

The coat of arms of the 15th FA Regiment above the shield contains a French 75mm Howitzer with the Indianhead of the 2nd ID patch incised in the wheel. The upper lefthand corner of the shield represents a smaller shield of the 4th FA Regiment who provided the initial cadre that organized the 15th FA Regiment. The red colors on the overall shield represent the blood that was spilled by the members of the Fighting Fifteenth who helped win WW-I. And the five silver stripes running east and west on the shield represent the five rivers the Regiment fired in support of, assisted in holding, or crossed in combat.



From the memoirs of Pvt. Frank Hodson, Btry. "F", 15th FA:

"Apr. 6. I was ordered to report for active duty at the guns. As we rode along on the caissons we talked and wondered just how soon we would see action and what our chances were for coming home alive. The darkness was intense at one o'clock in the morning when we reached the gun positions. The guns were in pits covered with about six feet of tree-trunks, iron girders, earth and stone, camouflaged from German airplanes. Only the muzzles were seen. As we came up the hill the lieutenant met us with a flashlight, and we noticed he was very careful to keep his light sheltered from view. He told us that we would open fire at five in the morning and casually dropped the remark that we were likely to have Merry Hell when we did so. We were warned to have our gas suits in readiness as a gas attack was expected. Well, we got ready all right and then began carrying ammunition from our caissons to the subterranean storehouse. Then we entered our dugout and went to sleep. Scarcely two hours had passed before I was awakened by a thundering noise. I went up the steps and saw our battery blazing away in the darkness. Never having seen war before, the picture that met my eye was one I shall long remember-the flames shooting from the gun muzzles seemed to me, a rookie, like Hell incarnate. Our fire was being answered; shells were bursting all around us, they burst even on the tops of the gun pits and only the thick logs and iron beams saved the men. Great trees were mowed down like grass and their trunks blocked the paths everywhere."

"Apr. 21. During the night I was on lookout to watch for a three-flare signal from our infantry, meaning the Germans were attacking and the infantry needed supporting fire. Then someone yelled "Gas"! We ducked for safety, about forty of us, and made a wild grab for our masks. The officer in command ordered us to our dugouts until the fumes disappeared. We ducked for safety and landed in a tiny dugout, huddled together in the darkness. Having masks on we couldn't speak and were so crowded we couldn't move. Here we spent a mighty uncomfortable half- hour. When we came above ground and as I was pulling a rope attached to a gun I stumbled into a shell hole. With the next breath I fell almost unconscious from gas which still lingered in the hole. As I dropped I

made frantic efforts to adjust my mask, but too late. The next thing I remember I was being supported by two comrades towards a first aid station."

From the diary of 1st Lieut. Elmer Hess, 15th Field Artillery, about the march to May-en-Multien on May 31, 1918:

"Finally we arrived at the town of Nanteuil-le-Haudouin where we were told to detrain. The village station was certainly a sight for the gods. One might have thought the Germans were coming down the road by the enormous cloudy of dust which could be seen. The station was filled with women, children and very old men, sitting upon piles of household goods, waiting for the next train to Paris, which the station master told them would never come; and too thoroughly exhausted to go any farther, they sat there in silent grief. When our animals, guns and other belongings were unloaded, the train pulled back to the rear. Over our heads airships with a little black cross, indicating that they were Germans, hovered, and once in a while dropped small bombs upon us at this village and at other villages along the railroad, trying to stop the detraining of troops. Down the road out of these clouds of dust came no Germans nor retreating French soldiers but thousands of women, children, old men, mules and cattle, with carts piled high with household goods, fleeing from the invader. "The battery started marching up the road; Major Bailey left in his side car to try to gather up the rest of his batteries that had detrained previously at other villages or were now detraining somewhere along the line.



The road was lined with refugees. Old women pushing wheelbarrows, with a few personal rags and a pen of chickens or rabbits on it. Two-wheeled carts, the type used almost entirely by the French farmer, great cumbersome things, loaded with hay, a few personal belongings, one to ten children. A couple of old women drawn by three horses, one behind the other. Tied to the rear are usually a donkey or some cows, occasionally a flock of sheep or some dogs. I saw not one such party but literally thousands of them. The women and children do not cry as they are beyond the crying stage, but the agony at leaving their homes is written all over their faces. Even the dumb animals plodding along with them have the same look.

June 1st, we marched up the road to Lizy and halted in the evening, tired, dusty and dirty, and bivouacked in the town. On a corner was a lone French woman who had remained to feed the retreating French soldiers with whom the town was filled. Stragglers and infantrymen in great confusion, wearing the horizon-blue of the French, dragged themselves to the rear. An entire regiment of French field artillery galloped through the town towards the rear carrying their wounded.

The battalion moved again to the front. The left side of the road was filled with trucks, ammunition, retreating French soldiers, field hospitals-all in great confusion. We marched until midnight with practically no rest and on into the morning. We could hear the songs sung by the American artillery marching ahead. We remained in this position for two days and nights, and during our stay discovered back in the woods an old Frenchman and his wife living in a little shack which they had laboriously built, and where they did some gardening and kept a cow, thinking they were safe from the advancing Germans. I discovered them late at night while trying to find a safe place to put our horses. Accidentally, we stumbled across the path that led to the door of their shack, and seeing a light oozing from the cracks, we went to investigate. Spies, was our first thought. We pushed the door open, and there on their knees were the old couple in all likelihood praying for deliverance from the German. When they saw us they immediately climbed up and crawled into bed, seemingly perfectly satisfied that they were safe for the time being at least. We left them alone, and when we moved out a night later, they were still there and may be there now for all that we know.

The roads around these positions were patrolled by French cavalry. The following morning I went over to Major Bailey's headquarters and was there when he was visited by a French Colonel and his Adjutant. Through the interpreter, Major Bailey was begged to remove his battalion across the River Marne to the hills overlooking the river on the south bank. This Major Bailey refused to do, stating that his orders were to take these positions, and until his Colonel countermanded his orders, he would stay here. The French Colonel then informed us that outside of the detachments of French cavalry, there was no infantry in front of the 1st Battalion; the Germans at any moment might sweep

through this sector. He begged us to cross the river immediately as he expected to blow up the bridge which, he said was our only avenue of escape. Again Major Bailey refused to withdraw. An hour later we heard a terrific detonation which we knew meant the destruction of the bridge over the Marne and our supposed last avenue of escape. Lieutenant Peabody, who was in the kitchen of the farmhouse, raised a bottle of wine and drank a health to the bridge in which we all joined before the reverberations of the explosion had passed away. At three o'clock in the morning we were up again. We assembled in the yard of a farmhouse, lined up, and roll call was taken. Our rolls were dropped and piled up. Later we would come back and get them if we lived that long."

From the memoirs of Pvt. John A. Hughes. Btry. "C", 15th Field Artillery

"June 3. A German aviator was circling over our heads. We stopped, expecting every moment to hear something drop. He kept flying around and I suppose he had seen the column coming up the hill. Finally he flew away but in about twenty minutes was back again. By this time the battery was pulling into a courtyard where there was a big chateau. The aviator kept flying around. There were several French soldiers in the village, and I guess most everyone was firing his rifle at the plane and he was flying very low; in fact, we could see the Iron Cross painted on his plane. I kind of admired his nerve with all the bullets whizzing around him. Someone made a lucky shot as he flew over the chateau. We could see the observer looking over the side of the plane. I thought that he was going to take a 'Brodie' but they managed to land in a field close by."



World War One Victory Medal

From the diary of 1st Lt. Elmer Hess, 15th FA, written during the relief operations on June 23-24:

“One evening Major Bailey and I, with several other officers from the batteries went up to the Paris Farm and on up the road towards Belleau to investigate the condition of our infantry and Marine regiments, and to get some first hand information. Up the road we saw a column of `green' replacements marching in, under the command of a Sergeant. We knew that our Marine brigade was in extreme need of these replacements and wondered how these boys would stand up under the terrible conditions which had prevailed in and around Belleau Wood. We did not have long to wait for an answer to our question. The night was hideously dark, lit up by the flash of gunfire and exploding shells. As these men passed by us, if they knew any fear, they certainly had determination written all over their grim young faces. During one of the flashes we got sight of the face of the Sergeant-in-charge.

He was tall, lean and hard; but there was a merry twinkle in his eyes. Suddenly, without warning, there was a shriek in the air, which caused our group to flatten themselves in the ditch alongside the road but not so with this column of men. The shell landed right in the middle of them, killing and wounding twenty. There were a few moans and other hideously audible sounds, such as only dying men can make. There was a cold, sharp command given by the Sergeant, 'Close ranks.' My men and myself scrambled to the road to aid in any way we could those who were still alive; but those youngsters with their heads high, closed the gap in their ranks without an apparent quiver, marched down the road and disappeared in the woods. Then we knew how they would conduct themselves later.”

Private John A. Hughes, Btry. "C". 15th FA, gives his impression of the attack on Vaux:

"The Germans were entrenched in deep dugouts at Vaux. We were to start firing gas shells at 6.00 A.M. At 5.00 A.M., at daybreak, we were up ready to fire. Each gun had to give two hundred and fifty rounds of gas shell. It was some kind of liquid gas: when you shook a shell the gas inside would make a noise as though it was full of water. However, it was exceptionally strong as we were allowed only 25 shells at the gun at one time. All of us had to wear oilskin pants and coats, also hot rubber gloves and our gas mask at alert. We looked more like fishermen than soldiers. At 6.00 A.M. we started firing. It surely turned out to be a hot day, especially with the extra uniform on. Those not needed to fire the guns were busy hauling shell. The heat and smoke were awful."

From the diary of Frank Hodson, Pvt., Btry. "F", 15th FA:

"We left Nanteuil-sur-Marne on July 15th at 9.00 P.M. and traveled all night and the following day without rest. Several times I fell asleep on my horse. Passing through Betz and Haramont the roads were filled with trucks carrying shell for 75's and 155's. I never saw so many shells in my life and it looked as though something big yeas about to happen. We passed a number of horses cut clean in two and one had been blown into a tree. It was a task to get our horses past the dead bodies as they displayed great fear of the gruesome sight."

From the diary of Pvt. John A. Hughes, Btry. "C", 15th FA:

"In our new position everything was fine. We expected to stay here for two weeks, but on the night of the 15th orders came to pack up and move. By ten o'clock we were on the move again, hiked until nine the following morning; pulled into moods and pitched camp. Oh, yes, the horses came first always. Broke camp about six o'clock and hiked until nine A.M. the neat morning. The same routine as yesterday followed. Pulled out and hiked all night; getting up to some other front. The traffic was heavy and all going in the same direction. We stopped for breakfast and were told that a big attach was to be pulled off the following morning. Hiked all day, and it sure was hot and telling on man and beast. Some of the boys were sleeping on their feet and the horses the same way. The nearer the front, the heavier the traffic-all kinds-guns and tanks. We arrived three miles from our destination at 8.00 P.M., had supper, fed and watered the horses, and off again at 11.00 P.M. to go into position. It took us until 3.00 A.M. to make the three miles. I never saw such traffic; for miles we would move about a hundred yards or so, then stop for fifteen minutes. It was hard to keep awake. German aviators were flying very low, dropping lights on us. As soon as the light would drop we were good for a shower. We learned that the 1st and 2d American Divisions, with the Moroccans, were to start the attack at 5.00 A.M."

The following incident is given in the diary of 1st Lieut. Elmer Hess, 15th FA, as having taken place a few days after the 2d Division was relieved at Soissons and while the 2d FA Brigade was still in line:

"The following day we had rested up enough to investigate and find out who some of our neighbors were in the woods across the road. We found a new kind of soldier, the Scotch. A division of Scotch infantry had pulled up to relieve one of the exhausted infantry divisions. This was our first experience with the men who, because of their kilts, were nicknamed by the Germans, 'The Ladies from Hell'. These troops were fine, upstanding, big-rav-boned men with their knees bare, wearing the skirts and colons of their various clans; and all in all a very wonderful body of men. One of their officers

come over and asked Major Bailey if it wouldn't be a good thing to have a boxing match between one of the Scotchmen and one of our artillerymen, and Major Bailey turned him over to me. We arranged a boxing match between one of our blacksmiths, a huge brute of a man; and the champion fighter of the Scotch. We roped off a ring in the woods and these two men stripped to the waist and went at it for the edification and amusement of both groups. Talk about a prize fight! This fight reminded me of the old days of bare knuckle fighting, and after a goodly number of rounds neither the American nor the Scotchman was off his feet. There was a lot of good-natured joshing between the men and officers of both units."

From the diary of Pvt. Frank Hodson, gunner, "F" Battery, 15th FA

"July 17. On July 17th we had our guns in position. The ground around showed the signs of heavy shelling. I saw French tanks go into action for the first time; they were much smaller than I supposed, but very efficient. I carried orders to the battery commanders that we would attack in the morning; and was given orders for Battery `D', and told about where I would find it; but I took the wrong path in the darkness and found myself lost. I was in the midst of the infantry marching along through the woods, single file, each man with his hand on the shoulder of the man ahead to guide him.

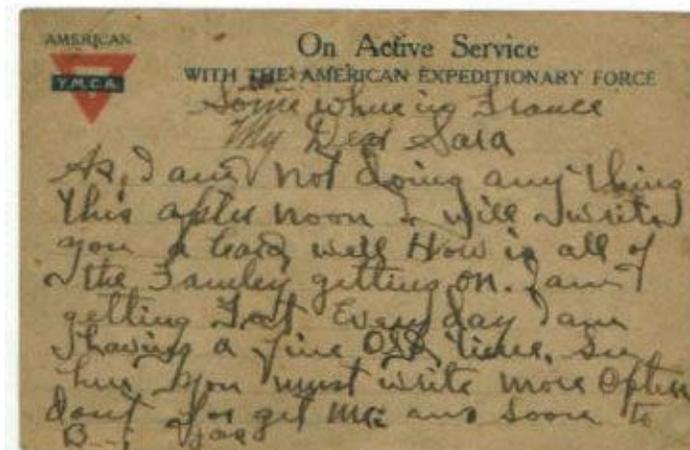
"July 18. We opened fire at 4.30 in the morning. It sounded as though thousands of guns were in action at one time, all firing at top speed. The ground fairly shook with the violence of the firing. Within an hour our men began bringing in German prisoners. Some of them were terrible sights to behold, frightfully maimed; they passed us in groups all half dazed from the terrible Hell they had just passed through. Our casualties were heavy, and German prisoners were pressed into service to carry both German and Allied wounded from the field, often on crudely made stretchers. Many prisoners under no guard whatever wandered past our guns waiting to be directed which way to go to our prisoner camp. I felt pity for some of them-nothing but boys scarcely sixteen years old, almost hidden in clothing and helmets made to fit full-grown men.

"July 19. We were still advancing. Column after column of prisoners and many wounded were constantly passing us. Dead Germans and Americans were lying on the ground over which we advanced. We gained ground so rapidly that the field kitchens could not keep up with us and I had only three meals in four days and scarcely any sleep. Still more French tanks passed us on their way to support the infantry, also a company of French Lancers. I suppose their purpose was to mop up behind the advancing army; that is to rout out any Germans who might have been overlooked in the rush of the advance.

During these days we changed our gun positions so frequently that there was no time for camouflage, so guns and men stood exposed to the enemy's fire from German

airplanes. One day about sixteen of these planes in battle formation flew over us and for an hour or so made life Hell by dropping bombs wherever they could count most."

"July 20. By nightfall the attacks were not our only worry. No sooner had we cast ourselves on the ground for a well-earned night's sleep-for we were all dog-tired-than we were startled by the sound of a German motor overhead and almost instantly the countryside was illuminated by the light from a glaring flare suspended from the airplane. While it was still burning, the rat-tat-tat of a machine gun sounded, apparently a signal for the German artillery, for we were immediately deluged with shell. While here, we averaged only one meal a day for over a week and in that time had but three days' sleep. I had not had my shoes off for a month, but was carrying orders day and night. Sometimes I rode my horse until he absolutely refused to take another step and I had to continue on foot."



"July 21. We were relieved and marched four miles to the rear, overjoyed with the prospect of some rest and square meals, but our joy was short-lived; we were ordered to return at once to the front to support the French Moroccan Division. On this day I saw a

French observation balloon brought down by a German airplane. The balloon burst into flame, but the observer saved his life by jumping with a parachute.”

"July 23. We fired a big barrage, our guns set for their extreme range, but we did not advance.”

"July 25. Our guns lined up side by side with French artillery, firing continuously all day.”

From the diary of Pvt. John A. Hughes, Btry. "C", 15th FA:

"July 18th. The guns were laid ready. Once more I was detailed to the ammunition train and received orders to get the shells up. I started back about 4.30 A.M. and met our infantry going in. I sure felt sorry for them as they had been hiking all day and now they were running to get to work on time. Several had loaves of bread stuck on their bayonets. All were tired, all cursing, but anxious to be there on time. The storm broke about 5.00 o'clock. Hell broke loose. I felt that I could sleep forever if I could get away from the noise. But the guns had to be fed. The French cavalry was going in, to follow up the Germans and to give them no repose. I got back about 11.00 A.M. and found our guns out in an open field. The thousands of prisoners were coming in. It was funny to see one little doughboy marching behind a hundred big, husky German prisoners, but I guess that after the Hell they had been through in the morning they didn't need much of an escort. They sure looked bewildered.



We had a respite during the afternoon as our infantry had driven the Germans beyond the town-a big gain, considering the country. It was in a wheat field here where I saw one of the most picturesque scenes: the French cavalry going into action. The wheat was ripe in

"Late in the afternoon of September 10th, while on our way to St. Mihiel front, orders were received to march that night and there was much hustle and bustle. The roads were more crowded, if that were possible, than ever before. Everyone was wet and covered with mud splashed by the trucks. The strange thing is that anybody was permitted to sing, and all through the night the gang of prisoners, marching at the tail of the column, sang continuously. These men had excellent voices and they made us forget the otherwise unpleasant night. These prisoners were a tough crew. As we marched, the 9th Infantry passed us, and their men could not understand why so many foot soldiers were with a regiment of field artillery. Curiosity finally got the best of them and a 9th Infantryman yelled across the road: 'What in Hell outfit is that, anyhow?' The reply from a prisoner immediately went back: 'We are Y.M.C.A. replacements!'"

Extract from the diary of Pvt. John A. Hughes, Btry. "C", 15th FA

"We arrived at Suippes on September 29, where things were lively. The guns were pounding away night and day; several hundred prisoners were coming in, all anxious to get cigarettes. They would swap almost anything for a pack of butts. One German could speak fairly good English and said he was in the Prussian Guards. He inquired about our regiment and when we told him he began to laugh. He told us that his regiment had been against ours at Chateau-Thierry in June, and that he was at Vaux when we bombarded the town. He said: "I ran like Hell! You fellows sure did treat us rough." One question they always asked was 'How many Americans were in France'; and didn't the submarines torpedo our ships?' When we informed them of the number of our troops in France, they seemed shocked. Of course, we always gave a good measure in our favor, but they were surely duped. The weather was getting quite cool, especially towards night. The following morning we received word that we were going up that night. Everybody got busy and cleaned up. We always tried to clean our clothes, especially our underwear before going up as we surely would need the change at the front. About 5.00 P.M. we had supper and after supper packed up.

About 8.00 P.M. we pulled out, hiked till eleven P.M., waited around until 1.00 A.M. French soldiers were to meet us, but they didn't show up. We were all asleep when a big shell landed within a few yards of us and our major came tearing down the road on a fast horse and gave orders to get the Hell out of range. We didn't have to receive a second command, and though the road was narrow, I bet we turned around in nothing flat. We went into position about seven o'clock but didn't fire until around midnight, Oct. 2. At 12.30 A.M., Oct. 2, we received orders to be on the alert. Our infantry was going over at 3.00 A.M.; their objective was Blanc Mont Ridge. Ours was the only American division in this sector. At 1.00 A.M. we received orders to fire so we blazed away for two hours. At 3.00 A.M. we lifted our barrage; our infantry went over. We received word at 6.00 A.M. that the Germans were offering severe resistance.

The German troops opposing us had a division of Bavarians, mostly all young men; they surely fought every inch. Our infantry captured the hill twice and were forced to withdraw. We couldn't fire to assist them as they expected to try again. The German artillery was raising the devil with us; one shell killed eighteen horses that were being fed in a ravine about a hundred yards back of us. Our position was continually under fire-it was a case of moving front or back. We moved ahead to within three hundred yards of our infantry. Quite a few prisoners were coming in, also several hundred wounded. The Germans were making us pay dearly for every inch we gained. They wouldn't give in. Our barrage raised havoc with the Germans. They must have tried to get away with their artillery, but the God of War must have said `No!'-some of their horses were cut in two. We went into position about half a mile beyond Somme-Py.



SGT Celetta

Towards noon our infantry got possession of the hill and kept it. While moving out of our position, we came directly under fire of a German gun. We could hear its report and immediately a shell would land among us. We realized we were in for a hot time. We finally made it to the field and were fortunate as only five men were wounded in getting through. We staid on the road about thirty minutes. Our captain sent a runner ahead to notify the infantry and in about five minutes the gun was silent. The Germans had hid the gun in the woods and our infantry had passed through and missed it. As soon as the infantry passed they must have pulled the gun out and commenced firing. As we moved forward we saw the run and gunners, all dead around the gun.

We went into position on the edge of a ravine where the underbrush was three or four feet high, an ideal place for artillery, but it was not pleasant to be in as it began to rain heavily. About two o'clock all of us were drenched to the skin. We hadn't been here long before shells began to fall among us. The part we couldn't make out was that the guns were being fired from behind us. We naturally blamed the French as they had their heavy artillery a few miles back of us. Our captain finally informed us of our position. We were in a pocket as the French on either side of us had failed to advance and the Germans' guns were firing from our right flank. We sure had a lively time here all night. "As we marched a number of Germans gazed at us without commenting on the passing column. Seimerich and Korperick were passed before 10.00 A.M. We entered Neuerburg, a large-sized town about 3.30 P.M., the men well-nigh exhausted and famished. Our breakfast was negligible and the dinner very poor. The civilians stayed inside not daring to look upon the ferocious Americans.

The march was resumed on a hard, well-made road, the men's shoulders aching and their feet blistered. At 6.00 P.M. the column halted and waited for their billets. The supply train came up and the mules were so tired and blown that they could hardly stand on their feet. We were billeted in barns and houses of German farmers, about a kilometer across the field. Though the galley prepared a good supper, few men ate. It was raining and we were so tired that our hunger could wait, so pulling off our clothes, we dropped into the straw and slept."



Caissons

From the diary of Pvt. John A. Hughes, Btry. "C", 15th FA:

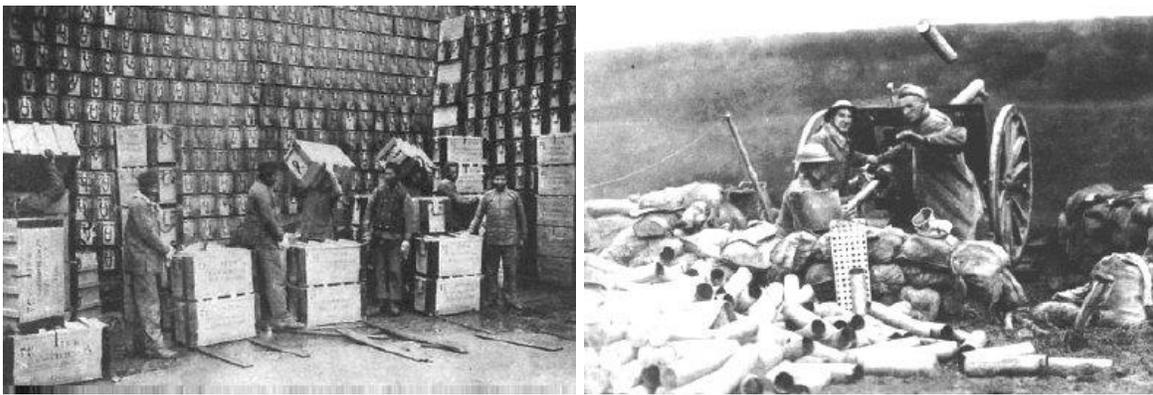
"Nov. 11th. We arrived at Beaumont and everybody was running around, everybody laughing. One old French lady was hugging and kissing the boys. I was surprised to see her in town as I had been going through Beaumont for five or six nights and days and never thought of any civilians living there through it all. I shouldn't say living, barely existing in a cellar, never hardly venturing outdoors.

It was a funny feeling all of us had. Everybody was listening and watching for shells to come over. On my way back to Beaumont I had to stop and listen every once in a while.

After months of constant roar of the guns and exploding shells, to have everything stop all at once; the quietness was too much for us; we couldn't believe it was true, and we were lost without the noise. I couldn't get my mind to believe that the war was ended.

At 7.00 A.M., Nov. 17th, we were off for Germany, our line of march through Belgium, and Luxemburg. We surely wasn't stuck on our pilgrimage. I guess all the boys would have been satisfied to hike twice the distance towards a seaport to get home. However, we were headed for strange countries and that helped to ease our feelings somewhat.

The first stop was Montmedy, a town partially leveled by the aviators. The French had already put up three or four balloons in the towns. There were several stores, but one couldn't buy anything even though we had money. We hiked until 8.00 P.M., watered, fed and groomed the horses, and at eleven o'clock had our supper and turned in very tired.



75mm ammo and artillery

Up the next morning; entered Belgium; passed through quite a large town, Arlon, but didn't stop though we were objects of curiosity to the women folks, as I guess it was the first time most of them had seen any Americans. They had several home-made flags—three or four stripes and a few stars stuck on. We hiked until 7.00 P.M. and slept in our pup tents. The weather was cool, especially at night and it rained most every day. We had to hike through the country road as our column was too long to travel through the large towns. By the way, a regiment of artillery with all the wagons and guns extends for a mile and a half. We stopped at several towns in Belgium where the women folk were very kind to us. One little town that we stopped at the women came and insisted that we go and sleep in their houses and we were glad of a chance to get into a dry place.

Four of us went with an old lady. She showed us upstairs two fine beds—feathers. Oh Boy! Those beds looked good, but we had more respect for the beds. We spread our blankets on the floor and asked the lady to call us at 4.30 A.M. In the morning she came and woke us and found the four of us on the floor. She couldn't understand why we hadn't used the beds. We couldn't explain to her our reason as none of us could speak her

language. We were all lousy as cuckoos and we didn't want to leave any cooties in the beds. I really believe the old lady was offended because we hadn't taken advantage of her offer. We finally got one of the boys who could speak her language to explain to her.

The Belgians could understand German as the Germans had occupied these parts for four years. We inquired about their treatment while under the German occupation and learned that during the first two years of the war the Germans took most anything they wanted and set their own price on it, especially in regard to grain, hay and all kinds of forage; also that they were very domineering; but during the last two years the natives could bargain about the price of various foodstuffs. We also inquired about the way the women folks were treated regarding various abuses committed by the Germans, and we found out that they had heard of such abuses having been committed in other towns, but none around where they lived. Such was the answer all through our trip through Belgium. I personally never came across one instance where such offenses had been committed. No doubt there had been some; couldn't expect anything different from an invading army, and I honestly believe no army would be immune from such cases where four or five thousand men visit a city after possible months of fighting at the front, especially those that occupied the city as victors. The bars were dropped.

We met hundreds of soldiers returning from Germany and some of them had been prisoners since 1914. Several had on their old uniforms of red pants and blue coats and they surely appeared funny looking to us. They had walked for days and we shared grub and smokes with them.

After four days of hiking we arrived in Luxemburg and learned from the natives that the German army was only twenty-four hours ahead of us. We learned also that they took most anything they wanted in the fine of eatables and didn't pay any attention to the officers. Every place they camped they never cleaner! up after-tin cans and every kind of refuse strewn all over. Also many a big gun and truck was abandoned, deliberately run over the embankment into the woods. We stopped four days in Luxemburg until the German Army moved ahead. Practically every day was the same, our greatest concern was eats and beer, but many a bottle of Cognac was emptied.

We were on the move once more and arrived in a little town on the German border. The following morning we crossed. Here we were objects of great curiosity from the natives. It was Sunday and they were coming from church. Some gave us a sour look, others smiled, and all were curious. About the first week in December we arrived in quite a large city. Here we learned. The German aristocrats used to spend their holidays anal there were some fine hotels. By the way, we slept in some of the biggest hotel in town. There were some very good baths in town where the water was hot. It was coming from a spring, something like Hot Springs, Arkansas. All the boys enjoyed a bath and we had a chance to clean our clothes and bodies, which were in much need of hot water. We

stayed here four days when we were off again, hiking from seven in the morning until seven at night every day.

On Dec. 13th, a Friday at that, we crossed the Rhine. Such a day it was! Pouring rain all day. Everybody was drenched. While we were crossing on the bridge a photographer stood with his camera taking pictures. He kept yelling at us to smile. Yes! We felt like smiling, wet and hungry. Some of the boys told him to go to Hell. That evening we turned into a field at 8.00 P.M. and pitched camp for the night and were notified that another day's hike would finish the job. We were all glad as everyone was tired and wanted to settle somewhere.

On Dec. 14th we were off at seven and arrived at Fahr-our town, or at least it was to be ours for four or five months. In the course of a couple of days most everybody was located in the houses. All the inhabitants had to take in two, three or four soldiers. The Government paid twenty-five pfennigs a night for each man. Four of us stayed at No. 8, Wilhelm Strasse. An old lady by the name of "Timmerman" owned the house, but she had vanished when she learned that Americans were to occupy the town. The lady next door had stayed, and after a few days we got acquainted with her and her family.

We inquired where the lady that owned the house had gone and heard that she had gone to a nephew's house sixty miles away. However, we got after the lady next door to try and persuade the owner of our house to return as we were the sole occupants of her house. She finally arrived after several days and was so afraid she would not even see us. Her impression of us was taken from the Indians, as she told me afterwards. She expected to see us all painted up with feathers in our hair. We had to go next door to bring her in and she surely was scared; she just stood and looked at us. Naturally we couldn't speak German, neither could she speak English, so we could not hold any conversation. One of the boys went for Nick Miller who could speak German, so we got acquainted through Nick. We got Nick to assure her that we were not Indians and that she was the boss of the house; also that we expected her to take care of our room, and that we would pay her so much a week for her trouble. This was satisfactory to her. Well, it didn't take long for her to get to know our names, and many a night's fun we had. All of us would store up from the commissary, canned fruit and cakes, and the old lady would spread the table every evening and all of us would enjoy a bite. I managed to pick up the German language fairly well and the old lady would talk to me for hours about different things. Of course, I couldn't understand everything she said, but I managed to get some of it. She washed all of our clothes, but wouldn't take any money for doing it, and the only way we could pay her was to load up her pantry at night with stuff from the commissary.

Our stay here was the same unending routine-drilling, exercising the horses, a pass to Coblenz once in a while. Some of the boys took a trip back to France. Personally, I didn't care about a furlough under the conditions, as the Military Police were always on

the job. The least little violation of army rules would place a fellow under arrest and subject him to two or three months in the mill without pay. Here at Fahr we had our own guards. At poker or craps we either made a few hundred marks or lost, it depended on Lady Luck. If we won, we would have a blow-out; if we lost, why, we could have a party on the other fellow. In March, 1919, I was given the job looking after the prisoners, our own bunch who had transgressed the laws and who were committed to the mill for thirty, sixty or ninety days. It was up to me to find work for them. I could always find work, fixing up the base ball grounds, fixing up a place for horses to jump, cleaning the streets, etc.

We finally received orders to move from Fahr as the 32d Division was going home and we were to take up their territory. We didn't want to move as we were well established, though Fahr was a small town. We had fairly good accommodations right on the Rhine River. Even the natives didn't like the boys to move. However, when the big fellows issue orders, we have to move.

Our future hone was a small village up in the country by the name of Eberdorf. I really felt homesick when we arrived here. Of all the forsaken places, this was one. About fifteen houses and all farmers. Gee! How we did cuss our luck. There was only one horse in the whole village, and the farmers did all their cultivating with oxen. Every house had big piles of manure stacked up, mostly right alongside of the living quarters.

We had the same routine every day. Once in a while we borrowed an ambulance and ran down to Neuwied to see a prize fight; also the TM would come up with a flivver and we would borrow a bed sheet, hang it on the line, and all the boys would flock around to see Charlie Chaplin or some of the rest performing. I shall never forget our first movies. All the natives were out in their Sunday best and I believe it was the first movie they had ever seen. The kids went wild. We had Charlie Chaplin on, and those kids went batty. They couldn't get the idea and ran back of the sheet, back to the flivver where the machine was, and run and jump. Everyday the kids asked when were we going to have our next show.

We stayed at Eberdorf until June when at about 12.00 P.M. we heard that the Germans had refused to sign the peace and we were to occupy more German territory. There was quite a commotion in town; the natives running around half dressed at two o'clock in the morning. The women were all crying, thinking the war was going to start all over again. Also they were afraid of the French occupying the village after we left there. At 6.00 A.M. the next morning we were off and arrived at a town called Selters, and here went into position about a mile from town and were told to be ready at a moment's notice. This maneuver was a bluff for the Germans."

From the diary of Pvt. John A. Hughes, Btry. "C", 15th FA:

"We received word one day that everything was settled and soon we would be on our way home. Four of us saddled our nags and started for Selters, and I drank more champagne that night than I ever did before. We received orders during the last week of July to get ready to start for Brest. Oh Boy! That was welcome news. The great day came and we bid goodbye to our German friends and off we went to the station. The train started and all of us gave one grand yell. Our trip took us through Mons, Valenciennes, Arras. The country from Valenciennes to Arras was the worst I had ever seen. For miles on both sides there wasn't a sight of any living thing, not a tree or bush of any kind. It fairly gave one the creeps just to look at it. The trenches were filled with water surrounded with barbed wire, broken guns and tanks. We were glad we missed the Somme; it must have been awful there in winter.

We arrived at Brest after forty-eight hours ride in the famous French Pullmans and marched to camp. Here we were kept busy bathing and standing inspections. They had a great system to feed us. I heard that they fed five thousand in less than an hour. There were about six doors to the mess hall and two kitchens at each door. The tables were about four feet high, no sitting down, wooden frames with corrugated iron for top. We went out at the opposite end from the kitchen. It was a case of keep sliding towards the other door as we ate. By the time we were through eating, we were outside. It was some job to try and juggle a full messkit and a cup of coffee, move and eat at the same time. However, we felt that our time was short here and everyone took things in good spirits.

July 29th we broke camp and were off for the docks and boarded the ship "Julia Luckenback" for our home trip. Bunks were arranged three in a tier. We had prize fights and concerts every afternoon and evening. Quite a few of the boys were sea-sick. We arrived at Bush Terminal, Brooklyn, August 8th, and received cocoa and cakes from the YMCA and were off for Camp Mills, Long Island. There wasn't much sleep that night as all the boys were talking of their future.

We paraded in New York on the 9th. Some day! We were on the go from 4.00 A.M. to 11.00 P.M. We were broken up on the 12th, the soldiers from different states going to different barracks; and as the remnant of our old outfit marched before us, all the boys felt like crying. Many a tear was shed when we saw our old colors march by. Everyone saluted. I guess we stood at attention for five minutes after the colors passed us, not a word spoken. I felt then as I have often felt, that silence is the greatest tribute. Little did we realize the attachment that had grown among us until that moment.

We arrived at Camp Dix, August 12th, and were discharged the next day. One of the clerks asked if I had been through all the engagement that were entered on my discharge. He said it looked funny because I wasn't wounded. I had to laugh at his ignorance and told him that I always kept a rabbit's foot in my pocket. Several of us hired a cab and went to a hotel in Trenton and found they were not anxious to

accommodate us. Quite a contrast from a year or two before. Human nature was taking its course and the events of the past three years had been forgotten."

15th Field Artillery Regiment

INDIANHEADS

By: Dan Gillotti, 15th Historian

The US was not prepared for WW-I, especially in equipment. The only American-made Artillery weapon of any value was the 4.7 inch Gun (approximately 120mm). My research with Rock Island Arsenal indicates only three American Field Artillery Regiments were armed with 4.7 Guns. I don't think any of them saw action as the ammunition supply would have been a huge problem.

As a result, the United States Army was equipped in France with mostly French and British-made Artillery pieces. The majority of American Divisions were armed with French 75mm Howitzers in the Direct Support Artillery Regiments that included the 15th Field Artillery (FA) Regiment.

The 15th Field Artillery (FA) Regiment was organized in Syracuse, New York on 1 June 1917 from cadre transferred from the 4th FA Regiment. Assignment to the 2nd Infantry Division followed on 21 September 1917, and training took place at Pine Camp, New York. The Regiment left the United States on 11 December 1917 and sailed onboard the SS Adriatic for Liverpool, England.

The Regiment landed in at Le Harve, France in February 1918, and was initially staged at Bourmont, France. On 21 March 1918, the Regiment deployed against the German Army on the west face of the St. Mihiel Salient. By 1 June 1918, the regiment occupied positions northwest of Chateau-Thierry and on 14 July 1918, was relieved by elements of the 26th "Yankee" Division in order to prepare for the Soissons Counteroffensive. On 18 July 1918, the Regiment participated in its first major offensive near Soissons. During July - October 1918, the Regiment supported the 2nd Infantry Division in operations in Soissons, Marbache, and Champagne. The Regiment also provided artillery support to the American 36th Division and the French 78th Division.

On 10 November 1918, the Regiment fired in support of the Meuse River crossing and three days later crossed the Rhine River at Remagen for Occupation Duty. The War Records indicate the 15th FA Regiment was in continuous action from July till November 1918, and participated in the Lorraine; Aisne; Ille de France; Aisne-Marne; St. Mihiel; and Meuse-Argonne campaigns, and earned them the unofficial nickname as the Indianheads.

The Indianheads of the Fighting Fifteenth fulfilled every mission assigned to it, never fired rounds short, and expended 285,000 rounds of shell and shrapnel. This was the greatest number of artillery rounds fired by any US Army Artillery Regiment during the war, and is a fact in which it can be justly proud.

SECOND INFANTRY DIVISION

Along with other units of the 2nd Infantry Division cited for outstanding performance in the Meuse-Argonne and the Aisne-Marne campaigns, the 15th FA Regiment received three awards of the French Croix de Guerre with Palm. Additionally, each member of the Regiment was authorized to wear the Fourragere in the colors of the Croix de Guerre. After the Armistice in November 1918, the 15th FA Regiment remained as part of the Army of Occupation in Germany until the summer of 1919. Returning to the United States in August 1919, the 15th FA Regiment took up permanent residence at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

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