armistice, immediately prior to his departure to assume command of the 8th Corps, General Allen published in General Orders his estimate of the Division, stating that he had no "doubts or reluctance in claiming for the 90th Division fighting qualities second to none." That this judgment was shared by higher commanders was made evident, not only by the choice of the 90th Division as a part of the Army of Occupation, but also by their express statements. Lieutenant-General Hunter Liggett, who, as commander of the 1st Army during the Meuse-Argonne operations, had an opportunity to judge the worth of practically every combatant division in the A. E. F. reported to General Pershing: "The 90th Division is as good as ... divisions; you have not a better division; it is as good and dependable as any division in the army." And the Commander-in-chief personally assured General Allen: "The 90th is one of the very best divisions sent over here. Every one says so."

That the German High Command shared this excellent opinion of the 90th Division was made known after the armistice as a result of interviews with German staff officers secured by the Intelligence Section of the General Staff, G. H. Q. In one of these interviews, Colonel von Heye, chief of staff of Prince Albrecht's group of armies on the southern part of the Western front, mentioned the 42d and 90th Divisions as among those particularly feared by the German General Staff.