

# *The American* MERCURY

November 1928

## THE SO-CALLED LOST BATTALION

BY HENRY O. SWINDLER

THE siege of the so-called Lost Battalion is no doubt the most widely known and generally discussed incident of the American operations in the World War. It is likewise true that about no other incident is so much fiction firmly believed. This is unfortunate, for the heroic conduct of these men needs none of the embellishments of the story-teller. The plain recital of the facts of their valiant defense, while entirely cut off in the heart of an enemy army, is quite sufficient to make their memory immortal. It will be my endeavor to accurately record these facts.

The name, Lost Battalion, is itself a misnomer. The units concerned were not, in the strict sense of the word, a battalion. Nor were they at any time lost. The elements known by this name were Companies A, B, C, E, G and H of the 308th Infantry, Company K of the 307th Infantry, and two platoons of Companies C and D of the 306th Machine Gun Battalion, all of the 77th Division. These troops, under the command of Major Charles W. Whittlesey of the 308th Infantry, were entirely surrounded by the enemy during the Meuse-Argonne Operation from the morning of October 3 until the evening of October 7. Although suffering extreme hardships from exposure, and from lack of food, water, and medical attention, the force repulsed incessant attacks of the enemy for

five days and four nights, and held, until relieved by our own troops, the objective to which it had been ordered.

At the beginning of the Meuse-Argonne Operation the 77th Division, of the American I Corps, was on the extreme left of the American First Army. It was between the 28th Division on its right and elements of the XXXVIII Corps of the French Fourth Army on its left.

Its zone of advance, about seven and one-half kilometers wide, embraced nearly the whole of the Argonne Forest, a thick tangle of underbrush and timber extending from La Harazée to Grand Pré. The sector had long been quiet, and its natural strength of heavily wooded ravines and ridges had been increased by all the devices known to the art of war.

Owing to its wide front, the division attacked with brigades and regiments abreast. The 154th Brigade was on the left, with the 307th Infantry on the right and the 308th on the left. The whole division advanced steadily against stiff resistance from the opening of the operation on September 26 until October 1.

On October 1 the division encountered an entrenched and heavily-wired position and was checked along its entire front. The enemy line extended from La Palette Pavilion, in front of the French, southeast across the ravine running south from

Charlevaux Mill, continued along the heights of Hill 198, and bent northeast along the high ground in the Bois de Naza, past the right of the division. The line was strongly held and protected by an outpost zone thickly studded with machine-guns concealed in underbrush interlaced with wire.

An attack on the morning of October 2 failed. Preparations were immediately begun for a concerted effort to be launched in conjunction with the French at 12:30 p.m. The objective was the line of the road and railroad running east from Charlevaux Mill to La Viergette. It was ordered that units follow the barrage closely, without regard to losses or the exposed condition of their flanks.

The western regimental sector of the 154th Brigade, which was occupied by the 308th Infantry, was divided near the center by a ravine running south from Charlevaux Mill. The enemy defenses were considerably stronger on the west of this ravine than on the east. Major Whittlesey, who was given command of the 1st and 2d Battalions, 308th Infantry, with two platoons (nine guns) of Companies C and D of the 306th Machine Gun Battalion, was ordered to leave two companies to occupy the attention of the enemy west of the ravine. With the remainder of his command, he was to break through the German line on the eastern slopes of the ravine and push on to Charlevaux Mill without regard to the progress of units on his right and left. Arriving at his objective, he was to halt, reorganize, gain liaison to right and left, and await orders. Having established himself near Charlevaux Mill, he was to send back one company to attack the enemy line in the rear, to the west of the ravine, and assist the two companies which had been left behind to come up.

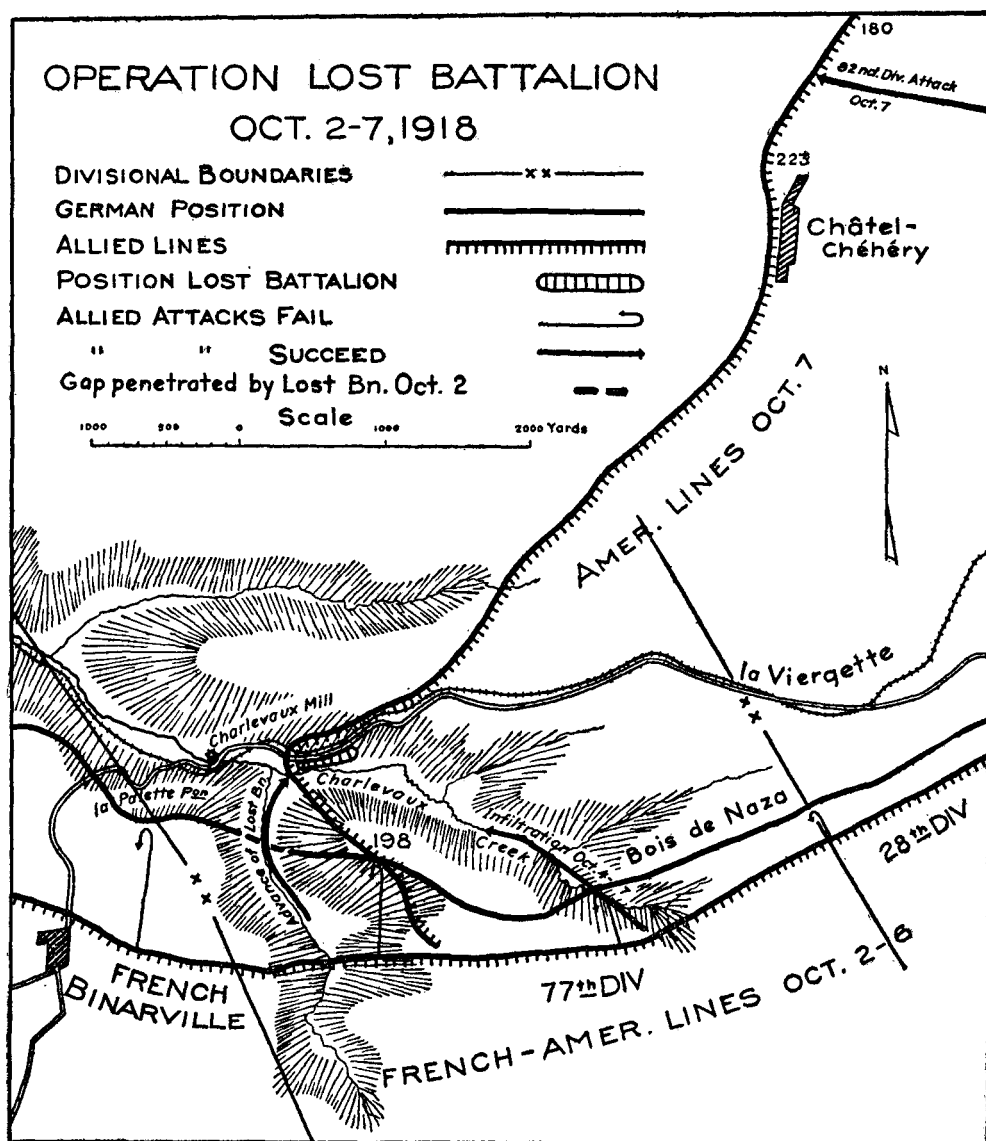
The attack was launched at 12:30 p.m. Leaving Companies D and F of the 308th Infantry to occupy the attention of the enemy west of the ravine, Major Whittlesey broke through the enemy wire near the bottom of the ravine. Driving north

along this depression, he arrived in the vicinity of Charlevaux Mill at 6 p.m., having captured two officers, twenty-eight other prisoners, and three machine-guns. Selecting a position about 450 meters east of Charlevaux Mill, he prepared it for defense.

The position selected by Major Whittlesey, which was to become the scene of the siege of the "Lost Battalion," was on the steep northern slope of the ravine which approached Charlevaux Mill from the east. Through it, from east to west, flows Charlevaux creek, a small marshy stream from which the ravine derives its name. Twelve hundred meters east of the mill the course of the stream bears to the southeast. The surrounding hills about this point, as viewed from the west, appear to close in the head of the valley. The slopes, especially the northern one, were covered in 1918 by thick undergrowth and young timber. One thousand meters east of Charlevaux Mill, the Charlevaux-La Viergette road and railway descended from the high ground north of the ravine, continued along the face of the northern slope, around a nose projecting into the valley four hundred and fifty meters east of Charlevaux Mill, and thence west to the mill. The left flank of the command rested on the projecting nose and was thrown back behind it. From this place the front continued along the road about 350 meters to the east. The companies of the 308th Infantry were placed in the following order from left to right: H. B. C. A. G and E. Fox holes were dug and the flanks covered by machine-guns. Outposts were sent out to the high ground to the north and to the flanks.

## II

The position selected, though not ideal, was undoubtedly the best available in the vicinity of the objective, Charlevaux Mill. The command was protected from artillery fire from the north by the crest of the ridge north of the road. It was protected from fire from the west and northwest by the



nose, behind which the left flank rested. Concealment was given by the thick underbrush and timber. Water was available in a spring and in Charlevaux creek, immediately south of the position. The field of fire to the north was short. The hills to the east and south dominated the position. The field of fire to the south, across the more sparsely wooded bed of the ravine, was good to a distance of about 200 meters.

In considering the position taken up by

Major Whittlesey it must be borne in mind that, when he selected it, he had no idea that he would be required to defend it for any great length of time. He expected momentarily that other troops of his division would advance on his right, that the French would come up on his left, and that the attack would be resumed. The great merit of the position lay in the fact that it was protected from the fire of the artillery of the main German position. This fact, no

doubt, saved the command from annihilation, for, could it have been reached by German artillery fire it surely would have been destroyed or captured.

Major Whittlesey maintained contact with the headquarters of his regiment by a chain of runner posts, which he had established as his command advanced. When he reached his objective the commanding officer of the 308th Infantry was immediately notified. This information was forwarded at once to brigade and division headquarters.

The French-American attack had failed at all other points, and, when word was received that Whittlesey had reached Charlevaux Mill, the dangerous situation of his command was at once apparent to higher authority. The division commander caused the 3d Battalion, 307th Infantry, which until this time had been held in reserve by the 154th Brigade, to be pushed forward along the route to Whittlesey's advance. But owing to darkness and the thick underbrush only one company succeeded in getting through. Company K, commanded by Captain Nelson M. Holderman, forced a passage through the ravine and bivouacked for the night about three hundred meters south of Whittlesey's position.

During the night of October 2-3, the enemy wired in the gap through which the Americans had passed and strengthened his defenses on either side of the ravine. The chain of runner posts was not disturbed until the morning of October 3, so that no warning came to Major Whittlesey during the night that his command was being isolated.

All was quiet in the Charlevaux ravine during the night of October 2-3. At dawn October 3, Major Whittlesey took steps to carry out the part of his orders which darkness had prevented him from accomplishing on the afternoon of October 2, *i.e.*, to establish contact to right and left and assist Companies D and F forward. Patrols were pushed out to the flanks to gain contact with elements of the 77th Division to the right and with the French to the left. Com-

pany E, commanded by Lieutenant Wilhelm, was ordered to attack in rear the enemy line in front of Companies D and F and assist them to come up. Ration details accompanied Company E. They never returned. At 7 A.M., Company K, 307th Infantry, crossed Charlevaux creek and was assigned the position on the right of the line which had previously been occupied by Company E, 308th Infantry.

At 8:30 A.M. enemy artillery began shelling from the northwest. It had little effect, because the position was on a steep reverse slope. At 8:50 A.M. Major Whittlesey released his first pigeon message, reporting that enemy artillery was firing on him from the northwest and requesting counter-battery fire. In this message, and in all succeeding messages sent by him, his position was given. This message was evidently delayed in transmission, for it was not received at the headquarters of the 154th Brigade until 2:40 P.M. General Johnson, commanding the brigade, at once requested counter-battery fire.

Until late in the morning Major Whittlesey had no reason to be apprehensive about the safety of his command. But a rapid succession of events soon left no doubt in his mind that it was in a very dangerous position. The patrols returned and reported the presence of the enemy on both flanks. At 10 A.M. a heavy trench mortar opened fire from 600 meters to the west. While it was in action, the enemy could be seen and heard filtering around the flanks of the position. He could also be seen on the slopes to the south. At the same hour Lieutenant Leake staggered into the position with eighteen men, all that remained of Company E. It had been surrounded by a superior force and a terrific encounter had ensued. Lieutenant Wilhelm had told Lieutenant Leake to cut his way out as best he could. The fate of the rest of the company was unknown.<sup>1</sup> At 10:30 A.M.

<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant Wilhelm forced his way through to the lines of the 77th Division with the remnants of Company E. This fact was not known by Major Whittlesey at the time.

word was received that the chain of runner posts had been cut by the enemy. The only means of communication now was by the five remaining carrier pigeons. A prisoner reported that his company (seventy men) had been brought up in trucks during the night and had moved to a position in rear of the American troops. A platoon sent to silence the enemy mortar met with heavy machine-gun fire and failed.

Major Whittlesey determined to attempt to establish communication with his regiment. Captain Holderman with Company K, 307th Infantry, was ordered to drive out the enemy south of the position and open up communication to the rear.

At 10:45 A.M. Major Whittlesey released his second pigeon bearing a note stating that the chain of runner posts had been cut and that Captain Holderman had been sent to reestablish it.

Meanwhile steps were taken to strengthen the position. New fox holes were dug and old ones enlarged. Excavations were made in the center for the protection of the wounded. The companies were placed for all-around fire, with greater strength on the north front. The south line was more lightly held, since the field of fire was better in that direction.

At 1:30 P.M. Company K, 307th Infantry, returned. It had advanced far into the woods on Hill 198, encountered the enemy in force and fought its way back to avoid annihilation. It was now evident that the command was surrounded in force. Until the end of the siege, although continuous efforts were made to get patrols through to the rear, no attempt was made to force a passage. Every man had to be conserved for the defense of the position.

The stubborn resistance through the following five days was forecast by a message sent to all unit commanders by Major Whittlesey soon after the return of Company K.: "Our mission is to hold this position at all costs. Have this understood by every man in the command." The fulfillment of this order wrote one of the most brilliant pages of our military tradition.

### III

At 4:05 P.M. a third pigeon message was released requesting ammunition. This message was received at the division message center at 4:55 P.M. Arrangements were made to bring up a supply of ammunition in the rear of the troops then attacking.

During the afternoon the enemy was reported pressing in close, was seen to be driving in American detachments, and soon was plainly heard to be forming his troops in the underbrush close at hand. The trench mortar pounded the position. Machine-gun fire raked it from flanks and rear. At 5 P.M. the attack was launched. Potato-masher grenades were rained upon the American line from the cliff north of the road and the flanks were assailed by infantry groups. The Americans waited until the enemy was exposed at close range when, by command, they opened a terrific fire with rifles, Chauchat rifles, and machine-guns. The attack melted under the accurate fusillade of the Americans, and the cries of the enemy wounded could be plainly heard until they were removed by their comrades under cover of darkness.

During the morning the 154th Brigade had attacked but had not been able to penetrate the German wire. A concerted assault by both brigades in the afternoon had also failed.

The command, which had no medical officers, had brought forward its wounded with it. The three enlisted men of the Medical Corps cared for the wounded as best they could, but their scanty supply of bandages, as well as the first aid packets of the command, was entirely consumed during the night of October 3.

The night of October 3-4 was quiet. The men, especially the wounded, suffered from the cold, as no overcoats or blankets had been brought, and all began to feel the pinch of hunger. The command had gone into action the day before with only one day's rations, and some soldiers had been unable to get even this scanty supply before the attack started.



Patrolling during the night of October 3-4 had indicated that the enemy had withdrawn from around the position. Patrols were sent out early on October 4 to verify this information. At 7:25 A.M. Major Whittlesey released his fourth pigeon message, summarizing events up to that time and requesting rations. When the message was received steps were initiated to drop them by airplane.

During the night the enemy had installed two light trench mortars, one to the northeast and one to the northwest. One, it will be remembered, was already in place. At 8:30 all three opened fire and kept it up for about an hour.

The patrols which had been sent out to determine the position of the enemy returned and reported his presence in all directions. At 10:35 A.M. Whittlesey released his fifth pigeon message stating the results of this reconnaissance and asking for support.

Harassing fire was continued by both Germans and Americans until afternoon. A friendly airplane circled over the position and the location of the command was signalled to it with panels. Soon after this plane departed, another appeared and dropped messages, all of which fell within the enemy lines.

At 2:45 P.M. fire from friendly artillery from the southeast was put down on the slopes of Hill 198. It crept up to the position, on to it, and clung there. The enemy trench mortars and his machine-guns gleefully joined in. This fire lasted about one and a half hours and wrought havoc in the position, causing about thirty casualties. During the confusion, some men wandered away and were captured by the enemy. Major Whittlesey released his last pigeon with a message which read as follows:

*To: C. O. 308th Infantry  
From: 1st Bn. 308th Infantry.*

We are along the road parallel 276.4; our artillery is dropping a barrage directly on us. For Heaven's sake stop it.

WHITTLESEY  
Major 308th.

This message was received by the com-

mander of the 154th Brigade, at 4:38 P.M., but the firing had already ceased.

At the conclusion of this preparation, the Germans attacked with grenades, supported by machine-guns. The assault was not pushed as vigorously as the attack on October 3, and was repulsed. At 9 P.M. a surprise attack was made by the light of flares thrown into the position from the hillside above. It was beaten off with rapid and well directed rifle and machine-gun-fire.

Vigorous attacks by the 77th Division during the day had failed to penetrate the German wire, but an attempt to filter small groups through a weak place in the enemy entanglements in the bottom of the ravine of Charlevaux creek, two thousand meters southeast of Whittlesey's position, was successful. By midnight of October 4 two companies of the 307th Infantry had got through.

The men by the night of October 4-5 were suffering severely from hunger and exposure. The wounded were in a very serious condition. The only dressings to be had were those taken from the dead and bits of clothing. Water could be obtained only with great difficulty and the little obtained cost many casualties. The enemy raked the water-holes with intermittent machine-gun fire both night and day. Guards were posted to prevent thirst-crazed men from attempting to get water in the daytime.

Patrols during the morning of October 5 reported about two hundred enemy troops moving past the right of the position to the heights to the south.

Unusually heavy firing was heard from the south during the entire day, indicating a vigorous effort by the Americans in the rear to break through the enemy lines. During the morning a friendly barrage dropped on the hill to the south and crept down into the ravine, throwing geysers of muddy water and torn bushes high into the air as it crossed the marshes bordering Charlevaux creek. No little anxiety was felt by the beleaguered men as the wall of fire again rolled toward their position.

But, as they burrowed into their fox holes for protection against the impending storm of shell, the barrage lifted and came down squarely on the enemy on the crest of the hill, where it dealt death and destruction. The heavy trench mortar to the west was knocked out and the enemy did not rally for another attack until late in the afternoon. Hopes were high that friendly troops would break through during the day. But spirits sank again as time wore on. Toward evening the sound of the battle to the south died away.

A few ranging bursts were fired on the position early in the afternoon as the enemy placed more machine-guns in position. At 4 P.M. he opened a terrific fire and for twenty minutes a storm of bullets swept the entire position. Although the men kept well to their fox holes and few casualties occurred, Major Whittlesey regarded this fire as one of the most unpleasant experiences of the siege. At the end of this preparation the enemy again attacked with grenades from the high ground to the north. The Americans again held their fire until the enemy approached to close range and they repulsed the attack.

A determined effort by the French and Americans had been made on this day to break through. A coordinated attack was launched early in the morning and was pushed vigorously until about five o'clock in the afternoon. The French took and held La Palette Pavilion for over an hour, but were driven out by a heavy counterattack. The American attack on the left failed, although General Johnson of the 154th Brigade took personal command of it. The infiltration previously mentioned continued slowly and by midnight an entire battalion had got through the enemy wire in the Charlevaux ravine.

Anticipating a break-through, the division commander sent a message to Major Whittlesey on the morning of October 5, directing him to maintain his position. When the combined attack failed to penetrate the German wire he sent another message directing Whittlesey to attack the

enemy line in the rear and cut through to his regiment. These messages were dropped by planes of the 50th Aero Squadron, but they, as well as packages of food, all fell into enemy territory.

#### IV

The condition of the command was now desperate. Had Major Whittlesey received the order to attack the enemy in rear, it is doubtful if he could have done so, so weakened were his men from hunger and exposure. They could fight only in their tracks. It was with great difficulty that enough men could be found with sufficient strength for patrol and outpost duty. The wounded were in a pitiful condition, festering under filthy rags. They could not possibly have been moved had the command changed position.

The night of October 5-6 passed quietly.

On October 6 an exceedingly determined effort was made to get patrols through to the rear, for the continued failure of the allied attacks had shaken the courage of the men. Many requested permission to work their way through individually. Permission was refused.

Firing on both sides began early and the day passed much as previous days. Lieutenants Peabody and Moon, in command of the machine-guns, were killed. Only one machine-gun of the nine remained in action at nightfall.

All available planes of the 50th Aero Squadron were used to drop supplies and ammunition to the command. From about noon until dark the planes of this squadron made a continuous succession of flights over the position, dropping food, medical supplies, ammunition, and pigeons. Although the pilots showed great courage and contempt for the enemy's fire, not one package fell within reach of Whittlesey's men. The enemy seized upon the packages of food and called out in English the articles which they contained.

So determined were the attempts of the 50th Aero Squadron to bring relief to the

battalion that during the day three planes were shot down by the enemy and one pilot, Lieutenant Goettler, and his observer, Lieutenant Bleckley, were killed.

Sounds of firing to the rear died away near sunset and night closed in. The fourth day of the siege had passed and still relief seemed far away. Continuous frontal pressure by the Americans in the rear had failed. The infiltration by friendly troops into the Charlévaux ravine, however, had gone on slowly.

Ammunition was now nearly exhausted. As soon as darkness came patrols were out collecting enemy rifles and ammunition from the dead lying too close to the American lines to be removed by their comrades. Scraps of food were eagerly sought in enemy haversacks. The hardships of the last four days, however, had been unable to quench the American thirst for souvenirs, and many pipes, mirrors, buttons, shoulder-straps, and other trinkets found their way into the American lines along with the precious arms and ammunition.

The position was a shambles. The dead of three days' fighting lay unburied. The living could scarcely drag themselves about the position to perform the necessary duties. The wounded were in frightful condition. In most cases gangrene had set in and many were slowly dying.

The night of October 6-7 finally passed and the fifth day of the siege dawned. Patrols sent out were immediately driven in. Discouragement was felt, when, during the morning, a few shells fell on the position from the southeast. It was assumed they were from friendly artillery, but it later appeared that they were from an enemy piece placed so that the position of the battalion could be reached with fire. Fortunately the firing soon ceased and was not repeated.

Shortly before noon an enemy attack supported by machine-guns and trench mortars was launched from the north. As on previous occasions, the Americans held their fire until the enemy had come within close range. Many wounded dragged them-

selves to the firing line. After a stiff fight the enemy attack was beaten off.

Harassing fire continued until the afternoon. At about 4 P.M. the enemy machine-guns abruptly ceased firing. An American soldier, carrying a white cloth on a stick, was seen limping towards the position from the left flank. It proved to be Private Hollingshead of Company H, 308th Infantry.

That morning he, with eight others, had left the American line to try to recover a package of food which had been dropped close by. In an encounter with the enemy, five of the nine were killed and the rest captured. Private Hollingshead reported to Major Whittlesey and handed him a message. It was neatly typed in English and read as follows:

*To the Commanding Officer—Infantry, 77th American Division.*

SIR: The bearer of this present, Private Lowell R. Hollingshead, has been taken prisoner by us. He refused to give the German Intelligence Officer any answer to his questions and is quite an honorable fellow, doing the honor to his Fatherland in the strictest sense of the word.

He has been charged against his will, believing that he is doing wrong to his country to carry forward this present letter to the officer in charge of the battalion of the 77th Division, with the purpose to recommend this commander to surrender with his forces, as it would be quite useless to resist any more in view of the present conditions.

The suffering of your wounded can be heard over here in the German lines and we appeal to your humane sentiments to stop. A white flag shown by one of your men will tell us that you agree to these conditions. Please treat Private Lowell R. Hollingshead as an honorable man. He is quite a soldier. We envy you.

THE GERMAN COMMANDING OFFICER.

Legend has it that Major Whittlesey read the message and shouted to the Germans to go to hell. It is well established, however, that he said nothing, and that he never made any reply to the demand for surrender. He read the message and handed it to two officers who were present, and ordered two white airplane panels taken in from the hillside since they might be taken by the enemy as a token of surrender.

Preparations were immediately made to meet the impending attack. The men



manned the firing positions. Many severely wounded painfully dragged themselves to positions from which they could fire on the enemy. Other wounded, unable to fire, loaded spare pieces and placed them near those who could. Some men silently polished their bayonets in the damp soil.

Receiving no reply to their demand for surrender, the enemy attacked furiously; the Americans found themselves confronted with the most determined attack of the siege. The main blow fell on the center and right flank. Grenades rained from the hillside in front, trench mortars pounded the position, and machine-guns raked it from flanks and rear. Flame throwers were brought against the right, which only infuriated the Americans. Men, disregarding the withering fire of the enemy, darted out and killed the bearers of these weapons. It seemed that the enemy must surely overwhelm the few survivors, but by almost superhuman efforts the attack was repulsed.

It was never repeated. In the gathering dusk the enemy could be seen drifting by the position towards the north. Firing was distinctly heard from the south and at 7 P.M. elements of the 307th Infantry were reported coming through the ravine from the southeast. About 9 P.M. companies of that regiment appeared, passed to the front and outposted the position for the night.

There was no demonstration or cheering. The relieving companies turned over every scrap of food they had to the starving men who devoured it ravenously. Immediate attention was given to the wounded and the exhausted men threw themselves on the ground to rest.

## V

The relief of Whittlesey's command was effected by an attack far to the northward. Troops of the 82nd American Division had been deployed, facing west, in a gap in the American line between the 1st and 28th Divisions. On the morning of October 7 they had attacked the eastern face of the Argonne between Chatel-Chehery and Cor-

nay, and by evening had occupied Hills 223 and 180 north of Chatel-Chehery. The enemy in front of the 77th Division, whose lines had been pierced by the infiltration in the Charlevaux Ravine, was threatened from the rear and was forced to withdraw.

On the morning of October 8 Whittlesey's command was joined by the rest of the 308th Infantry. Food and stretchers were brought up. Ambulances came up by the Charlevaux-La Viergette road and at 3 P.M. the wounded were evacuated. The remnants of the command were marched to the rear for rest.

Out of the 463 men and officers who were cut off by the enemy on October 3, 69 had been killed or were missing, and 156 wounded were evacuated. The total casualties were 225 or 48.6% of the command.

It is believed by many that Major Whittlesey was censured and that steps were initiated to try him by court-martial for losing his way and allowing his command to be cut off. This belief cannot be substantiated from the records. On the contrary, Major Whittlesey, Captain McMurry and Captain Holderman were awarded the highest honor that can be bestowed on an American soldier, the Congressional Medal of Honor. Other members of the command were awarded other decorations.

The troops under Major Whittlesey were never in any sense lost. They advanced under competent orders which directed that they push through to their objective without regard to the troops on either flank, and that they hold that objective until the general line was brought up to it. These orders were carried out in every detail by Major Whittlesey. Through circumstances over which he had no control, the troops on his flanks were not able to reach the objective for five days. During this time his command, though suffering terribly from lack of food and medical attention, held its position against repeated attacks of the enemy, refused honorable terms of surrender, and by its heroic conduct upheld the finest traditions of American arms.

# THE HISTORY OF A PATRIOT

BY BENJAMIN DeCASSERES

ONE can no more be born an American than one can be born a Presbyterian or a Kiwanian. One is born into a *race* and only *in* a country. This is particularly true of America, where the roots of a new national type have not yet even sprouted from the seed. There being, then, no such thing as a congenital and hence instinctive American, we have the amusing phenomenon of a country trying to make patriots of its own people by threats, drives, intensive school-drilling and other such devices of Americanization, which are not only launched upon the newly-arrived, but also upon those native-born who have other definitions of Americanization than that of the Ku Klux Klan or the Methodist Board of this, that or some other medieval *tic*.

As a matter of fact, even the born American has never been patriotic in the sense that a Frenchman, a German, an Englishman or a Japanese is. He has been literally kicked into every one of his country's wars, and in them he has always been secretly luke-warm. This applies, I believe, even to the Revolution. His tepid feeling about his country gives birth in the native-born to a feeling of shame, and he slews around for a defence-mechanism to hide it. This defence-mechanism is found in an exaggerated feeling of self-consciousness, in world-bawling and planet-terrorizing slogans, in the constant display and saluting of the flag, and in the oppressive and often murderous activities of hordes of "patriotic" societies. If patriotism in America was really organic all this would not be necessary. Patriotism should be profoundly mystical, like religion or the devastating

Grand Passion in love. But among us it is still a coldly mental concept, and mainly a matter of dollars and cents. We are dreadfully ashamed of it.

I was born in Philadelphia of an "American" Jewish family. My mother was born in Philadelphia. Her ancestry was Bavarian and Hungarian. My father was born in Jamaica, B. W. I., of Anglo-Spanish-Portuguese ancestry. The family had lived in Jamaica for nearly five generations. My father came to America in 1855, at the age of fourteen. Although he had received his education in the English public schools in Kingston and had been brought up in the most ultra-conservative and Tory atmosphere and traditions, and was taught in youth that the aristocracy was of divine origin and that Queen Victoria was practically immune to fire, water and cooties, he tossed away, in a manner that to me has always been a miracle, all his ancestral fetiches and became the most hard-boiled, dyed-in-the-wool, eagle-screaming, fire-cracker and roman-candle American I have ever met. And a Republican, to boot (his first vote was for Lincoln in 1864), who never voted otherwise during his lifetime.

America and the Republican party became his religion. His many brothers and uncles all came to this country, married, begat and did business, but all remained fanatically loyal to the Crown. None of them ever took out papers. They looked on us with contempt and raised their hats reverently whenever they saw the British flag. My father used to call them "rotten British idolaters" and they always thought of my father as a traitor. It may be that my father's insisting on choosing his own