

World War I Osterville Men at the Front by Paul Chesbro
- Part IX

***** **The Yanks Enter In** *****

**Chemin-des-Dames / Toul Sector / Chateau Thierry
Belleau Woods / Seicheprey / Pas Fini Sector / Champagne - Marne
Aisne - Marne / Rupt Sector / Argonne Forest / St. Michiel
Troyon Sector / Marcheville Raid
Meuse Argonne / Defensive Sector / Verdun**

**November 11th, 1918
The 11th Month - The 11th Day - The 11th Hour
VICTORY**



**Corporal LEO BEAUMONT, 101st Engineers
26th Division, Company F**

Enlisted August 28, 1917, in Boston, Mass. Because of the death of his platoon leader, his records were never completed. The following article appeared in print Feb. 17, 1919: "Corporal Leo E. Beaumont, who recently arrived home, was formerly of Company F, 101st Engineers, but later transferred to Co. F, 101st Infantry. He was in active service at Chateau Thierry and Argonne Forest where he was gassed and later sent to the hospital where he remained until he was able to return home." He was discharged Feb. 3, 1919. His widow of more than 55 years, who resides today in Centerville, states that her late husband was gassed twice and saw front line duty also at Belleau Woods, and maybe Seicheprey. She states that being a widow these many years, it is difficult to remember just where her husband served. It is believed that Beaumont served at the front from the Chemin-des-Dames through the Argonne Forest. In 1925 Beaumont was the first of the WWI veterans to die from lung damage sustained in the great war.



**Corporal EDWARD C. DANIEL, 101st Engineers,
26th Division, Company F**

Enlisted in August of 1917 at Boston, Mass. We regret his personal records cannot be found. Members of the family recall he saw front line duty at the Argonne Forest where he was gassed. In the personal diary kept by PFC Carroll Crosby, 'Ed' is mentioned during the battle of Chateau-Thierry. This is believed to refer to Edward Daniel. It is believed by the writer of this series of articles that Cpl. Daniel served at the front from the Chemin-des-Dames until removed from the front after the battle of the Argonne Forest. As a result of residual lung damage from gas, Daniel fled to the southwest U.S. after the war, where he lived for many years.

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**PFC MALCOLM CROSBY, 101st Engineers
26th Division, Company F**

Enlisted Aug. 25, 1917, at Boston, Mass. Truly an outstanding soldier of World War I, Uncle Max (as he was known to many) served at the front with the YD during their entire involvement at the front, Feb. 10 through Nov. 11, 1918. He participated in the following defensive and offensive battles, sectors and a raid: Battles- Chemin-des-Dames, Champagne-Marne, Aisne-Marne, Chateau Thierry, St. Michiel and Meuse-Argonne; Sectors- Toul, Pas Fini, Rupt, Troyon and Definsive; Raid- Marcheville. On Nov. 11, 1918, Uncle Max was at Verdun.

Over a period of years the writer of this series of articles spent many hours in the Crosby home, several times with a tape recorder. The life history of Mr. Crosby and also his war experiences have all been recorded. On one occasion during a battle, the solder beside Uncle Max was instantly killed. Upon his return to the U.S. in the spring of 1919, Uncle Max participated in the welcome home parade the Yankee Division held in Boston. More than one million New Englanders roared home this great division with a tremendous welcome. He was discharged at Camp Devens, April 28, 1919.

He worked for a short while in the oyster business, then built boats at West Bay until he was nearly 80 years old. Asked if he ever took a coffee break, his answer was "Never." Asked why, his reply was "couldn't waste the time." In April of 1979, Uncle Max died. He was nearly 86 years old.

Pas Fini Sector

Members of the 26th Division relieved the 2nd Division in this sector from June 28 to July 15, 1918. This sector was near the French towns of Vaux, Torcy and Meaux and saw hard fighting. It was also considered a part of Chateau-Thierry.

Rupt Sector

This sector was near St. Michiel and had been held since September of 1914 by the enemy. On one occasion as members of the Yankee Division drove the barbarians from this sector, a Catholic priest along with his parishioners with tears streaming down their faces embraced many of the men of the YD for releasing this sector from enemy hands.

The Marcheville Raid

On September 26 a bold raid was directed against the German positions at Marcheville and Riaville. The men fought defiantly although their ammunition was low. They finally got back to the trenches without much loss, bringing in 29 prisoners.

...About the 26th Yankee Division

The Division is unique in that it was the first division fully organized under the American flag. The new divisional organization in the American Army, as proved in the severest war in history, was the greatest tactical power known; its organization showed a forethought and imagination to make it equal to anything that might obtain either in trench warfare or in the characteristic use of American troops, open warfare. It had a carrying-on power greater than that of the divisional organization of any other power.

The Yankee Division was never concentrated in America; it gained its training in France, but was concentrated for the first time in the presence of the enemy on the Chemin-des-Dames. It made the first successful American raid into enemy territory. It received and withstood the first attacks of the Boche. It went into the line on the 6th of February, 1918, and except for a period of ten days' training, in the absorption of about six



PFC Malcolm (Max) Crosby (seated) and PFC Carroll Crosby.



Major General
Clarence R. Edwards
Commanding Officer- 26th Yankee Division

thousand replacements, it was continuously engaged up until the armistice. It saw desperately hard service. During this period, leaves or furloughs were not granted.

It was one of the pioneer divisions and it had unusual handicaps, but its morale and the capitalization of the traditions of the localities from which it came gave it an esprit record as no other division on the Western Front.

It was not a National Guard division, nor a regular nor a National Army division; it was a division of the Army of the United States, contemplated by the order of the President abolishing all discriminations of origin.

The relations of interest and respect between its officers and men were happy and typically American. The lessons from the record of the 26th Division and the fact it was in this war should be of great value to this country in working out an intelligent system of defense.

**PFC CARROLL PARKER CROSBY,
101st Engineers
26th Division, Company F**

Enlisted Sept. 18, 1917, at Boston, Mass. Served at the front from February, 1918, until July 26, 1918. He participated in the following battles: Chemin-des-Dames, Feb. 9 through March 21, 1918, and Chateau Thierry, July 9 through July 26, 1918. He also saw front line action at the Toul Sector, March 30 through June 26, 1918. On July 16, 1918, during the battle of Chateau Thierry, Crosby was seriously gassed while 200 yards from the enemy lines. He made several attempts to go back to the front. On July 26, Crosby was removed from the front to the evacuation hospital. He had sustained severe lung damage. He remained in the hospital until Dec. 9, 1918, when he sailed for the U.S. He arrived in the U.S. Dec. 20th and was sent to Camp Mills, N.Y. for further treatment. He was discharged Jan. 16, 1919, at Camp Devens, Mass. A son who resides in Osterville today states that his father never fully recovered from the effects of gas. His diary written while at the front has been very helpful in the writing of these articles. This diary will be featured in future articles.

Toul Sector

The division had marched for eight days from the Chemin-des-Dames through pelting rain and then bitter cold. All were soaked to the skin and had hardly any food as they arrived in the Toul Sector. Within 24 hours, the Boche attacked by putting down a deadly barrage of fire. The following battles occurred in this area- Bois Brule, Apremont, Seicheprey, Humbert Plantation, and others.

Troyon Sector

Orders came to proceed to St. Michiel. The New England sector was known as Troyon, halfway between St. Michiel and Verdun on the heights of the Meuse. It was a most difficult section. The enemy was fighting hard and were well located in concrete pill boxes.

...About the 101st Engineers

The engineers were fighters as well as devotees of their particular branch of service. They had to build and lay pontoon bridges as well as repair roads for the infantry to pass. They were often the advance guard. They were open to attacks from artillery, from snipers and machine guns.

At the Toul Sector in early April, the following was said of the 101st Engineers: "To build a trench and wipe out the salient, recourse was had to the services of the 101st Engineers. By working all night without sleep and without intermission of any kind, the trenches were completed by this unit."

The French General Desgouttes compliments the 101st Engineers for their splendid job at Chateau-Thierry: "At St. Michiel, the work of the Engineers, who toiled like beavers in getting conditions right for the passing of the field artillery, and the night march to Vigneulles, scored a triumph for their skill."

Bits and Pieces

The Yankee Division was called into service July 15, 1917.

From September through the middle of December the whole division was in France. After a period of training, the division was inspected by Gen. Pershing. He said that the troops were excellent stuff and their young officers very alert.

No other division saw such long and continuous service.

The suffering of these men and their inconveniences in billets should not pass without notice. The weather was enough to dampen the spirits of the most cheerful. Often their shoes were so warped and frozen, they could not get their soles and weary feet into them but complaining was rare.

Nothing was so pathetic as the gas cases with the victims gasping for breath.

Not a man in the 26th Division was court-martialed. Nothing could daunt them. They were responsive to every call made.

Many men in hospitals were gas cases, particularly New Englanders of the 26th Division, who had suffered much from it in and around Belleau Woods.

The Division captured 3,148 prisoners. Battle casualties are listed below:

- Killed- 1,730 (some records say 2,281)
- Wounded severely- 3,624
- Wounded slightly- 2,819
- Gassed- 3,363
- Missing- 283
- Prisoners- 136

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