

DAR, Kansas City Chapter, World War I Scrapbook

This scrapbook was compiled by the Kansas City Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. The group had adopted Battery A, 129th Field Artillery, an artillery unit comprised of men primarily from the Kansas City area.

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Daughters of the American Revolution. Kansas City (Mo.) Chapter. Committee of Battery "A". Mrs. A.H. Connelly, compiler.

Title: Record of Battery "A", 129th Field Artillery, A.E.F. (scrapbook)

Dates: 1917-1919

Size: 1 scrapbook, 1 box

Location: SC90

Administrative Information

Restrictions on access: Unrestricted access.

Terms governing use and reproduction: Due to preservation concerns, researchers are asked to use the photocopies.

Additional physical form available: Scrapbook has been photocopied. Photographs have been digitized.

Acquisition information: Unknown.

Citation: Daughters of the American Revolution. Kansas City (Mo.) Chapter. Committee on Battery "A" scrapbook (SC90), Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.

Collection Description

Biographical/Historical note

Most of the enlisted men in Battery A of the 129th Field Artillery were from Kansas City, Missouri. The battery was first called into service by order of Missouri Governor Frederick D. Gardner on May 2, 1917, as Battery "D" of the Missouri Field Artillery. On June 6, 1917, a further order assigned this battery to the First Battalion Missouri Field Artillery, and changed its designation to Battery "A". A June 18th, 1917 letter to Mrs. Connelly from the battery's commanding officer, Captain Marvin H. Gates, states that at that time the battery consisted of 151 enlisted men and five officers. The enlisted men of the battery remained fully involved in their civilian lives during this period, and drilled only on Sunday mornings and Thursday nights.

On August 5th, 1917, batteries A through F of the Missouri Field Artillery were mustered into Federal service, officially becoming batteries A through F of the 129th Field Artillery Regiment of the 35th Division, United States First Army, Allied Expeditionary Force. Battery A was mobilized at an armory building located at 17th and Highland Avenue in Kansas City. Tents were pitched at The Parade for serving food to the men, and a picnic took place that evening at Electric Park, during which the men of the batteries present marched.

The history of Battery A can be broken down into several phases. From the point of their mustering into Federal service to their embarkation for Europe, the company engaged in exercises at Camp Doniphan, located at Fort Sill, several miles from Lawton, Oklahoma. This was a period of drill and training. The men rose at 5:45 a.m. and actively trained until 6 p.m. daily. They prepared for

battlefield situations in practice maneuvers, such as simulated gas attacks, targeted grenade-throwing exercises, and the bombardment of trenches and terrain.

The next phase of Battery A's World War I experience comes in their travel to the front, and the combat in which they were involved in France. The 129th Field Artillery participated in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive near Verdun in northwestern France. Also known as the Battle of the Argonne Forest, this Western Front engagement was the largest in which American forces were involved during the war, and led directly to the German surrender in November, 1918. A detailed war diary kept by one of the officers of Battery A describes the movements and actions of the battery on a day-to-day basis. For an overview of the offensive and the part that the 129th Field Artillery played in it, see *The Artilleryman*, by Jay M. Lee (Press of Spencer Printing Company, Kansas City, Missouri, 1920), found in the holdings of the Kansas City Public Library's Missouri Valley Special Collections. This work also includes lists of Battery A's war casualties.

The final documented phase of Battery A's World War I experience is the regiment's homecoming. The return of the 129th to Kansas City was covered extensively in local newspapers, and many of these articles were clipped and pasted into the scrapbook.

Scope and content note

The record of Battery "A", 129th Field Artillery of the Allied Expeditionary Force (AEF) is comprised of a bound scrapbook containing a variety of media including newspaper clippings, photographs, telegrams, letters, and typed material. The items in the scrapbook were attached to its pages by its creator with paste. The scrapbook measures 9" x 11", and its cover is embossed with the words "Record of Battery 'A', 129th Field Artillery, AEF". The book came to the department in good condition, and its binding is still intact. Its 101 pages were photocopied onto acid free paper and numbered; both the original and copy were placed in a stable, acid-free environment.

The book was compiled by the Kansas City Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. The chapter "adopted" the group that eventually became Battery A of the 129th Field Artillery on May 14, 1917. Mrs. A.H. Connelly of Kansas City led the work of the committee involved with Battery A, and compiled the material in the book. Most of the correspondence collected is addressed to her, and the material in the book concludes in early May, 1919.

In adopting Battery A, the women of the Kansas City Chapter of the DAR engaged in various duties. The leaders of the battery appear to have been in continuous contact with Mrs. Connelly, reporting on the state of the men and their activities. The DAR chapter held an afternoon musical and pageant in Kansas City to raise money for the battery, with which they purchased various items of comfort and necessity to send to the troops, including food and books. Letters in the scrapbook illustrate that Mrs. Connelly and her peers undertook "home-front" favors for the men of the battery, as well; in one instance, for example, the captain of Battery A asked Mrs. Connelly to check on a private's mother in Kansas City, about whom the private was worried.

This collection provides a comprehensive picture of the activities of one U.S. artillery battery during World War I, as well as providing a representation of the involvement of Kansas Citians in the war effort. The scrapbook documents the details of Battery A's training, combat activity, and homecoming, and creates a

picture of daily life in camp and on the battlefield. The perspective of Mrs. A.H. Donnelly and the Kansas City D.A.R. on the war is valuable, as well; the adoption of Battery A by this group of Kansas City women is an interesting example of one way in which American civilians became involved in World War I on the home front. The scrapbook's roster of the names and addresses of enlisted men in the battery will be of use to genealogists.

Collection Inventory

(Scrapbook page numbers are followed by contents of page. All newspaper articles in the collection are undated, and come from unknown sources, unless otherwise indicated.)

1. 9" x 4", b/w photograph of seated officer in uniform overcoat, labeled: "The first Captain of Battery A. August 3rd, 1917." (Probably Marvin H. Gates).

2-3. Typed material briefly describing Company A of the 129th Field Artillery, and stating the intentions of the scrapbook's compiler. Members of the Kansas City D.A.R. "Committee of Battery A" are listed.

4. Typed copy of the Missouri Executive Order organizing Battery "D" of the Missouri Field Artillery, dated 2 May, 1917.

5. Typed copy of the Missouri Executive Order officially changing the designation of Battery "D" to Battery "A", First Battalion Missouri Artillery.

6. Typed message from 1st Lieutenant Charles S. Wengert to Mrs. A.H. Connelly regarding a request for a photograph of the commanding officer of Battery A.

7. Original typed letter from Company A Captain Marvin Gates to Mrs. A.H. Connelly, detailing the history and present state of the company. Letter is dated June 18, 1917.

8. 4" x 6", b/w photograph of Captain Roy T. Olney of Battery A. Handwritten notes regarding D.A.R. support activities fill right margin.

9. Newspaper article ("Second Artillery Ready").

10. 4" x 6", b/w photograph of Lieutenant Charles S. Wengert.

11. 2" x 3", b/w photographs of Captain Roy T. Olney, Lieutenant Charles S. Wengert, Lieutenant Walter G. Slagle, and "2nd Lieutenant Pendergast"; 3.5" x 5.5", b/w photograph of several buildings, labeled "Ft. Sill"; 3" x 5" card imprinted with an image of the American flag and the Pledge of Allegiance.

12. Typed service record of Captain Roy T. Olney, detailing his enlistments, commissions, and discharges.

13. Two 4" x 5", b/w photographs of people in a residential setting, labeled "Musical at Mrs. B.T. Whipple's."

14. Two 4" x 5" photographs of uniformed cadets marching in formation. Probably Officers of the Westport High School Cadets drilling in the backyard of Mrs. B.T. Whipple.

15. Printed program for the "military musicale" held by the Kansas City Chapter of the D.A.R. for the benefit of the battery at the Whipple home (4538 Warwick Blvd.); advertising card announcing the same event (date of event is noted as June 9, 1917); one paragraph newspaper item, dated August 10, 1917, reporting a reception presenting the officers and men of Battery A to the adopting D.A.R. chapter.
16. Additional copy of program on previous page.
17. Small oval-shaped image of George Washington; printed lyrics of the Battle Hymn of the Republic.
18. 3" x 4" image of George Washington; Two newspaper articles ("Olney Heads Battery A," "A Martial Battery to Benefit"); five-line poem clipped from newspaper entitled "Why Enlist?"; typed summary of the receipts and expenses of Mrs. B.T. Whipple's musical program.
19. Two newspaper articles ("Militia into U.S. Service" [lists officers of entire Field Artillery Regiment], "Artillerymen on a Picnic"); undated newspaper list of U.S. Army training camps.
20. Newspaper announcement noting the one-week postponement of the Whipple musical program, rescheduled for June 9, 1917; additional copy of advertising card for Whipple musical program (previously listed on page 15); two newspaper articles ("Battery D Is Given a Benefit by D.A.R.," "At Battery D Benefit, 500"); newspaper item announcing the Whipple musical event (at that time still scheduled for June 2, 1917).
- 21-24. "Report of the Committee of Battery 'A'", four typed pages summarizing the work of the committee, listing items donated to the company, and naming D.A.R. chapter members involved.
- 25-32. Typed list of the "nearly 200" books donated by the D.A.R. chapter to Battery A. Book titles and authors (surnames only) are listed in no apparent order.
- 33-37. Typed list of 108 "Victrola Records Given and Donated by many Ladies" to the battery. Titles and artists are listed in no apparent order.
38. Newspaper article and illustration ("All's Well at Doniphan").
39. Two newspaper articles ("The Guard to the Colors," "Shells Fall at Doniphan"); fragment of postcard addressed to Walter Slagle in Kansas City (address section of postcard only).
40. Two newspaper articles ("Selects to Go to West Point," "New Library at Doniphan"); undated newspaper illustration from unknown source ("Battery D's Big Gun").
41. 3.5" x 4.5" b/w photograph of tent and young girl in backyard setting (labeled "Home at Mrs. B.T. Whipple's"); 3.5" x 2.5" b/w photograph of Roy T. Olney (same photograph as on page 8).
42. Two newspaper articles ("An Airdome for Doniphan," "Dances Lend Joy to Camp"); newspaper reprint of an article from the Saturday Evening Post ("True Americanism").

43. Newspaper reprint of an article from the New York Independent ("What a \$50 Liberty Bond Will Do"); newspaper article ("What Thrift Stamps Will Buy for Our Soldiers"); newspaper reprint of an article from the Columbia Missourian ("The Liberty Bond"); newspaper article ("Song a Godsend to Army").

44. Newspaper article ("Coming Out of the Gas House at Doniphan").

45. Two newspaper articles ("Study the Army Weak" and "A Number for Every Man").

46. Newspaper article and illustrations ("As the Base Hospital at Doniphan Looks Now").

47. Typed service record of Cyrus K. Oakley, a soldier wounded in an accident at Camp Doniphan, Oklahoma, August 25, 1917; printed item entitled "A Soldier's Creed" by Bessie Dickerson Ducey.

48. Three newspaper articles ("Changes at Camp Doniphan," "No Loafing at Doniphan," "Safety First" for 129th").

49. Newspaper article ("A Battle Front at Sill"); 3.5" x 4.5" b/w photograph of people at the Whipple musical program; 3.5" x 4.5" b/w photograph of cadets in uniform at the Whipple program (same photograph as that on p. 14).

50. Three newspaper articles ("The Lieutenant" [reprint of Saturday Evening Post article], "Set 129th Camp in 2 Days," "Life in Camp Doniphan").

51. Typed letter from Captain Roy T. Olney to Mrs. A.H. Connelly, September 25, 1917. Letter requests Mrs. Connelly to visit the Kansas City home of a Private's mother.

52. Two 3.5" x 4.5", b/w photographs of people in a backyard setting at the Whipple musical program.

53. B/w postcard image labeled "View of Medicine Creek at Fort Sill, Okla.," Western Union telegram from Lieutenant Charles Wenger to Mrs. A.H. Connelly, January 20, 1918. Telegram reports the death of soldier Raymond J. Rolls.

54. Typed letter from Rowland Hill of the Arlington Methodist Episcopal Church in Kansas City to Mrs. A.H. Connelly, January 29, 1918. The letter is a biography honoring killed soldier Raymond J. Rolls.

55. Four newspaper articles ("To Honor a Dead Soldier," "Die in Fort Sill Explosion," "Soldier Dies at Doniphan," "Wound A 129th Man Badly").

56. Newspaper article ("Life in Camp is Like Battlefield").

57. Two 3.5" x 4.5" b/w photos of the Whipple musical program (one is the same photograph as those on page 14 and 49).

58-61. Typed, alphabetical list of names and home addresses of the men of Battery A, 129th Field Artillery.

62. Blank piece of stationary bearing official letterhead of Battery A.

63. Two newspaper articles and illustrations ("Airing Out at Doniphan," "Every Man His Own Washwoman at Doniphan").
- 64-65. Typed report, "Battery A's Christmas," detailing the gifts sent by the DAR chapter to the men of Battery A.
66. Newspaper illustration ("Americans in Front Line Trenches").
67. Three newspaper articles ("Fort Sill a Great Place," "Eat for Forty Cents a Day," untitled announcement of Battery A's receipt of Christmas gifts from the DAR); blank piece of Battery A stationary with official letterhead.
68. American Express receipt of materials received by Captain Olney at Camp Doniphan on December 19, 1917, sent by A.H. Connelly in Kansas City.
69. Two 3.5" x 5.5" b/w postcard images ("Camp Doniphan, Okla.," "Street Scene, Lawton, Okla.").
70. Two newspaper articles with illustrations ("A Device to Aid in Correcting Grenade Throwing," "Charging on the Washboard").
71. Two 3.5" x 5.5" b/w postcard images ("Artillery on Hike, Camp Doniphan, Okla.," "A Gift from Home Furnishes Music for Our Boys, Camp Doniphan, Okla.").
72. Two 3.5" x 5.5" b/w postcard images ("Waiting for Inoculation Against Typhoid, Camp Doniphan, Okla.," "Infantry on Hike, Camp Doniphan, Okla.").
73. Two 3.5" x 5.5" b/w postcard images ("Camp Doniphan, Fort Sill, Oklahoma," "Camp Doniphan, Okla.").
74. Two 3.5" x 5.5" b/w postcard images ("Barracks, Fort Sill, Okla.," "Medicine Park, Okla., Mt. Scott in Distance, near Camp Doniphan").
75. Two newspaper articles ("How Tirey Ford Died," "Soldier Letters: Says the 129th Lost Few").
76. Newspaper article ("French Aid Yanks in July 4 Jubilee", includes a photograph of Col. Karl D. Klemm).
77. Newspaper article ("With the 129th in Battle").
78. Newspaper announcement of D.A.R. reception for Battery A at Manual High School.
79. Typed letter from Fern Snook to Mrs. A.H. Connelly, dated October 17, 1919. The letter contains a two paragraph biography of Captain Keith Wright Dancy of Battery A.
80. Typed letter from Cap. Keith Dancy in France to his father, dated November 22, 1918.
- 81-92. Typed war diary of Captain Keith Dancy, containing daily and weekly entries of the movement and activity of Battery A.

93. Newspaper illustration ("Presentation of Flag to Veterans of the 129th at the Victory Arch on Grand Avenue").
94. Newspaper article and illustration ("The Present Home of the 129th Artillery").
95. Newspaper illustration and brief article ("Kansas City Receives Back Its Own Artillerymen," "Did you notice the "artillery walk"....").
96. Two newspaper articles ("Expect 129th Wednesday," "Expect 129th in Morning").
97. Three newspaper articles ("Chicken Dinner at Hall," "Silk Flag to Battery A," "Rain No Welcome Damper").
98. Two newspaper articles ("129th Received in Hearts and Arms of Home," "Today's Welcome Program").
99. Two newspaper articles ("Fire Away', 129th", "The Welcome Plans Today").
100. Three newspaper articles, with illustrations ("Gates to Bring 129th Home," "Coming Back Better Men Than Before," "The 129th at Six Tomorrow").
101. Newspaper article ("With the Boys on the Way"); handwritten item noting the post-war commissions of the officers of battery A and the 129th Field Artillery.

Processed by Special Collections Librarian Dan Coleman, October 2002.