

THE STORY OF THE RAINBOW DIVISION

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The story of the Rainbow division by Raymond S. Tompkins

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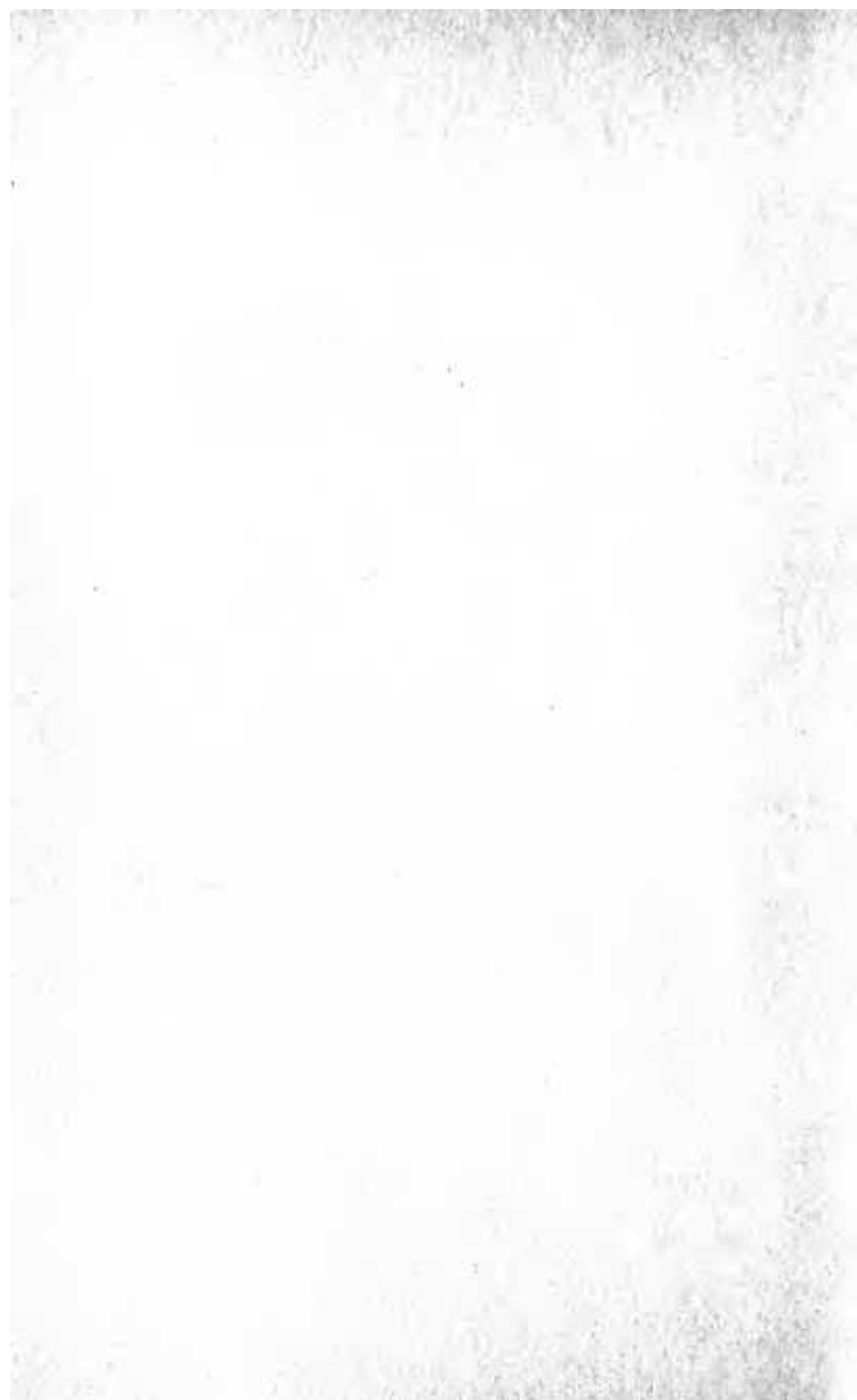
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BY

RAYMOND S. TOMPKINS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

MAJOR GENERAL CHARLES T. MENOHER

COMMANDER OF THE RAINBOW DIVISION
THROUGH ALL ITS FIGHTS



UNITED STATES
ARMY

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FOREWORD

When the history of the recent world war has been analyzed, it will be found that the psychological forces at work have been the most powerful of all those called into exercise to save the world for democracy.

The fact that the "Rainbow" Division was composed of elements of the National Guard selected from a majority of the states of the Union should have constituted an element of weakness; should have made for lack of cohesion. If the idea of constituting a division in this way was a happy thought, the selection of the name "Rainbow" for this composite organization was an inspiration. I consider that the name in itself was perhaps the strongest asset the Division had. Instead of lack of cohesion; instead of an organization made up of elements, each with local interests that might have been antagonistic, the Division constituted a complete, compact, cohesive, single unit which ran like a well oiled ma-

chine. Of course, it had a most excellent staff, which was headed by a most brilliant officer, General MacArthur, and the Division was privileged to plume itself more or less on its excellent staff work. Yet I believe these desirable results would never have been arrived at without the name "Rainbow."

It is an interesting fact that on the morning when the Division left the Baccarat Sector, after four months of intensive training in trench warfare, to be thrown in in the Champagne to assist in checking this last desperate drive of the Germans, a most beautiful rainbow appeared directly over the sector occupied by the Division. Again on the morning the Division became engaged on the Ourcq, another beautiful rainbow appeared directly over the point where contact was first gained. On at least one other occasion this same phenomenon appeared.

When on the defensive as in the Champagne, resisting the desperate attempts of the Germans to break through, there never was any thought—it never entered into the calculations, that the Division might have to retire. In the same way

when on the offensive, there was never any thought except that of going forward.

To have commanded such a body of men throughout the entire time of its service against the enemy, of some nine months, was a privilege indeed.

In this book the story of the Rainbow Division has been told accurately, fully and absorbingly. As nearly as it is possible to do so in a narrative that tells of the experiences of but one division, "The Story of the Rainbow" tells the story of America's part in the Great War.



Major-General.