

TROOP D BOYS AS PART OF 66TH ARTILLERY BRIGADE PLAYED HEROIC PART IN DRIVING GERMANS FROM WESTERN FRONT

Local Men Engaged in Four Major Offensives But Manning Big Long Range Guns Did Not Suffer Heavily in Casualties Themselves.

It is peculiarly fitting that Pendleton's own company, Troop D, should have become a part of the Army of Occupation and as a part of the 66th Field Artillery brigade actually occupy German territory.

Troop D, with Troops A, B, C, made up the First Separate Squadron of the Oregon National Guard. After the squadron left its state mobilization point, Camp Withycombe, September 6, it made a nine day journey to Camp Greene, reporting there September 14.

The commanding officer of the 145th P. A. was Colonel J. W. Cavenier of Wyoming, and the 146th, closely associated with the 145th, was commanded by Colonel W. H. Edelblut, of Idaho. The two formed the 66th Brigade.

During the mobilization of the various units, the traveling from the west to the east, the first part of the journey to France, was a feature much enjoyed by the men and one which they remembered when traveling, 40 in a freight car, after reaching Europe.

Tourist sleepers, cook cars, and hot meals made a "regular" trip for the men. Being among the first troops to leave the west for the east, the arrival of the troop trains in various cities was greeted with the wildest enthusiasm. The war fever was not at its height, however, but the spark was beginning to burn and the reception left nothing to be desired.

Two Regiments formed

This period of time after the arrival of units at Camp Greene, until October 25, when the brigade left for Camp Mills, was spent in the formation of the two regiments reassigning units, and making up the organization of field artillery regiments to strengthen decided upon by war department plans. The assignments of the various units were made at this time. In the original formation of the brigade, the 145th was a part, but later operated as a separate and distinct unit from the heavy gun regiments.

October 23 the 146th entrained for Camp Mills, Long Island, then the embarkation camp of the newly formed American army. Two days later the 145th entrained, both regiments arriving at the new camp two days after leaving North Carolina. It was at Camp Mills that the actual organization of the 66th was completed with Brigadier General Vollrath in command.

Camp Mills, according to the men, was in the fall and winter of 1917 not what later military camps proved themselves to be. The 42nd, upon the

arrival of the 146th and 145th, was preparing to sail for Europe. The camp, situated in typical Long Island lowlands and with the heavy fall rains, became a sea of mud. Tents without floors or sidewalls did not afford the comfort eventually furnished troops at the camp, and the period of time spent there until the departure of the 66th for the newly constructed Camp Merritt, N. J., was not among the pleasant experiences of the two regiments. However, this condition was remedied later and was found to be due to the haste in which the camp was erected.

Train at Camp Mills

Foot drills, and the three-inch gun target work, manual of arms and the ordinary military duties occupied the time at Camp Mills. All the troops of the brigade, with the exception of the artillery, were equipped with rifles and these were issued to the units that had heretofore scorned the idea of anything so small as a Springfield for a fighting weapon. Horses belonging to the units had been turned in from Camp Greene, a large detail accompanying them to Newport News. Some members of these details never returned to their units while others were assigned to the two regiments after reaching Europe.

At Camp Mills, before leaving for Camp Merritt, all three inch material was turned in and the regiments left with only personal equipment. At Camp Mills, replacements were furnished to the amount of several hundred, to each regiment, thus bringing up the brigade strength to the figure called for in the new tables of organization for all troop units for overseas service. All of the new men were from the west, making it possible for the western origin of the brigade to remain intact.

Camp Merritt was just nearing completion when the 146th and 145th arrived. For the first time since mobilization, the regiments were enabled to live in real barracks and keep warm and dry. Long rows of barracks heated with especially constructed heating plants, mess halls and complete kitchens were in shape for occupancy at this time.

146th Embarks

The usual sickness which seems to hit a brigade when just ready to move hit the troops at Camp Merritt and quarantines, few pass privileges and much out-door drill came as a result. The 146th was more lucky than the 145th and on Christmas Eve the regiment left for Hoboken, and embarked on the S. S. Lapland, a White Star liner, bound for Halifax to join convoy. The leaving of the regiment on the day before Christmas caused a

cancellation of many holiday parties planned in New York for the regiment, but the joy at being bound for "Over There" offset the disappointment.

The 145th, languishing and drenched with dysentery and other forms of sickness, was a month in quarantine at Camp Merritt, and did not embark until the last of January, taking ship at Hoboken, January 22, and sailing the next morning, likewise bound for Halifax to join convoy being formed in the Canadian ports. The 145th sailed on the Baltic.

January 15th 1917 after the 146th had sailed, and a few days before the departure of the 145th, General order No. 9, paragraph 2, was published, officially putting the status of the brigade as corps artillery, of the First Corps, American E. F., a distinction and honor that the two regiments appreciated.

Chateau Thierry First Fight

The Chateau Thierry fight was the first active engagement of the brigade. Feelings of individual soldiers of the 66th E. A., as the 145th and 146th took their positions on the Chateau Thierry front, differed but little from those of men in hundreds of other regiments doing their first turn. The war that had devastated half of Europe was encroaching on the Marne and Paris, while the Germans threatened to extend not only to all France but to England and America.

The men of the 66th had but a faint understanding of the battle line, say the veterans. While training had provided for any and all contingencies and every man knew what he was to



A Good Girl Rider

The 145th detrained at La Ferte Gauche, after a change of orders. The first battalion went into position near Montlevon, southeast of Chateau Thierry, on July 7, following by the other two battalions. The second went into position July 31st at La

Chappelle-sur-Cher, south of Chateau Thierry while the third went in July 9 at Vifort.

Preparing for Battle
The 146th detrained near Meaux.

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