Throughout World War I, German submarines targeted ocean traffic of the Allied nations. After the U.S. entered the war, the British and American navies began a convoy system to thwart the German menace. Many of the troops and supplies destined for the Western Front landed in the British Isles first.
More than two million American service members arrived in France during World War I. Almost one million landed in England first. Most of those proceeded to France. Some remained, serving at base hospitals, naval air stations, in support of the ports, and at sea and in the air.

June 9, 1917: General John J. Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF), and staff arrived in Britain. They consulted with British officials before reaching Paris on June 13.

February 5, 1918: A German submarine torpedoed the American troop ship SS Tuscania near the Isle of Islay, Scotland. More than 200 men were lost.

May 31: The troop ship USS President Lincoln was sunk by a German submarine in the Atlantic west of Brest, France.

July 20: The U.S. Navy established a seaplane patrol base at Killingholme, England.

August 1: Base Hospital No. 29 of the AEF began functioning in London.

September 16-17: The Coast Guard Cutter USCGC Seneca, on convoy escort, assisted the torpedoed steamship Wellington. Eleven Seneca and five Wellington men perished.

September 26: The USCGC Tampa was sunk by a German torpedo in the Bristol Channel. She sank with all hands: 131 lives were lost, including 111 Coastguardsmen.

October 6: The troop ship HMS Otranto collided with another ship during a storm near the Isle of Islay.

General Pershing wrote in his final report: “The hospitable reception of those of our forces who passed through England has impressed upon us how closely common language and blood have brought together the British and ourselves.”

“MUTUAL REINFORCEMENT IS EFFECTIVE”