

Regarded as a mere "bluff" by her adversaries, the United States' entrance apparently failed to cause undue anxiety in Berlin. With an unprepared democracy for another enemy in which a great many were believed to have been opposed to war, Germany had little cause for worry, she declared.

But America went to work. The act produced an electrical effect on her people and almost instantly united her various factions, creeds, parties, and nationalities for one purpose—to crush Germany and her Allies. She became a workshop, with no hours, in her determination to end the European fight victoriously, and thus save democracy for the world. Every effort was bended to the cause, every penny of wealth was eagerly held ready for the call, and every atom of energy was expended in her feverish haste to redeem mankind.

Her sons by the hundreds of thousands rushed to the colors, as their fathers did in the wars of their day, to see another victory added to the flag which had never known defeat. That the distribution of soldiers throughout the land might be as nearly equitable as possible, Congress passed the Selective Service Act in May, 1918, the greatest mobilization machinery developed by any of the 25 nations at war.

Naturally there were obstacles and delays. A nation's task in rising up over night to send a formidable force three thousand miles overseas to fight for world freedom is not the kind that can be accomplished without some disorder and delay. But loyalty and union did it, and on June 26th, 1917, only two months after the declaration of war, the first American doughboy landed on French soil. On November 3d, 1917, the Yanks had their first clash with the Germans. On January 31st, 1918, a report reached America that American infantrymen were occupying first line trenches for the first time.



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French Crossing a Perilous Bridge on the Advance Toward St. Quentin, 1917.