

# Salem Men in Nation's Wars

Mounted Volunteers in '55 and '56 Fight Yakimas; Law of 1887 Paves Way for National Guard; Spanish War and World War Participation Sketched in Article

Prior to the enactment by the 14th legislative session in 1887 of the Summers law, which gave to Oregon its first real statute providing for a National Guard organization, military companies were formed only at such times as protection against the Indians was necessary or as a result of patriotic zeal on the part of individual officers and men who were willing to serve without remuneration and in a great many instances, reimbursement for expenses for the sheer desire for military training and the associations that resulted.

Companies A and B of the Recruiting battalion of the First Oregon Mounted volunteers, commanded by Colonel Thomas R. Cornelius are the first regularly organized companies whose home station was Salem. These companies were commanded by Captains Harding and Burch respectively and it was by means of these units that men were furnished to the rest of the command organized to operate against the Yakima Indians and their allies in 1855 and 1856.

The next record we have of a Salem unit is Co. A, 2nd Regiment of Infantry also called the Marion rifles. This company came into existence in 1863 and was disbanded about 1869.

## One to Three Companies Here for Years

Following the passage of the Summers law and until the mustering for service in the Spanish American war, Salem always had from one to three national guard companies. When the First and Second regiments were consolidated and mustered-in as the Second Oregon U. S. Volunteer Infantry Salem's company became known as Company K.

As soon as the organization was completed at Camp McKinley in Irvington park, Portland, the first contingent of Oregon troops to serve overseas departed for the Presidio of San Francisco and there assembled on May 18, 1899, to await transportation to the Philippine Islands.

Upon arrival in the Philippines on July 1, 1899, Company K participated in the capture of Manila, Calocan, Malabon, San Rafael and San Isidro as well as some other less important engagements and expeditions.

Following the return of the Second Oregon from its Philippine service and muster-out at San Francisco on August 7, 1899, Oregon set about the task of reorganizing the state forces and, in the course of this Salem was assigned Company F, Fourth Infantry which a year or so later was re-designated Company M, 3rd Infantry and so remained until the World war when the regiment's designation was changed to the 162d Infantry.

Pursuant to the call of the president dated June 18, 1916, Brigadier General George A. White, adjutant general of Oregon, issued the necessary orders causing the mobilization of the Third Inf., Troop A, Battery A and the Sanitary company, at Clackamas. Company M, commanded by Captain Max Gehlar, was the first unit to report ready for service. It departed from Salem by rail at 9 a. m. June 20 and was the first line company to arrive at Clackamas. Following the preliminary work of conducting physical examinations, issue of some additional equipment and immunization against typhoid and smallpox the 3rd Battalion, of which Company M was a part, was mustered into the federal service on June 25.

## Abrams Commands Battalion in South

On the evening of June 27

the Battalion under command of Major Carle Abrams left for San Diego, Calif., where he was to receive further orders as to the future station of the battalion. Upon arrival at 3 p. m. June 30, Major Abrams was directed to move south to San Diego to the little town of San Ysidro which was just across the border from Tia Juana. Here the battalion remained for about three weeks before being relieved by the first battalion and rejoining the regiment in its camp at Palm City. On August 3, all components of the regiment moved to Imperial Beach, two or three miles west of Palm City to a new camp site which had been previously selected and which met with the unanimous approval of the command owing to the proximity to the sea and the fine bathing beach.

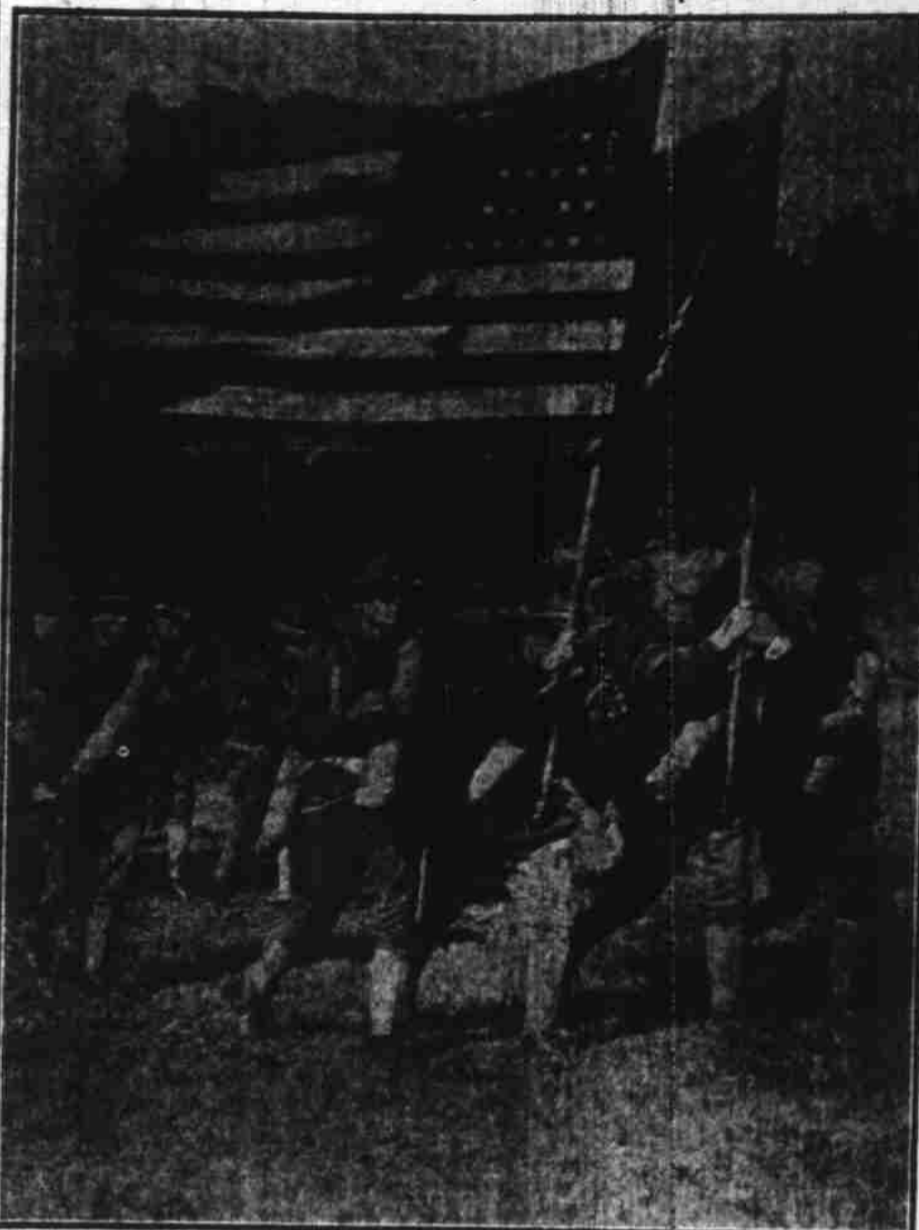
Pursuant to orders from the western department, received August 31, 1916, the Third Battalion entrained for Clackamas on September 2 and arrived on September 5. On September 13 the entire command was reviewed by Governor Withycombe. The troops, in full field equipment, presented a very fine appearance in this review which was witnessed by a large crowd, among which were a great many people from Salem.

On September 25 all roops of the Third Oregon Infantry were given their final pay, mustered out of the service and returned to home stations and their old status.

When the call for troops was issued by President Wilson on March 25, 1917, Company M was again among the first ready to move and on March 30, under command of Captain James R. Neer, the company took station at Vancouver Barracks which had been designated as the mobilization point for the regiment and on April 5, 1917, was mustered in the federal service by Colonel U. G. McAlexander, U. S. A., later to become famous as the "Rock of the Marne".

During the summer of 1917 various companies of the regiment were utilized in performing guard duty at vital points in Oregon and Washington and Company M was moved to The Dalles from which point detachments were sent to guard bridges and tunnels along the O. W. R. and N. company's line.

This type of duty engaged the regiment until the latter part of



COLOR BEARERS FOR 3RD OREGON LEAD THAT FAMOUS REGIMENT AS IT STARTS FOR MEXICAN BORDER IN 1916.

September when rumors became fact and orders were received to entrain for eastern points, preparatory to sailing for France. On September 26, Company M, with other units of the regiment now designated the 162d Infantry of the 41st Division, left for Camp Mills, R. I., long to be remembered as a very uncomfortable winter camp. While at Camp Mills the regiment was filled up to war strength and received the new 1917 rifle and other wartime equipment.

December 12 and 14, 1917, were the sailing dates of the 162d, M. Company leaving on the latter date and awaking on the following morning to find itself out of sight of land, bound for St. Nazaire.

Following the arrival in France on December 28, Company M moved to Bordeaux for a short time, then to Contres which was to be the station of most of the regiment for the duration of the war as the 41st Division had been designated by General Pershing a training division through which was to pass thousands of replacement troops which were held only long enough to complete their training. This duty, of course, was not the kind expected by the members of the company when

they held up their respective right hands and took the oath but the high type of men composing Company M and the rest of the regiment coupled with the excellent state of training of the regiment, sealed their collective doom as far as their chance of ever realizing their hopes of getting into the front lines was concerned.

This did not apply to individuals as many were transferred to advance zones where ample proof of the soldierly qualities of Oregon, and particularly Salem men, was not lacking.

Typical of the valor of Salem's sons was Lieutenant Francis W. Mason, who, because of his bravery and ability was awarded the distinguished service cross, under the following citation:

"Francis W. Mason, second lieutenant, 328th-Infantry. For extraordinary heroism in action near St. Georges, France, October 22, 1918. He led a patrol of men through a woods in order to envelope the enemy's position. Advancing under heavy shell fire, this officer was severely wounded, but, displaying excellent leadership and unusual bravery, he continued the advance and succeeded in occupying the woods. Residence at ap-

## THE FLAG

pointment: 2566 Oak street, Salem, Oreg."

Captain James R. Neer, who commanded a battalion of the 337th Infantry in the Argonne and First Lieutenant Paul B. Wallace were wounded while serving in the Argonne, Private Aubrey P. Jones, who served in the battle of the Marne, St. Mihiel and Verdun and was killed in action, October 23, 1918.

Marion county sent a total of 2588, for service during the World war, of this number 72 paid the supreme sacrifice and 82 were wounded.

The training of these frequent and large groups of replacements was a very arduous duty and one that tested the morale of the officers and men to the uttermost. Replacements were usually received in quotas of 500 to 1000 men and were divided among the various training companies by division headquarters.

Upon receipt of orders to return to the United States the regiment moved to Brest on January 30, 1919, and was there inspected, preparatory to embarkation, by General Pershing on February 4, 1919. The regiment sailed aboard the S. S. Canopic on February 8, 1919, and arrived in New York harbor 11 days later. From New York the regiment went directly to Camp Dix and there went through the demobilization routine and was mustered out of the service as a regiment on February 19, 1919.

## HOPS STARTED, BUENA VISTA

When T. B. Jones of Salem set out his first hops on his farm near Wheatland in 1886 the hop industry was comparatively new in Oregon. Kirkwood and Magnus, respectively, were in the hop raising business at Wheatland before Mr. Jones, as was Ralph Geers near McCleay. A few hops were raised near Butterville.

The first hops to be grown in Oregon, as near as Mr. Jones can recall, were raised by a man named Wells, whose farm was near Buena Vista. Mr. Jones has sold hops for as low as three and one-half cents per pound and as high as eighty-seven cents per pound.

Thirty-five years ago A. W. Nussom set out his first hops on the William Eagan farm at Waconda. Mr. Nussom now has a small acreage on his place here.

Before the use of wire for trellises the hops were trained on poles about twenty feet in height. Ravellings of burlap sacks were used instead of twine and in the spring at training time the vine was given a start up the pole by the use of the string. At harvest time the vine was cut and the pole removed from the ground and placed over a hopper, the weight of the pole resting on a wooden "horse." The hopper consisted of a frame about 14 feet long covered with burlap and looked somewhat like a camp cot with ends closed. After filling the hopper the contents were emptied into a measuring box of nine bushel capacity or 100 pounds. From this the hops were emptied into a sack. The sacks were hauled in wagons to the dryer where the hops were spread out on the floor of the kiln room and dried in much the same manner as they are now. A new drying process, the hot air dryer, has been invented by Frank Needham of Salem, but for the most part the farmers use the old method.

## COMPANY M, ENTRAINING FOR AMERICAN LAKE



—Taken about 1906, prior to summer encampment. OFFICERS, FRONT ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: CAPT. CHARLES A. MURPHY; FIRST LIEUTENANT WHITNEY L. HOLMAN; SECOND LIEUTENANT CARLE ABRAMS. —Copyright: courtesy Cronise Studio.