

CHAPTER VII

THE WORK AT CONCHIL

On April 25th, the 7th C.R.T. entrained for the neighborhood of Conchil-le-Temple, in which locality it was to spend several quiet months. After fifteen moves and five weeks of extremely heavy toil under the most trying conditions, the troops were almost exhausted and welcomed the change.

The new work consisted of building a section of a broad gauge line to run from Conchil on the Boulogne-Abbeville main line to Conteville, as a means of supply for the Third Army. Several other C.R.T. units were already engaged on it. Lorries of the 12th and 13th C.R.T. moved the 7th from Conchil to the vicinity of Crecy. Headquarters encamped on the famous battleground of 1346, and the companies within a short distance, about Vironchaux, Ligescourt, Wadicourt and Estress-le-Crecy. The section allotted the battalion was approximately seven miles. Scrapers were used to great advantage. Up to May 11, 27,710 cubic yards of earth were handled on the grade.

Shooting practice on the Estress range was now begun, and each company was given one afternoon a week for this purpose. The practice consisted of five rounds grouping and ten rounds application at 100 yards. A team of officers of the battalion won by a score of 157 (note that figure) to 237 in a competition with a team of officers of the 47th Division Wing. Sunday, May 12th, a successful field day was held at Ligescourt on "C" Company grounds. There was keen competition among the teamsters for the best "G.S." wagon and team. Other events were baseball and football games, tug-of-war, potato and sack races. The band of the 47th Division Wing enlivened the sports.

Arrangements were made about May 14, 1918, to move the battalion to Conchil to operate a pit for ballasting the line and for other work in that area. "D" Company moved to the pit, May 15th, and headquarters followed on May 23rd. Lieut.-Colonel Martin returned to the battalion May 18th, when Lieut.-Colonel Harstone was recalled to the 4th C.R.T.

Shortly afterwards by exchange with the 4th C.R.T., Major E. J. Bolger came to the 7th as Chief Engineer. In the meantime the following warrant officers and sergeants had received commissions: J. C. Anderson, J. A. Burns, G. B. Christison, G. D. Curry, A. A. Gallagher, H. Grayston, H. Lester, A. N. McDonald, and E. P. Whaley, B.S.M., D. B. Free was promoted later. Lieut. T. Watt came to the battalion in March, while Lieuts. Biggar and Grayston were transferred and Lieuts. Cavendish, Kortright, Bell and Christison were evacuated to England during the summer. A dental officer, Capt. G. B. Marlatt, was sent to the unit at Conchil, and was succeeded in September by Capt. E. H. Campbell. The Medical Officer, Capt. V. K. O'Gorman, was replaced by Capt. S. L. Walker in September, to whom Capt. F. E. Rogers succeeded in November and until Capt. O'Gorman's return in December.