

# MEHUN NEWS

VOL. 1

ATELIER de MEHUN-SUR-YEVRE, (CHER), FRANCE, FRIDAY, MAY 9, 1919

NO. 13

## OFFICERS OF G. H. Q. SHOWN REPAIR SHOPS

### Colonel C. M. Wesson Personally Conducts Tour

Making the Ordnance Repair Shop one of their principal stops in their tour of the entire S. O. S., fifteen officers of rank from General Headquarters visited this place last Monday, May 5th. Their special train arrived on the shops' siding at 1:00 p. m. and departed at 2:30 p. m. During this short hour and one-half, an inspection of the great war work shops in action was made with Colonel C. M. Wesson and other shop officers personally conducting the tour. As the majority of these high officials were regular army officers they appeared very much interested in the fact that most of the United States guns have already been shipped to the U. S. The tearing down, greasing, painting, boxing and crating process received considerable comment for in this way the guns will be well preserved for years to come and will be all ready for any emergency that may arise in the future.

Those making the trip were; Major Generals John L. Hinds and Earnest Hinds; Brigadier Generals Walter A. Bethel, LeRoy Eltinge, Fox Connor, Dennis E. Nolan, Stuart Heintzelman, Lesley J. McNair, and Robert I. Rees; Colonels M. A. Elliott Jr., Roger G. Alexander, S. R. Gleaves, A. J. Booth, H. H. White; and Major Franchol. From here the party went to Gievres.

### WEEK-END PASSES GRANTED

Beginning Saturday noon May 10th, week-end passes of 36 hours will be granted to the men of this camp. As high as 20 per cent of the strength of any organization may take advantage of this privilege each week. The men will now have an opportunity to visit many points of interest in the neighboring country. However, men are not permitted to stay overnight in Bourges or Vierzon.

## MEHUN NINE WILL TAKE EXTENDED TOUR

### First Game Out of the Camp to be Played on Saturday.

Selected to represent the Montierchaume district in the A. E. F. baseball schedules, the Mehun nine will play their initial out-of-town game on Saturday and Sunday afternoons with the C. R. O. aggregation at Bourges, returning here to meet Romorantin on Tuesday afternoon. Friday they will journey to Nevers to play a return engagement with the 19th Engineers in an attempt to wipe the slate clean of the defeat they suffered here at the hands of the latter on Monday evening. On Saturday and Sunday of the following week they will cross bats with the representatives of the St. Aignan and Tours districts.

The locals have a well balanced team of semi-pro diamond stars and under the faithful coaching of George Rose and Lieut. Barancik are being fast rounded into "big time" calibre. They have so far made a creditable showing and are working hard in an effort to get in on the S. O. S. finals to be held at Nice in the near future.

Indications from the "dope" sheet are that "Alabam" Vardaman, "Lefty" Noyes and "Arlie" Latham will be the mainstays in the pitcher's box, while Sapper and Earnshaw will hold the receiving end.

### "STROLLERS" STAGE CLASSY SHOW

The "Strollers" were the chief attraction at the "Y" on Saturday evening with their six classy vaudeville acts. The cast is made up of ten casuals from Brest, all men who have seen service on the front. The troupe has been on the road in the A. E. F. for the past four months and undoubtedly have one of the best productions. The Jazz band feature as well as the black face comedy and rendition of some of the latest song hits were the feature acts of the evening.

## C. & M. DIVISION HAS MANY TASKS

### Work Consists of Roadbuilding to Skilled Cabinet Making

For a diversity of tasks the Construction and Maintenance Division can prove their claim as the strongest contenders for this honor in the Ordnance Repair Shops camp. The work of this Division might be compared to that of a janitor, plumber, carpenter, or in fact anything that has any bearing whatever on the maintenance of the structures necessary to house a great industrial plant such as the Ordnance Repair Shops. This was not all, for previous to December 26th it was also the duty of this Division to look after all construction and repair work on the barracks and other buildings in the camp where the men are housed and fed.

The regular routine of the duties which this Division was required to perform also included the furnishing of men to work with the Engineers on numerous road building projects about the shops and also aiding to install the water system which now affords ample fire protection for the shops. Plumbers and tinsmiths have played an active part in the activities of the C. & M. work, a large force being kept at work constantly in looking after such work as repairing drain facilities and attending to repair work on the roofs and tin drain pipes.

The largest personnel employed by  
(continued on page 6.)

### CONVOY LEAVES FOR BORDEAUX

The fourth train load of German artillery left the Ordnance Repair Shops Wednesday evening for Bordeaux on the first lap of its journey to the Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Maryland. The train was made up of 26 cars of Historical and Engineering Collection and material suitable for trophies. The convoy under the command of Lieut. Kauffman consisted of eight men.

# The Mehun News

PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY THE ORDNANCE TROOPS  
AT ATELIER DE MEHUN-SUR-YEVRE, A. P. O. 741.

|                    |                             |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| Commanding Officer | Col. C. M. Wesson           |
| Asst. to C. O.     | Maj. G. S. Brady            |
| Military Dept.     | Lieut.-Col. A. G. Gillespie |
| Inspection Dept.   | Lieut.-Col. A. D. Hubard    |
| Shops Dept.        | Lieut.-Col. W. W. Doe       |
| Stores Dept.       | Major O. V. Dodge           |

|                               |                                 |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
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|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
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|                   | Pvt. I/c M. D. Shankland.                      |
|                   | Cpl. H. W. Davis, Staff Cartoonist             |
|                   | Ord. Sgt. Richard C. Greer, Staff Photographer |

**Mothers' Day** You have seen the boy of five and even of ten years cling to his mothers' hand or run to her in every fear or trouble. A few years ago we were young and like that. Our mothers meant everything to us then. Now we have grown into men, and feel that we are physically independent of womankind. But one day in the year has been set aside as a time of remembrance of the mothers who gave us life, and who protected and guided us through our helpless years with a true and unselfish love. Let us honor Mother's Day, and spend a little while in writing her a letter to show that we have not forgotten what we owe her.

**Our Last Edition** When we started this little journal thirteen weeks ago we had one main object in view. It was our desire to have a camp newspaper that would give to the men the facts and information on the things that were going on about them, and to give it in such a form that it would serve to send home and give the folks back there the correct account of what we are doing. How well we have succeeded in this we have some evidence from the remarks of our men and the letters we have received from all over the A. E. F. and from the States.

We have maintained an editorial staff under the great difficulty of continual evacuation of our men. With the exception of a very few men that we have been able to retain from the beginning, our reporters and staff have been placed in the evacuation companies almost as fast as we got them. We never could count on a permanent force. The greater part of the activities of the S. O. S. will be completed this month, and it will be only a matter of a few weeks before we can see the best of our own work

## CAMP TATTLER

Well, if some writer came to France last Monday and left on Tuesday he could have gone home and written about Sunny France.

Sgt. Major Daniels asked George Washington, a pick and shovel artist in the 525th Engineers, what he has done with all his salary that he got in France. George said "Ah done investigate ma money."

"Jakey" Randolph, who has always boasted that he enlisted to do work as a machinist has at last been offered the opportunity. His latest assignment makes him the fireman's assistant on the steam shovel.

We were speaking of easy jobs and Joe Harrell says his idea of work is being weather prophet in France. "All you have to do," says Joe, "is predict rain. If it don't rain the people won't say a word, anyhow."

We have all heard of the men who saluted Field Clerks, Y. M. C. A. workers, Etc., but during the past week, due to the noise of a passing train a certain Captain of this post called his Company to Attention and then saluted the Mess Call—Who's got one better?

cleaned up. Three of our staff will take the G. H. Q. newspaper trip this week and two more will take their long deferred vacations before the close of the leave areas. In view of the rapid loss of our permanent force, from now on, we have decided to make next week our final issue of the Mehun News.

We hope that we have succeeded in our initial desire, and in addition we trust that we have been able to give the men a clearer idea of some of the other Ordnance activities of the A. E. F. In the beginning we felt that we might find enough material of general interest to keep a small paper going for the three or four months that we would be here. But we have found such a wealth of material in the Ordnance work that we now leave the field feeling that we have only touched the surface.

Some one remarked that we were lucky to have over here a good press, good ink and high grade paper. But our answer is that it was not luck; it is only the foresight of that great American Ordnance program that was to supply our armies with anything they might need, whether trained personnel or material, and that counted on no end or no cessation of work until complete victory.

## A TRIP TO BIARRITZ

By ORD. SGT. H. L. HESS

Going by the way of Bordeaux to Bayonne, one rides for many miles through forests of pine and in the center of these forests, fields of grain.

The tram leaves Bayonne for Biarritz at twenty minute intervals. The ride, about one hour, is mainly through the residential district of this resort. Here one sees the homes of American, French, Spanish and Swiss well-to-do people with their beautiful gardens of palms and flowers. At one place there is a modern arena, used for the bull fights which the permissionaire sometimes sees. Biarritz is a sea coast summer resort with a population of about 15,000, which is doubled by tourists during the summer months. It is also the French resort for Spanish royalty.

Things of particular interest at Biarritz, besides the people who are mainly French, Spanish and Basque are the palace hotel which the Spanish King and Queen and other Royalty occupy while visiting Biarritz, the lighthouse overlooking the Gulf of Gascony, the Russian Temple with its blue dome inlaid with gold, the casinos and gardens, and the beach and coast, which scenery excels even the Mediterranean.

The coast at Biarritz is divided into three beaches: The beautiful beach of small white gravel between the lighthouse and casino, where tourist children play and permissionaires gather luck stones; then one passes under archways worn through huge boulders on to a rock formation beach in which is cut basins where sea shells lodge. Adjoining this, in huge rock walled basins, fishermen bring in their fish, mainly sardines, which are carried from there in huge baskets on the heads of women and retailed by them on the streets. From the Rock of the Virgin you view the bathing beach which is formed by a natural cave, and then the grey and red walls of the Basque coast where the Pyrenees meet the Atlantic. In the distance one can see the higher Pyrenees.

## A PERISCOPIC OBSERVATION TOWER

A periscopic observation tower which when extended measures 75 ft. over all has been received with other armistice material at the Artillery Repair Shops. Observations are made from the ground, the elevating and the traversing of the receiving lenses being accomplished by mechanism extending through the long collapsible column. It was built at Jena, Germany.

## SUPPLYING AMMUNITION TO THE AMERICAN ARMIES

BY ORD. SGT. LOUIS SAPPER

The early part of July, 1918, with about 20 men we left Camp Foey with orders to report to the Chief Ammunition Officer of the 1st Army at La Ferte in the vicinity of Chateau Thierry. These men had received a short training at that camp, consisting of several weeks of good hard work, and they formed the nucleus for the ammunition organizations that sprung up in the 1st and 2nd Armies. The work at Chateau Thierry was only of minor importance as compared with later accomplishments, and consisted largely in schooling under the French in the French-American dumps.

These parks had been heretofore operated exclusively by the French, but the difficulties caused by differences in languages, soon showed the necessity of American operation. From what I could learn our artillery was ever encountering difficulty in obtaining what they wanted, and the pleasure with which they received us was most assuredly convincing.

Along about the middle of August we returned to Neuf-chatel, the new 1st Army Headquarters, and in a few days we jumped to Dongermain, six kilometers from Toul. This latter place our force was materially augmented and numbered some several hundred men. Here also was to be found the largest ammunition reserve of the St. Mihiel sector, and the smaller dumps were "rationed" from it. The size of the place and variety of ammunition handled made it an ideal spot for schooling, and this was done on a very thorough basis. With Dongermain as Field Headquarters, we were sent out in groups of 6 to 8 men with orders to take over the various depots from the French. These men were the ammunition personnel of the depot and were assigned in charge of the different jobs. The labor was furnished by detachments of men from the Ordnance and Pioneer Infantry, and numbered anywhere from 150 to 250 men to the dump. The depots in this sector were never exclusively taken over by us, the French maintaining a working force at all times. However, after inventory was taken, we were in complete charge, but their superior knowledge of the material at hand and methods of handling same due to years of experience were of great assistance to us.

In the St. Mihiel Sector we had about twelve Dumps which were lo-

cated from 4 to 8 kilometers behind the lines, and fed the ammunition straight to the batteries. These dumps handled all types of ammunition. Afterwards, when we organized our own dumps in the Meuse-Argonne Sector we had three classes, one for light artillery, one for heavy artillery, and one for small arms ammunition, the latter also handling pyrotechnics and grenades. Our final system was to feed from Army Dumps to Corps or Divisional Dumps, and from thence to the batteries. We kept the ammunition separated into Manufacturers "lots", each consisting of about 6,000 rounds. All guns of a battery fire from the same lot at one time.

After the St. Mihiel drive, the 2nd Army took over this area, and all of the Ordnance men remained with the exception of about 15 men of the original force already referred to. These men moved over to the Meuse-Argonne sector with the 1st Army, and once more formed the working nucleus for the establishment of new parks. By this time we had sufficiently progressed to operate independently of the French and all the dumps during this entire offensive were purely American. By this time, also, more men had come up from the S. O. S. and these took the places of the men remaining with the 2nd Army. Greater difficulties in operating the depots was encountered here, owing to the fact that several of the dumps were being continuously shelled. Especially was this true at Montfaucon and Charpentry, while at Varennes we were harrassed by enemy planes.

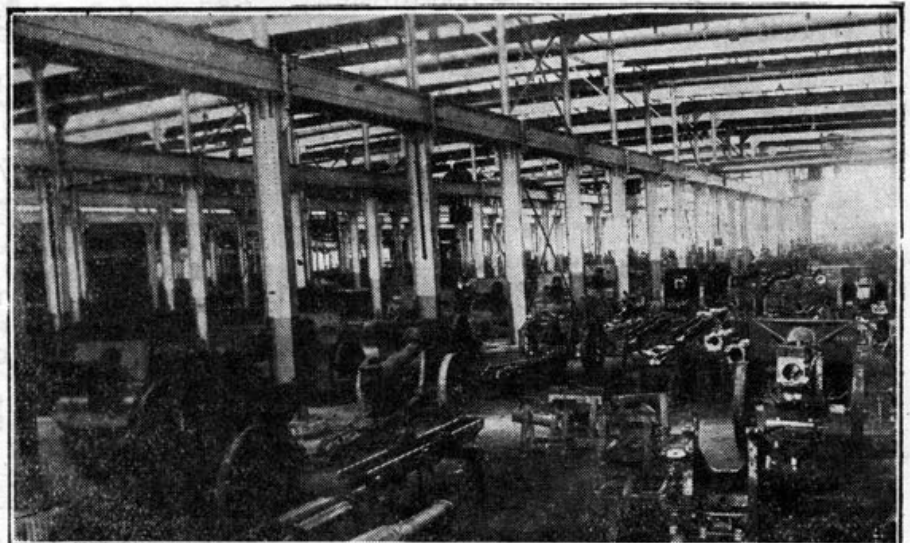
Despite the number of dumps shelled, only one was totally destroyed, and that was at La Fourne on August

30th, 1918. The enemy succeeded in placing 44 shells in this depot and the result was total destruction. However, all men escaped without injury.

In the Meuse-Argonne were three classes of Ammunition dumps; first, the army dumps which generally contained all classes of ammunition and were established from 4 to 8 kilometers in the rear, and these furnished the other two, namely, corps and divisional dumps, and also served as a reserve from which the batteries were directly fed; such a depot was near Verdun.

These dumps were organized for the best convenience of the combatants, some furnished heavy artillery, others light artillery, while others furnished small arms, grenades and pyrotechnics. Pyrotechnics consisting of three general classes of signals, namely, the Signal Bomb or Light, the Signal Rocket and the Very Pistol Cartridge, with their various sub-classifications, besides such materials as Smoke Candles. In all there were thirty-seven depots established in this, the Meuse-Argonne, sector.

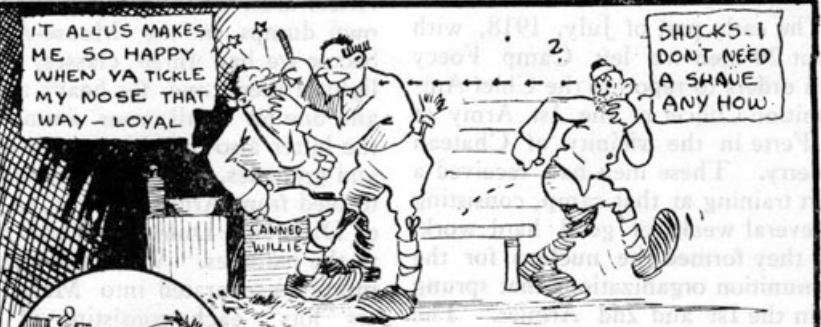
This organization handled the entire ammunition of the 1st Army throughout the two great American offensives. These men were always on duty, there being no such thing as time off, either day or night. One was more likely to be called during the night than during the day as most of the work was done under cover of darkness. There were times, particularly before a drive, when the men left the job just long enough for a bite to eat, while on the other hand several days might pass without any sight of work. When such was the case, time hung heavily as there was no recreation or diversion to be had.



OVERHAULING 155MM. HOWITZERS, ORDNANCE REPAIR SHOPS.

# It Will Be Hard To Leave — We Are So Used To It Now

*Too true — too true*



ITS GONNA BE HARD TO JUMP FROM THE OLD FOUR PASSENGER FLOP TO A REGULAR COUCHE —



ITS GONNA BE TUFF ON TH' ANKLES WHEN WE DISCARD TH' ARMY WRAPS



IT'LL BE HARD TO GET AWAY FROM MIXING UP THE RATIONS —



## GLEANINGS FROM THE PRESS

An extra session of Congress is to be called about June 1st.

Japan has subscribed \$50,000,000 to the United States Victory Loan.

An American military mission is studying the Swiss military system with the object of introducing it into the United States in a modified form.

The 332nd. Infantry has arrived in the United States from Italy. This was the only U. S. Regiment with the Italians, and by a series of marches and countermarches it created an imaginary five Divisions.

Captain E. F. White, an American aviator, flew from Chicago to Mineola, L. I. a total of 727 miles, on April 19th. in 6 hours and 50 minutes. He used a De Haviland-4 Biplane with a 400 horse power Liberty Motor.

## MEHUN Q. M. CLOSING BUSINESS

Final instructions for the closing of the Quartermaster stores and warehouses in Mehun were received by the Commanding Officer of the detachment this week from Headquarters of the S. O. S. The depot will cease its existence on May 31st, according to the order. Rations will be issued on the 10th of this month to include the 31st; after that date all rations will come here direct from Gievres.

The clothing, fuel, forage and miscellaneous supply branches of the local depot will close on May 10th and the Sales Commissary in Mehun will discontinue its business on May 24.

## MEHUN LOSES CLOSE GAME

Playing their first game in the Intermediate League, the Post Team tasted its initial defeat at the hands of the 19th Engineers of Nevers by a score of 1 to 0. The game was hard fought and was not decided until the visitors came to bat in the ninth inning, when Koweton caught one of Vardaman's fast ones and drove it to deep left scoring a man from second. Vardaman pitched a good heady game which would have won nine out of ten games, Sapper as usual displayed plenty of pep behind the bat, during the game the crowd was treated to some star fielding features by Feeny and Bates of Mehun, Koweton starred both in the field and at bat for the Nevers nine.

## GERMAN MINNENWERFERS

The complete overhauling—which includes replacement of unserviceable parts and the preparation against further deterioration—by the Artillery Repair Division of approximately 600 German minnenwerfers, and the shipment of 40 of the 76 mm. and 40 of the 245 mm. calibers to the United States, where they will form part of the Ordnance Engineering and the Ordnance Historical Collections, has attracted much attention both from visitors and from our own men.

The minnenwerfers are more mobile than any of the other pieces of French artillery of similar caliber used in the recent war. They range in caliber from 76 mm., 2.99 in., to 24 cm., 9.8 in. in caliber and are equipped with recoil and counter recoil mechanisms. The small size was considered by the German experts to be so closely associated with the infantry units that their use was under the direct control of the commanders of the assaulting troops, rather than under the control of the artillery commander. Every infantry battalion had four to six minnenwerfers as part of its equipment, and records were kept describing minutely inspections and accidents, the latter which were frequently due to the extreme strength of the propelling charges.

The construction of the minnenwerfer varies in the different calibers. Lighter models are easily dismantled and carried by two men, or mounted on two wheeled carriages, the gun being set on a round steel platform which has mountings for the short barrel permitting its adjustment for high angle or straight trajectory fire.

It is thought the Germans obtained the idea of the modern use of small mortars from German officers engaged with the Turks against the Bulgarians in 1912-13.

## GERMAN 150 MM. GUN

A number of pieces of Germany's most modern heavy field artillery are in a recent shipment of armistice materials received at the Artillery Repair Shops. Several of these are 150 mm. rifles mounted on field carriages. These German guns are much heavier than similar French artillery. The heavy one-piece metal spade, a part of the gun's trail which anchors the carriage against recoil, gives a fair idea of the gun's proportions. It is over five by three feet in dimensions and made of 1/2 inch thick sheet steel.

## THE TOWN OF BARMONT

The picturesque old village of Barmont to the north of the camp, across the Yevre on the road to Mehun, was once an important Roman town. Columns and Corinthian Capitals of the earliest Roman dates have been found along the Yevre. The church of Thinay-Barmont is as old as the 12th Century; the original walls with their round windows still stand, but the building has been converted into a barn.

Thinay was a fief entirely separate from Mehun and belonged in 1380 to Jeanne de Beauviller. In 1695 the name of the town was changed to Barmont when it belonged to Francois Perroton. The Chateau of Barmont, situated a little east of the church, dates back only to the 17th century. The town is perhaps one of the oldest in this part of France, and was one of the last to remain under the feudal system, belonging to the Lords of Barmont until after the Revolution.

## A LETTER FROM BORDEAUX

Editor "Mehun News",--

I have heard of your publication from many sources and am anxious to receive copies of the paper representing our department. By way of explanation, let me inform you that our detachment, sixteen in strength, is on duty at the Bordeaux Embarkation Camp, but let me further state that the men at Mehun are nearer "God's Country" than are we who are listed as permanent personnel. We see thousands of men leaving for the States every week and only two weeks ago bade farewell to our friends in the 3rd Ordnance Battalion which sailed from this port. We all have at least two service chevrons having been on duty at Gievres, Mehun, Foecy, Is-sur-Tille, Le Havre and too many other places.

Hoping to be placed on your mailing list and wishing you success in your undertaking of the Ordnance mouth-piece, I am

Bertram Raff, Sgt. 1st Class.

## "Y" TROUPE ENTERTAINS MANY

The "Tunes, Chalk and Magic" troupe which played at the "Y" the fore part of the week entertained a large crowd at both appearances. The program is made up of some popular instrumental selections, sketch work and sleight of hand stunts. The caste of four, three girls and one man, are recent arrivals from the U. S.

## CAMP BRIEFS

During the early part of next week 553 men are expected to arrive in this camp from Dongermain.

Lieut. Col. Tasker, Sanitary Inspector of the Intermediate Section, made an inspection of the camp and shops on Tuesday.

A new department of the Ordnance Repair Shops has been formed with Major Ericson in charge. It will sort and sell the unserviceable material in the yards.

A convoy of 50 men has been selected which will leave this camp the first of next week to go to Is-sur-Tille in order to drive trucks from that place to Mehun or the Base Ports.

Bourges is proving the Mecca for the boys of this camp on Sundays and the trains to and from there are usually jammed. Bourges is quite a pretty city and the parks are beautiful at this particular season of the year. Last Sunday over 300 Ordnance men were visitors there.

**Total Carloads Shipped to May 8th, 3,701.**

## C. & M. Division Has Many Tasks

(continued from page 1.)

this Division was in December when a total of 601 men were assigned to this work. At the present time however there are about 125 men assigned to the C. & M., of these 65 are colored personnel, 35 are Chinese and the remainder are Ordnance mechanics.

The duties of the Division at this time are varied and include such work as installing shelves in the messhalls used by the French women to installing fire hydrants, keeping the corduroy road in repair, digging drain ditches around the shops and in fact everything that pertains to the maintenance of the buildings here. Very little construction work is being carried on. Lieut. L. L. McColister is the officer in charge of the work of this small but important Division.

## BUSINESS INCREASES AT EXCHANGE

Setting a record of over 7,000 francs as the gross receipts for six and one half hour's business, the local post exchange has shown itself to be a real asset to the men of the camp. More than 1000 packs of cigarettes, 75 boxes of cigars, 500 pounds of assorted candies made by such well known American companies as Schrafft, Lowney, Auerback and E. J. Brack and Son are sold every day. As high as twenty boxes of Washington apples have been handled across the counter in two hours time. In fact the business has become so large that a separate warehouse capable of storing a month's supply is now being used.

A large supply of luxuries that make a soldier's life more pleasant is now on hand; Wrigley's gum, Doublemint, Spearmint and Juicy Fruit, real American toothpaste, plenty of jam and apple butter; cakes in large quantities; canned fruits and regular tomato catsup to season those Sunday night beans may be bought. Practically anything that a soldier wants may be secured through this exchange.

In order to accommodate the large crowds a unit system of shelving has been arranged. Each of the three salesmen has a complete stock behind him with his own cash drawer. The manager says: "Step right up boys and don't be afraid to break the old army system of standing in line for what you want. Our motto is to serve as many as possible in a short length of time."

## CHINESE LABOR COMPANY ARRIVES

Administration Labor Company No. 26 with Lieutenant J. I. Ishester in charge arrived in camp from Mesves today. Fifteen non-commissioned officers, 2 French interpreters, 2 French soldiers and 243 Chinese laborers make up the Company.

## The Town of Barmont

## MEHUN WALLOPS LYON NINE

The Lyon nine proved no match for the Mehun team in their second game of the Intermediate schedule played here Thursday afternoon and the locals romped away with the long end of an 8 to 2 score. The locals played stellar baseball throughout the game and the result was never in doubt after the fourth inning when Captain E. Faucett of the visitors was forced to retire from the box being replaced by Hoskins whose offerings were also knocked to the four corners of the "lot". Ramsey, Crippen, Reville and Martin were the stick artists for the locals and the work of Munch for the Lyon team deserved credit.

## TRAINLOAD OF TROPHIES TO U. S.

The second train of German artillery to leave here this week under convoy for the States left Thursday. It was made up of thirty-six carloads of German artillery of the following classes: Serviceable, special material suitable for service and trophies, the guns ranging in calibre from 37 mm. field guns to the 240 mm. trench mortars and included a number of 77 mm. field guns and 76 and 105 mm. trench mortars.

It goes via Bordeaux to Aberdeen Proving Grounds. Captain Marker with eight enlisted men make up the convoy for the train.

## SOCCER TEAM ELIMINATED

The Mehun soccer representatives suffered a setback at Bourges last Sunday, when they were defeated by a score of 4 to 2. This game eliminates Mehun from the soccer finals at Paris.

## THE "MERRY MAKERS"

Monday and Tuesday, May 12 and 13, the "Merry Makers" will appear at the local "Y." The troupe is composed of three American girls and one demobilized Ordnance sergeant. The program consists of music and songs.

