

## MEDALS AND MEMORIES MINUTES



### Mon Cher Ami

October 4, 1918, the American 77th Infantry Division of 500 men was down to just around 200. The men were trapped in a small depression on the side of a hill and surrounded by enemy soldiers. Major

Whittlesey had unsuccessfully sent out several pigeons to tell his commanders where the division was. When the American command, not knowing exactly where the 77th was located, started dropping big shells right on top of them the Major sent for his last bird, Cher Ami.

The Germans saw Cher Ami rising out of the brush and opened fire. For several minutes Cher Ami rose through the hail of bullets, but then, he was hit. The doomed American infantrymen looked on in despair as their last hope started to plummet to earth. Then somehow miraculously Cher Ami spread his wings and started to climb and climb—out of the reach of the enemy guns. When the wounded bird reached his coop, the soldier that answered the bell wire he had tripped found him lying on his back covered in blood. He had been blinded in one eye and had a hole the size of a quarter in his chest. Attached to his almost severed leg was the silver canister with the life-saving message.



Dedicated medics saved Cher Ami's life but couldn't save his leg; they did carve a small wooden leg for him. When the one legged hero was well enough to travel, General Pershing, the commander of the

U.S. Army personally saw him off. The French presented Cher Ami with a Croix de guerre with a palm leaf. Cher Ami had saved 194 lives.