STRANGERS IN A STRANGE LAND
The U.S. Post WWI Occupation of the Rhineland

Presented by Molly Bompane
Curator of Arms and Ordnance
United States Army Heritage and Education Center
A Piece of the Rhine
Amerikanische Besatzung im Brückenkopf Koblenz
1918-1923
American Occupation of Coblenz Bridgehead

LÄNDERSCHAMMUSEUM WESTERWALD
Leipziger Str. 1, 57677 Hachenburg
Dienstags - Sonntags 10 bis 17 Uhr
www.länderschaumuseum-westerwald.de

THE UNITED STATES ARMY WAR COLLEGE

VORTRAGSREIHE 2018
AMERIKANER IN RHEINLAND-PFALZ

100 Jahre / Years
Amerikanische Präsenz in Rheinland-Pfalz
The U.S. Army in World War I: An Army Transformed
“They will not even come, because our submarines will sink them. Thus America from a military point of view means nothing, and again nothing and for a third time [I say] nothing”

Germany’s Minster of the Marine, Admiral Eduard von Capelle assured a Reichstag leader who questioned the order of returning to unrestricted submarine warfare on 31 January 1917.
This is the perception of the United States Military in early 1917. We ranked in size 17th in the world and are largely focused on the Mexican/U.S. border and the capture of Pancho Villa.

With the declaration of war with Germany on 6 April 1917, the United States mobilizes for war in Europe, growing from a force of 133,000 to ultimately a 3.7 million-man wartime army, with a staggering conscription of 23.9 million Soldiers from 1917-1918.

...So begins the transformation of the U.S. Army and marks our entry into Europe and onto the world stage.
The Armistice with Germany signed at Compiegne Forest, near Rethondes, France, November 11, 1918

Paragraph V – outlined the terms of the occupation

“Evacuation by the German armies of the districts on the left bank of the Rhine. These districts on the left bank of the Rhine shall be administered by the local authorities under the control of the allied and United States armies of occupation.”

The United States Army War College
Third Army — Coblenz
III Corps — Neuwied
IV Corps — Cochem
VII Corps — Wittlich
1st Division — Montabaur
2d Division — Heddesdorf
3d Division — Andernach
4th Division — Bad Bertrich
32d Division — Rengsdorf
42d Division — Ahrweiler
89th Division — Kylburg
90th Division — Berncastel
ENTERING GERMANY
FIRST U.S. OFFICIAL PICTURES IN AMERICAN TROOPS IN GERMANY.

What do they think, these citizens of Treves, Germany, as they watch the victorious Americans (troops of the First Division) marching into town? Treves is the first large German City to be entered by the American Army of occupation. December 1st, 1918.
FIRST U.S. OFFICIAL PICTURES OF AMERICAN TROOPS IN GERMANY. 765-DG 50371. With their arms stacked in the courtyard of a German barracks in Trövas, troops of the American First Division await orders assigning them to the quarters recently evacuated by the Germans. Trövas is the first large town in Germany to be entered by the American Army of Occupation in the course of its march to the Rhine front.
The American Army of Occupation, Vanguard of the American Army of Occupation moving into the Coblenz Bridgehead to begin its occupation of the Rhineland. This is the bridge at Coblenz, Germany.
40977. 6th F.A. 1st Div. going across the pontoon bridge from Coblentz to Ehrenbreitstein, Germany, across the river Rhine. Coblentz, Germany Dec. 12, 1918.
or the American Army, soldiers of the III American Corp, crossing the Rhine at Koblenz as the initial step, in the occupation of the Koblenz Bridgehead.
Jan. 17, 1919.
Pontoon Bridge.
Honningen, Germany.
1919.
Photo by 2nd Engineers.
Copy from print furnished by Mr. Freas,

Pontoon Bridge at Honningen
Progress at 9:43 A.M.

Photo by
2nd ENGRS.

THE UNITED STATES ARMY WAR COLLEGE
Von Hindenburg, the first American horse to drink from the Rhine, ridden by Capt. H. W. Lanham, 2nd Brig., 1st Div. 
Boppard, Germany, Dec. 10th, 1918.
414. First Battalion, thirty-ninth regiment infantry, march through Kaisersech, Rhine Province Germany, December 14, 1918.
Troops of the 125th Inf. in Mayen (32nd Div.)
Germany. Dec. 7, 1918.
Watch on the Rhine. Sentry posed upon rock at river’s edge, resting on his rifle and looking off across the water. In the background are the stacked arms of Inf. organisations and a few men warming themselves around an open fire. Chief figure is Pvt. Chas. H. Purviance, of 510th Field Radio Signal Bn. In the background are members of 501st Reg. Engrs., Co. D. Moselle Valley, Germany, Jan. 18th, 1919.
Soldiers of 1st Div. keep "Watch on the Rhine".
Coblenz, Germany, Dec. 12th, 1918.
4147 - DO. WITH THE AMERICAN TROOPS ON THE RHINE.
ON DUTY ON THE BANKS OF THE RHINE; tough boys of the "Rainbow" Division (two American 2ndo) pacing up and down the waterfront of the Rhine on sentry duty near Nieder Breising, Germany. (November 19, 1918)
Heilstein, Germany, and Mosel River. To the right is seen the old ruins of Burg Metternich, said to have been built in the year 770. The figures are, left to right: Pvt. W.J. Wadrocky, Pvt. T.F. Welsh, and Sergt. G.A. Allen, all of Company B, Fourth Regiment Engineers. Fourth Army Corps, stationed in Heilstein. Heilstein, Rhenish Prussia, Germany. February 6, 1919.
Raising the colors of the 4th A. C. over the parapet of the castle "Burg Cochem", now being used as 4th A. C. Hqrs. The figures at the staff are Pvt. H. Loda left, and Pvt. George Hebben. The guard is Pvt. F. Grunes.

Cochem, Germany, Jan. 18th, 1919.
ESTABLISHING A PRESENCE
Variety of flags have flown from this staff since first erected but the Stars and Stripes perhaps is the last the German people expected to see unfurled to the gentle breezes of the Moselle. Below may be seen the Moselle and the town of Cochem.

Cochem, Germany, Jan. 16, 1919.

Old Glory flying from roof of Burg Cochem, ancient castle restored on Moselle River.
Raising the colors of the 4th A. C. over the parapet of the castle "Burg Cochem", now being used as 4th A. C. Hqrs. The figures at the staff are Pvt. H. Lode left, and Pvt. George Hebben. The guard is Pvt. F. Grunes.
Cochem, Germany, Jan. 16th, 1919.
Entrance to divisional Headquarters, Third Division.
Andernach on Rhine, Germany. Jan. 1, 1919.
51895. View of building occupied as headquarters by Fourth Division Hotel Pitz Hurnotel, shows American soldiers in front of hotel Bad-Bertrich Rhine Province, Germany. Jan. 28, 1918.
Headquarters of the 1st Division at Cons, Germany.
Cons, Germany, Dec. 1st, 1918.
Cash sales commissary, about 20 kilometers over the Rhine.
Supplies clothing to officers of the 32nd Division.
Bierdorf, Germany. Dec. 24, 1918.
49490. The American government grants as a special favor permits for the German population of Koblenz to travel outside the city. Crowd waiting to get their permits 0-9d in back of third army headquarters. Koblenz, Rhenish Prussia, Germany. January 2, 1919.
INTEGRATING WITH THE LOCALS
Children were forbidden to loiter in areas where the Americans were billeted, and parents were warned that if they could not control the “unnecessary inquisitiveness of their children” around the American soldiers, legal proceedings might be taken against them.
German children gathered around American sentry on banks of Rhine on outskirts of Coblenz, Rhenish Prussia, Germany. Hundreds of such children gather as soon as American appears, bringing helmets etc., to trade for chocolate, cigarettes and biscuits. Dec. 11, 1918.
A modern "Piper of Hamlin". Musician Joe Foster of the 51st Inf. Band, having helped in ridding the country of "rats", pipes his way into the hearts of the children of the community and demonstrates his capability of piping them out of the village. At any rate the picture is evidence of his "large following" among the younger element in Cochem, Germany. Jan. 6th, 1919.

4th Army Corps.
American soldiers of Eighth Field Signal Battalion, Fourth Division, off duty, joining in fun with German children, sleighing on the ice. Bad Nellenbach, Rhine Province, Germany. January 25, 1919.
 Pvt. H. Becker, Company G, 8th Field Signal Battalion, Fourth Division, pushing the sled of a little Rhinlander (German). Note the military cap the kid is wearing. Mullenbach, Rhine Province, Germany.
Jan. 25, 1919.
WITH THE AMERICANS ON THE MARCH TO THE SHIP.

AFTER THEIR MILK RATIONS American troops marching through Mayen, Germany, on their way to the ships are greeted by a crowd waiting in the street for a chance to buy a ration of milk from the local dairyman. The milk is sold only for the use of children and the sick. Children less than a year old are allowed a litre a day. (December 16, 1944)
46051. Town crier (Joseph Müller) performing daily task and informing civil population of any new orders which may have been issued by A.E.F. occupying the town. Johann Blaum, burgomaster, on his left. Leuterod, Germany. January 12, 1919.
49441. Allowed to proceed, these blushing frauleins consent to pose for the "Amerikaner." First Division, Army of Occupation. Hundsangen, Germany. Dec. 29, 1918.
42119. American soldiers as they stop for a little rest, on their way toward the Rhine, asking the German girls how they like the American soldiers.
Beuren, Germany. Dec. 8, 1918.
EVE RYDAY LIFE
44659. American construction work in Germany. Shows four of nine buildings being constructed by 2nd Engineers; when completed, these buildings will corral 500 horses of 2nd Supply Train, 2nd Div. Neuwied, Germany, Dec. 31, 1918.
Elevation view of a few hundred of the 1250 trucks to be delivered to our Government by Germany, as per armistice agreement. These trucks are being assembled in the yard of the Flacken Steins Kaserne. A corps of W.T.C. experts here inspects them and classified them as to their condition. COBLENZ, Germany, Dec. 23rd, 1918.

THE UNITED STATES ARMY WAR COLLEGE
Members of eighth field signal battalion, Fourth Division, fixing up German village in which they are billeted.

MULLENbach, Rhenish Prussia, Germany. December 21, 1918.
with army rations and transported to different organizations. In background can be seen depot where rations are stored. On the left is the station sign of Neuwid, Germany. Heddendorf, Germany, Dec. 24, 1918.
First Radio Station established by American army in Germany sending and receiving word about occupation of German territory by American troops. Station established by 2nd F. S. Battalion, 1st "Division, Kalender Nuhl, Germany

THE UNITED STATES ARMY WAR COLLEGE
83120, infantry on the hike Fall maneuvers, A.F.G. 1921, Neer Cottings, Germany.
Sept. 24, 1915.
Division train, motor repair shop #100 operating.

THE UNITED STATES ARMY WAR COLLEGE

Coblenz, Gcr., July 25, 1921
Inter-Allied Field Meet at Carnival Island
Frenchman, Marescllin, winning 200 meter dash.

THE UNITED STATES ARMY WAR COLLEGE
C:\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\\...\n
THE UNITED STATES ARMY WAR COLLEGE
HEADING HOME
After September 1919, U.S. troops were permitted to fraternize with the German population. Between 1 December 1919 and 1 January 1922, the U.S. Army became responsible for providing passage back to America, along with rotating soldiers whose tour was completed, for 782 dependent wives and their 267 children.
A typical private soldier of the American forces in Germany with over 2 1/2 years overseas service with his German bride.

Coblens, Germany, May, 1921.
Maj. R. E. Patterson inspecting a young German-American wearing the shoulder insignia "AO" of the Army of Occupation. Coblenz, Germany, May 1921.
German Fathers and mothers visiting their married daughters in the women's section of the Casual Depot.
Coblentz, Germany, May, 1921.
THE LEGACY OF THE OCCUPATION
FORTRESS
EHRENBREITSTEIN
Fort Ehrenbreitstein is just across the river from the monument to Kaiser Wilhelm I. The sloping rock on which it rests, is, at the top, 400 feet above the river, and is said at one time to have been a Roman fort. Ehrenbreitstein was besieged unsuccessfully by the French, in 1808, but in 1795, on account of the failure of provisions, its garrison had to surrender to them and the fortress was razed. Between 1816 and 1826 it was restored at a cost of 8,000,000 thalers. In the foreground is a pontoon bridge called the Bridge of Boats.

"The Watch on the Rhine". Two Provost guards of the city of Coblenz on the banks of the Rhine, with the fortress of Ehrenbreitstein in the background.
Coblenz, Rhenish Prussia, Germany, Jany. 6th, 1919.
Allies and Training Partners
“We’ve had a strong partnership with the German Soldiers. These guys are like family to us, so we took it personally when they got injured and just went out there and did what we had to do.” --SGT Antonio Gattis