

60,000 MEN FILL ST. AIGNAN CAMP; 270,000 ASSIGNED Anyone, Brigadier General or Muleskinner, Furnished to Order CASUALS GO IN COMPANIES

Departing Troops Grouped According to Localities from Which They Came in States

There is one beautiful thing about St. Aignan besides the mud. You don't stay there very long. St. Aignan is the habit of the First Depot Division. It has been working as such for sometime, but it did not blaze so conspicuously into the public A.E.F. eye as a replacement center as it has done since becoming a rung on the ladder that leads home.

For things are moving at St. Aignan. Time was when a hurried telephone call, with a properly authoritative voice behind it, would result in travel orders for a muleskinner, a bugler or a brigadier general. Would you have a druggist's assistant, a mechanic, a printer, an authority on Assyrian and Babylonian mural decorations? Call St. Aignan. There are still 60,000 men to pick from. But they are playing a more interesting game at St. Aignan just now. It is called "States." To be eligible to play it, a man must be a casual, the more casual the better. Sides are chosen according to the part of the country—America, not France—that the casuals came from, and when 150 men have been assembled into a company, the race for the transports is begun.

Last year St. Aignan sent home 40 casual companies. In the first three weeks and a few days over of the present year, St. Aignan has sent home 55 casual companies. And this increase is expected to gain steadily.

Tabs on Men's Abilities

The casual companies are formed out of men who have been wounded or recently discharged from a sick bed in a hospital—men, in a word, disqualified for replacement service.

But just being assigned to St. Aignan doesn't necessarily mean a quick trip home. Up at 41st Division headquarters is a corporal who keeps a perfect set of books. He keeps a trial balance of his casual replacements each month, and not yet has he got his accounts mixed. No piano tuners charged up as steamfitters, no dramatic critics ticketed as card sharps.

He knows, that corporal, or he can find out in a jiffy, how many bricklayers have been recruited at the camp and what has become of them. He can run his finger down an index and supply an accumulator expert, accountant, bicyclist, bank clerk, carriage man, entertainer, lumberman, male nurse, tailor, upholsterer and welder all on a single travel order.

St. Aignan, in the twelvemonth that ended December 31, received and re-assigned 270,000 soldiers to 987 different organizations. A total of 1,643 clerks were supplied, and, when it looked as though the supply might run out, a school was started and clerks made to order. So well were the casual assistants, and 21,151 supplied to units that needed them. Officers? Thousands of them. Here is St. Aignan's 1918 account: Colonels, 22; lieutenant colonels, 31; majors, 113; captains, 560; first lieutenants, 1,715; second lieutenants, 1,527.

ANGERS RECALLS DAYS SPENT IN TRAINING CAMPS

It's anything but a gay life at the casual officers' camp at Angers. Picture several hundred wearers of an Browne's turning out into the chill morning at reveille, answering roll call.

By 8 o'clock, attending morning afternoon drill formations, polishing their own quarters—in barracks—getting "called" occasionally for improper saluting or for an unbuttoned blouse, "making quiet" after 10 p. m., and you have an idea of the lot of casual officers at Angers.

To the casual officer at Angers there is much that is reminiscent of rookery days in the training camps. Casual officers arriving at the camp are formed in line, given a number, relieved of enough francs to pay for ten days' grub at eight francs a day, assigned a room, and advised to read the bulletin board closely. One notice on the bulletin board informs the newcomer that the penalty for violation of rules is restriction to quarters and being placed at the foot of the priority home-going list.

There are picture shows and Angers itself to see, but the greatest attraction is watching the bulletin board for the names of officers designated to sail.

It's anything but a gay life at Angers these days.

OLD SEDAN GUNS HIDDEN IN TRIER

Weapons Used in War of 1870 Found in Army Storehouse

Again and again the fact has been borne in upon the men of the American Army that the German is absolutely set against salvaging obsolete military equipment.

Another instance of this fact came to light at Trier recently, where the Germans are turning over to the Americans a lot of salvage. There are three main army storehouses at Trier, each of which contained a lot of equipment. Here the salvage officers found, among other things, limbers and caissons that in all probability had not turned a wheel since the return from Sedan in 1871—and they may have been used in the war against Denmark in 1864, or at Sadowna, against the Austrians, two years later.

In addition, some old saddles were found, though from them the Germans, with what reluctance can be imagined, had removed the leather. There were 60,000 hand grenades of modern manufacture and 16,000 rifles, of which 2,000 were taken from civilians. Trier was a minor demobilization center following the signing of the armistice. Eight thousand anti-aircraft shells have been found in dumps on the heights surrounding the city, and these have been ordered destroyed. Two 100mm anti-aircraft guns mounted in positions on the heights, also have been ordered removed.

IT'S AS CHILLY IN GERMANY AS IT IS ANYWHERE ELSE THESE DAYS

The ex-Kaiser is still missing. It happened at Metz, headquarters of the 6th Brigade, Third Army, where a bust of the last Hohenzollern was mounted in an ornate pedestal in a little open space not far from headquarters. On a joyous evening, while everybody who could afford it was making merry, the bust disappeared.

Where did it go? Nobody knew. But there had been a light fall of snow in the night, and through this snow, between the pedestal and the river, there were visible footprints, partly obliterated by what seemed to be the dragging of a heavy object over them. The footprints went down to the Sever bank. They went back, without the heavy object.

The bust is still missing. Near Hausen, on the road to Mayen. Is a cannon—a German cannon. It sits unhonored and unsung, near one end of the village, and it may be added to the number of guns being handed over to the Allies by the Germans and it may not.

But it is rapidly becoming a landmark. Children play in the sand and mud beneath it. The women of the neighborhood gather there to gossip. The men discuss the state of internal affairs while leaning over it. Boys play about it. American soldiers examine it, discuss it, and try its levers and wheels. And the other day a great red rooster mounted upon the point of its muzzle and emitted a long, loud, triumphant crow. The best part of it was that an outfit of Yanks was marching through the village at the time.

It is as hard to get into Coblenz as it is to get out of it. At the Amberglstein fortress, just across the river, are Kentuckians who have never been in a real big city, or even a medium-sized one like Coblenz, and there are New Yorkers and New Jerseyites who have tasted metropolitan sweets and have a great hankering for seconds.

They are on top of the big rock, with the winking, yellow beckoning lights just across the river, with the music, the cafes, the commissary and everything, and they can't get across.

A young artilleryman whose outfit is located near Mayen was curious about the high peak that overshadows his billet. There came from over the tip of the peak daily and nightly a constant clanking and a screeching, explosions, and now and then, when the wind was in the right direction, the hoarse shouting of men. What in the world could it be? Was the war starting up again? Orders were that no soldier should go more than 300 yards from his billet, and the colonel meant what he said. He had provoked on numerous occasions. But the youth was miserable. Finally one night he stole away, climbed the peak, and looked over the crest—down into a stone quarry.

The royal chapel of the Kaiser's Palace at Coblenz, where Protestant church services for Americans are held every Sunday morning, has had an interesting history. The chapel dates back to before 1813, but it first sprang into prominence in that year, when Napoleon's soldiers used it as a stable. The former German emperor, who used to visit Coblenz frequently in 1914-15, used to worship here. Catholic services are held every Sunday in the Carmelite church.

There is a certain grim picturesqueness about camouflage these days. When a truck appears in the streets of Coblenz still bearing upon it traces of the magic paint of other days, it focuses the German eye almost as quickly, as does an American band or a column of rubber.

HEARD IN THE S.O.S.

"No, I wasn't broke," declared William Williams, colored cook in a Stevedore company near Bordeaux, as he reminiscently slipped another spud into the kettle of water. Cook Williams had just stated that he was commander of a company of his own back in Louisiana before the war. The company consisted of Mrs. Williams and 26 little Williams.

"I will admit, though," he continued, "that it kept me pretty busy getting enough taters and hoe cakes and fried chicken to feed that bunch. It was a bigger job than I have now—feeding a couple of hundred hungry Stevedores."

The American Naval Air station at Pambouef, just a few miles from St. Nazaire, boasts a jail that has never had a prisoner.

"The building, which is thoroughly modern in every particular, was completed a week before the signing of the armistice. It took the place of a dilapidated structure that has served France in peace time. Navy officers found that the window frame could be removed by anyone inside the building, and decided it was too unstable for a guard-house.

The cessation of hostilities and the demobilization of the Air station personnel, which has since begun, coming just after the construction of the new building wrecked its chances of usefulness.

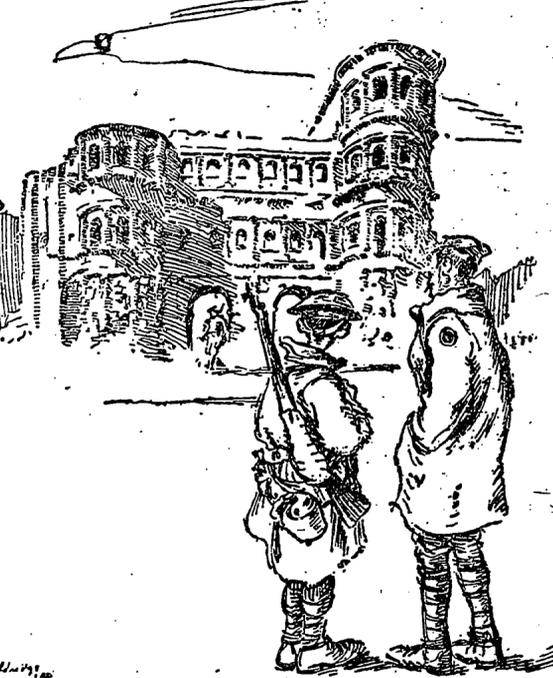
"R.T.O. Pvt. J. F. O'Neal." This is the sign which catches the eye at the entrance to the Transportation Office at La Rochelle.

O'Neal is a private—back—from Philadelphia, but is holding down a job which in most places is turned over to a commissioned officer.

The boys, naturally, call him captain. "To treat prisoners the way the United States treats them is typical of the humanity of the Americans." This was the tribute paid by a German prisoner at La Rochelle last week when one of his comrades from Germany was buried with military honors.

The dead prisoner of war was helping in the Race to Berlin when his death occurred from pneumonia. The camp commander gave orders that the funeral should be military. An American chaplain participated in the ceremonies. His address was followed by that of a comrade of the dead man, who paid the above tribute.

Next to the A.P.M.'s at Marseille and Lyon who have to listen coldly to the best reasons why men on leave have to stop over between trains, the American guards on duty at the Italian frontier near Mentone have the job most wearing on sympathy. Every day permissionnaires from Cannes and Nice and Mentone come to the border looking for a chance to get over into Italy to visit relatives.



THE ROMAN RUIN AT TRIER "Gee, we cert'n'y bombed hell out o' th' Opry House, didn't we?"

bar-booted doughboys. It seems such a relic of the past—a stately Spanish carved among modern battleships, a golden piece of eight among a lot of silver American half dollars.

Four sailors from Brest breezed into Coblenz last week and throughout their stay provided one of the sights of the town. "Just cruising around," they said in response to queries as to how they had stayed so far from salt water.

One of the finest banners in the Third Army is being flaunted by members of the 322nd Field Signal Battalion, stationed in Coblenz. The banner is the gift of the organization's former commander, Lieut. Col. Sosthenes Behn, made just before his departure for the States. The banner is of orange silk, with the familiar crossed flags of the Signal Corps, and beneath them an eagle clasping arrows in its talons.

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Coblenz is now a limited leave area and 2,000 fresh buyers from the Third Army, not to mention thousands of other transients, are in the city every day. Iron Crosses of the first class went from three marks to nine—and then leaped to 12 and 18. One store demands 40. Crosses of the second class are 12 marks. They used to be two and six. Most of the helmets in the region are now on their way to the States. The leather ones brought 40, 50, 60 and more marks each. And yet, word from Cologne is that these relics are going begging at nine marks.

The delicatessen stores continue to do a roaring business. The pastry is the nearest approach to the real stuff many members of the Third Army have had since they landed, and they're taking advantage of it. And the photographic galleries—you can scarcely get into them, everybody wants to have his picture taken in Coblenz, it seems, in order to prove to the folks at home that he had gazed upon the Rhine.

Reading one's shirt seems just as popular an indoor sport as ever, even officers of high rank taking part in the pastime ever and anon. All Germany seems to have been smitten, due chiefly to the fact that when the armistice was signed the soldiers called it a war and departed for their homes, taking their guests right along with them. Hotels have not escaped.

Incidentally, there is the story of the luckless doughboy who read faithfully and diligently, meanwhile hoarding each piece of issue clothing—especially the time when he went to seek his bundle, after outfit. Then for a bath and freedom. Alas! He had his new clothes wrapped up in a newspaper in a disused room of his billets. It was decided to throw all old clothing into the disused room; and when he went to seek his bundle, after drawing his last necessary bit of clothing, he found it buried beneath a pile of the coziest clothes in all Germany.

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