

THE MILITARY CENSORSHIP OF PICTURES

Photographs that came under the ban during the
World War - and why.

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

This volume is based upon magazine articles written for popular consumption while the author was the Officer in Charge of the Pictorial Section of the Historical Branch, War Plans Division, General Staff. They were published in Collier's (April 19, 1919), in Leslie's Weekly, (June 21, 1919), and in the International Military Digest, (February 1920).

The original photographic prints with which this book is illustrated are furnished by the Signal Corps, U. S. A. They include not only official pictures made by the camera men of the Signal Corps, but also pictures made by private photographers (reproduced in the Signal Corps Laboratory from prints that were submitted for visa to the Committee on Public Information), as well as a few pictures that were published without sanction - and which caused complications that have given them historical significance.

During the period of America's participation in the World War over 93,000 official still photographs were made by the Signal Corps, and over 900,000 feet of official motion picture film - all of which were censored by the General Staff at the Army War College. Those pictures that were approved for publication were released through the Committee on Public Information. In addition, the General Staff received hundreds of thousands of still pictures from private photographers and illustrative news syndicates which, by the terms of the Photographer's Permits issued to them, (See photograph No 86606) were required to submit three prints of each; one to be censored by the Committee on Public Information and returned to the sender, one to be retained by the Committee as a record, and one to be transmitted to the files of the Pictorial Section of the General Staff, which was charged with the duty of compiling the pictorial records of the war.

To the author fell a considerable portion of the responsibility not only of drawing up the censorship rulings on pictures, but also the task of applying them to the enormous volume of photographs that poured into the offices both of the Committee on Public Information and of the General Staff, reaching on occasions as high as 12,000 still photographs in a single day and several thousand feet of motion-picture film besides.

Out of this experience, extending intermittently over two war years, the notes in this volume are drawn. They are here presented in written form with the purpose of serving as a reference and guide to those who may be called upon to serve in the capacity of censor of pictures in future emergencies.

Copies of this book have been deposited in the Congressional Library and in the libraries of the Army War College, Washington, D. C.; at the West Point Military Academy, West Point, New York; at the Leavenworth School at Leavenworth, Kansas, and in the office of the Chief Signal Officer of the Army.

When the United States entered upon a state of war with Germany, the curtain was preemptorily lowered upon all photography of military activities until the War Department could take an account of stock, and come to some understanding as to just what pictures should and should not be made and published without detriment to the welfare both of the army and of the public.

HOW A PICTURE-CENSORSHIP WAS EFFECTED WITHOUT A CENSORSHIP LAW.

To use the term "curtain of censorship" would be improper; there was no censorship of photographs - in a technical sense, at least. There was no military ^{censorship} law. Indeed, it is probable that the United States is the only great nation that ever went through a war without one. When the President created the Committee on Public Information, on April 11, 1917, that body was promptly but improperly regarded by the people as a censorship board, and George Creel, its chairman, was referred to in many of the public prints as the "censor." No one was quicker to refute this appellation than Mr. Creel himself. The Committee on Public Information was not a censorship board. So far as pictures were concerned, it was an advisory board only. It made a study of the censorship regulations on photographs which foreign nations, particularly the Allies, had found necessary to impose, and from their practical experience, much of it acquired at great cost, it evolved a policy that was based largely upon the policies of the French and English, and adapted it to our peculiar conditions and needs. And from this beginning grew the War Department's policies toward photographs -- policies which were modified from time to time to meet the changing exigencies of the hour, and which were eventually reduced to printed words, but which never attained the purport of

"censorship" rulings. (See No. 86607) They were merely a list of general groups of photographs which were not regarded as to the public interest to publish, and which were sent to photographers and editors generally for their information and guidance. And to their credit be it said, that only in rare and isolated instances did they violate either the letter or the spirit of this "voluntary censorship."

The first point for the War Department to determine was the kind of photograph that should be suppressed.

The second point was to find out how to suppress that photograph without the aid of a censorship law.

Up to the time that this country entered the war, the Government had had practically no experience in censoring photographs. Such supervision as had been exercised over the taking of pictures in military posts was exercised by the local military commanders. If any photograph made by a private photographer was published and caused trouble, the local commander was held to account. So the natural tendency was to keep camera men away from military reservations, particularly forts, arsenals and other places where information of military value might be obtained. And as such pictures were usually of comparatively trifling value to the press of the country, (for the public interest in the affairs of the army was at a low ebb before the World War), the effort of obtaining permits was not generally regarded as worth the effort. So that when this country entered the conflict there was in the "morgues" of the newspapers and illustrative news syndicates, a dearth of military photographs.

But the spring of 1917 changed all that.

Interest in our army became real. The demand for pictures of soldiers and of war material became extensive and

insistent. Press photographers haunted the forts, the shipyards and the factories where munition was manufactured. Few permits were granted by the local officers at that time, and when war was finally a reality, a general order was issued from Washington to allow no photographs to be made at all in areas controlled by the War Department. At the same time the Government realized that it was advisable to maintain the public's interest in our war activities with the aid of pictures and to let it know what our soldiers were doing. The question was, what pictures should and should not be published?

The Value of Military Information Conveyed in Pictures

First of all, no photographs should be published that revealed information of military value to the enemy.

It has been said that Germany directed her campaigns in 1870 largely on information published in the French newspapers. France learned a lesson in censorship at that time, but that was before the days of the news photograph and the movies. In 1914, both France and England permitted certain private photographers to accompany their armies - until it was discovered that some of these pictures, which revealed information of military value, somehow found their way into the enemy countries. So both France and England promptly went to the other extreme and revoked all photographers' permits and for several months no pictorial record at all was made of the activities of their armies.

How the System of "Photographer's Permits" Operated

Eventually, this curtain of censorship was penetrated by official photographers - enlisted men and commissioned officers, (in some instances also by civilian employees), who operated under orders and whose pictures were government property and were circulated under government control.

This was the system that was put into effect in this country.

Permits were issued to responsible private photographers whose credentials were viséd by the Committee on Public Information and whose authority was established in writing by the Adjutant General in the case of the Army and by the Secretary of the Navy personally, in the case of the Navy.

Such permits (86606) were issued for specified places and dates on condition that all photographs so made should be submitted for approval and that copies should be furnished for preservation in the permanent records of the War Department. In this way it was made possible for war photographs to be taken in this country under proper restrictions; only in a few isolated cases did the photographers, who were trusted with these permits, show any inclination to abuse their privileges. If they did, their permits were revoked and further privileges were denied them. And to penetrate the censorship curtain in the more confidential areas in this country as well as overseas, official photographers - some of the most expert news photographers in the country - were enlisted and commissioned in the Signal Corps.

Thus provision was made for passing judgment upon both official and privately taken photographs without the need of a censorship law. Only occasionally did photographs slip through that were prejudicial to the public interests, and these slipped through largely because the photographers did not appreciate the danger that lurked in them. The camera men and editors, as well as the Government authorities, had to be educated in war photography - not merely in pictures that revealed movements of troops, but pictures of infinitely more subtle import that might cause, and in some cases did cause, serious embarrassment to this Government in its relations with friendly nations, as well as possible military losses. Not until the records of the enemy are revealed to us will we learn just to what extent the sinking of an American vessel may be traced to its silhouette, or a knowledge of its gun position, or

of its date of sailing, that was obtained by a German agent from the publication of an apparently innocent snap shot of the ship at its dock, or how a German invention was perfected and put to use against American soldiers as the result of an idea conveyed in a casual kodak view of a factory workroom.

Photographs That Are of Value to the Enemy

Chief among the taboos photographs were those which showed movements of troops.

"Whatever other pictures you release, be sure not to release those that tell the enemy where troop units are or even that they are in motion," was the importunate advice of the French High Commission, who had learned from bitter experience the great value of such information to the enemy's intelligence officers. Even such an obviously innocuous snap shot as that of a society woman serving tea at a farewell garden party, to the officers of a certain regiment, may put the enemy's agent on the alert and tip him off to a troop movement of import. And the fact that a certain regiment is moving from one point to another point and may be in a certain sector on the battle front at a certain time, is of very great value indeed to the enemy; many a spy has risked his life to obtain just this kind of information. The size of the command, the character of its equipment, the number of its guns, the experience of its men, the nature of the command which it supports or relieves and the motives for sending it into its new position are details on which important issues may depend. In one instance, during the early stages of the war, a French repulse was attributed to a photograph that showed a small body of French soldiers en route to a sector, and who were identified as comparatively inexperienced troops by a style of legging which had been issued only to reservists for two years, and who were promptly opposed by an attacking force of veteran shock troops.

Just what kind of photographs could be classified as "dangerous" was, of course, unknown to the American photographer and editor when this country entered the war.

Willing as both were to conform to the government's purpose of withholding from publication certain pictures that might be prejudicial to the public interest to circulate, neither the photographer nor the editor had experience in identifying the "dangerous" features of photographs, nor were means immediately available for getting authoritative rulings from government officials. The United States went to war without any machinery for controlling or directing the making or publication of photographs. As it went to war - and came out of the war - without even a censorship law, the only "censors" of such pictures as the press of the country was considerate enough to submit to were army and navy officers who, however capable and conscientious, were naturally, unqualified to pass judgment upon the wide variety of pictures which they were called upon to "censor," and which entailed an extension and often technical knowledge of the activities and policies not merely of the various branches of the army, but of the Navy and State Departments as well and often of the other departments of the Government. No one man nor anyone group of men could have the knowledge required to give authoritative decisions on pictures, except within broad limitations.

How the Censorship Was Organized

A proper military censorship on pictures necessitates more than a mere group of censors; it requires an organization that

- (1) Restricts the taking of photographs that might reveal information of military value;
- (2) Enables the authorities directly involved and consequently best qualified to pass judgment upon the fitness of the pictures for publication to act as "censors."

The first step in the creation of such an organization was

taken by the Committee on Public Information almost immediately following the appointment of George Creel as Chairman in April, 1917. A conference was held in the War Department which was attended by Major Douglas MacArthur, (later Major General) who was then acting as censor for the Army; Lieutenant Commander Porterfield, then censor for the Navy, Mr. Philip Patchin, representing the State Department, and Mr. Kendall Banning, representing the Committee on Public Information.

In order to coordinate the various and often conflicting "censorships" of pictures, the Committee on Public Information was established as a central clearing office for all photographs that were submitted for approval. Such photographs as required special rulings - for example, pictures of technical equipment for airplanes or ordnance - were referred by the Committee to that branch of the War Department which was immediately concerned and which alone could know their significance and could determine their fitness for publication. Thus while photographs submitted or censorship were stamped with the official imprint of the Committee, the actual censorship was exercised by the officials of the war, Navy and State Departments.

Out of this procedure was evolved in time a fairly definite policy toward the censorship of pictures. (Nos. 86605 and 86607) Gradually with the helpful guidance of the French and English authorities who had learned many practical lessons through actual experience during the preceding three years, a set of general rulings was drawn up. Policies were established not on the personal and sometimes off-hand opinion of some officer temporarily acting as censor as incidental to his other duties at some remote point, but on the consensus of opinions of authorities who had made studies of the subject and whose conclusions were based upon sound and clearly defined principles.

The Five Main Groups of Pictures That Were Banned

A resume of those censorship rulings, which effected the War Department and which during the war were necessarily reserved for official use only, are appended herewith.

It will be noted that the list includes several times that were obviously inspired by experience, and which an un-informed censor, whoever intelligent or careful, could hardly be expected to regard as dangerous. The rulings might be divided into five main groups, as follows:

NO PICTURES SHOULD BE PASSED THAT -

1. Disclosed information of military value to the enemy;
2. Tended to misrepresent or bring ridicule upon the American soldier, affect his morale, or be prejudicial to his interests;
3. Might be used by the enemy for anti-American or pro-enemy propoganda;
4. Antagonized neutral nations, or injured or misrepresented the Allies.
5. Effected the morale of the American public.

I: Pictures that Disclose Information of Military Import

The most important and largest group is the first.

It is the paramount duty of every censor to withhold any and all pictures that might conceivably give away information of military value, ranging from positions and movements of troops and munitions to mechanism of equipment. Specifically pictures of the following objects were taboo:

- (a) Fortifications
- (b) Magazines
- (c) Wireless plants
- (d) Manufactories of war material
- (e) Ports of embarkation
- (f) Fixed land defenses, (including number, native and positions of the guns)
- (g) Buildings devoted to experimental work and research work

- (h) Movements of troops marching or in transports that reveal locations
- (i) Detachments whose special duties are shown
- (j) Sentinels or guards whose locations can be identified and the proximity of valuable property strategic positions thereby disclosed
- (k) New military formations
- (l) Experimental work of all kinds
- (m) Portraits of officers or men or interior views that show maps or diagrams on the walls, or papers that might indicate military plans or the officers' duties
- (n) Training scenes which reveal changes in front-line tactics
- (o) War material other than the standard equipment presumably known to the enemy; i.e.;

- New types of airplanes and balloons
- New types of engines
- Special cameras for mapping and reconnaissance work
- New types of bombs, bombing sights and bomb releasing devices
- Devices for commeration
- Stabilizers
- Mounts for guns and cameras
- Gun handling gear
- Anti-aircraft guns
- Guns with special mounts
- Range-finding devices and apparatus to determine the speed of targets
- Methods of manufacture or testing guns and munitions
- Interior mechanisms of rapid-fire guns; (for several months no pictures of either the Browning light or heavy gun were released);

- (p) Camouflage work, other than that generally known to the enemy
- (q) Methods of hand-to-hand conflict
- (r) New inventions of all kinds, ranging from bomb-throwing devices to life-saving apparatus:
- (s) All airplane views, made over cities, towns, camps, coast lines and other points where the presence or absence of objects of military value might be indicated.

With such a list before him, even the unexperienced censor could exercise his functions with a fair degree of safety, although details of very considerable value to the enemy have often passed

unobserved even by the most meticulous. On one occasion, for example a photograph of a common type of airplane in process of assembling in a factory, was about to be "passed" when attention was called to a small detail, in the remote background, that to the discerning expert revealed an important innovation in plane construction. It is often the casual detail in the background that conveys information of the most value to the enemy agent - and it is this casual detail that is most likely to be overlooked by the censor whose attention is centered on the main object of interest in the picture.

Innumerable photographs of soldiers were withheld because the regimental number was discernable upon a haversack or tent pole (thus identifying the unit), in connection with a recognizable landmark that revealed the exact location of the unit, (No. 16592 and 15605) In the same manner the mere portraits of known officers, if shown in photographs that revealed the locale, gave evidence of the positions of their commands. No Sherlock Holmes is required to "read" a snap shot of a street scene in New York, for example, which shows in the crowd a couple of sailors from a British vessel whose name appears on their hatbands, particularly if a public clock is discernable in the distance, or a newspaper of which the date or headline is decipherable, or if the occasion can be otherwise recognized and dated. The fact that these sailors may be observed by thousands of New Yorkers does not necessarily justify the censor in releasing such a picture for publication. For an enemy agent to transmit information through the uncertain and perilous secret channels, usually under surveillance, is one thing; to transmit it openly through the public prints, without risk, is quite another.

But the greater part of the censored photographs were

of a purely technical nature - machine parts, gun mechanism, tests of war material and manufacturing processes. Practically all of such pictures were made by the official photographers of the Signal Corps or by trusted private photographers employed for such purposes. Nevertheless the average editor apparently had the idea that the censor of military pictures at Washington was holding the cream of the official war photographs in the confidential files of the War Department. And many had the idea that the censor was withholding something that they owned and had a right to see.

As a matter of fact, both were wrong.

An inspection of the confidential files of photographs would have revealed little of interest to the average editor or reader; most of the pictures would not have come within their understanding at all. It might, however, have revealed many photographs that would have been not only of interest, but of very real value to certain technical experts in the enemy countries, who in most cases, (but not in all), would have comprehended their significance.

The casual interest of the American people in purely technical photographs - which constituted the largest group of "Not for Publication" pictures - was infinitesimal in comparison to the safety of the American soldier in the first line trenches, or to the ties that reached back from him to the little home in Keokuk, Iowa or Walpole, New Hampshire. Whether it knows it or not - (and how can it know it?), - the interests of the American people, to which the censor himself belonged, were much better served by withholding pictures that would give "aid and comfort to the enemy" than in throwing open the files broadcast to friend and foe alike, as some well-intentioned but - uninformed citizens of "broad, democratic sympathies" were constantly recommending

Occasionally, too, a photograph was withheld because it

was obtained surreptitiously and in violation of the rulings. To have permitted a clever but unscrupulous photographer to profit from his disregard of the War Department's requests would have merely penalized the great majority of photographers who were conscientiously observing the rules and "playing the game," and would have encouraged a general attempt to break through the barriers - at the serious risk of disseminating information of military value.

It was important, for example, to withhold all pictures showing our transports; a large proportion of such views indicated the units that were being shipped, their equipment, the identification of the vessel, the location and character of the convoy. (No. 15626) Accordingly, as a matter of precaution, all cameras were forbidden and all photographs made by them that reached the hands of the authorities were confiscated - even an occasional harmless one.

Of course, one may argue that the information embodied in such photographs could reach Wilhelmstrasse through other mediums. So it could, and so it likely did in many cases. But at least, the censor of pictures could close this particular and exceedingly safe and easy channel of information to the enemy. Copies of American newspapers and magazines not only reached Wilhelmstrasse promptly through neutral countries, but were openly displayed on newsstands in Berlin during the war; any pictures printed in them, together with all information secreted in those pictures, might reasonably be assumed to get into the German's hands expeditiously and without danger to the transmitter.

It was a part of the censor's job to see that this particular means of communication was blocked.

2: Pictures that are Prejudicial to the Morale of the Soldier

The second group of pictures that came under the ban was

not always easy to determine. What kind of pictures effected the morale of the American soldier? What kind was it prejudicial to his interests to release? Briefly they may be summarized as follows:

- (a) Pictures that showed soldiers improperly equipped or "out of uniform", or that represented them in unseemly attitudes or improper environment;
- (b) Pictures of drills on "faked" battle scenes that gave false impressions of military tactics and methods.
- (c) Pictures that gave information concerning physical or psychological tests of recruits or candidates for special branches of the service.

In passing judgment upon pictures that fall into this classification much must be left to the good sense of the censor.

On one occasion, for example, a musical comedy company gave a performance in one of the camps near New York under the authority of the camp officials. The members of the cast were entertained, naturally enough, and numerous snap shots were made of the affair, including a few posed pictures showing the enlisted men dancing on the lawn with some of the young women members of the company in costumes. (No. 86611) These particular photographs were withheld, - not because of any impropriety in the pictures themselves or in the occasion, but because they might so readily have been used to misrepresent camp life and be published with misleading captions as "evidence" of the dissolute life that the men were leading in the army. The censor acted upon his knowledge of the unscrupulous methods that were sometimes used by certain radical and pacifist elements - always but not consciously the tools of the enemy - to arouse prejudice against the army.

The wisdom of keeping secret the various methods of examining recruits or candidates for special work, (such as the Air Service, for example), the value of which depended largely on the element of surprise, is too apparent to call for comment.

All such information would, of course, enable the candidates to prepare themselves in advance - even to the extent of memorizing the arrangement of the eye-testing chart that may be depicted on the wall of the surgeon's office - and thereby defeat the purpose of the examination. (No. 8242)

Pictures of soldiers either drinking alcoholic beverages or in the attitudes of drinking were withheld after the general order was issued that forbade soldiers in uniform to use intoxicants in this country. The only such pictures that came to the attention of the authorities however, were frankly posed in a spirit of fun, - even the widely circulated official snap shot of American soldiers making merry over the (empty) steins of German officers whose "Kanteen" had just been captured during the drive on the St. Mihiel sector. (No. 20930)

Only in a few cases were photographs withheld on the grounds that they did not illustrate approved military tactics, and most of those were motion pictures of battle scenes, staged by well-meaning directors of the film companies whose knowledge of modern warfare was largely derived from books on the battles of the Spanish and Civil War and augmented by their imaginations. The Army censors assumed the position that so long as such pictures did not disclose information of value to the enemy they could be released, although such releases did not imply endorsement. If some of these films ever reached Wilhelmstrasse they probably caused many an anxious hour to the German intelligence officers whose duty it was to keep informed of our latest equipment and methods.

3: Pictures That are Used as Anti-American
or Pro-Enemy Propoganda

In the third main group may be found some of the most subtle problems with which the censor had to deal. It was difficult to anticipate in just what ways the German mind might pervert the

significance of what really was and appeared to be a harmless photograph and make it serve his purpose - either to lend encouragement to the German people or to prejudice neutral opinion against us.

A snap shot of a mob in an American city or even a picture of an ordinary street crowd listening to a soap-box orator on woman suffrage might be circulated in enemy or neutral countries as "evidence" of the unrest in this country or as public "protests" against the President for continuing the war, or even as "proof" of the public clamor for food. (No. 44813) In such cases, of course, misleading captions would furnish the import which the photographs themselves lacked. Views of destruction of property - ruins of a factory or warehouse that had been burned, a vessel that had met with an accident at its dock (No. 25122) - were easily available and lent themselves readily to the purpose of bolstering German morale by propagating the idea that German agents were successfully active in their service to the Fatherland, and that American resources were being depleted.

Both motion pictures and still pictures that purported to show Yankee contempt for our sister republics in Central and South America offered excellent opportunities to the enemy to sway public opinion against us; indeed, several films, some of them merely comedies with no serious intent, were withheld from circulation because they could be diverted to such uses with but slight alterations in the plots or titles. No phase of the cunning of the German propagandist was more subtle than his persistent efforts to capitalize every opportunity to inflame public sentiment in neutral nations against American traits or institutions, and photographs were peculiarly effective in this purpose - not because they were harmful in themselves but because they are so readily accepted as convincing testimony to the "truth." (See No. 86612).

"Photographs do not lie" is a glib phrase that the unthinking public accepts as a statement of fact. Yet few mediums of communication are so easily manipulated or so readily perverted to purposes of deception, as every camera man knows, particularly the motion picture camera man who is experienced in "shooting" feature films. The censorship of such pictures, accordingly, entailed more than a mere casual estimate of their literal face value; it included some knowledge of psychology and of the made-in-Germany psychology in particular. Several feature films were found to be "prejudicial to the public interests" only after they had been released and a part of the damage done, particularly in the instances of motion pictures that treated Latin-American themes.

4: Pictures that Disturb Relations with Friendly Nations

This third group occasionally overlapped on the fourth group - pictures that affected our relations with friendly nations. Included in this classification were news photographs as well as motion picture story films, ranging from such scenes as the taking over of foreign property of friendly nations to out-and-out fiction movies that exported Japanese and Spanish villains or depreciated the character or war efforts of the Allies. In the vast majority of such cases, of course, the photographers and producers were quite innocent of any improper intent; they merely did not comprehend the reaction that a circulation of such pictures might (and in some cases did) entail in certain quarters. The motion picture producer who depicted the evil machinations of an Oriental spy in his drama, or in other ways tended to arouse American opinion against a friendly nation, was merely grasping at an emotional situation because of its dramatic value; he was not giving thought to the possibilities of his film from the propoganda standpoint. In their efforts to extol American valor and efficiency they were sometimes led to a depreciation of the French and British virtues

by comparison - unintentionally. Nevertheless such pictures were fraught with dangerous consequences, especially at a time when the destinies of the Allies were largely dependent upon close cooperation and mutual understanding and upon unity of purpose and action. Whatever the individual American's point of view may be toward the Japanese, Mexican, Irish or any other question, time of war was not the opportune time to exploit them if they tended to undermine that international entente which was so important to maintain.

No one of course, was quicker to understand or to capitalize our tendency to bring up subjects that threatened this entente, than the enemy. However unimpeachable their motives may have been, the anti-British, anti-French, anti-Japanese, anti-Mexican and anti-Russian propagandists played into German hands and were, directly or indirectly, encouraged by the enemy. The more discussion could be aroused and prejudice stimulated against friendly nations, the more would American attention and effort be diverted from the immediate purpose of the war against Germany. And pictures were among the several instruments used for just this purpose.

In many cases photographs that touched upon our international relations became matters of diplomatic intercourse. Representatives of friendly nations were properly and commendably prompt in taking up through official channels many instances in which pictures threatened to disturb our international relations, and through the State Department many motion picture concerns were induced to make changes in their dramatic films or to withhold them altogether.

5: Pictures that Affect the Morale of the Public

The fifth group comprised a vast assortment of pictures which had to be considered from the point of view of the American

people alone. In the absence of a censorship law, (and the United States is probably the only great nation that went to war without one), the problem of censoring pictures was a difficult one. Official photographs, made by the camera men of the Signal Corps, were of course the property of the Army, and these automatically passed through military channels into the hands of the properly constituted censors. Many of these pictures were of a highly confidential nature, and were properly reserved "for official use only." But pictures made by private photographers, with or without permits issued by the War Department through the Committee on Public Information, were usually intended for the newspapers, which gave them wide circulation. Consequently if such pictures were detrimental to the public welfare, the War Department could merely advise against their use, without having power to enforce its rulings.

As a hint that the War Department did not approve the publication of such photographs unless their potential value to the enemy was first passed upon by competent authority, permits issued to the illustrative news syndicate and newspapers were occasionally revoked for periods. That form of punishment was about the only club the War Department could wield on the photographers of the country, and in the first months of the war it was used quite a bit, not so much as a punitive measure^{but} as a means of educating the camera men as well as the newspaper editors into the habit of getting the "Passed by the Committee on Public Information" stamp on the backs of all photographs that might be questionable.

After the press learned that the policy of the "censors" was to encourage rather than to discourage the use of photographs, and to frown upon only those views which the editors themselves later learned might be dangerous, (and why), comparatively little

misunderstanding ensued. As a matter of fact, the press photographers of the country showed themselves to be a remarkably loyal body of men who have been of material aid to the Government in many, and sometimes in unusual ways; a valuable portion of the pictorial history and record of the war, which has been compiled by the General Staff is a monument to their zeal and generosity.

In general, it was the policy of the War Department to encourage private photographers to take pictures -- always, of course, under proper restrictions. Such photographs were regarded as valuable propaganda; they kept the American public in touch with its soldiers and maintained interest and pride in the service. The authorities at Washington believed that the American public should see as many war pictures as possible, and not only issued permits extensively to private photographers of repute, but established a Photographic Section in the Signal Corps for the purpose of penetrating those more confidential areas, both here and overseas, in which no civilian camera men were allowed. Both motion pictures and stills were regarded as valuable mediums of contact between the soldier and his folks back home; only such restrictions were placed upon the taking of pictures as seemed necessary to safeguard information of military value to the enemy.

One of the most insistent demands on the part of the press was for official photographs of the so-called "horrors of war" -- snap shots of the dead and dying and wounded for example. It is doubtful, however, if the public wanted such scenes.

Whenever the British or French motion pictures, showing killed or maimed soldiers, were exhibited in our theatres, the Committee on Public Information would be deluged with letters of protest from individuals; in one case the protests against

certain scenes in one of the official British films shown in New York were so numerous that the exhibitor was induced to make deletions. Such pictures caused needless anxiety to those whose friends and relatives were at the front, and tended to foster the anti-war spirit that was always so persistently cultivated by the enemy. Accordingly the general policy was adapted of withholding such views from the public -- although as a matter of fact only a bare handful of such pictures reached this country.

HOW THE AUTHENTICITY OF OFFICIAL PICTURES WAS GUARDED

All pictures were also withheld that were not authenticated. Every effort was made to insure the accuracy of every official picture and caption that was released. No official photograph was released which might reasonably be questioned and thereby tend to undermine public confidence in pictures that bore the imprint of the War Department.

No official war picture was represented as a front-line scene, for instance, if there was any reasonable doubt that it was made in the training areas, where the making of photographs was infinitely easier and safer -- largely because the real activities in the front line trenches took place at night when photographs could not be made at all.

An illustration of the care that was exercised in checking up the accuracy of Signal Corps pictures is furnished by a set of official photographs taken July 30, 1918, immediately following the German retreat from Chateau Thierry, which the enemy had occupied for sixty days prior to their repulse by the Yankees in that memorable action. (Nos. 17807 to 17811). In order that the American people might have some graphic evidence of the manner of man the Hun at war really was, Captain William E. Moore, of the Photo-Sub-Section, G-2, an experienced newspaper man, personally supervised the making of a dozen or more Signal Corps photographs

of the deliberate vandalism in a typical private residence at No. 4 Rue d'Essomes. (Nos. 17805). The ripping open of mattresses, the systematic destruction of furniture and crockery, the careful mutilation of old family portraits with knives, (No. 17809) were carefully recorded with the camera, and photographic prints were sent to this country accompanied by affidavits of army officers. But just as this set was about to be released to the press, word came that the authenticity of the pictures was in doubt; perhaps the French themselves had wrought the destruction just before their retreat from the town, in order to prevent any property of value falling into German hands!

In other words, the photographs themselves proved nothing at all except the perfectly obvious fact that household goods had been destroyed. Under the circumstances, the pictures were withheld from circulation for nearly two months, at the end of which time the doubt concerning the circumstances of the vandalism was removed.

The Germans apparently, did not allow themselves to be restricted by either moral scruples or facts in obtaining photographs that served their purposes. They surmounted the problem of getting pictures of allied "atrocities" by the expedient method of "staging" them themselves, thus insuring satisfactory results. Albert K. Dawson, the photographer, who in 1914 and 1915 spent considerable time as an American correspondent behind the German lines, reported that to his knowledge, the Germans deliberately wrecked one of their own motor ambulances by shell fire in order to obtain photographs to be used as visible "proofs" of Allied perfidy in attacking the Red Cross emblem, thus justifying their own violations on the ground of reprisals.

In general, a broad policy was observed in censoring photographs that were questionable only on the grounds that they

might have a deleterious effect upon the American people -- so broad, in fact, as to cause serious concern to the authorities of the allied governments, who had learned from experience in their own countries some of the dangerous reactions that pictures might cause. Practically all photographs, except those of the dead and suffering, pictures suspected or known to be fakes, and pictures that served as enemy propaganda (more especially motion pictures that tended to arouse an anti-war sentiment and thus weaken the public morale) were released. It is probable, as a result, that the American people saw more and better war-pictures and kept in closer touch with its army through the medium of photography than the people of any other nation.

A visitor representing himself as the chairman of a committee appointed for the purpose of getting up an exhibition of war photographs, the proceeds of which were to be given to a war charity, called at the Army War College in Washington and asked if he could borrow some official pictures -- "action photographs, the real inside uncensored stuff", as he knowingly expressed it.

The officer in charge took him to the metal cabinets where nearly half a million prints of one kind or another were filed alphabetically by subject, and showed him the work of the army's official photographers overseas, including photographs made in the "zone of the advance" under actual battle conditions. He glanced casually over the photographs of men going through the routine motions of loading and firing field pieces, operating machine guns in rifle pits, observing artillery fire from ruined buildings and bringing up munitions and supplies over exposed areas.

"No; I don't mean that sort of thing," he explained with a gesture indicating disappointment in what he saw. "I want snappy pictures of men charging the enemy and being killed

in hand to hand fighting, with bombs going off and all that sort of thing -- the kind of pictures you don't show the public ordinarily; I want the real thing."

As a matter of fact, he had been looking at photographs of the "real thing" and did not know it. He did not recognize, in a simple little picture of a few soldiers walking along quietly, at intervals of a few yards, an actual modern "charge" of Yankee infantry against the enemy trenches. He did not know that the indistinct little print of a half dozen doughboys lying in an open field, really showed them rolling forward in the dim light of early dawn, in the face of a rifle fire so intense that one could almost hear the ping of the bullets as they cut through the grass, - or that the photographer was killed by a shell only a few hours after this picture was snapped. He could not realize that a close-up of three soldiers, apparently stretching themselves unconcernedly on their bellies, behind a rapid fire gun in what appeared to be a quiet spot in the woods, actually showed men venturing forth "over the top" into No Man's Land and creeping toward the enemy at imminent risk. No, the visitor did not want the "real thing", after all. It looked too tame. He wanted the kind of battle picture that he was accustomed to see in the motion picture play, as staged on the California or New Jersey coast, or in the women's magazines, as painted by artists in Philadelphia or New York. They had real punch; they showed men being bayoneted and gassed, and airplanes swooping down with machine guns shooting and flags waving, and shells exploding, and tanks charging, and prisoners being captured 'n everything -- all in one picture!

The visitor was still a bit skeptical when he left. He probably thinks that the authorities were holding out on him,

and were reserving the "real thing" for some other occasion. It is possible that he found the pictures that met his ideas of warfare in the artists' studios of Greenwich Village, or in the offices of the movie press agents of Broadway. They, at least, could produce war pictures without the limitations imposed by inartistic and untheatrical realities.

The average editor had the idea that the censor of military pictures at Washington was holding the cream of the official war photographs in the confidential files of the War Department. And the average newspaper reader had the idea that the censor was withholding something that he -- an American citizen -- owned and had a right to see.

Both were wrong.

PICTURES THAT CONVEY VALUABLE INFORMATION TO EXPERTS ONLY

An inspection of the confidential files of photographs would have revealed little or nothing of interest to the average editor or reader; most of the pictures would not come within their understanding at all. It might, however, reveal many photographs that would be not only of interest, but of very real value to certain technical experts in the enemy countries, who in most cases, (but not in all cases) would comprehend their significance. The publication of these particular pictures, or even the circulation of the photographic prints, might bring them eventually to the attention of those very experts, who were seeking them so assiduously, and who would make the most damaging use of them. It is for this very reason that they are held in the confidential files. If there was but a single man in all of the enemy country who could turn the information embodied in a single picture against the American soldier, and there was

a chance that this picture might eventually reach his hands, the American citizen could perhaps forego for a while the thrill of gazing upon a photograph of a bolt designed for a new releasing mechanism of a new type of field gun or a chart showing tests, expressed in terms of chemical formulae of acids that enter into experimental work on phosgene gases.

The casual interest of the American citizen in purely technical photographs -- which perhaps constituted the largest group of "Not for Publication" pictures -- was infinitesimal in comparison to the safety of the American soldier in the first line trenches, and to the trail of affection that leads from him back to the little home from which he came. Whether he knew it or not (and how could he have known it?) the interests of the American citizen were much better served by withholding pictures that gave "aid and comfort to the enemy" than in throwing open the files broadcast to friend and foe alike. To keep secret military information of value to the enemy is Rule I in the code of the military censor. He would be himself a foe of the American people if he did otherwise.

It is, therefore, a primary function of the military censor of photographs to withhold all pictures that convey information concerning new inventions or reveal movements of troops or indicate plans of campaign or new methods of warfare which might be converted to improper uses for anti-American propaganda or involve us in misunderstandings with friendly nations. The successful maintenance of a picture censorship must depend not on a mere list of rules, but on a common-sense understanding of the possible value of the pictures to the one man who might use the picture against the public interest. But despite the fact that a careful watch was maintained over photographs during the war -- as careful as was possible in view of the remarkable fact that there was no real censorship

law -- occasionally a photograph would slip through and cause trouble. And the trouble usually came from quite unexpected and unanticipated sources.

PICTURES THAT HAVE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Perhaps the pictures that created the greatest domestic row were the four now famous airplane factory photographs (Nos. 6858, 6859, 6860, 6861) that came out at a critical hour in the history of the America's aviation preparations, and which led to investigations within the army, Congressional inquiries, charges and counter-charges, and indirectly to the reorganization of the Signal Corps and the establishment of the Division of Military Aeronautics. It is likely that these four pictures helped out the finances of more reporters working at spare rates than any pictures published during the war. Yet strangely enough, the real point of controversy was not in the photographs themselves, but in the captions that went with them. Here, for example, is one of the captions, as released to the press through the Committee on Public Information and duly printed in the Official Bulletin of March 28, 1918:

"6858. Aeroplane Bodies Ready for Shipment
'Over There'; These aeroplane bodies, the acme of engineering art, are ready for shipment to France. Though hundreds have already been shipped, our factories have reached quantity production and thousands upon thousands will soon follow."

The statement that our aviation program was proceeding so favorably was seized upon by critics as interesting, if true. Certain Republican congressmen found special interest in

this paragraph. Who was responsible for the claim that "hundreds" of airplanes had been shipped overseas and that "thousands upon thousands will soon follow?" Where did the photographs come from? Who sent them out to the press, and why? Who wrote the captions? Was it an attempt to bolster up public confidence in a phase of our military preparations that the newspapers were already branding as a failure? These were only some of the questions that the four pictures raised, and which were answered variously at the hearings that were later held in the Capitol. The statement became at once a matter of moment to the whole nation, for was not the American war program largely dependent upon the development of our air forces? The results of the several investigations instituted at that time are now matters of history; pages of the Congressional Record are devoted to the subject. It is not the purpose of this paper to enter into a discussion of the responsibilities or merits of the case, but merely to emphasize the capacity for mischief in four apparently innocent photographs that blew the lid off a condition that started in the Equipment Division of the Signal Corps and developed into a political situation of the first magnitude.

A censor cannot be too careful in passing upon either a picture or the caption that accompanies it; either or both might be used as a weapon against him, and bystanders may be hurt in the melee -- as in this instance.

Another photograph that was presumed to be harmless -- until it became an object of editorial comment in a New York newspaper, which used it as a means for attacking the reliability of the pictures issued by the Committee on Public Information in the earlier but always stormy days of its career -- was an official Signal Corps picture of cavalymen at the National Army training camp at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, riding over a sand bank, (No. 14331). Cross country riding was, of course, a part of the military training at the camp, and riding over sand banks in gener-

and over this sand bank in particular, was a regular and established stunt. As Signal Corps photographers were not ordinarily equipped with observation towers to enable them to obtain any desired elevations, this particular cameraman had to content himself with a position on the ground at the foot of the bank, from which location he tilted his camera upward in order to photograph the horsemen as they came over the summit. The effect was striking and unusual -- so much so in fact, that one editor, critical of the administration in general, and of the "Creel Committee" as its alleged spokesman in especial, promptly held up the picture to ridicule as an exaggeration and cried "fake!"

Now the picture did look odd, for a fact. If one was looking about for a pictorial missile to hurl at the head of George Creel, this particular picture might seem as handy as any. One could, and as a matter of fact, one did build up a fairly convincing case against the picture.

But the critics were wrong, and the picture was right -- as was proven by the motion pictures made at the same time, of the same subject, and in the same place, by the Signal Corps movie operator who, as customary, traveled about with the "still man" (as the photographer is called), as his companion and helper. Efforts to grind the political axe with this picture were not as successful as in the case of the four airplane pictures.

The moral of the incident, so far as the censor is concerned, seems to be to question not only those photographs that are obviously fakes, but also genuine photographs that only seem to be fakes. As a matter of fact, the accuracy of all official pictures and captions has always been under the strictest surveillance, and no war picture was ever represented as a front-line scene if there was any reasonable doubt that it was made in the training areas, where the making of photographs is infinitely easier and safer -- largely because the real activities in the front line trenches take place at night when photographs cannot be made at all.

THE DANGERS OF UNOFFICIAL RELEASES OF OFFICIAL PICTURES

On rare occasions, so rare that they may be counted and remembered, official photographs of a confidential nature found their way through devious channels into the magazines and newspapers. In practically every case, however, such leaks could be traced to no moral delinquency on the part of anyone concerned, but merely to a lack of understanding as to either the confidential nature of the picture or, (more often), to the prescribed method of releasing it. A typical instance was furnished by an officer in the Ordnance Department who requested the official photographers of the Signal Corps to make some pictures, for record purposes only, of the 240 m. Stokes trench mortar (No. 10516) at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds.

Now all pictures of tests and experimental work were regarded as strictly confidential, and all came under the censor's ban. But the particular officer for whom these pictures were made "for official use only" wrote an article for a technical magazine, and submitted the print as an illustration, without first getting the military censor's O.K. on it, and releasing it through the prescribed channels which provided for a fair and equitable distribution of these government documents to all comers. The publication of this photograph not only violated a ruling and circulated confidential information, but opened the War Department to criticism on the grounds of favoritism. The immediate reaction was a series of requests from other magazines for similar "exclusive rights" on official photographs, and much tact was needed to explain the situation and smooth ruffled feelings.

Trouble ensued every time that the distribution of official pictures was not carried out in strict accordance with the rules. Every editor was apparently quite willing to take his fair chance with the other fellow, but every time that there was

even a suggestion of favoritism, pressure was immediately applied for an advantage over competitors. This impulse is perfectly human and understandable, but it made especially necessary a careful surveillance of every editor and photographer, and each was held to account for every violation of the rules of the game. As long as the press had confidence that no special privileges were being extended, it was content to abide by the regulations that were laid down.

It was to accord with this policy, that a handful of pictures, (most of them quite harmless) taken on a transport by a soldier, who had smuggled his camera abroad and smuggled his prints back to a photograph dealer in this country, were not approved for release. If the War Department countenanced any such violation of its orders, other men would be encouraged to take other pictures covertly, and the dealers and the press would be stimulated to obtain photographs from improper sources. Such a course might have led to disastrous consequences. In the instance cited, only the patriotic desire of the photograph dealer to cooperate with the War Department prevented the circulation of pictures that probably would have resulted in really drastic measures of suppression of other like efforts.

HOW THE PUBLICATION OF UNCENSORED PICTURES WAS DISCOURAGED

Of minor incidents, wherein "uncensored" photographs caused trouble of one kind or another, there were surprisingly few in view of the fact that the submission of photographs for approval was a purely voluntary affair. During the early days of the war in 1917, for example, before the photographers and the press had become experienced in sensing the military values of pictures, one of the New York dailies published in its Sunday supplement a small and not particularly interesting snapshot of a few sailors marching along a street on the way to their vessel

at a "port of embarkation". The editor, apparently presuming that the picture was as innocuous as it looked, and that it did not come within the ruling against "all photographs showing movements of troops", had taken a chance on publishing it.

That picture caused trouble. In the first place, the editor was not a proper judge of the value of the information of military import in that photograph. He did not appreciate that a sign over a shop in the background definitely identified that mysterious "port of embarkation" as Newport, Rhode Island. He did not know that the names of vessels usually appeared on the sailors' hat bands, and that even so slight a clue as a tiny kodak view of a sailor in a crowded street might tip off the enemy's agent to knowledge that a certain vessel was in a certain port at a certain day. All such information is of value to the enemy. Whether or not this particular information ever reached Wilhelmstrasse through the medium of this particular photograph may never be known, although it is entirely conceivable that it prompted a German agent to start an investigation which might not otherwise have been made. But as a hint that the War Department did not approve the publication of such photographs unless their potential value to the enemy was first passed upon by competent authority, all permits issued to the illustrative news syndicate from which the picture was obtained, were revoked for a period of a month -- a form of punishment was about the only club the War Department could yield on the photographers of the country. After the press had become acquainted with the new order of things and learned that the policy of the "censors" was to encourage rather than to discourage the use of photographs, and to frown upon only those views which the editors themselves later learned might be dangerous (and why), comparatively little misunderstanding ensued. As a matter of fact, the press photographers of the country showed

themselves to be a remarkably loyal body of men who were of material aid to the Government in many, and sometimes in unusual ways; a valuable portion of the pictorial history and record of the war, which had been compiled by the General Staff, is a monument to their zeal and generosity.

An endless amount of complications, some of which threatened to disrupt the friendly relations between the War Department and the press, resulted from what appeared to be discrimination in the distribution of official photographs. As a matter of fact, there was real cause for complaint by the editors, because official Signal Corps photographs from overseas actually did, for a while, reach certain newspapers in this country through private sources. In some instances these photographs arrived and were actually published before the army authorities at Washington had themselves received them through military channels or even knew of their existence. One Sunday there appeared in the gravure section of a New York daily, the first photograph to reach this country of Lt. Quentin Roosevelt's grave (No. 21800); the picture purported to be and later was proven to be, an official photograph. All official pictures passed through the office of the Pictorial Section of the General Staff, and the officer in charge knew that no such print had reached him. Apparently the picture had gone directly to the editor either from the Signal Corps Laboratory at Vincennes or from the Committee on Public Information office in Paris. Apparently also, there was a leak somewhere, and as soon as other editors discovered that the machinery of distribution could be circumvented, a host of Paris representatives of American newspapers and syndicates would go about gumshoeing in attempts to pick up official pictures of special interest that could be hurried to this country through devious channels and score "beats" on their rivals.

The expected storm broke. Practically every big illustrative news syndicate and pictorial editor in New York arose in indignation that was considerably righteous, one must admit, and demanded just how and why one of the most valuable news pictures of the war should be given exclusively to one paper. Investigation showed that a representative of the Committee on Public Information in Paris had passed out a few newly arrived prints to local representatives of American newspapers before these pictures had been forwarded by the Signal Corps to this country, thus making exclusive releases. For a period of several days, official A.E.F. photographs of which the authorities at Washington had no cognizance, kept cropping up in various publications, until it began to appear that the whole system of distribution was running wild, as indeed it was. The trouble was apparently caused by the delay in getting pictures to this country through military channels. It was obvious that if the system of releasing in the United States could be nullified by releases made in Paris, all Government control of its own photographs on this side of the Atlantic would be gone. Cable messages straightened out the difficulty, however, although not before some damage had been done -- not because there was anything confidential in the photographs themselves, but because there was a breakdown in the system of releasing them.

"ATROCITY" PICTURES

One of the first inquiries made by the civilian visitor to the confidential files was for "atrocities pictures." And his regard for the pictorial records of the war underwent a noticeable slump when the files produced no photographs of Belgian children with amputated hands or mutilated English Red Cross nurses or Canadian sergeants hanging crucified to trees. No peck

behind the scenes in the censor's sanctum appears to be entirely satisfying to the layman unless he can look over what he imagines must be a pictorial chamber of horrors. Such photographs are exceedingly rare; the few that are available have been obtained almost entirely from foreign sources. Several views of slain men, women and children came from Serbian and Armenian sources, and some of them were circulated by war relief organizations for arousing sympathy for a people who had suffered so terribly from the red scourge. The British and French were said to have obtained such pictures as records of Hun brutality, but few, if any, except photographs of U-boat victims, reached the War Department files.

It is difficult at best to accept photographs as proofs of atrocities. Mere views of dead women and children do not necessarily prove the enemy's disregard of the rules of warfare; indeed, such pictures do not prove even that the dead were victims of war at all. Pathetic as a photograph of a ruined church or home may be, it does not show the circumstances of the ruination, nor is it even evidence that it was ruined by the enemy. An illustration of this point was furnished by the striking set of official photographs taken July 30, 1918, immediately following the German retreat from Chateau Thierry, which have already been referred to.

PICTURES THAT CAUSED INTERNATIONAL COMPLICATIONS

All of the trouble-making pictures mentioned so far led to merely domestic disturbances. Those that led to foreign complications, however, were fraught with infinitely more danger. On several notable occasions, situations more troublesome than the War Department (or the State Department) liked to admit, were developed.

One of the official photographs which, on its face

seemed most harmless, proved a veritable bombshell. The picture showed a German war prisoner, Captain Koenig, formerly in command of one of the interned enemy vessels, in his working clothes, at the war prison camp at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia. (No. 4676). It was taken on February 8, 1918, while the captain was bossing some of his men in the manual labor of preparing vegetable gardens. The picture itself was innocent enough, but it was published over a caption that indicated that interned German officers were put to work on the rock pile. The picture reached Berlin, and presto! Uncle Sam had an international problem on his hands. To put captured officers at manual labor is a violation of the rules of war, so the German high command issued a curt statement to the effect that all American officers in its hands would be set at ~~menial~~ labor as a reprisal. The incident has become historic in the office of the picture censor because of the unexpected trouble that just one supposedly innocent little snap shot caused. Incidentally, the misunderstanding was adjusted before serious damage was done, through the prompt and vigorous efforts of neutral nations.

Photographs that brought the United States into misunderstandings with friendly nations were always causes of special anxiety. One picture that created a delicate situation, showed a new type of Handley Page bombing plane (No. 19501); it was published in the New York Times of July 17, 1918, together with a brief statement to the effect that 10,000 of these planes "can be manufactured in this country and delivered in France by May 1, 1919, according to officials of the Handley Page Company, each machine flying the Atlantic under its own power, arriving in France three days after leaving erecting shops in the U.S." Now the Handley-Page is an English plane, although it was then being manufactured in this country in order to meet the emergencies of war. The picture was made by a private photographer and was given to the press, together with a statement, by a representative of the company. The picture was not submitted

to the military censor, who did not know of its existence until it was published and the damage was done.

All pictures of new inventions, or new types of machines or new appliances, and all statements concerning military plans, came strictly and properly under the ban, and the publication of both the picture and the caption was not merely a violation of the rules of the voluntary censorship, which the press of the country had so patriotically imposed upon itself at the request of the Government, but a violation of the English censorship rulings as well. The British War office made an issue of the case, and advised this country that had the leak occurred in England, someone would have been "dealt with summarily." With the responsibilities for the incident, this paper is not concerned; a report may be found in the files of the Military Intelligence Division. But the case is interesting as evidence of the importance with which the British censors regarded pictures of war materiel.

A somewhat similar case was presented by the publication of a photograph of a Filloux 155 m. French gun, mounted on a new type of automotive tractor. The still picture did not reveal the true significance of the device; to all outward appearance it showed nothing but a field piece on an ordinary carriage. (No. 13647). But the motion picture, made at the same time, showed the device in operation, and, of course, gave the secret away. The French Government made immediate representations to the Chief of Field Artillery at Washington, and another international complication, caused by a photograph, was thrust upon us.

The wonder is that we did not have more of them than we did have. Both the British and French authorities expressed surprise and at times alarm over what they regarded as a reckless publication of photographs of a nature which in their own

countries would have been suppressed. Perhaps they were right; they had had far more experience in war and in war censorship problems than we. They were, too, closer to the scenes of battle, and knew from costly experimentation, the extent to which photographs reached German hands and were converted to German purposes. We, on the other hand, were far from the front - so far that the danger in publishing photographs that might help the enemy, seemed remote. We did not know from first-hand experience just how dangerous certain pictures might be. And then, too, the psychology of the Yankee is different from that of the Briton and of the Frenchman; his reaction to news pictures, both stills and motion pictures, is not the same. The authorities at Washington believed that the American public should see as many war pictures as possible.

Our friends, France and England, were not the only Allied nations to be disturbed by what they regarded as our reckless use of photographs.

Japan took issue on several occasions to the portrayal of Japanese as spies, plotting against America, in motion picture dramas; for the period immediately preceding our entrance into the war, our Oriental neighbors were apparently very popular as "heavies" among some of the producing companies. At the suggestion of Washington, however, the producers modified these films in order to keep racial feeling at least as far away as possible from a world already inflamed with hatreds.

New Zealand became disturbed because some camera men snapped some views of Ausac and Maori troops passing through the Panama Canal on their way to France, (No. 86613) and there was danger that the photographs might find circulation in this country and thus advertise a route that was kept secret for many months. As a matter of fact these pictures did reach the hands of one of the important illustrative news syndicates in

New York, and only its rigorous and patriotic observance of the Government's desires to pass upon such photographs before publication, prevented these dangerous documents from reaching Wilhelmstrasse via the American press.

Of course, one may argue that the information embodied in these photographs could reach Wilhelmstrasse through other mediums. So it could, and so it likely did. But at least, this particular and exceedingly safe and easy channel of information was closed to the enemy. Copies of American newspapers and magazines not only reached Wilhelmstrasse promptly through neutral countries, but were openly displayed on newsstands in Berlin during the War; any pictures printed in them, together with all information secreted in those pictures, might reasonably be assumed to get into the Germans' hands expeditiously and without danger to the transmitter. It was a part of the censor's job to see that this means of communication was blocked.

WHERE TO LOOK FOR INFORMATION OF MILITARY IMPORT IN PICTURES

The amount of information that may be conveyed in an ordinary photograph is surprising to the uninitiated. Let us consider, for example, an ordinary view of some soldiers boarding a train, (No. 16592). Careful search may reveal the number "69" on one of the haversacks. To the military man that designates the 69th Regiment Infantry, N.Y.N.C., the identification may be practically certain by the fact that the picture appears in a New York newspaper. In the hands of one of the soldiers may be seen a copy, say of The Evening Telegram, the exact date of which may be determined by the headlines. Perhaps in the crowd may even be recognized by some individuals whose presence may establish the exact place and time. Only trivial clues of this kind are sometimes needed to piece together evidence of troop movements that may put the enemy agents on guard and lead to a

derailment of a troop train or to a submarine attack upon a transport. In another picture (an official photograph which was not released until months after it was taken), not only was the location of a troop-ship established by a ferry boat in the background that is peculiar to New York harbor, but the ship itself was identified by the decoration on the stern and the size and location of the anti-submarine gun, (No. 15626). The ways in which this information may be used by the enemy are manifold, not the least of which is the number, size and armament of such U-boats as might be detailed to lay for this particular vessel, and the place and date of the rendezvous.

But why, it may be asked, should efforts be made to conceal information in pictures that so many thousands of people can obtain so easily by merely keeping their eyes open?

The answer is that printed information is a thousand-fold easier to convey to the enemy than unprinted information. As soon as a fact is published in printers' ink, it becomes public property, and may be transmitted with infinitely less effort and danger than it can be transmitted through the secret and uncertain channels, usually under surveillance, established by the enemy's agents. American newspapers and magazines had been displayed on German newsstands since the war started, and German papers had reached this country through neutral nations. Illustrations or prints that conveyed pertinent information to the man who was looking for it could have passed into improper hands through neutral mediums with far less effort or suspicion than the same information could have been passed by secret codes through devious routes. A hundred thousand people might watch a street parade of the crew of a visiting battleship, with the name of the vessel emblazoned on their caps, as was the custom early in the war. How many of that number could report to the enemy that their vessel was

in the harbor? Yet a photograph of even a single one of these sailors printed in a newspaper would spread the news broadcast and could be safely placed, without exciting suspicion, in the hands of the very German agent, who could make the most damaging use of this information. And photographs, too, are sometimes accepted as proofs when the spoken or written word may be discredited. If the government cannot entirely suppress the enemy agent, it can at least make it difficult for him to use the photograph as an easy and desirable medium of communication.

Contrary to popular belief, the pictures held from publication were not at all the most interesting to the public. Few of them were spectacular or available from the editor's point of view. True, some of them were of much interest to the enemy -- at least, to those particular officials who were in a position to comprehend their significance. This was particularly true of pictures of new inventions, training methods and experimental work. One photograph, for example, showed a layout of perhaps thirty small parts of a new model of rapid-fire gun; one of these parts was so small that a magnifying glass was required to study it. Yet that small part revealed the secret of its mechanism. Only an expert in ordnance could, of course, realize the importance of this apparently harmless picture, but luckily it was that expert whose advice kept that picture in the confidential files. Pictures of all aeronautical and ordnance instruments of new design -- stabilizing devices, bomb and gun sights, wireless telephony, bomb releasing mechanisms, and cameras (No. 11497) and equipment for aerial photography -- all came under the ban and were kept there until it could reasonably be presumed that the devices were no longer unknown to the enemy. Only the opinions of experts were naturally of much value in determining just which

photographs were harmless.

SECRETS REVEALED IN THE BACKGROUNDS OF PICTURES

In some instances the really significant detail of the picture was hidden in the background. One picture showing a general interior of an airplane factory revealed in the dim and obscure distance, a model of a new device on which experiments were being conducted, and a knowledge of which would have made glad the heart of any enemy agent who was informed on the technical details of airplane motors. An officer of the Royal Flying Corps of the British Army, and an expert in aerial photography, discovered in a German photograph reproduced in an American magazine, the clue to a secret of aerial camera work that the enemy had guarded safely up to that time, and which led to a change in the methods employed by the English. It is probable that this officer was the only man in this country at the time, who knew the real significance of the picture or how to profit from it. It is probable, further, that this picture was "passed" by a German censor who either did not see the detail that was of such importance, or did not realize its import if he did see it.

Among other pictures that conveyed information of value to the enemy were photographs that illustrated camouflage work, particularly the new tricks of the camoufleurs, (No. 1342). As soon as a novel form of deception had been penetrated by the enemy, as it eventually was in most cases, its value was largely gone. Consequently all pictures showing experimental work in camouflage, the materials used and the methods of using them were suppressed until the knowledge of them was common property, and the pictures were thus become harmless. Pictures showing the launching of ships, (No. 86616) were placed under the ban, although in many cases reports of the events were published in the newspapers. Photographs, however, can reveal

information covering the size and character of the vessel, and might enable the enemy to obtain a "silhouette" of it for identification purposes. Pictures of camouflaged ships were always regarded as valuable to the enemy, both because they showed the methods of camouflage and also helped to identify the vessels. And, of course, all new pictures that indicated positions of guns in our coast defense system, or the locations of munitions plants, naval bases, storehouses for military supplies, all scenes near the docks and piers which might show vessels or cargoes, and other points of military import were invariably banned.

One unusual type of photograph that was withheld for many months showed the instruction which was given to many of our soldiers in hand-to-hand fighting. Some of these methods of attack and defense with the bayonet and with the bare fists were remarkable; indeed, some of the most experienced jui-jitsu experts in the world were employed to teach the Yankee how to tackle the Hun -- and to tackle him to maim and to kill. These methods did not savor of sport; they were designed solely to increase the capacity of the American fighting man to save himself and at the same time to put his antagonist out of business so that he would stay out. The fact that this kind of instruction was being given to Yankee soldiers leaked out to the Germans and impelled them to similar efforts, but their methods did not compare with our own; certainly the results on the battle front would not indicate that they did. A series of official photographs was made to record some of the more important tricks and modes of attack and defense, but they were all withheld from the press for obvious reasons, (No. 24112). The less Fritz knew of these tricks beforehand, the less likely he would be to prepare a defense for himself from them. The surprise element was in itself a factor in this new fighting method.

PICTURES THAT DISTURB INTERNATIONAL AMITY

A photograph that nearly precipitated trouble with our friend, Holland, showed the hauling down of the Dutch flag (No. 6969) on the vessels which Uncle Sam took over in New York Harbor on March 28, 1918. The incident was pregnant with misunderstandings at best, and had to be handled with diplomacy. Press photographers hurried to the spot, however, and the event was duly recorded pictorially, and some of the pictures were published to feed fuel to the flames and to spread further the fact that Uncle Sam had lowered the colors of a friendly power. Eventually the seized ships were returned to Holland, but the fact that both still and motion pictures of what the Dutch regarded as an affront were shown broadcast, did not make the problem of American diplomats any easier.

Another picture that in the early days of the war threatened to upset the relations of this country with a friendly nation was a motion picture serial ("Patria") that was prepared some months before, and which had for its villain a Japanese spy. It was inevitable and proper that the Japanese Government should protest to our State Department over this or any other picture -- and there were several such instances later -- ("The Curse of Iku" and "Hari Kari") -- that tended to represent our Oriental neighbors in an attitude hostile to this country, or to prejudice the American public against them at a time when passions ran high. It was equally inevitable that the Germans should be quick to seize upon this chance to arouse distrust between the two peoples and to feed the flames of racial feeling that had been smouldering on the western coast. Modifications were made in the serial which lessened its capacity for damage, but it was never regarded as entirely harmless -- even when its Japanese characters were changed (in the titles) to Mexican characters and generous deletions were

made by the producer.

During the period that the enemy's agents were active in their attempts to embroil us in war with Mexico, (and later disclosures showed that they were more responsible for the Mexican troubles than was generally known) several pictures likely to cause trouble came under the ban. One, for example, showed the one-armed Mexican General Obregon in conference with General Staff officers in Washington. (No. 8258) To those versed in our foreign affairs, such conferences might have had a great deal of significance; even a snap shot of Obregon on a Washington Street would have been sufficient evidence of his presence in the Capital, and his probable mission. Indeed, any chance photograph of a street scene in Washington might reveal some individual whose presence would be significant to the Hun agent, and in some cases they did. (No.).

PICTURES THAT CAUSE ANXIETY TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Other photographs which were withheld from publication because of possible foreign complications showed war materiel that was being made in this country for the Allies -- not because these pictures were necessarily confidential, but because it seemed only proper for the Allies themselves to determine whether or not such pictures should be released.

That intangible something known as morale is just as important to maintain among the people back home as among the soldiers in the field, and pictures have played a bigger role in keeping it up in this war than ever before. Motion pictures were made showing the folks in various American cities and towns passing slowly before the camera, and were shipped overseas and shown to the doughboys recruited from those centers. Films of soldiers at the front were shown in turn to the home folks. Pictures illustrating the war work that American women

and children were doing were flashed on the screens and printed in the press from Maine to California. Munitions factories in operation, ships being built, troops being trained -- all these subjects were photographed and shown extensively. They all helped to keep the public informed of Uncle Sam's activities, to arouse and to maintain interest in the war, to inspire confidence and to instill steadfastness of purpose. But just because the public is so susceptible to the message of a picture, emphasizes the need of care in selecting those which might undermine that morale. A series of pictures showing, for example, the mangled remains of a fallen airplane, (No. 10754), an accident in camp, (No. 16575), the wreck of a war vessel, (No. 34060), a trench of American dead (No. 33372), an operating room in a military hospital (No. 13323), the ruins of a gun factory and picking up of Americans killed in action (No. 17387) would tend to have a depressing effect upon the public and to cause unnecessary and unwarranted anxiety to the families of men at the front. The average mother sees her own boy subjected to the dangers portrayed. Her mind makes specific applications from general suggestions, and she visualizes her own son in each corpse she sees pictured. At one time the motion picture trade in its desire to inject "pep" into its war films, and to show the "real stuff" from the battle front, ran so many views of the dead and wounded that the public voiced its protest not only by letters but (more eloquently) by remaining away from the motion picture theatres. The American public does not want horrible pictures, as the editors know from experience, nor was it wise policy to publish them. As a result, official pictures of American dead, mutilations and accidents were usually withheld from publication, although the demand for such pictures was negligible.

PICTURES THAT MISREPRESENT THE SOLDIER

Another type of morale picture that was frowned upon was that which showed American soldiers improperly clothed or equipped, or otherwise "out of uniform" -- a fault confined largely to raw recruits who posed before local camera men sometimes in fantastic, but more often in merely unsoldierly attire.

Indeed, all pictures were barred that misrepresented the soldier's life or which created wrong impressions of military discipline and tactics. So assiduously, however, have the motion picture producers "educated" the public into their own theatrical conceptions of what a soldier's life might be, and so falsely have been screened so many of their battles showing combatants rushing frantically back and forth in unregulation uniforms, waving banners, setting off prototechnic displays and employing varigated instruments and impediments of war, that the genuine war photograph, made on the battle front under fire, by official camera men on duty with troops, seems a tame affair in contrast. While Uncle Sam did not presume to "censor" such photographs, nor did he discourage any private photographer from making any kind of fanciful picture his imagination may dictate, he could at least prevent his own official camera men from disseminating false conceptions of battle action. All fakes or posed pictures were either stricken out or released with a proper title that made no false claims to reality.

In case a private photographer submitted a photograph for approval, the War Department was willing to pass upon it, But in most cases the pictures submitted required merely the O.K. of the military censor -- which was given if the picture was not regarded as harmful. But that O.K. did not imply that the military censor advised its publication or was concerned

incidentally was the donor. (No. 86612) News photographs of that event were sent to many South American newspapers by enemy agents, with captions that sneered at the conceit and self-exploiting character of the hated Yankees. Constant care had to be exercised by American officials in passing upon any picture that, in the hands of the Hun, might be used for pro-German or anti-American propaganda, invariably, of course, with misleading captions. Unofficial photographs of the small group of east side women who called at the City Hall in New York to protest against the high price of food early in 1917, for example, (No. 44813) were circulated in Germany with wild reports of the alarming bread riots throughout this country; views of occasional pacifist street meetings were circulated as evidence of the "great public sentiment against the war." Pictures of the arrest of a suffragette were used as illustrative of our impending civil war - all of which helped the enemy to maintain his morale, by keeping up his belief in our disintegration, and encouraging him to renewed effort. Such photographs may properly be regarded as "giving aid and comfort to the enemy." Yet for lack of a war censorship law, no steps could be taken to withhold such views from publication unless the private photographers who took them voluntarily submitted them for approval - which they seldom did because such pictures were not of a military nature and could not, in their view, have any bearing upon the war.

PICTURES THAT "GAVE ENCOURAGEMENT " TO THE ENEMY

Sometimes a simple news photograph had a double edge, and served both to encourage the enemy and to dismay our own countrymen. During the spring and summer of 1917, for example, the public demand for rifles and light artillery pieces became suddenly tremendous, far in excess of our meagre supply. Home defense bodies sprang into existence overnight, and each body

wanted its quota of army guns and wanted it quick. Officers' training camps needed field guns; so did the National Guard; so did the National Army, eventually. And because they could not be supplied promptly, they drilled with wooden guns or brooms or billiard cues, - and were photographed with this makeshift armament. (Nos. 30247, 34385)

"Behold our unpreparedness!" observed the newspapers in scare-heads. And the public forthwith became panicky and began to lose confidence in the Government.

"Ha! ha!" chortled the enemy, "see how the Yankee pigs are armed. It will be easy to crush them."

And Fritz forthwith was inspired to renewed and confident efforts. Neither the American nor the German, however, could peek behind the scenes and see just what Uncle Sam was really doing in the way of preparedness, and both were proven wrong in their snap judgments.

There has always been and probably there always will be a resentment upon the part of the general public against any kind of a "censor." He is popularly portrayed as a grim visaged, sharp eyed Cerebus, whose aim is to keep from the public the very information which the public is most anxious to get. As a matter of fact, he aims primarily to withhold facts that might benefit the enemy and to guard the public from false conceptions. The vast majority of pictures which have been withheld are of no interest whatever to the average American- the confidential pictorial files of the General Staff are composed chiefly of pictures of technical equipment, views of houses used as headquarters overseas, progress pictures of buildings under construction, and scenes and objects of no value except to those particular German agents who may have known their significance, and how to employ the information against. And the "censor" of war photographs is usually an officer who has been selected because he has studied his subject and who can act

REPRESENTATIVE MOTION PICTURE FILMS TO
WHICH OBJECTIONS WERE MADE BY CENSOR

THE CURSE OF IKU:

Produced by Essanay. This was an anti-Japanese play in which the Japanese were represented in an unfavorable light, with the intention of inflaming public opinion in the United State against them. The titles were eventually changed to indicate that the Japanese were Malays, although the pictures themselves retained their Japanese characteristics. This picture is said to have been owned in part by Senator James Hamilton Lewis of Illinois; (see letter files of George Creel for further data).

PATRIA:

Issued by Hearst. This was also an anti-Japanese play produced in several instalments and featuring Mrs. Vernon Castle. The villains were represented as Japanese. This was the first anti-Japanese motion picture to demand the action of the State Department, after the entrance of the United States into the war. The titles were altered to make the Japanese to appear as Mexicans, and the film was circulated with these alterations -- although without the approval of the State Department.

WAR BRIDES:

Produced by Herbert Brennan Corporation. (Selznick). This was an anti-war film featuring Mme. Nazimova, produced shortly before the U. S. entrance into the war. Objections were made to it on the ground that it dilated upon the horrors of war. It was withdrawn from circulation.

WOMANHOOD, THE GLORY OF THE NATION:

Produced by Vitagraph. This was a frankly pacifist propaganda film.

THE HORRORS OF WAR:

Produced by Pathe; (also by Captain Kleinschmidt). The particular film was never released, but the Kleinschmidt film, under the same title, was circulated until suppressed. It was made up largely of German official film taken on the battle field, and was apparently intended to emphasize the horrors of warfare, with the view of keeping the United States out of the conflict, and arousing public opinion in this country against war. It showed close-ups of the dead on the battle-field - a horse

blown into a tree by an explosion, dogs eating remains of dead soldiers, a regiment of Russians who had been wiped out by a machine gun fire, after being caught between a river and a precipice, and dead bodies being loaded into wagons with pitchforks.

THE ROAD THROUGH THE DARK:

Produced by Selznick. This was a pro-German film showing a Prussian officer in a most favorable light, preventing German privates from wrong doing while in French territory, and otherwise appearing as a hero. It further aimed to show that no vandalism was being done in France by the Germans.

A GIRL OF TODAY:

Produced by Vitagraph. This was an anti-British film. The scene was apparently laid in the West Indies. English army officers were made to appear in an unfavorable light.

FOR THE FREEDOM OF THE EAST:

Produced by Goldwyn Distributing Corporation. This was an anti-Chinese film which was slightly changed and then released.

THE HUN WITHIN:

Produced by the Arrow Film Corporation. This film showed the German-American in an unfavorable light. One scene shows a German-American striking a match on the bust of Lincoln; another scene shows negligence of the Navy in permitting a German spy aboard in a naval uniform.

THE TROOP TRAIN:

Produced by Edgar Lewis. This showed what was presumed to be a typical western town in the United States which is populated almost entirely by Germans and where German is spoken entirely. One small store was represented with a sign "English spoken here." Objection was made to the title "Many Germans are fighting for America in France." This was changed to read "Many Americans of German descent will now fight with the Yankees in France."

AMERICAN SPIRIT:

Produced by W. W. Hodkinson Corporation. This was an anti-Mexican film. The scene showing Mexicans tramping on the United States flag was suppressed as illegal, as well as contrary to public interest.

WHY AMERICANS WILL WIN:

Produced by William Fox. This film was anti-French. The scenes deleted showed U. S. troops entering Berlin alone, without any evidence of the Allies. It tended to belittle the activities of the French in the war.

TRAVEL PICTURES FROM MEXICO:

These films were submitted to Mr. G. A. Skinner, President of the Educational Films Corp. They contained many such harmless subjects as the manufacture of pulque, Mexico's floating gardens, scenes in the silver mining camps, etc. The films were obviously political propaganda of the Carranza's administration. The following is quoted at random from the title sheets:

"Carranza is a fearless man, but it would be the height of folly for him not to protect himself from the possible dangers resulting from the hallucinations of misguided or drunken Indians."

Referring again to Carranza: "Most liked and disliked, most feared and hated, and most loved man in Mexico."

"Mr. Carranza is very democratic."

"Here is the democratic president voting with his populists."

"A plain, unassuming and magnetic character."

"Most talked of and least understood man in the Republic."

DAUGHTER ANGELE:

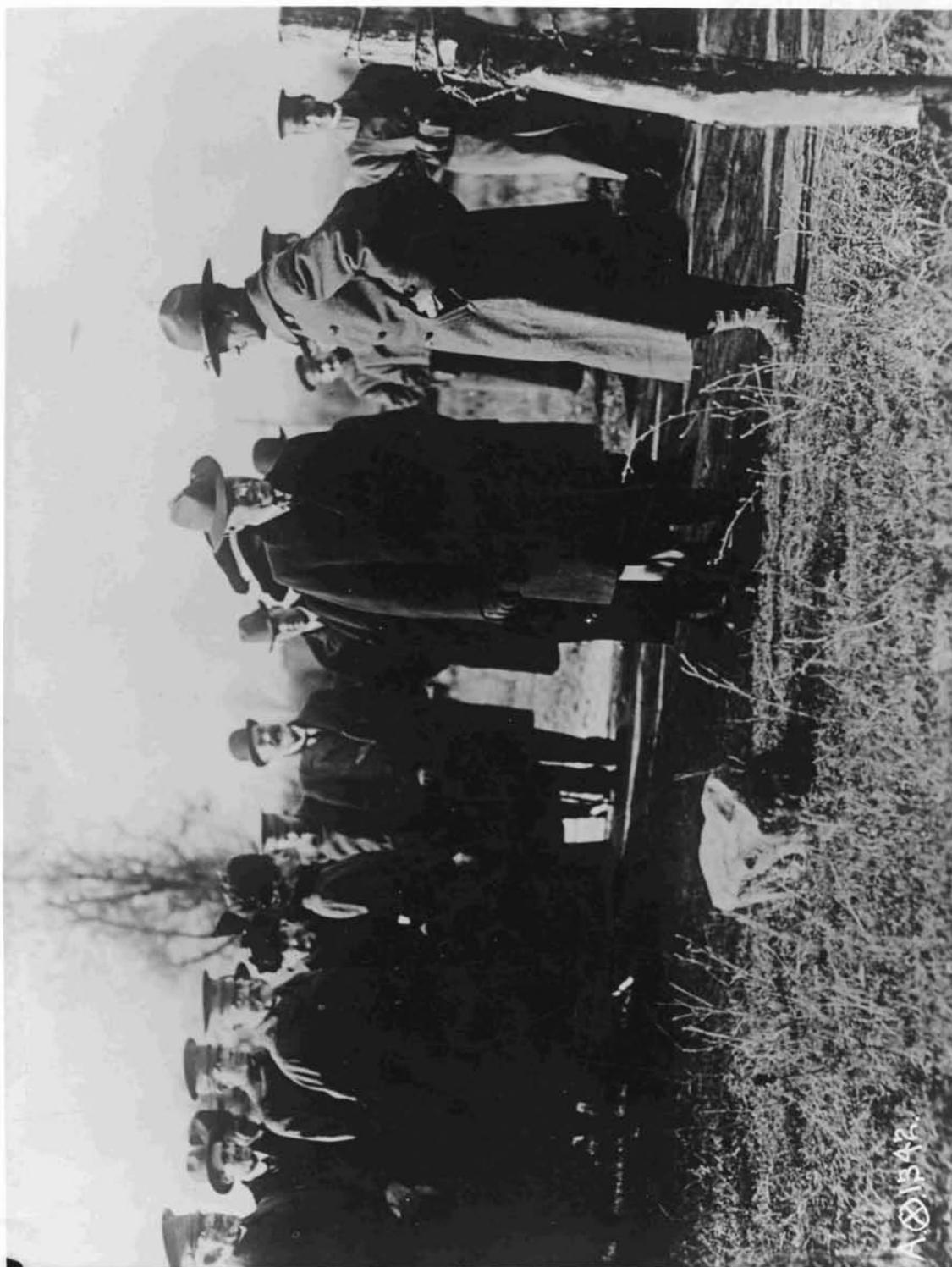
A scene deleted showed^a newspaper headline announcing the torpedoing of sixteen ships going out to sea. Such a statement was not authentic. It was further considered unwise to print news of that kind, especially if untrue.

THE AMERICAN SPIRIT:

Produced by W. D. Hodkinson Corporation. A scene showing the trampling of the American flag was eliminated; also a cafe scene where in the crowd is forced to salute the American flag which was represented as reversed.

REPRESENTATIVE STILL PICTURES
THAT CAME UNDER THE CENSOR'S BAN -
OR THAT SHOULD HAVE.

(Arranged in numerical sequence
by Signal Corps numbers, to aid
in reference.)



1342 - This picture of President Wilson at the Training Camp of Co. F, 24th Reg't Engineers at American University, Washington, D.C., is harmless in itself. But the caption explained that a few seconds after this picture was taken the papier mache rock was suddenly thrown aside and a man in a listening post was revealed underneath, and all pictures that revealed experimental work in camouflage were censored.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



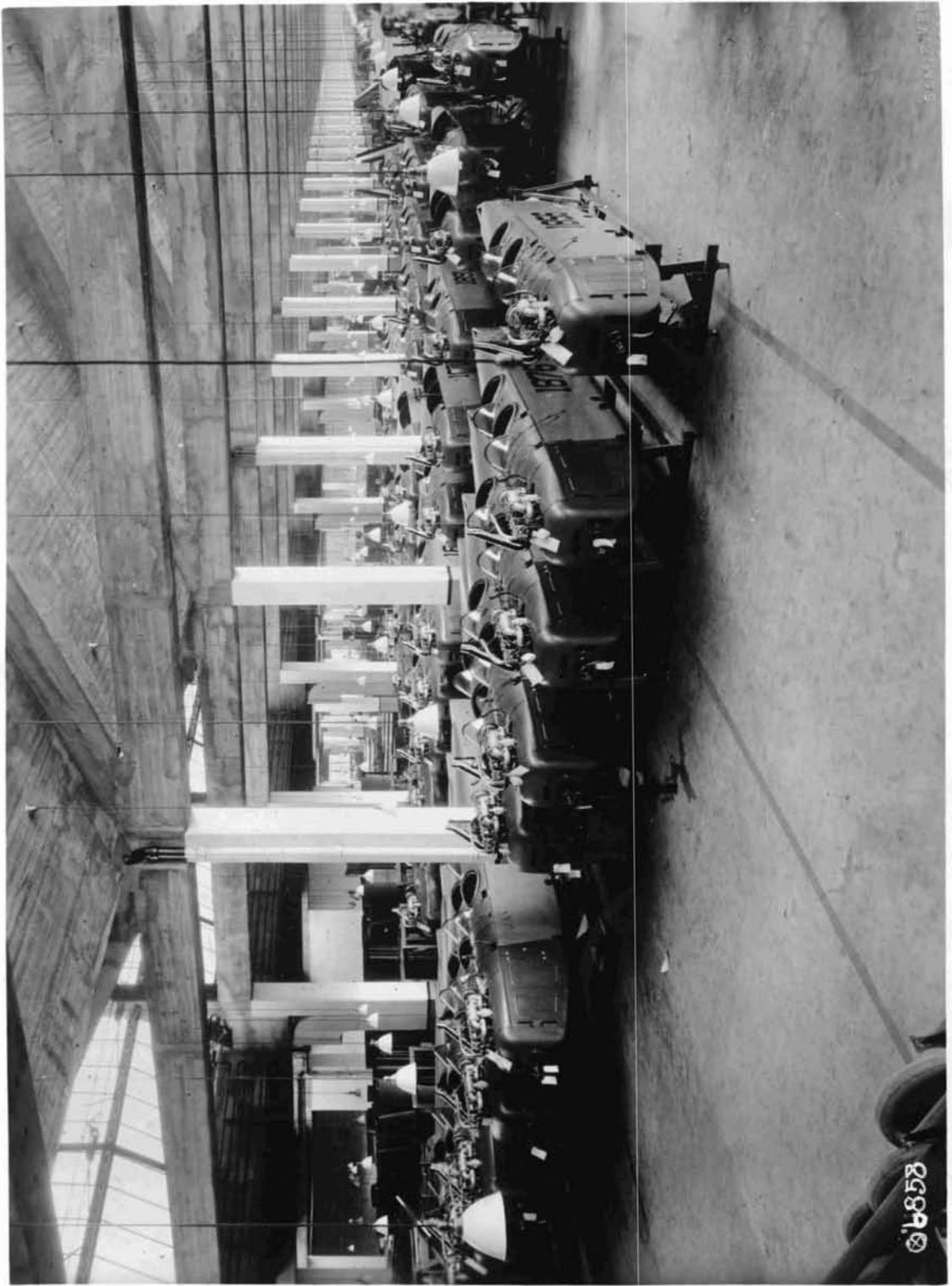
No. 3029 - "Sambo and his banquet at Reilly, France." This was the title that came with the picture at a time when American soldiers were being feasted and flattered by French women, to whom they were great novelties. But the picture was withheld for a while, - until the bloody race riots then prevalent in the South, had subsided.

(U. S. Signal Corps).



4676 - No one would suspect that this innocent snap shot of an interned German prisoner of war, Captain Koenig, at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, taken February 8, 1918, could create an intense international situation for a few days. But it did.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



6858 - This apparently harmless photograph of a number of bodies of training planes caused more domestic trouble than perhaps any picture published during the war; it led to Congressional inquiries, investigations within the War Department, and served as the spark to set off explosion in the Signal Corps in its conduct of our aviation program.

(Committee on Public Information.)



6967 - This picture caused international complications because it shows a fancied affront to a friendly nation at a critical moment in our relations. The Dutch flag, which was lowered when the Dutch vessels were taken over in New York, was later raised when the property was restored.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



8242 - Physical tests of candidates for commissions, particularly tests of an unexpected nature, were carefully scrutinized by the censor. If you, for example, were shortly to be examined in the office pictured above, and were liable to be "plucked" because of defective vision, the eye-test charts on the rear wall might be of interest to you.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



8258 - At one time the Mexican situation became so threatening that the most influential representative of the party of the opposition was summoned to Washington to confer with the U. S. army chiefs. At least, that is the supposition inspired by the picture of the Mexican General Obregon at the Army War College, flanked by General Staff officers. An international conflict, which was happily avoided perhaps by this very meeting, might have been started by the publication of this picture.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



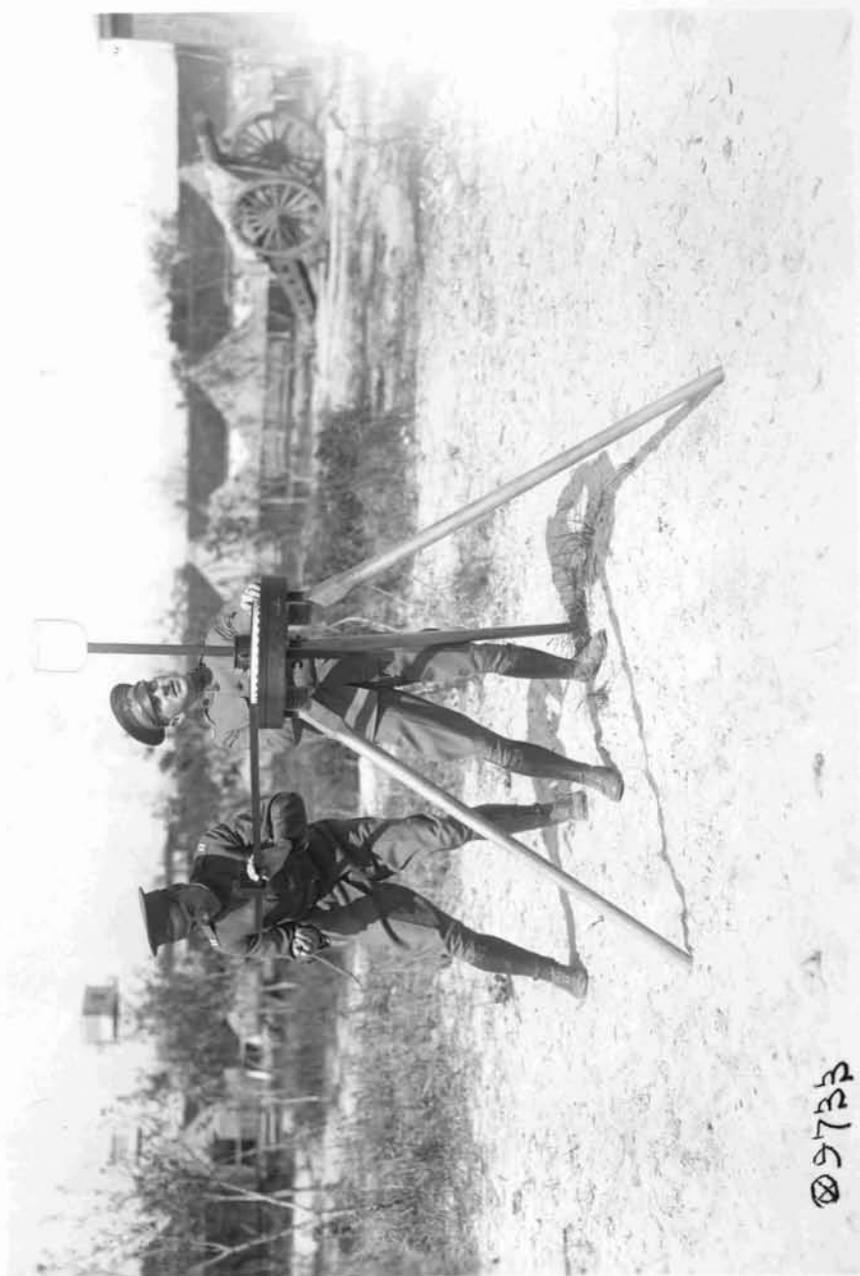
9673 - The character of these coast-defense mortars, the ammunition used, the manner of operation, the gun crews required, the location and other data of military value are here clearly revealed. Such pictures were invariably withheld from distribution.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



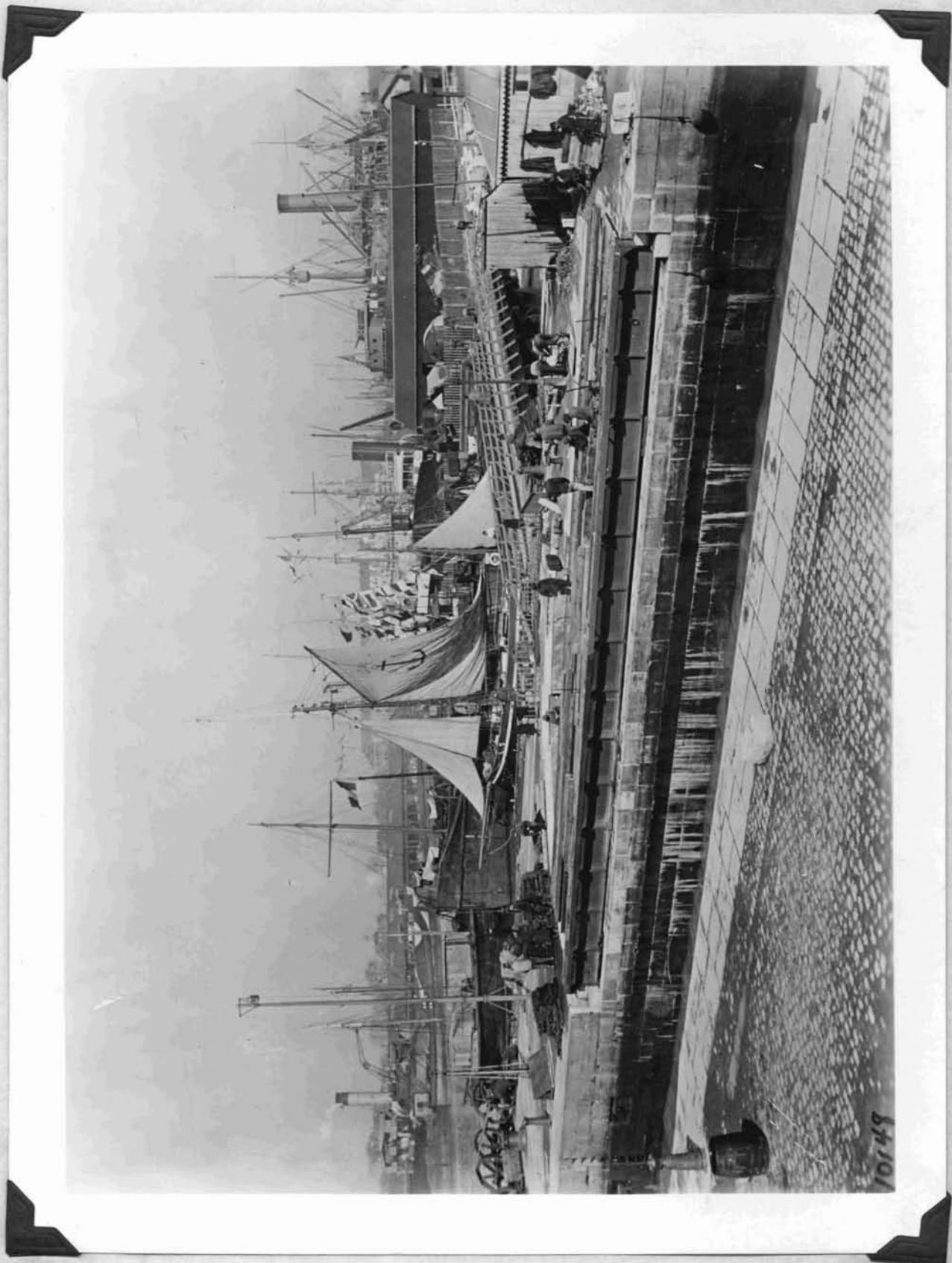
9731 - The size and character of this anti-aircraft gun, its method of operation, its sighting apparatus and its exact location are clearly illustrated in the picture taken at Fort Monroe, Va., in April, 1918.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



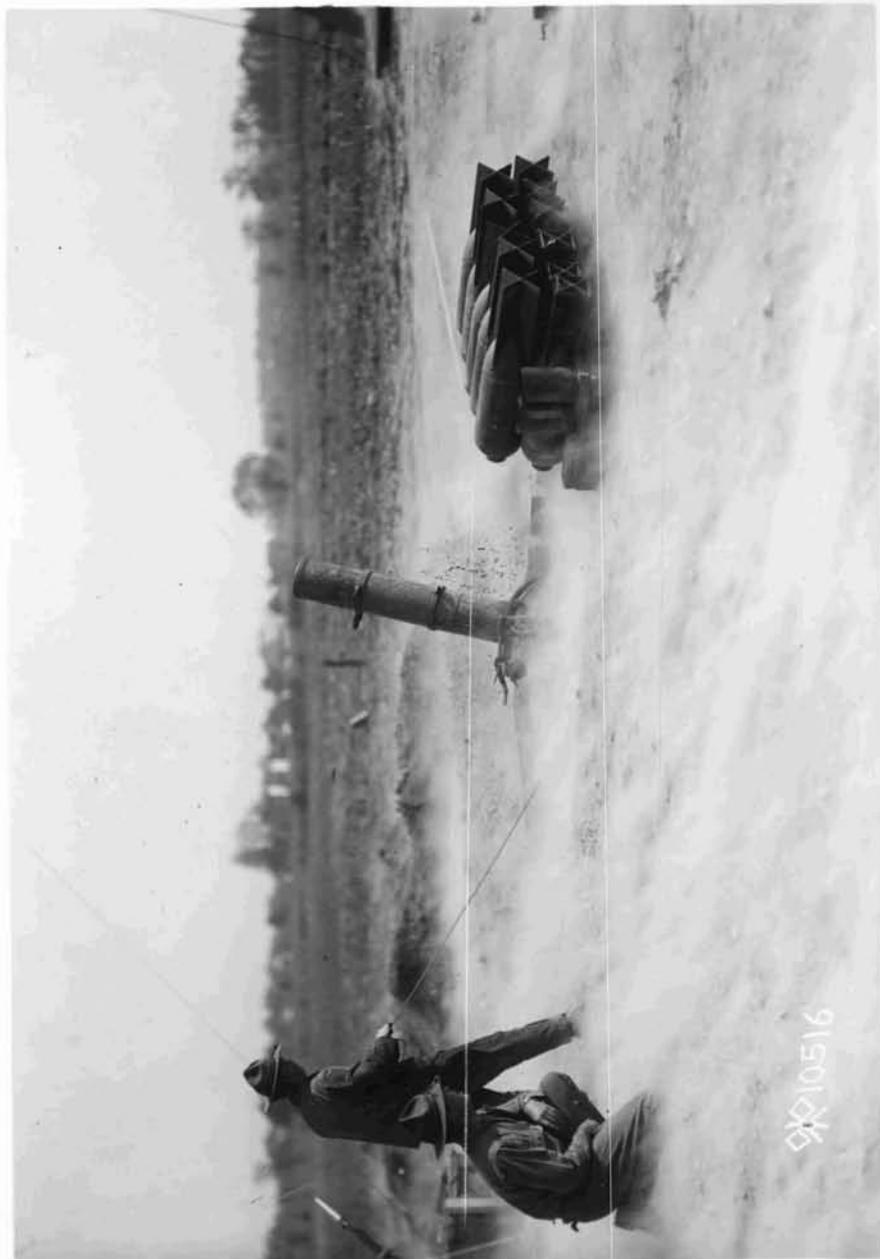
9733 - Instruments of war, especially new inventions, were photographed only by official camera men of the Signal Corps, and the prints were kept in the confidential files. This is a specimen of the many pictures of this kind, taken at the School of Aerial Gunnery at Fort Monroe, Va., and designed "for official use only".

(U. S. Signal Corps)



10148 - The swinging bridge across the canal lock at St. Nazaire, France, through which American supplies were transported. This belongs to a large group of photographs of docks and waterways that would reveal much more to the German intelligence officer than to the casual American newspaper reader.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



10516 - All pictures of experimental work of a military nature came strictly under the censor's ban. This particular photograph of a test of a 240 m. Stokes trench mortar, taken "for official use only" at the Aberdeen proving grounds, was given out to a magazine through other than the prescribed channels, thereby giving exclusive rights on a War Department photograph of a confidential nature.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



10754 - What parent of a flying cadet could see this picture of an accident at Kelly Field without seeing his or her own boy lying there? Views of accidents which might tend to lower the morale of the public or cause unnecessary alarm, were under the ban.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



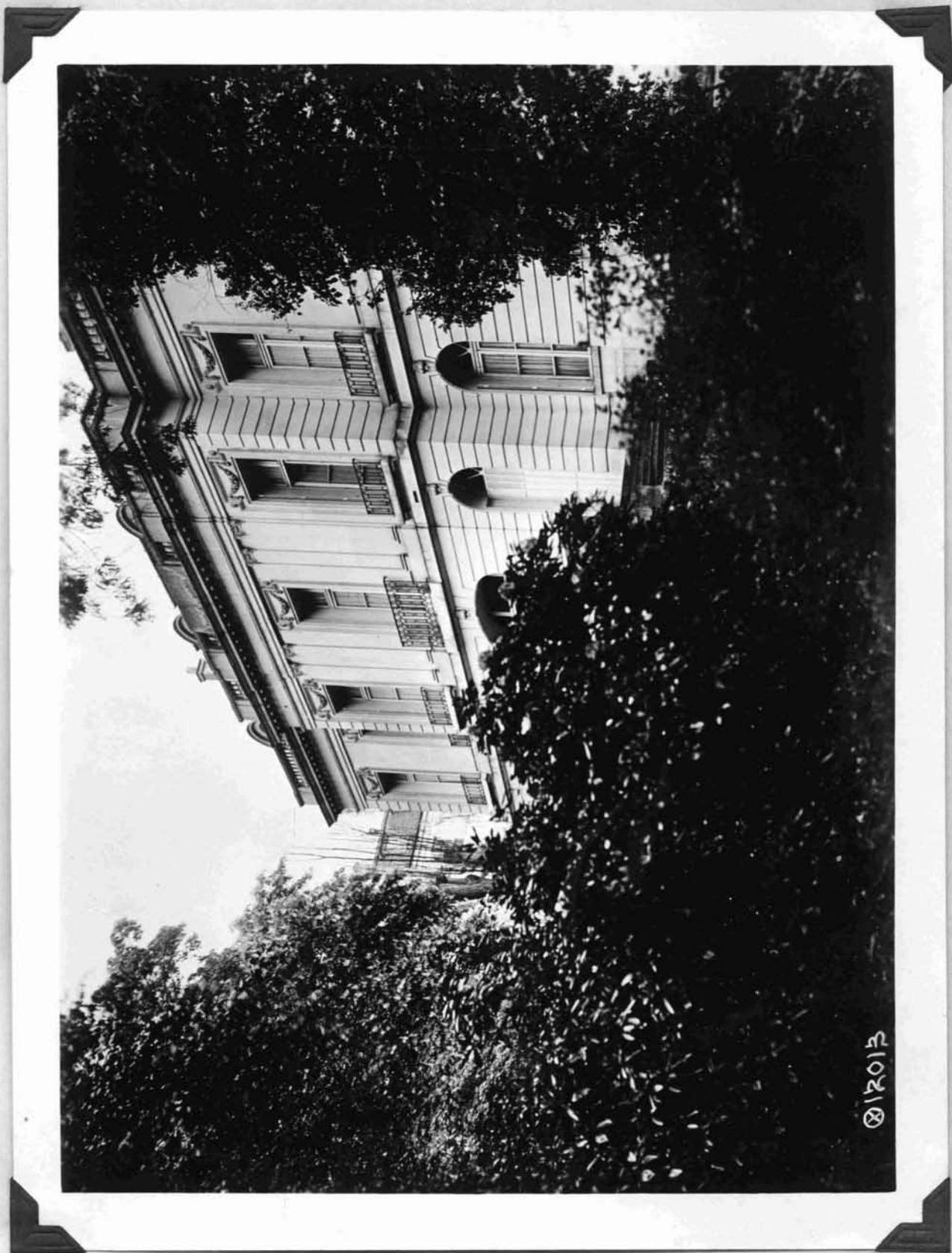
11497 - Apparatus with which experimental or training work was conducted came under the ban. This picture shows ^{the} Scharf mounted visible gun camera, similar to the Lewis gun, used by the Air service for training flyers in aerial gunnery at Ellington Field, Houston, Texas. May 1918.

(U. S. Signal Corps.)



11965 - German prisoners being quizzed by intelligence officers at the headquarters of the 42nd Division, Baccarat, France, May 1, 1918. But on the walls may be seen maps and charts that may reveal military secrets. So this picture did not reach the enemy.

(U. S. Signal Corps.)



12013 - A pretty view of an attractive home in France, - but of value to the enemy when identified as the headquarters of General Tasker H. Bliss, Chief of Staff at Versailles, in May 1918. Many censored pictures that showed headquarters were of this general class.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



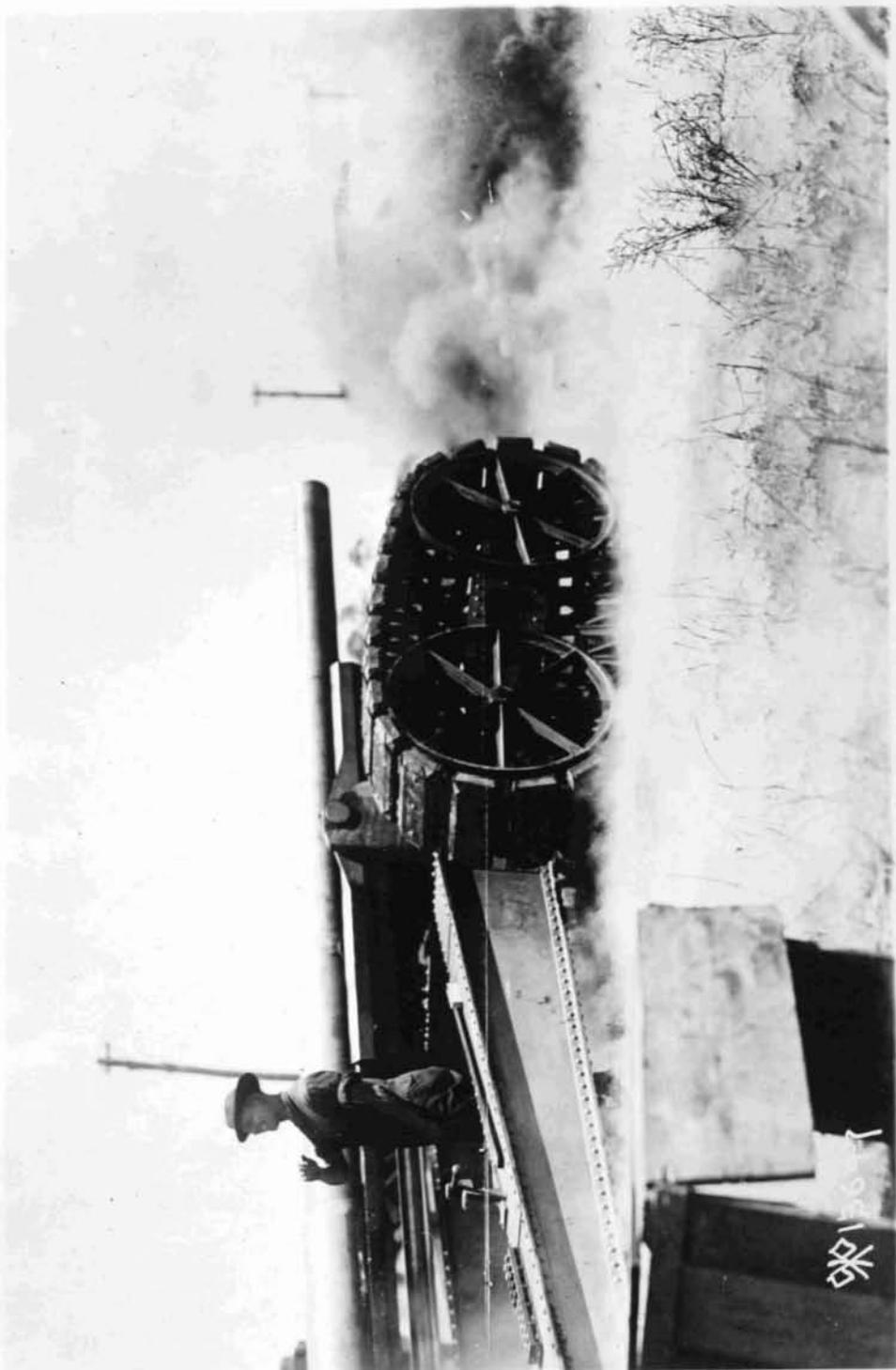
12074 - The special point of interest to the enemy in this apparently harmless desk portrait of a General Staff officer (Col. Edgar T. Conley) was in the typewritten matter on the sheets before him. This was "deleted" before the picture was released. Taken June, 1918.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



13323 - American army surgeons operating on shrapnel cases at Base Hospital No. 6, Sebastopol, France, May 12, 1918. Many hospital scenes were released, but this was one that was withheld. Close-ups of surgical cases were of more value to the medical profession than to the public.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



K3617 - The French authorities took exception to the publication in this country of this new and (then) secret type of automotive tractor mount for a 155 m. Pilloux field gun. The real secret of this invention is so casually suggested in this picture that none but an expert could detect its significance.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



13944 - Bodies awaiting burial in No Man's Land, pending the cessation of firing; Centigny, France, May 28, 1918. Such pictures were withheld from circulation.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



14331 - This is one of the official photographs, released through the Committee on Public Information, that resulted in editorial comment on so-called "faked" pictures issued by that organization. As a matter of fact, the picture, while slightly distorted, shows an actual scene at the cavalry training school at Fort Sam Houston, as was proven in the motion pictures made at the same time.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



14868 - New styles of weapons, like these bomb-throwing devices, were photographed by official photographers for purposes of record and instruction only. Men of the 126th Reg't Infantry, 32nd Division, in the Hecken sector, Alsace, Germany, June 14, 1918.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



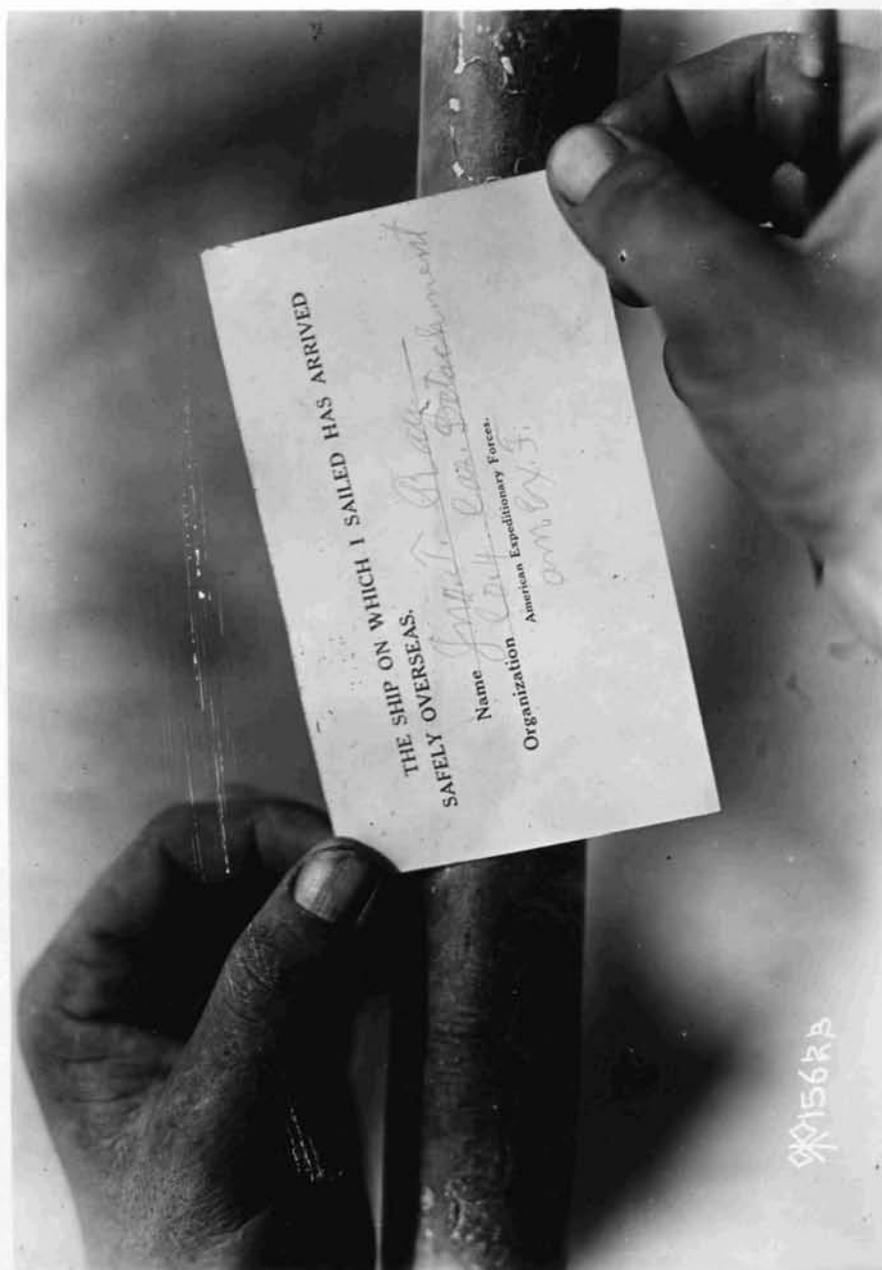
15460 - One of the most remarkable photographs of the war, - the explosion of a balloon at Fort Sill. The accident was caused in a highly exceptional manner by a static spark: the picture was withheld because it would create the impression that such accidents were common and the danger to balloonists was excessive.

(Captain Roger B. Whitman,
U. S. Signal Corps.)



15605 - All embarkation views were taboed; in this case the port, the vessel, the gun position and one of the units leaving (shown by the letting on a box at the left), are all clearly shown on the original print.

(. U. S. Signal Corps)



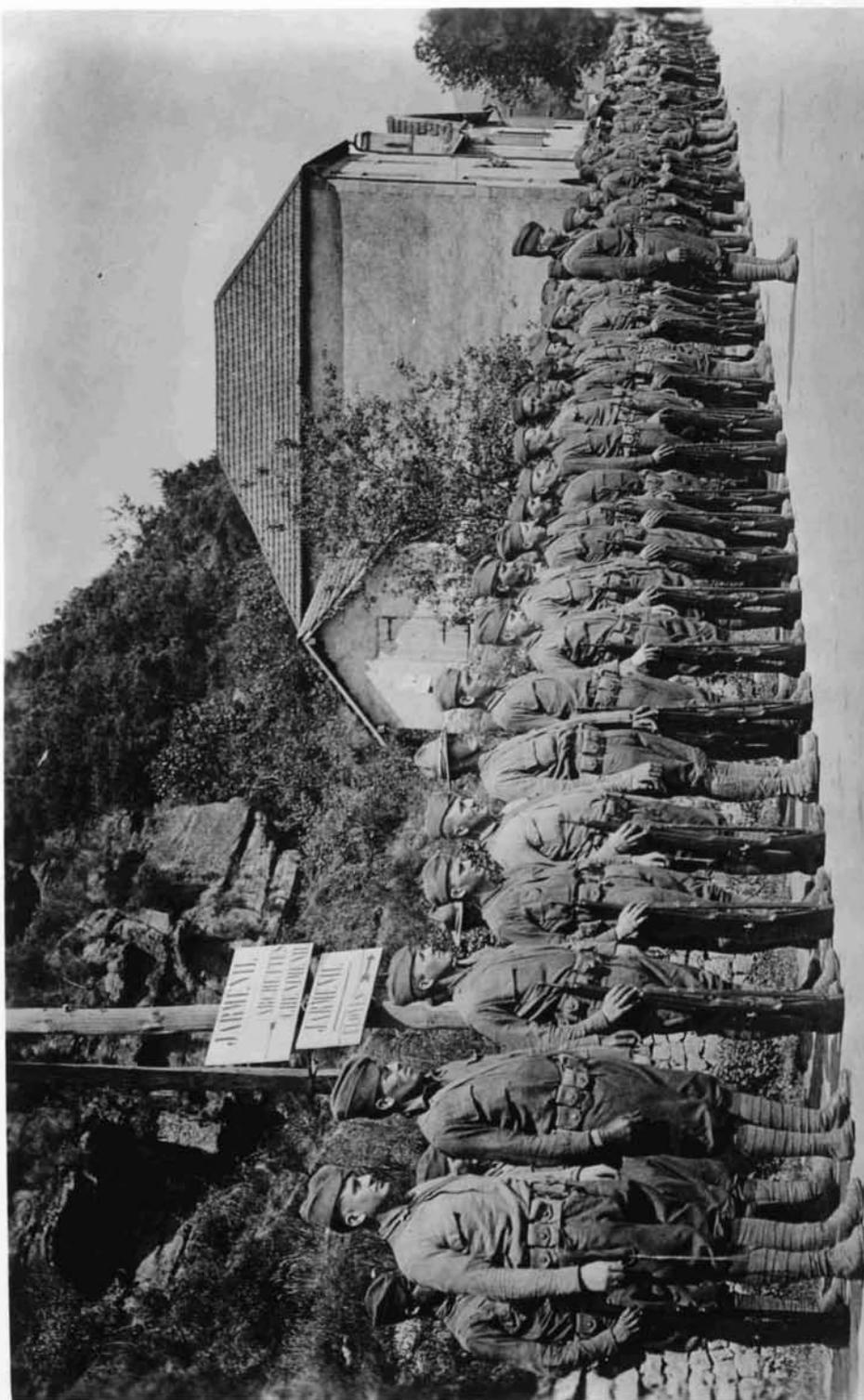
15623 - This "safe arrival" card, used by American soldiers for notifying their friends of the safe arrival overseas of the transport on which they sailed, were deposited by the senders in a mail bag and retained by the port authorities until word was received of the ship's arrival, when the cards were mailed. Pictures of this kind reveal the units that arrived abroad.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



15626 - This picture shows the location and size of the anti-submarine gun, identifies the vessel, the "Leviathan" (by the decorations in the stern) and the locality (New York) by the type of ferry boat in the background. All such information was of value to the enemy.

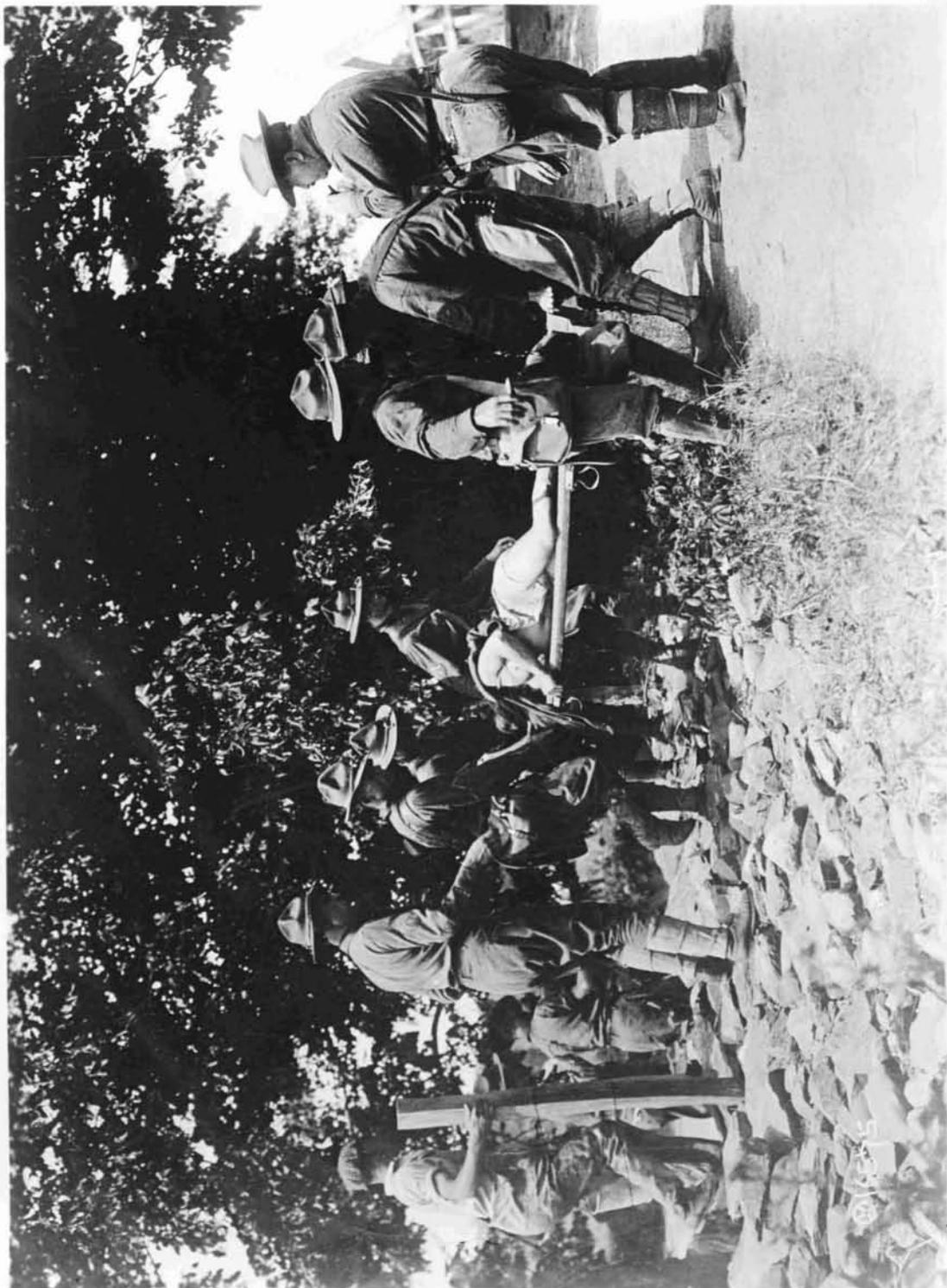
(U. S. Signal Corps)



SIGNAL CORPS U.S.A.
12891

15871 - A snap shot of American troops in France, - revealing their exact location by the sign board at their rear. All photographs that showed locations of troops, supplies and gun positions were, of course, banned, on the ground that they might invite attack.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



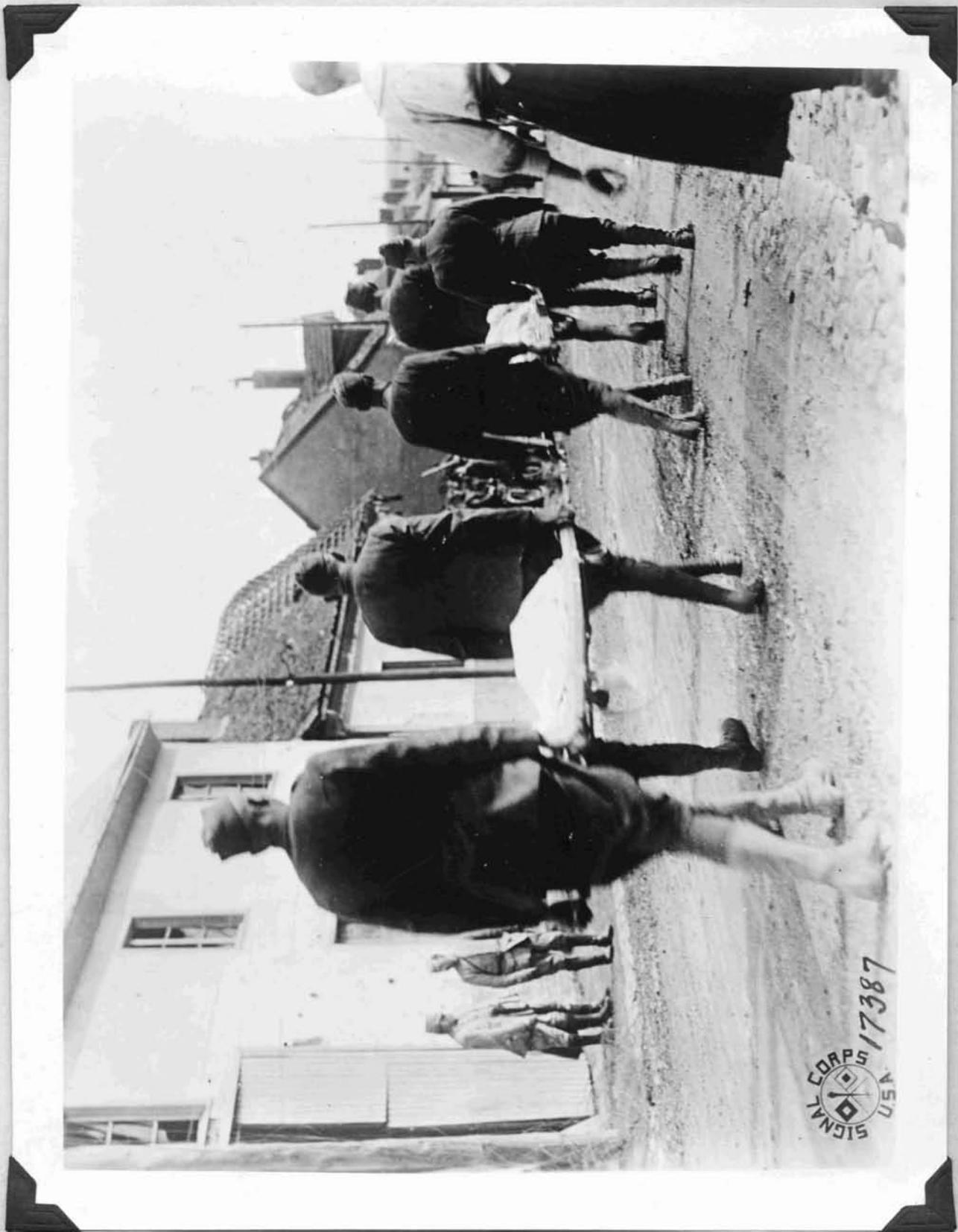
16575 - A drowning accident at Camp Whitman, N. Y., 1917, when three soldiers lost their lives while swimming. Pictures of fatalities that might cause anxiety to the families were withheld.

(International)



16592 - The name of the regiment, the place and the date of departure are clearly shown in this snap shot, - to one who can read the signs. Pictures of troops movements (except to the training centers), were always dangerous to release.

(Paul Thompson, N. Y.)



17387 - Picking up the remains of men who were killed by serial torpedoes that struck the houses across the street from the 305th Engineers' Infirmary, 80th Division, Beauval, France, July 19, 1918.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



17805 - A home in Chateau Thierry wantonly wrecked by the retreating Germans. The series of photographs, of which this is one, was withheld until all of the facts of the case were ascertained and reduced to affidavit form. Official pictures of questionable accuracy were not released.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



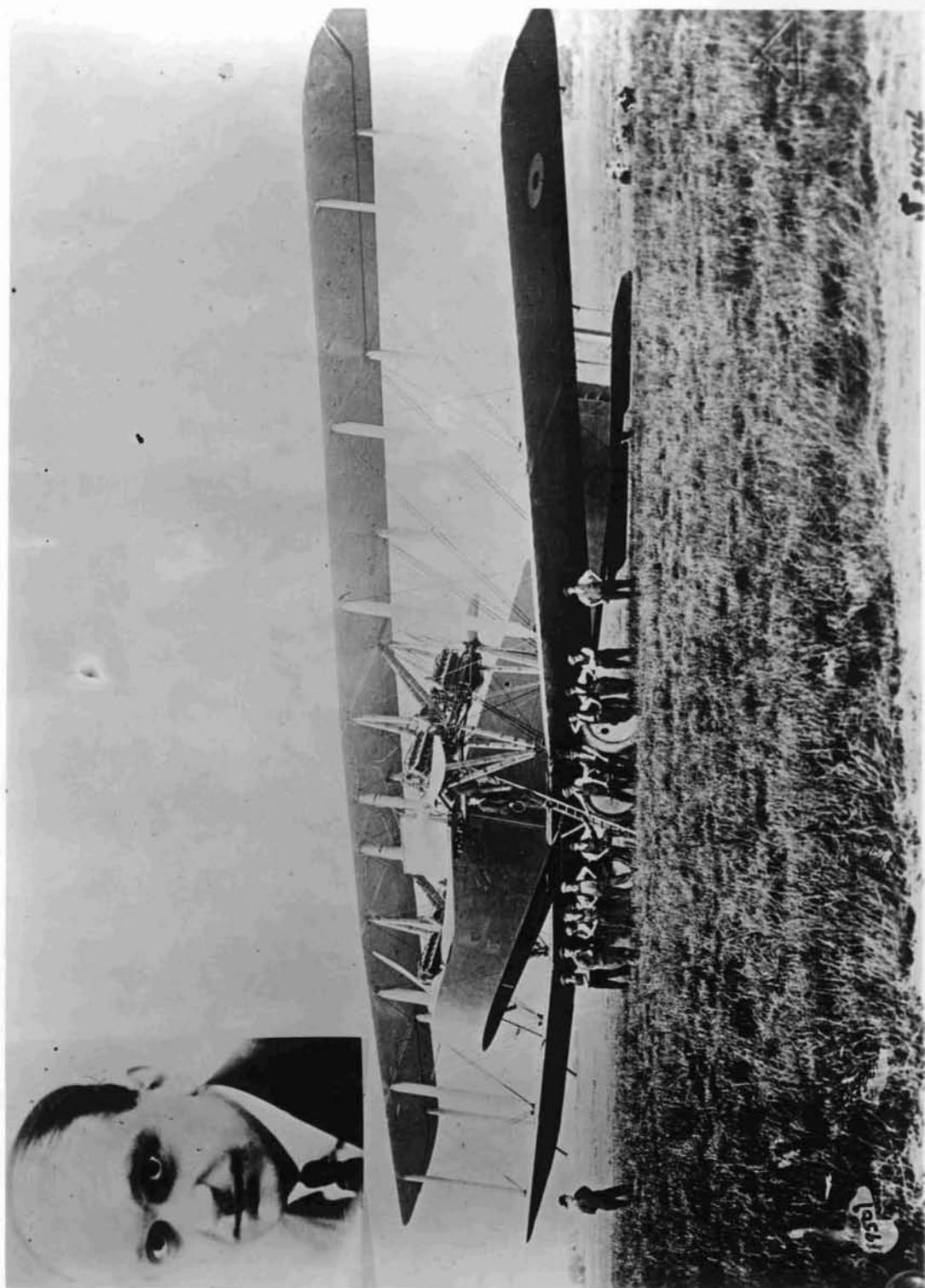
17809 - A picture that started an investigation by the military intelligence officers; one of a group of official Signal Corps photographs made to illustrate the deliberate vandalism of the Germans in Chateau Thierry, following their retreat in July, 1918. The pictures were held up for two months because of doubts of their authenticity, which was finally established.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



18809 - American dead on the field of battle - one of the few such scenes that were sent to this country by the A. E. F. censor. Such views were made almost entirely for purposes of official record. This picture shows men of the 167th Reg't Inf., formerly the 4th Reg. Inf., Ala. N. G., who were killed at Vere-en-Tardenois, France.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



19501 - The publication of this picture and the caption that went with it caused the British Government to warn the American authorities that had the information been given out in England, someone would have been "dealt with summarily". It shows a type of Handley Page bombing plane, which at the time was being made in this country under secrecy.

(Western Newspaper Union, N. Y.)

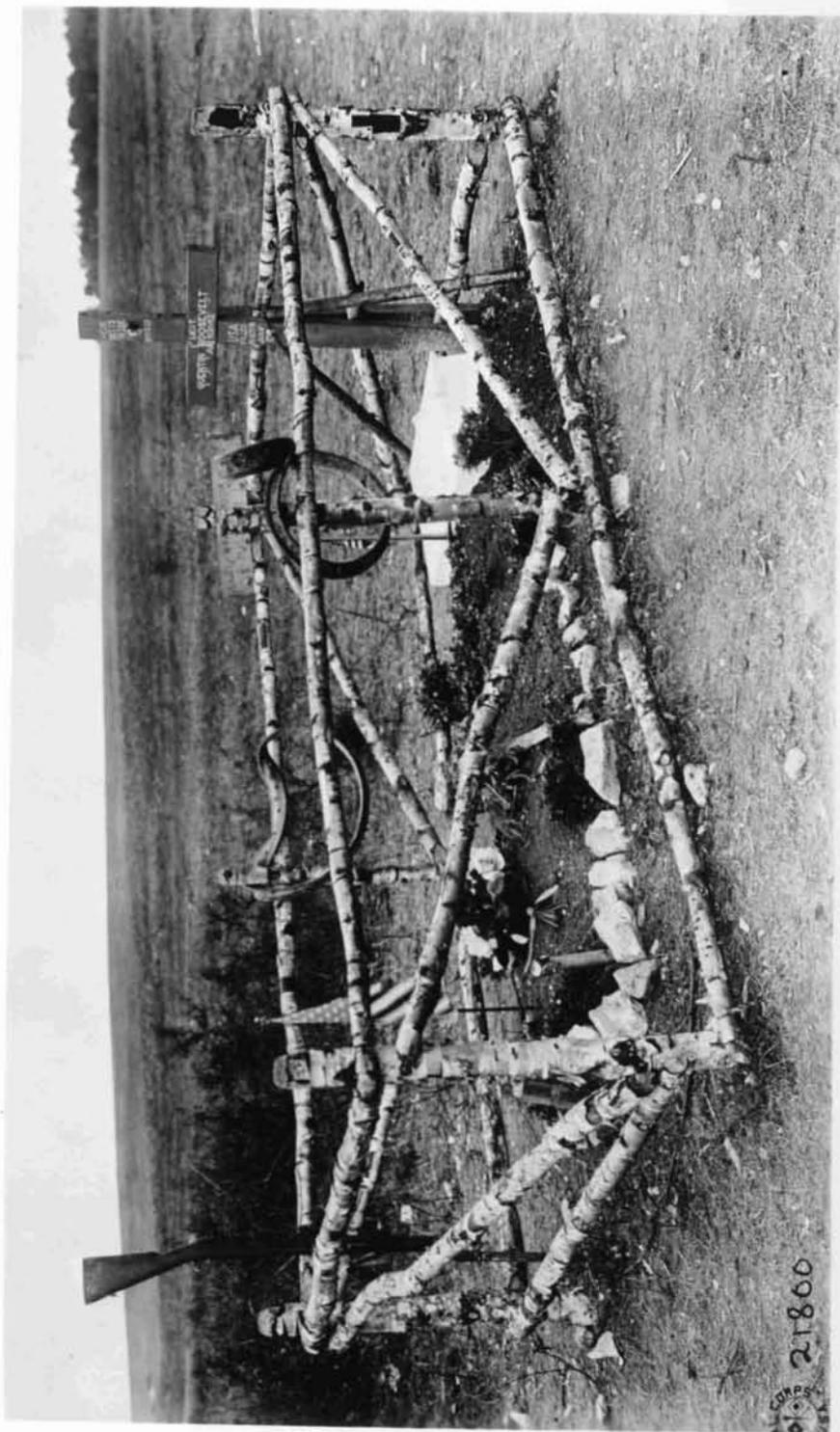


20799 - Photographs that revealed experimental work on war material, or that indicated lines of scientific research, (and in some cases that even suggested that such work was engaging the attention of the Army's experts) were withheld. This picture showing the experimental work on the Liberty Motor in the Packard Motor Co., factory at Detroit, Mich., is an example of the kind of picture that may give away important information to the experienced observer. (U. S. Air Service)



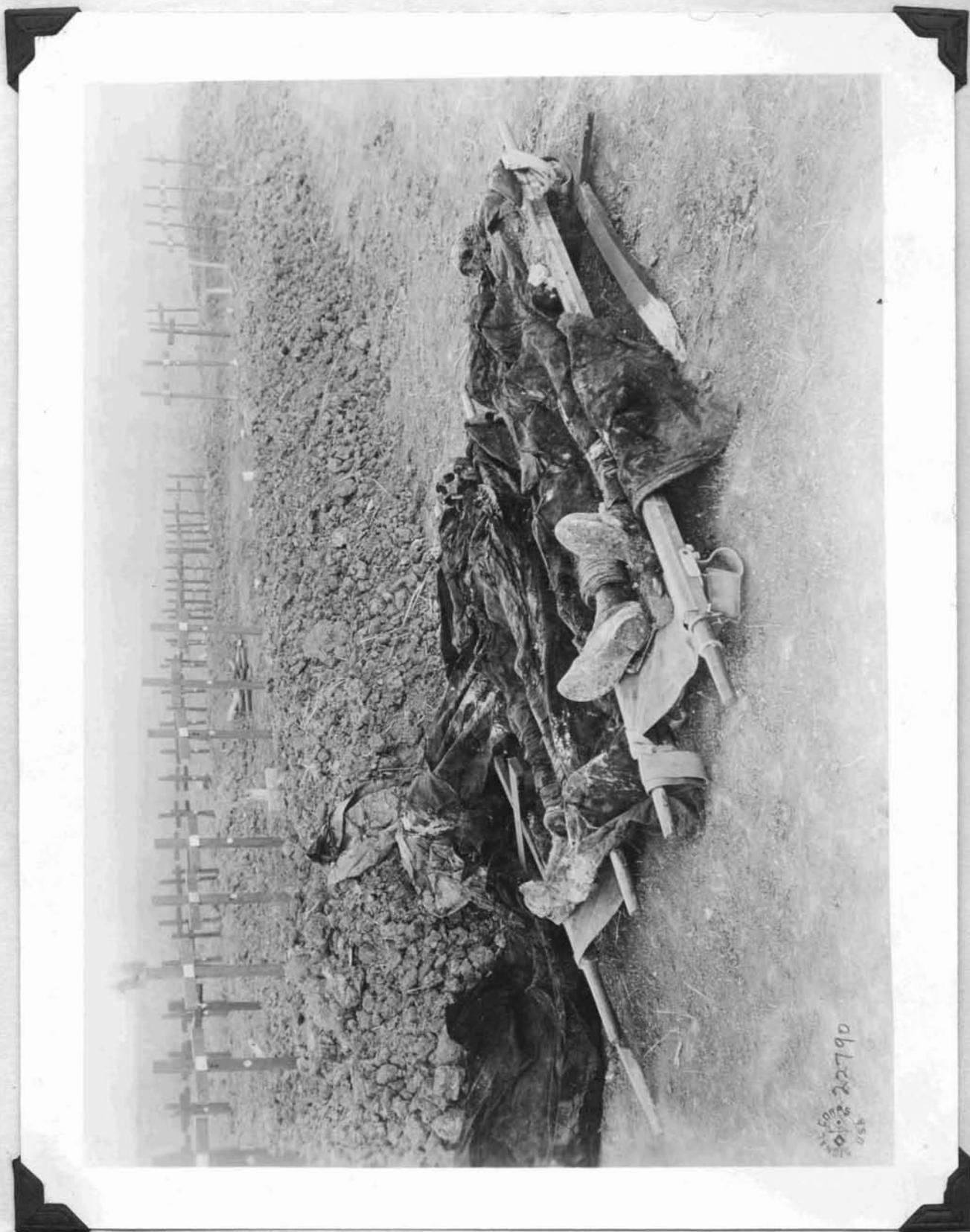
20930 - Pictures of American soldiers drinking liquor - which was contrary to army orders - came under the ban, even though, (as in this case), the steins were quite empty. This picture was made following the capture of a German position in the St. Mihiel Sector.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



21800 - Newspaper editors in New York will recognize this photograph of Lt. Quentin Roosevelt's grave in France; it was regarded as one of the best "news" pictures of the war. It reached this country through private sources before it came through official channels, thereby demoralizing, for a while, the system of releases in this country.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



22790 -- Grewsome scenes that enabled anxious mothers and wives to visualize in each casualty her own son or husband, were usually withheld. Neither the press nor the picture theatres were inclined to show horrors, however; the public did not want it. This shows the re-burial of two American soldiers at Clerges, France.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



22833 - The gun sighting device, as well as the gun itself, kept this snap shot from the front in the confidential files for a while. The value of views of technical equipment may be considerable to the enemy's experts, while only of trifling interest to the public.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



23094 - "Gassed". This remarkable picture was actually made in the battle area of France; the men are real soldiers; the cloud in the distance is real poison gas. But the picture was posed, and consequently was not approved as "official."

(Major Evarts Tracy, U. S. A.)



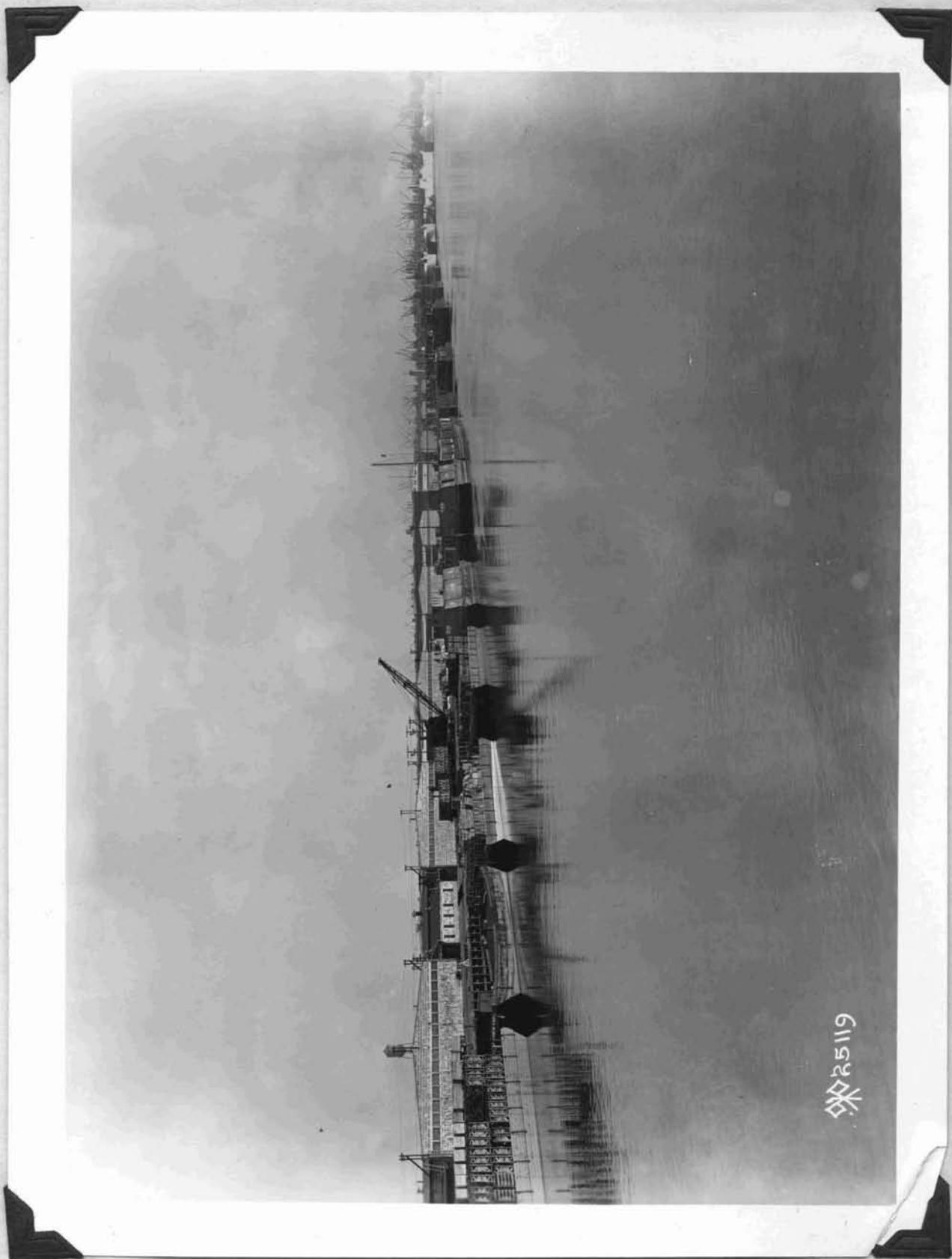
24112 - All pictures showing hand-to-hand fighting methods, (in which the surprise element is important) were censored, in order to keep Fritz in the dark as to what he might expect in a grapple with the Yankee.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



24707 - Not dead or wounded but looking like it. Members of Co. B, 108th Machine Gun Battalion, 28th Division, Bourcuilles, Meuse, France, taking a brief nap after a hard session, Sept. 26, 1918.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



25119 - Few American newspaper editors would be particularly thrilled with this view of an army supply base at Fort Newark, N. J. But it would be a welcomed addition to the intelligence records of Wilhelmstrasse.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



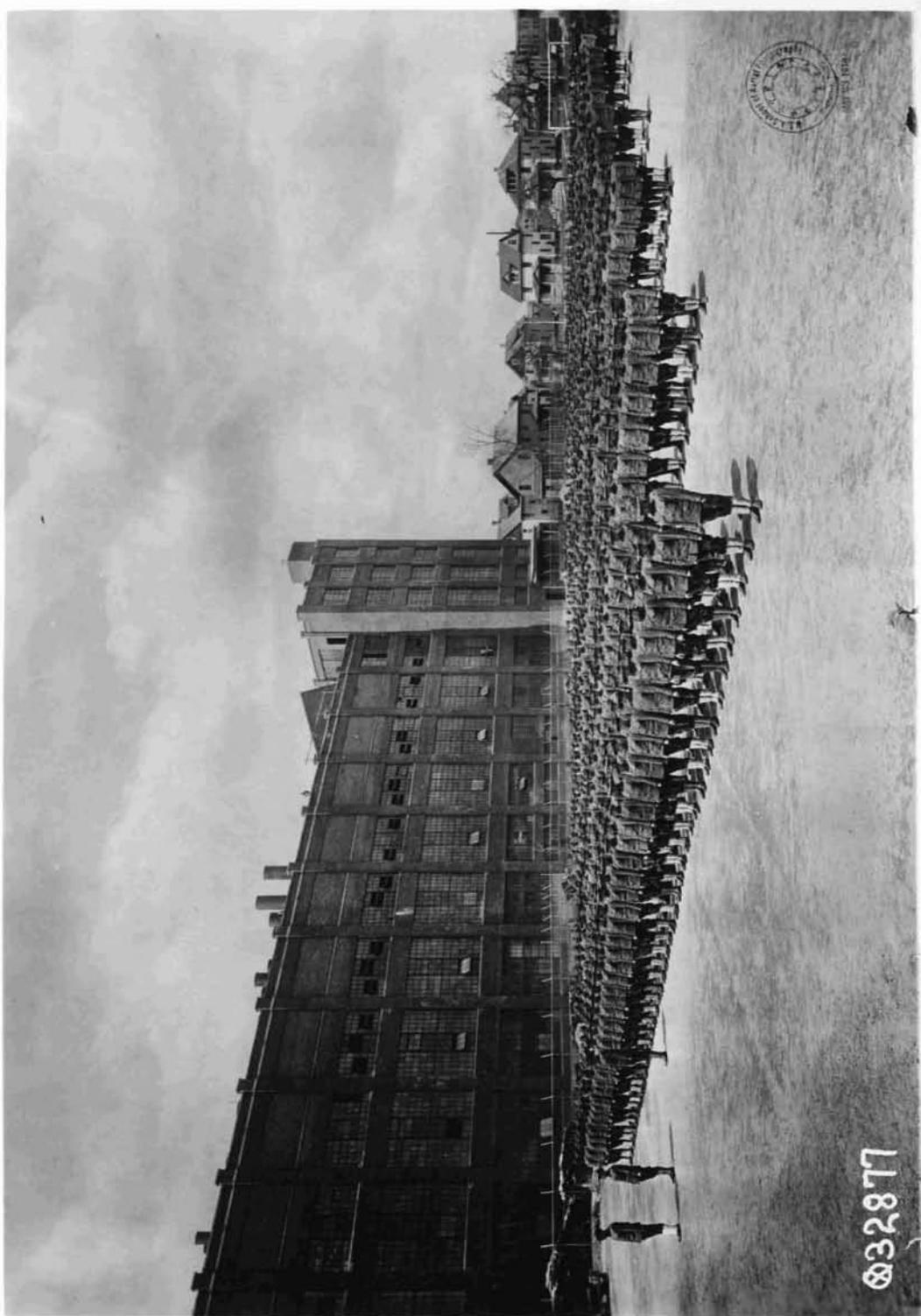
25122 - The sinking of the U. S. transport "American" at her dock in Newark, N. J. This picture was withheld for three reasons, first, because it furnishes a "silhouette" of the vessel, which is always of value to the enemy; second, because it illustrates the method of camouflage; third, because it shows an accident that affected the movement of our troops.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



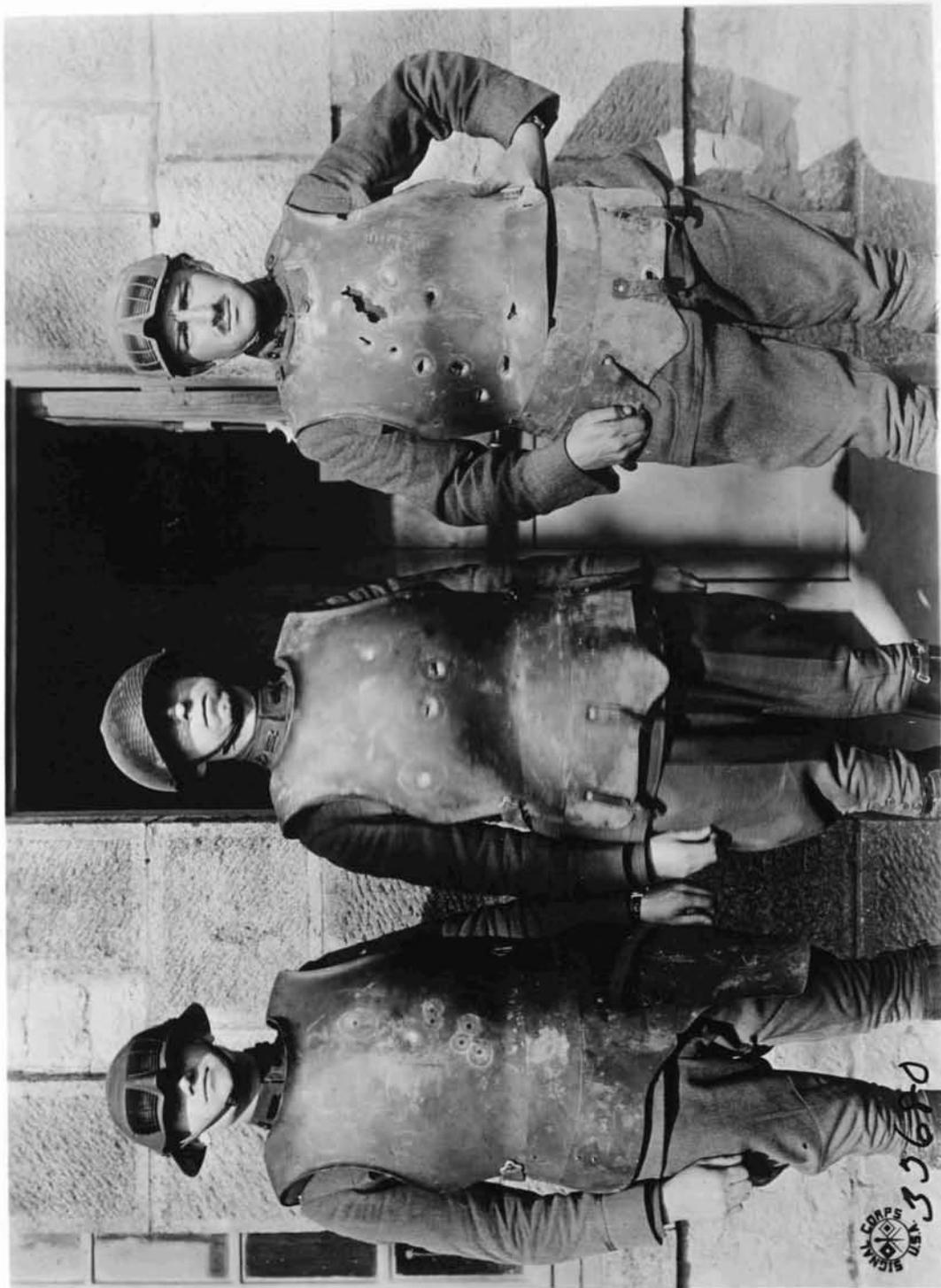
30247 - Men in training camps were forced to resort to improvised wooden machine guns and mortars because of the lack of real ordnance. Pictures of this kind were censored, not as much to allay popular unrest as to prevent their use as propaganda in the enemy countries. Taken at Plattsburg, N. Y., 1917.

(Underwood & Underwood)



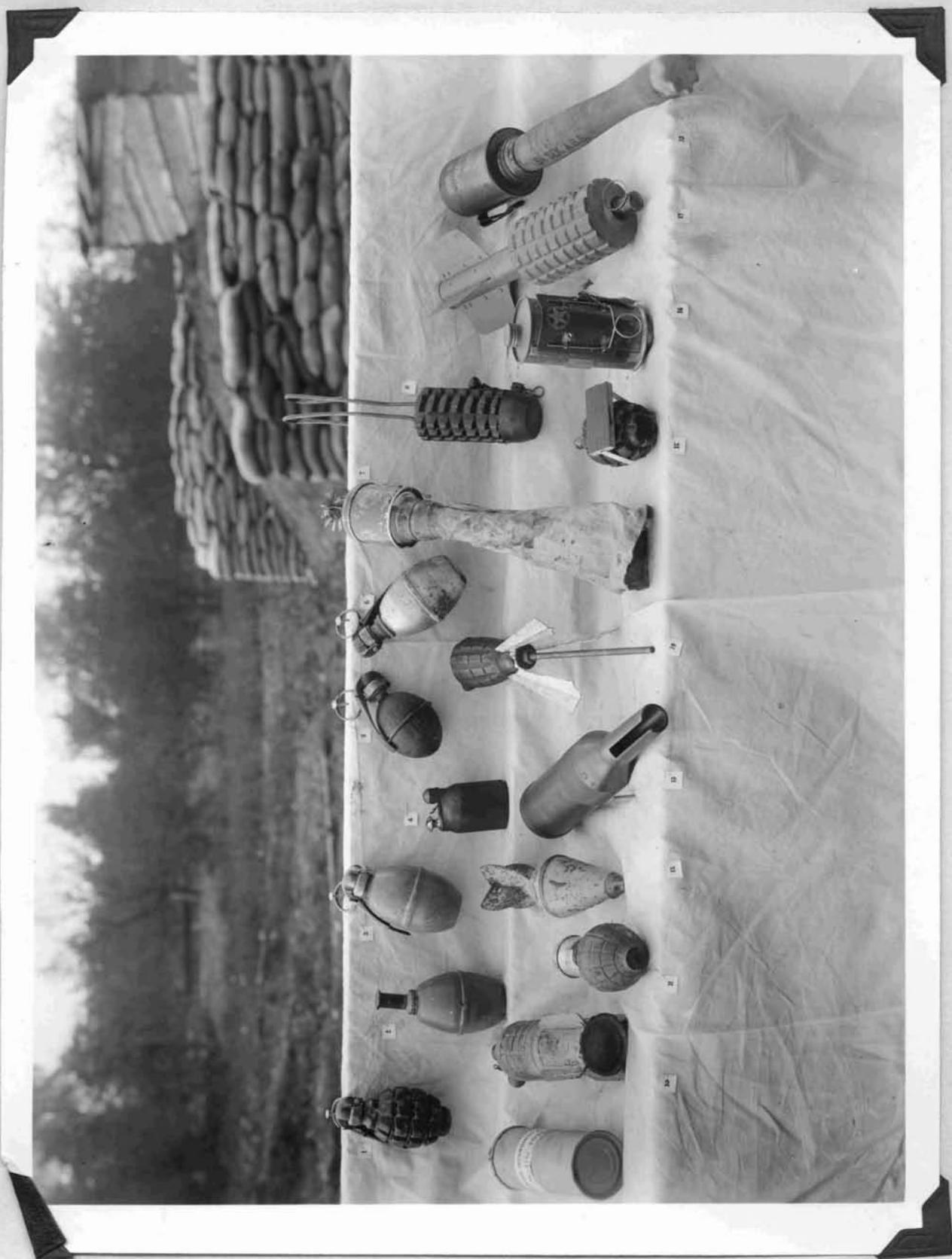
32877 - Such a picture may reveal the extent of America's air program. The locality may be identified as Rochester, where a school of aerial photography was located, the number of such schools was known; so was the proportion of photographic units to the total air force, and the size of the units. Computation will show the approximate number of men in training for this service, and the probable size of our air fleet.

(U. S. Air Service)



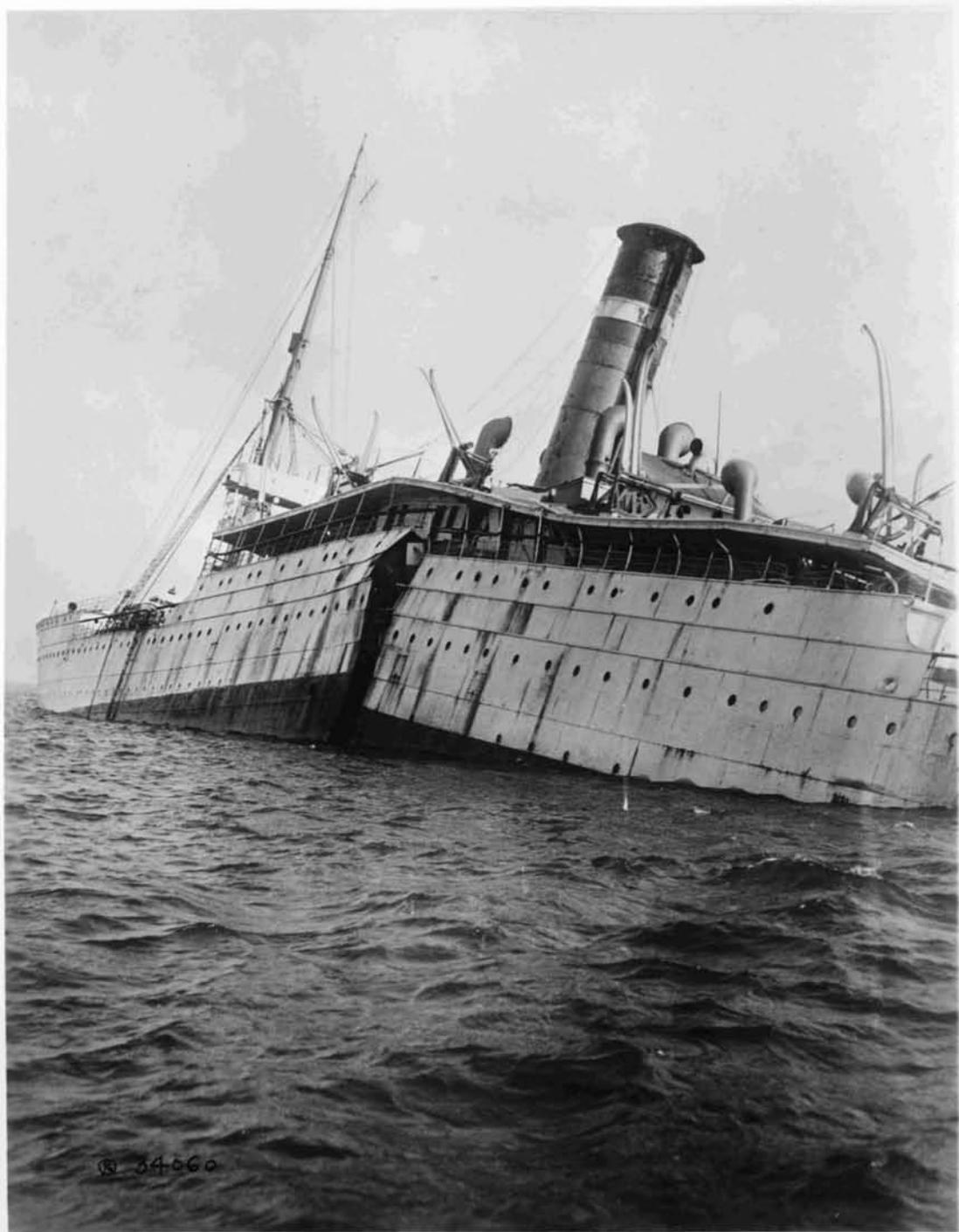
33680 - All pictures that even suggested new lines of scientific thought in warfare were stamped "Not for Publication". The fact that the War Department was experimenting with body armor would have been of material interest to the Hun, even to the extent of prompting him to develop similar protective devices of his own or guns that would render ours useless.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



33712 - Photographs like this, made for record and instruction purposes, sometimes convey information of considerable military significance. Not only does this picture show eighteen types of grenades, for example, but to the experienced eye it pointed out new and unusual forms of this weapon that were obviously designed to be employed in new and unusual ways, and on which experimental work was then being conducted. Taken at Sauvages-Meuse, France, May 10, 1918.

(U. S. Signal Corps)

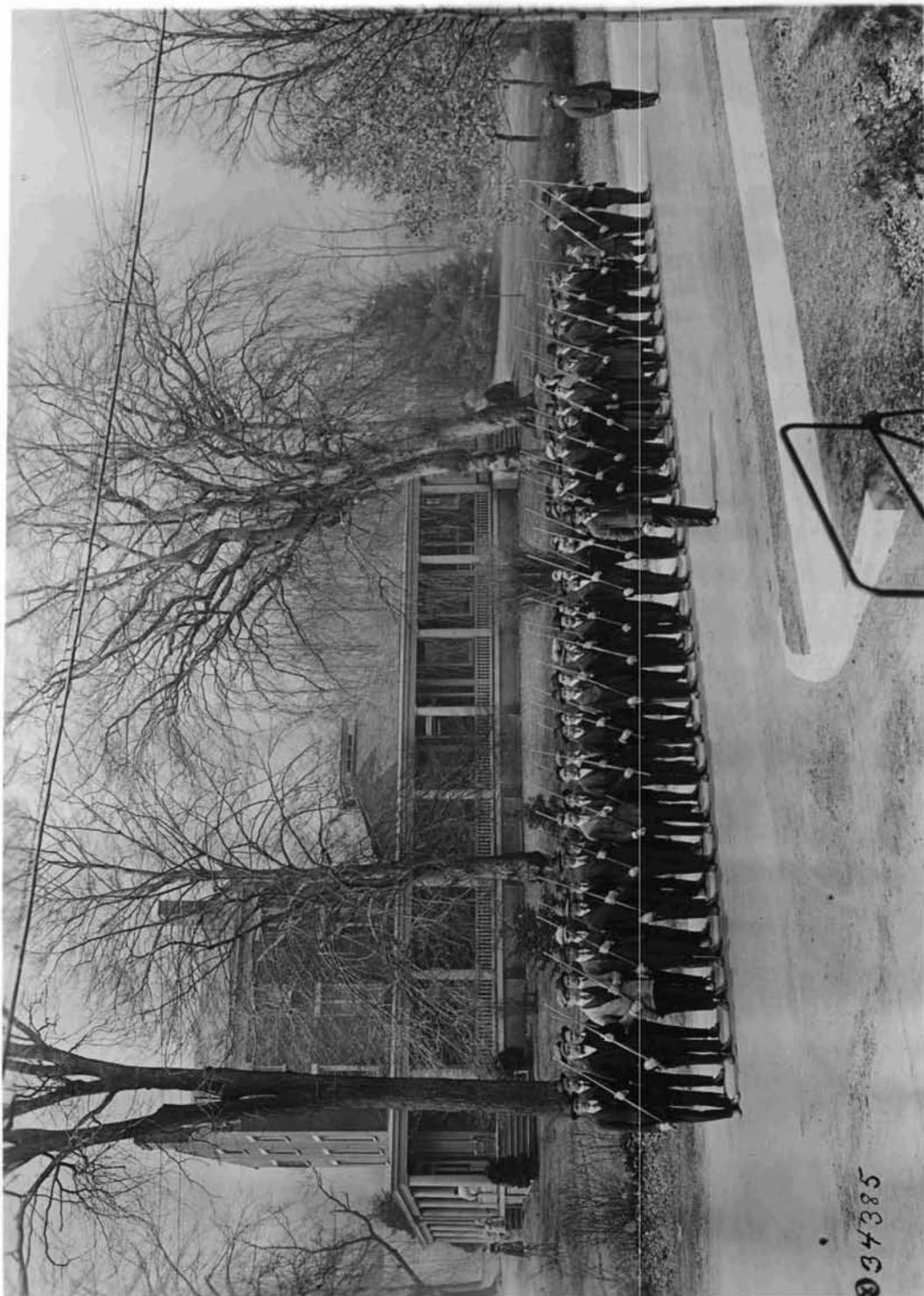


34060 - Pictures that showed disasters of military import - like the destruction of the U. S. Army transport Summer on the shoals off Barnegat, N. J., in 1917 - were banned both because of the effect upon our own public and the effect upon enemy morale also.



34062 - General March surrounded by the Washington newspaper correspondents during one of his weekly talks with them during the war. The real interest to the German agent, however, lies in the charts on the wall.

(Harris & Ewing, Washington, D. C.)



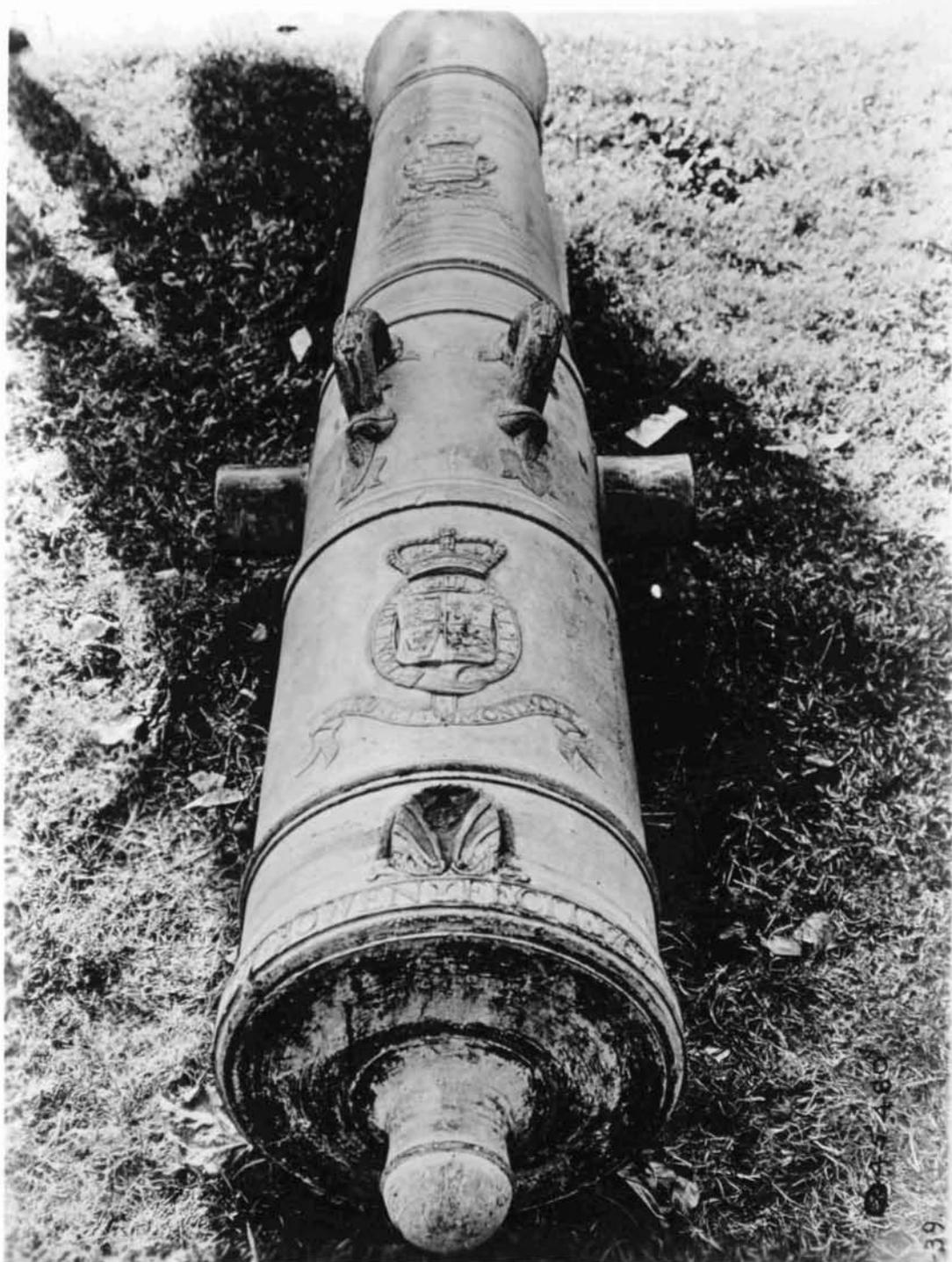
34385 - During the early days of the war the public was inclined to become panicky over our lack of war material. Pictures showing citizens or soldiers drilling with makeshift rifles or guns helped to increase this distrust of the Government, and at the same time lent encouragement to the Hun. The publication of such pictures was therefore discouraged.

(Norman A. Burke, E. J.)



44813 - The "Bread Riots" in New York early in 1917, when the women of the East Side appealed to the Mayor at the City Hall to curb the rising prices of food. Such pictures were used by the enemy as evidence of the unrest in this country and of the resentment aroused against America's entrance into the war.

(Underwood & Underwood)



45480 - Censored as an act of courtesy to our English allies;
a picture of one of the old cannons captured from
the British during the Revolutionary War and now
at Fortress Monroe, Va.

(U. S. Signal Corps)

WAR DEPARTMENT,
WASHINGTON, September 10, 1918.

PART II.

REGULATIONS GOVERNING CORRESPONDENTS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS WITH TROOPS IN THE UNITED STATES
AND PRESCRIBING THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH PHOTOGRAPHS CONNECTED WITH THE
MILITARY SERVICE OR WITH THE PRODUCTION OF WAR MATERIAL MAY BE TAKEN.

1. Under the restrictions of this order, and under such additional regulations and supervision as commanding officers may deem appropriate and advisable, the freedom of military camps, including the privilege of establishing offices and private wires therein, may be given to newspaper correspondents and photographers, provided the Government is thereby put to no expense.

2. Correspondents and photographers will not ordinarily be permitted to live in camp, but they may be given this privilege at the discretion of camp commanders under conditions which make it necessary or desirable. Correspondents and photographers will not be required to provide themselves with uniforms, but will be required to wear on the left arm a white brassard, 2½ inches in width, bearing the letter "C" in red, as specified in paragraph 428, Field Service Regulations, U. S. Army, 1914.

3. Correspondents will be expected to exercise great care that they transmit for publication no matter which might be injurious to the public interest. In this connection they will be expected to conform to the views and wishes of the military authorities and the Committee on Public Information. Commanding officers who grant press and photographic privileges will, so far as practicable, inform correspondents and photographers of such views and wishes.

4. Officers and enlisted men in active service are forbidden to act as paid correspondents or photographers. The conditions under which officers and men on duty in the United States may permit fiction, verse, essays, letters, descriptive or technical articles, pamphlets, books, or illustrations to be published are prescribed in section V, General Orders, No. 1, War Department, 1918, as amended by section V, General Orders, No. 89, War Department, 1918.

5. No correspondent or photographer will be permitted to take a camera overseas, or to accompany troops leaving the United States for duty overseas, without special authority from the Director, Military Intelligence Division, under the conditions prescribed in Part I, paragraphs 1 and 2, of these regulations.

6. With the exception of official photographers, officers, enlisted men, and civilians attached to the military forces are forbidden to take cameras to ports of embarkation or to carry them overseas, except by authority of the Director, Military Intelligence Division.

7. No person, firm, or corporation shall by any authority be granted an exclusive privilege to take, develop, or vend photographs at any place under military control. No person, firm, or corporation shall by any authority be granted an exclusive privilege for the sale of newspapers or periodicals within the limits of camps.

8. The object of these regulations is to remove all unnecessary restrictions and grant the maximum of practical freedom to citizens in photographing matters of legitimate public or private interest in so far as is compatible with discipline and good order. Ordinary photographs of military subjects, concerning which no secrecy is requisite, may be taken freely about open camps without restrictions other than such as may be imposed by the commanding officer, having due regard to the avoidance of unfair discrimination. The term "open camps" is understood to include all divisional camps,

[000.77, A. G. O.]

replacement camps, and officers' training schools. In these places the intelligence officer shall have charge, under the direction of one commanding officer, of such details of registration, limitation, and inspection as may be found necessary for the proper control of civilian photographers within the reservation. The freedom to photograph in open camps may be revoked or limited at any time by the commanding officer when exigencies arise demanding secrecy.

9. None but official photographers of the Signal Corps, or other recognized bureau of the War Department or of the Navy, or of the Committee on Public Information, properly identified by a permit secured from the Director Military Intelligence Division, shall be allowed to make photographs, moving pictures, drawings, or pictorial records of movements of troops, experiments in matériel, experiments in intrenchments or experiments in formations, fortifications, armories, arsenals, or factories connected with the national defense, except as hereinafter provided. The taking of photographs from kites, aeroplanes, or balloons, and the taking of photographs at ports of embarkation and at camps connected with such ports, and of troops aboard transports, are forbidden, except to commissioned officers with special permits from the Director, Military Intelligence Division.

10. Progress pictures for record purposes only may be made within the prohibited reservations hereinabove referred to by properly accredited civilian or other photographers having permits from the Director of Military Intelligence, provided, however, that prints of all pictures be submitted in triplicate to the Director of Military Intelligence. Under no circumstances may progress pictures be used for advertising, exploitation, or commercial exhibition.

11. The Director, Military Intelligence Division, General Staff, is hereby authorized to correspond directly with commanding officers and with such other persons as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this order.

12. The foregoing regulations govern only newspaper correspondents, photographers, and the taking of pictures connected with the military service in the United States. Regulations governing newspaper correspondents, photographers, and the taking of pictures overseas are published in Part I of these regulations and in orders of the American Expeditionary Forces.

13. Applications for permits to take photographs under the conditions prescribed above in paragraphs 9 and 10 shall be made directly by the chief of the bureau or department concerned to the Director, Military Intelligence Division.

14. The greatest caution is enjoined and the strictest responsibility imposed upon persons in the military service entrusted with experiments in matériel or movements of a confidential nature to protect them from discovery, investigation, or exploitation.

15. The provisions of these special regulations repeal and revoke the instructions contained in the letter from The Adjutant General of the Army, dated November 6, 1917 (000.77 N. G. & N. A. Tr. Camps, Misc. Div.).

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

PEYTON C. MARCH,
General, Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:

P. C. HARRIS,
Acting The Adjutant General.

86605



WAR DEPARTMENT
PHOTOGRAPHER'S PERMIT

Date

To

Permission is hereby extended to the bearer of this communication, whose name and credentials are attached, to take photographs of the following subjects within your jurisdiction:

NAME OF PHOTOGRAPHER

FIRM OR ORGANIZATION

ADDRESS

This permit is issued on the express condition that all photographs shall be submitted promptly and BEFORE PUBLICATION to the Committee on Public Information, 10 Jackson Place, Washington, D. C., and that only those pictures will be released that secure official approval from the War Department through the Committee on Public Information.

Still photographs should be submitted in triplicate; one print, if approved, will be stamped "Passed by the Committee on Public Information, Washington," and will be returned to the owner; one print will be retained as a record by the Committee on Public Information, and one print will be retained as a record by the War Department. Prints that are not admissible will be stamped "Not passed by the Committee on Public Information, Washington," and will be returned to the owner. The publication, reproduction, sale, or other distribution of such pictures is forbidden.

Motion picture films should be submitted in duplicate and in positive. One film will be returned to the owner with directions for alterations, if required, and the other film will be retained by the Committee on Public Information as a record.

The War Department reserves the privilege of using such photographs for official purposes.

This permit may be revoked at the discretion of the authorities to which this communication is directed.

SIGNED
Adjutant General

APPROVAL RECOMMENDED

For the Committee on Public Information, Washington, D. C.

(This permit will be taken up by the authority to whom it is addressed and returned by him to the Committee on Public Information, 10 Jackson Place, Washington, D. C.)

86606

86606 - The "Photographer's Permit" which was issued by the Adjutant General to reputable camera men in private life, upon the recommendation of the Committee on Public Information. All photographs taken by authority of this permit had to be submitted for approval before release, and duplicate prints were retained for record - one by the Committee and one by the Pictorial Section of the Historical Branch, General Staff.

(U. S. Signal Corps)

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION

10 JACKSON PLACE : : : : WASHINGTON, D. C.

WHAT THE GOVERNMENT ASKS OF THE PRESS.

The desires of the Government, with respect to the concealment from the enemy of military policies, plans, and movements, are set forth in the following specific requests. They go to the press of the United States directly from the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy, and represent the thought and advice of their technical advisers.

For the protection of our military and naval forces and of merchant shipping it is requested that secrecy be observed in all matters of:

1. Information in regard to the train or boat movement of troops. Such information is at all times and under all circumstances dangerous and should be scrupulously avoided.
2. Information tending directly or indirectly to disclose the number or identity of troops in the expeditionary forces abroad.
3. Information tending to disclose the names of line officers in expeditionary forces and reference to individual units of these forces. Only names of staff officers are permissible.
4. Information calculated to disclose location of the permanent base or bases abroad.
5. Information that would disclose the location of American units or the eventual or actual position of the American forces at the front.
6. Information of the movement of military forces toward seaports or of the assembling of military forces at seaports from which inference might be drawn of any intention to embark them for service abroad; and information of the assembling of transports or convoys; and information of the embarkation itself.
7. Information of the arrival at any European port of American war vessels, transports, or any portion of an expeditionary force, combatant or noncombatant, until announcement is authorized by the Secretary of War or the Secretary of the Navy.
8. Information of the time of departure of merchant ships from American or European ports, or information of the ports from which they sailed.
9. Information indicating the port of arrival of incoming ships from European ports or after their arrival indicating, or hinting at, the port at which the ship arrived.
10. Information as to convoys and as to the sighting of friendly or enemy ships, whether naval or merchant.
11. Information of the locality, number, or identity of warships belonging to our own Navy or to the navies of any country at war with Germany. Papers published in ports should with especial care refrain from giving information to enemy agents in regard to ships stationed or calling at such ports. Because dangerous news is known locally, it does not follow that it can be safely published. Nonpublication of dangerous news obliges the enemy to rely on spies actually in the localities concerned, thus adding difficulties and delay in its transmission.
12. Information of the identities of American merchant ships defending themselves against submarines, and the identities of their captains, their gun crews, and crews. No matter from which side of the ocean comes the news, it is asked that this information be withheld from publication. Editors will appreciate the importance of cooperation to withhold from the enemy such information as might expose the officers and men of merchant ships to the danger of cruel and outrageous reprisal.
13. Information of the coast defenses of the United States. Any information of their very existence, as well as the number, nature, or position of their guns, is dangerous.
14. Information of the laying of mines or mine fields or of any harbor defenses.
15. Information of the aircraft and appurtenances used at Government aviation schools for experimental tests under military authority.
16. Information of all Government experiments in war material.
17. Information of secret notices issued to mariners or other confidential instructions issued by the Navy or the Department of Commerce relating to lights, lightships, buoys, or other guides to navigation.
18. Information as to the number, size, character, or location of ships of the Navy or of the merchant marine, ordered laid down at any port or shipyard, or in actual process of construction; or information that they are launched or in commission.
19. Information relating to dry docks and to all classes of work, repairs, alterations, or construction performed in connection therewith.
20. Information of the train or boat schedules of traveling official missions in transit through the United States.
21. Information of the transportation of munitions, or of war material.

PHOTOGRAPHS.

Photographs conveying the information specified above should not be published.

These requests go to the press without larger authority than the necessities of the war-making branches. Their enforcement is a matter for the press itself. To the overwhelming proportion of newspapers, who have given unselfish, patriotic adherence to the voluntary agreement, the Government extends its gratitude and high appreciation.

THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION.

By GEORGE CREEL, Chairman.

July 30, 1917.

86607

1-2-2

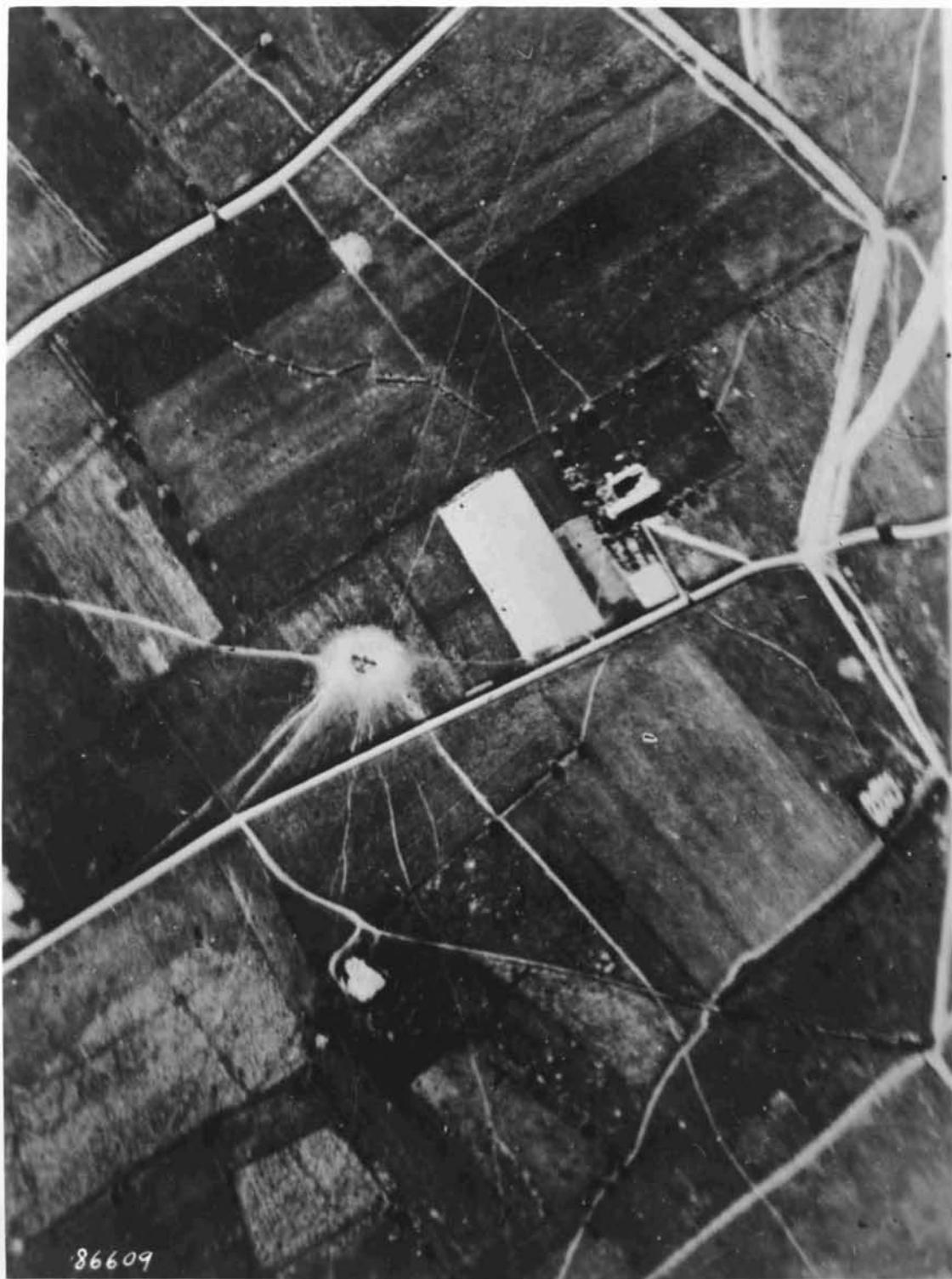
86607 - "What the Government Asks of the Press;" issued by the Committee on Public Information. It was necessary that information of military or naval import be kept secret, and this request to the press was issued in lieu of censorship laws. Nearly all of such information as is here specified could be revealed in photographs.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



86608 - Several cases occurred of women of German extraction insisting upon being photographed by local camera men in positions and with documents and objects held in certain positions; in one case a code was traced in the lace work on the subject's gown. Some such pictures excited suspicion and were reported; a sample is shown above.

(Marshall Studio, Cambridge, Mass.)



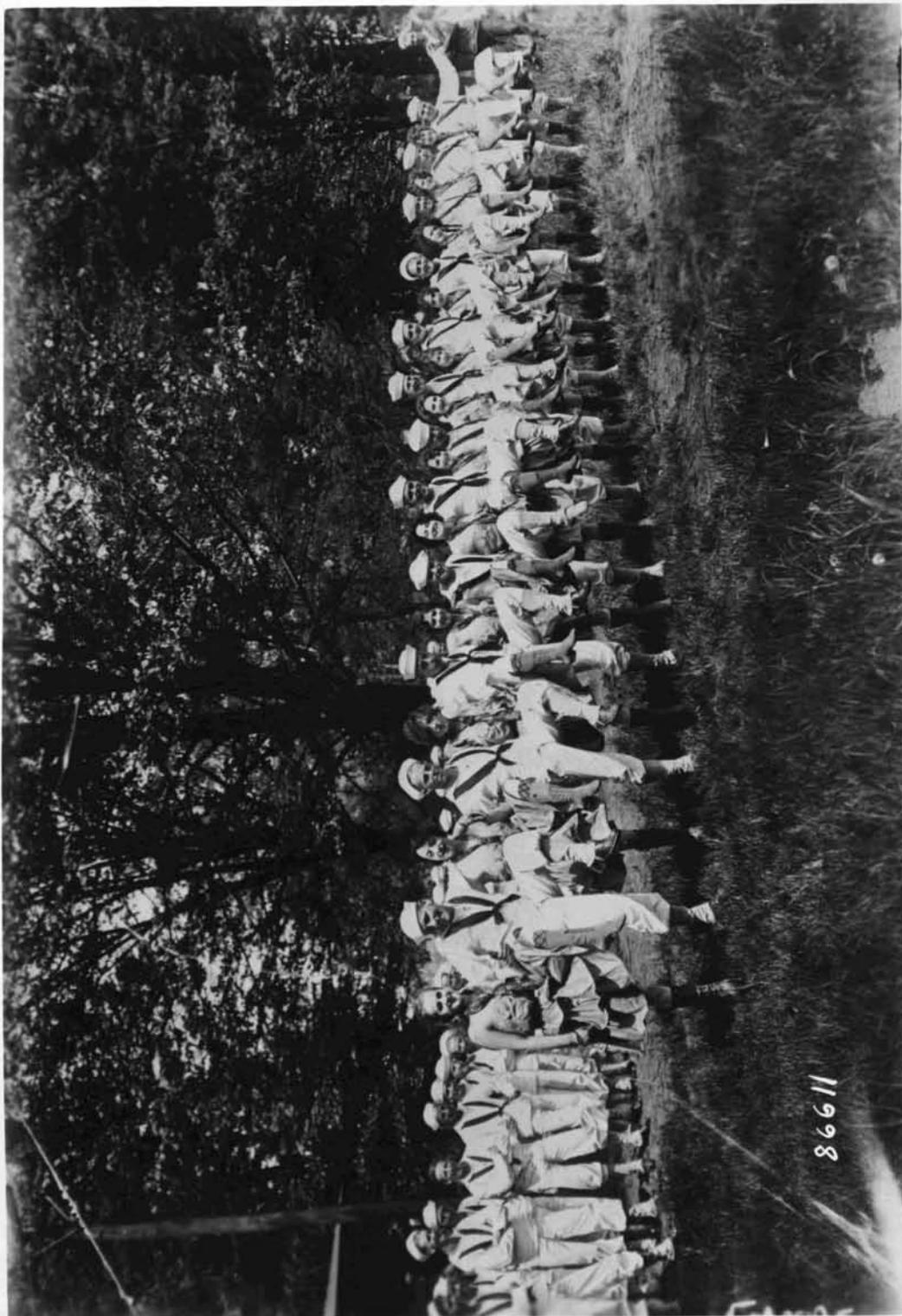
86609 - The censor is sometimes compelled to refuse a release without being able to explain his reasons without giving away the very information he desires to conceal. Here is shown an aerial photograph, taken early in the war, of a fallen British airplane; the lines radiating to it show the grass that has been trampled by onlookers. The fact that orthochromatic screens were developed to the point that the aerial camera could show up such details as were invisible to the naked eye was, at that time, guarded as a military secret.

(Royal Flying Corps)



86610 - A view of three enlisted men working in the office of the Gunnery Department at Post Field, Fort Sill, is harmless - but the diagrams on the wall are not.

(U. S. Signal Corps)



86611 - Sailors at Pelham Bay posing for the camera with members of a theatrical company which had just given an entertainment at the camp; a harmless scene, but capable of misrepresentation.

(International)



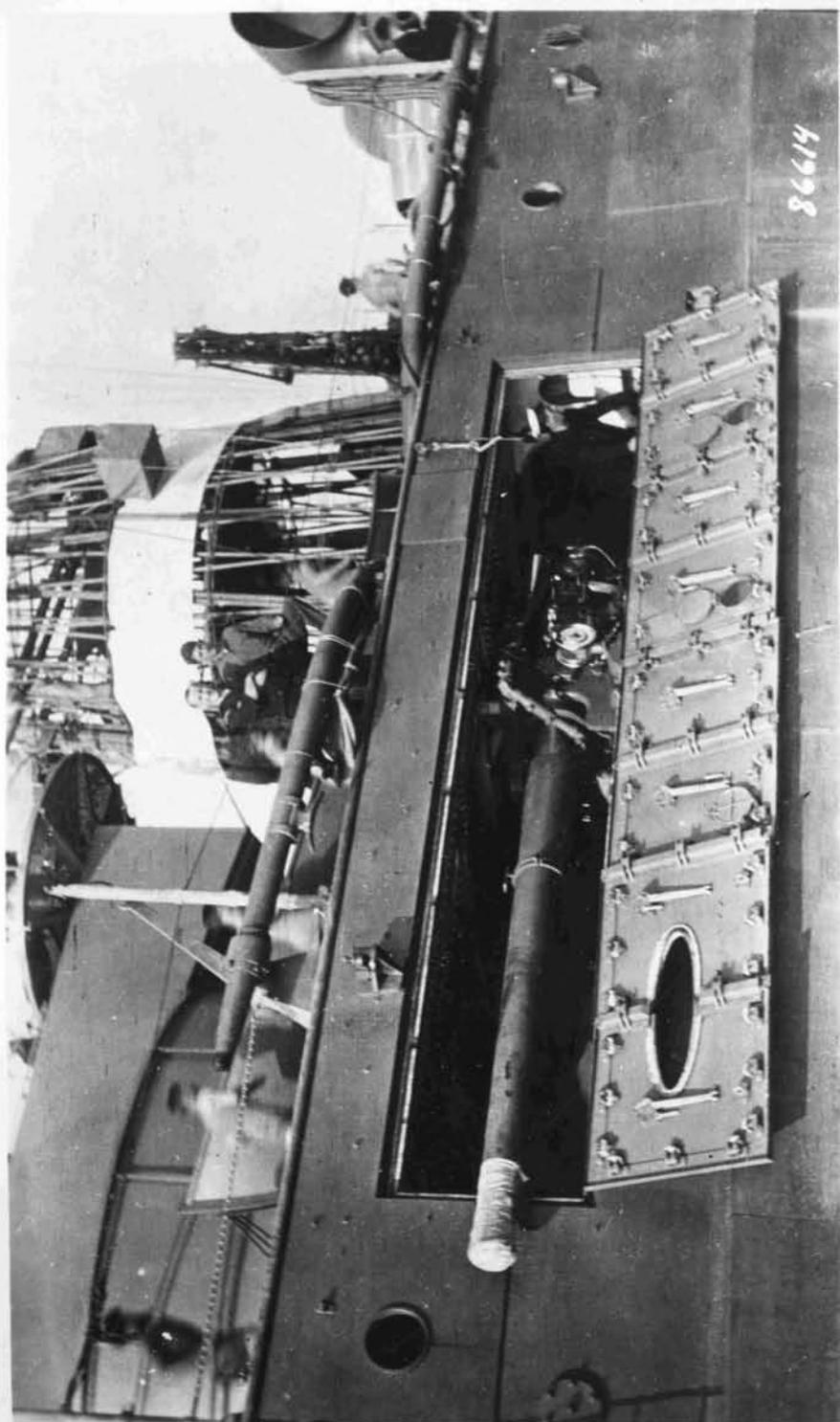
86612 - The unveiling of the Chauncey M. Depew statue at Peekskill, N. Y., in 1918, was covered extensively by news camera men - and the pictures were circulated in neutral countries by German agents for the purpose of arousing resentment of "Yankee conceit and arrogance".

(International)



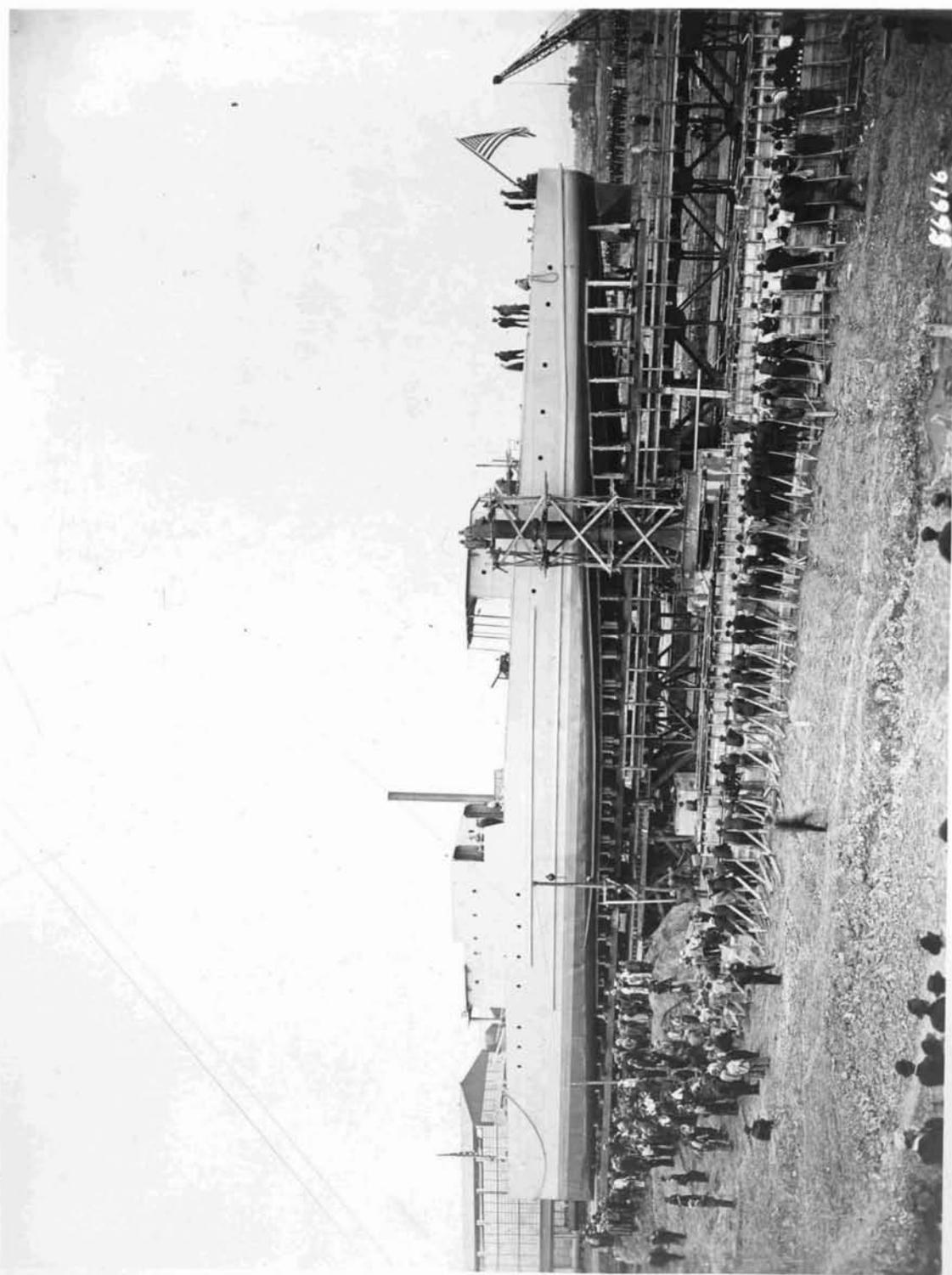
86613 - The fact that the Panama Canal was used for transporting British troops from New Zealand to France was regarded as one of the secrets of the war. Consequently, when some snap shot views showing this highly interesting news event were submitted to the censor, he suppressed them.

(Underwood & Underwood)



86614 - One of the pictures that was invariably suppressed - a photograph of a secret anti-submarine gun on a transport, revealing its method of concealment, calibre, location and method of operation.

(International)



86616 - A particularly valuable photograph to the enemy; the launching of the first Ford "Eagle Boat," showing its size, character and construction. All such pictures were censored.

(Ford Motor Co.)



00000 - A snapshot taken in front of the State War and Navy Building in Washington, D.C. that conveyed the information at a pertinent date that Major General Omar Bundy (at the right) was in Washington and that his command was still in this country. (At General Bundy's left are Secretary of War Baker and General Peyton C. March).

(Harris & Ewing)