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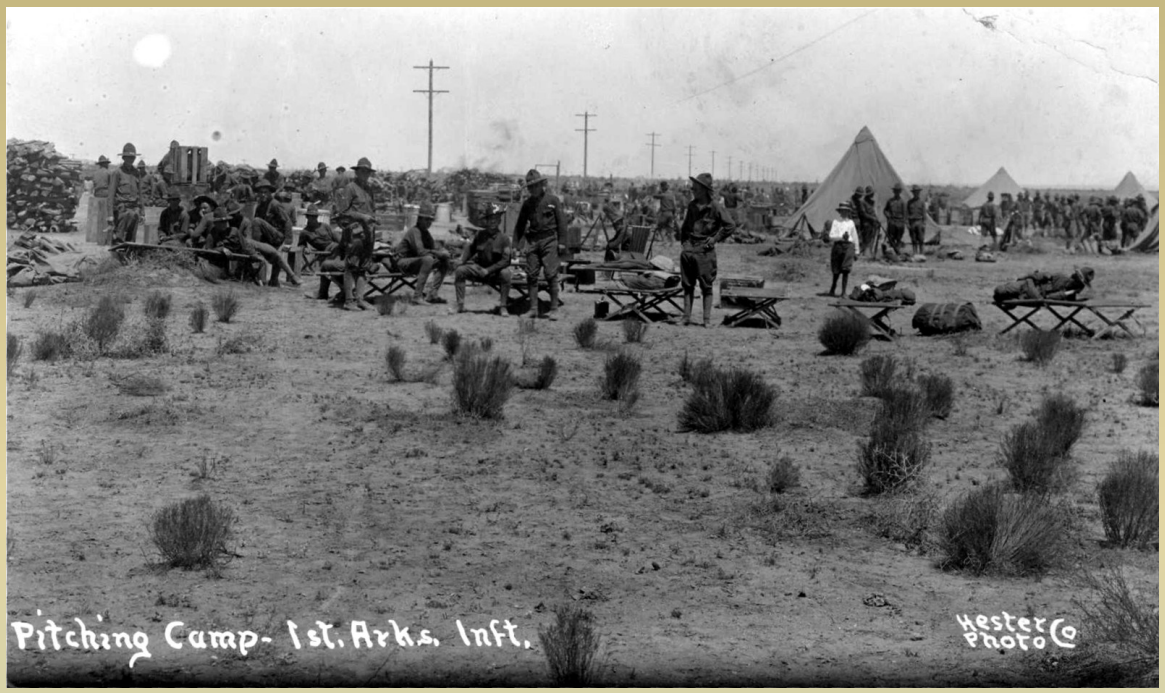

Mexican Expedition

The Great War

Incorporated 27 June 1989 Arkansas Non-profit Corporation

Cover Photograph: "Pitching Camp, 1st Ark. Inft," Deming, NM from the Ray Hanley Collection

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Correction to Vol. 11, Winter 2017 No. 1, Arkansas Militia and the Mexican-American War— On page 30, on the lower right hand side, there is a picture of a Soldier in a Plaid hunting shirt labeled 1st Arkansas Mounted Rifles. That is a Civil War photo. 1st Arkansas Mounted Rifles was an Arkansas Confederate unit that served at Wilson's Creek, Pea Ridge, and then went west of the river, and ultimately surrendered in North Carolina. The man in the photo is Lieutenant Dave Alexander, of Company G, the "Napoleon Rifles" commanded by Captain John L. Porter. This company was originally organized as a volunteer militia company in the 6th Regiment, Arkansas State Militia, Desha County, on March 7, 1861.

Message from the Chair

This edition of the *Arkansas Military History Journal* marks my final issue as Chairman of the Arkansas National Guard Museum Foundation. I would like to thank Dr. Screws, COL Cluck, and the staff and committee members continuing to build a strong museum program. Also, join me in welcoming Colonel (promotable) John Payne as the new Chairman who will continue to build a stronger museum program for the Arkansas National Guard and for the visitors to Camp Robinson. Also, we welcome several new board members who represent the diversity of thought, experiences, and heritage that makes our Arkansas National Guard a great organization. In this edition of the Journal, we look at the transition of the Arkansas National Guard in the years leading up to World War I, the equipment used during the period, and even get a chance to read the words of an Arkansan who participated in the war. Perhaps no period in history has had a greater impact on how we are organized today. Starting with the Spanish-American War in 1898 through a series of federal actions and events from 1900-1910, we see the origins of the "new" Arkansas National Guard. One of the most interesting facts you'll learn in these pages is where our battalions and companies were located in the early 1900's. Cities like Ola, Arkansas became home to Infantry companies in the buildup to World War I, highlighting the dramatic location changes that have occurred over the past 100 years in the Arkansas National Guard. The "how and why" Ola became a company headquarters should be of interest to every Arkansas National Guard leader and is at the root of why need to study history. Enjoy this edition of the Journal and I encourage you to submit articles as well!

BG Keith A. Klemmer
Arkansas National Guard Museum Foundation Chair

Message from the Editor

One hundred years ago the United States entered the Great War. When the US declared war in April 1917, World War I had been raging in Europe for three years. It took a while for America to prepare, but by late 1918, the US forces had helped turn the tide in favor of the Allies. The Great War ended in November 1918, and it profoundly changed the world. The *Arkansas Military History Journal* is dedicating this issue, and the next, to commemorate the centennial of the US entry in the war, and especially the role the Arkansas National Guard, Camp Pike, and Arkansans played in the Great War. We hope you enjoy.

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The Arkansas National Guard Prior to WWI and the Mexican Border, 1898-1917

By COL Damon Cluck

The history of the Arkansas National Guard and World War I begins with the reorganization of the Arkansas State Guard following the Spanish –American War. As a result of difficulties encountered during the mobilization of state militia forces, the United States Congress passed new legislation, which resulted in the renaming of the Arkansas State Guard as the Arkansas National Guard. The new federal legislation resulted in increased funding and training for the guard. The newly reorganized Arkansas National Guard was call upon by the President to help defend the border with Mexico in 1916, in response to cross border raids during the Mexican Revolution. Just as the Arkansas National Guard returned from the Mexican Expedition in 1917, it was again activated, this time for service in World War I. As part of their incorporation in the United States Army, all National Guard units were renumbered in accordance with a federal system. The Arkansas National Guard units were incorporated into the 39th Infantry Division and after training at Camp Beauregard, Louisiana, they were shipped to France in August and September 1918. The 39th Division was broken up, with some units used as replacements for other divisions. Most former Arkansas National Guardsmen returned to the United States in February through June 1919, and were demobilized. The period following the war included a rapid expansion of the National Guard and the beginnings of the permanent units, institutions and in stallions that are recognized as today's Arkansas National Guard.

Impact of the Spanish-American War on the Militia System

While the Arkansas State Guard did not win any campaign participation credit for its mobilization as a part of the Spanish–American War in 1898, the reorganization that occurred as a result of the War laid the groundwork for the modern Arkansas National Guard. The 153rd Infantry Regiment and the 142nd Field Artillery Regiment each trace their lineage and honors to the units in existence just prior to and during the Spanish–American War. [1]

The nation's experience with a large scale mobilization of the state militias resulted in new legislation that changed the nation's national defense strategy. The realization that the system of state funded and organized militia units failed to provide the nation with a rapidly deployable army at a time when the United States was becoming an international power led to legislative provisions focused upon establishing a more reliable, standardized and federally funded reserve component. These provisions were enshrined in the Militia Act of 1903, which established the National Guard.[2]

The Dick Act

The Militia Act of 1903 (32 Stat. 775), also known as the Dick Act, organized the various state militias into the present National Guard system. The act was passed in response to the demonstrated weaknesses in the militia, and in the entire U.S. military in the Spanish–

American War.

U.S. Senator Charles W. F. Dick, a Major General in the Ohio National Guard and the chair of the Committee on the Militia, sponsored the 1903 Act towards the end of the 57th U.S. Congress.[3] Under this legislation, passed January 21, 1903, the organized militia of the States were given federal status to the militia, and required to conform to Regular Army organization within five years. The act also required National Guard units to attend 24 drills and five days annual training a year, and, for the first time, provided annual training pay. In return for the increased Federal funding, which the act made available, militia units were subject to inspection by Regular Army officers, and had to meet certain standards.

The increase in Federal funding was an important development. In 1808, Congress allocated $200,000 a year to arm the militia; by 1887, the figure rose to only $400,000. But in 1906, three years after the passage of the Dick Act, $2,000,000 was allocated to arm the militia; between 1903 and 1916, the Federal government spent $53,000,000 on the Guard, more than the total of the previous hundred years.

In Arkansas, re-organization of the Arkansas State Guard actually began in 1901, under Governor Jeff Davis.[4] Major General W.M. Maynes, in a biannual report dated December 31, 1906, provided an overview of the status of the Arkansas Militia. The Militia was subdivided by statute into two parts, the State Guard, or active organize militia, and the Reserve Militia. The State Guard, or regularly enlisted, organized and uniformed militia was at a total strength of 1,274 personnel. The Federal Government appropriated $35,956.86 for the support of the Arkansas State Guard in that year and the Adjutant General asked the General Assembly for a matching appropriation of one half the Federal appropriation.[5]

The Arkansas State Guard becomes the Arkansas National Guard

Beginning with the passage of the "Dick" Act, the state militia, which was formerly referred to as the Arkansas State Guard, was henceforth called the Arkansas National Guard. The units of the Arkansas National Guard retained their designations as the 1st Arkansas Infantry, 2nd Arkansas Infantry, and so on, until the beginning of World War I, when all National Guard units were re-designated with federal numbers. Also, beginning with the "Dick" Act, National Guard units were requested to meet certain criteria in order to receive "federal recognition." These "federal recognition" dates became critical to establishing a new unit and receiving federal funding.

Company	Station	General Order Authorizing
Company K, 1st Infantry	London	General Order 9, Dated February 20, 1909
Company M, 1st Infantry	Heber Springs	General Order 10, Dated May 2, 1909
Company C, 2nd Infantry	Hope	General Order 11, Dated May 25, 1909
Company I, 2nd Infantry	Yellville	General Order 15, Dated June 21, 1910

Growth Under New Organization

Several new companies were organized during the period before World War I: [6]

Geographic Reorganization

In 1909, a change was made in the organization of the Arkansas National Guard. For several years, the state was organized with the 1st Infantry Regiment being stationed north of the Arkansas River and the 2nd Infantry Regiment stationed south of the river.[7] The Adjutant General, General Green, determined that the building of railroads and highways made this stationing plan inefficient and issued General Order No 35, which reorganized the regiments and battalions and changed the letter designations of some of the companies. The Regiments were re-

Regiment[7]	Unit	Station	Officers	Enlisted
Department Officers		Little Rock	34	
	Brigade Headquarters	Black Rock	4	
1st Regiment	Headquarters,	Little Rock	15	5
	Company A,	Prescott	3	78
	Company B,	Beebe	3	58
	Company C,	Hot Springs	3	41
	Company D,	El Dorado	3	57
	Company E,	Black Rock	3	56
	Company F,	Jonesboro	3	64
	Company G,	McCrory	2	61
	Company H,	Heber Springs	3	42
	Company I,	Helena	3	58
	Company K,	Lonoke	3	71
	Company L,	Piggott	3	61
	Company M,	Blytheville	3	55
	1st Regiment Band	Little Rock		28
2nd Regiment	Headquarters Company,	Paris	14	6
	Company A,	Siloam Springs	3	55
	Company B,	Fayetteville	3	52
	Company C,	Dardanelle	3	71
	Company D,	Eureka Springs	3	57
	Company E,	Paris	3	63
	Company F,	Magazine	3	61
	Company G,	Hope	3	55
	Company H,	Atkins	3	61
	Company I,	Yellville	3	53
	Company K,	Fort Smith	3	42
	Company L,	Oin	3	58
	Company M,	Harrison	3	60
	2nd Regimental Band,	Russellville		27
3rd Regiment Band		Hope		28
	Medical Corps,	Little Rock	15	14

stationed so that the 1st Infantry was situated in the eastern part of the state, with its principle "concentration point" being Little Rock, and the 2nd Infantry was stationed in the western part of the state with its "concentration point" at Fort Smith.[8]

Regular Army Advisers

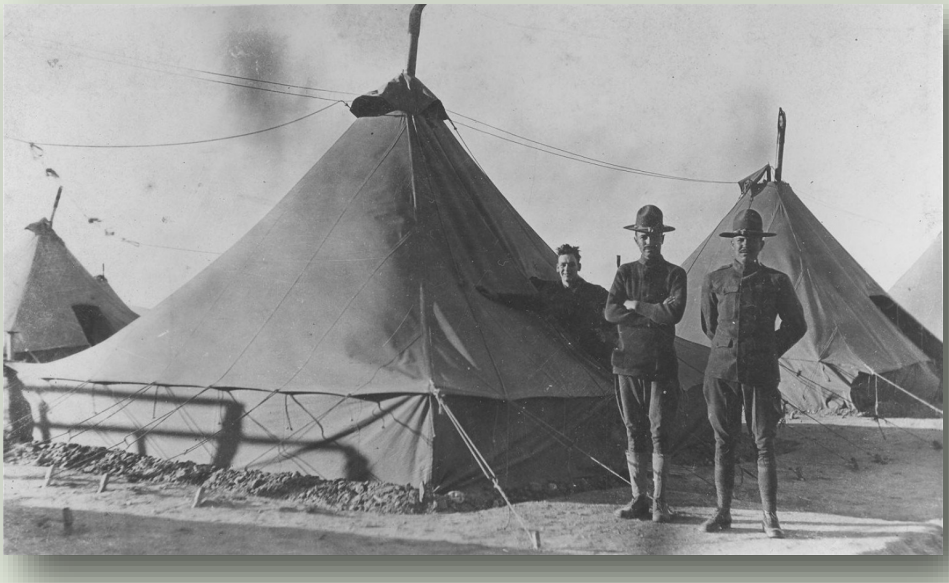
Under Section 30 of the 1903 "Dick" Act, the War Department detailed one officer for duty with the Arkansas National Guard on October 10, 1909. On February 4, 1910, a second NCO was detailed to the Guard and a commissioned officer was added on November 12, 1910.[9]

The First Permanent Military Camps

The Officer's Association of the Arkansas National Guard held a meeting on November 10, 1909, to discuss the possibility of obtaining suitable land for a permanent military camp to provide a location for training. A committee formed and bids were received from the cities of Benton, Dardanelle and Beebe. Ultimately an offer from Beebe of 200 acres (0.81 km2) at very little cost to the State was accepted. Camp W. M. Haynes was named in honor of a former commanding General. Improvements to this camp were paid for with federal funds. Other ranges were maintained at leased sites including Camp X.O. Findall, in Little Rock; Camp J. N. Wright at Fort Smith; Camp C. B. Gregg in Jonesboro; and Camp John S. Little in Russellville. The State owned no permanent armories during this time but did fund leases for most companies.[10]

First Annual Training Encampments

With the new Federal funding in place State National Guard units were encouraged to participate in bi-annual encampments with the Regular Army. In 1906, Arkansas sent one provisional regiment to Fort Riley, Kansas for training. In 1908, a provisional Regiment trained at Leon Springs, Texas. In 1910, Arkansas Troops were invited back to Leon Springs, Texas for a 12-day encampment and the federal government provided $25,000 to defray the costs of the encampment. Companies A-D-F-H-I and M of the First Infantry and Companies A-B-F-C-I and M of the Second Infantry participated in an encampment at Dardanelle, Arkansas from August 9–18, 1909. The units were trained by members of the 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry, U.S. Army.[11]



Mexican Expedition 1916

The Mexican Expedition was a military operation conducted by the United States Army against the paramilitary forces of Francisco "Poncho" Villa from 1916 to 1917. The expedition was in retaliation for Villa's illegal incursion into the United States and attack on the village of Columbus, Luna County, New Mexico, during the Mexican Revolution. The United States Army Center of Military History officially refers to the campaign as "the Mexican Expedition." The official beginning and ending dates are March 14, 1916 and February 7, 1917. National Guard units from Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico were called into service on May 8, 1916.[12] With congressional approval of the National Defense Act of 1916, on June 3, 1916, National Guard units from the remainder of the states and the District of Columbia were also called for duty on the border.[13] By mid-June President Woodrow Wilson called out more than 110,000 National Guard for border service. None of the National Guard troops crossed the border into Mexico but were used instead as a show of force.

In July 1916, the entire Arkansas National Guard was mobilized for federal service on the Mexican border. Arkansas units began to assemble immediately at Fort Logan H. Roots, near Little Rock on the north side of the Arkansas River. Of the 2,078 Guardsmen that answered the call, only 1,208 passed the new physical standards for entry into Federal service. The Arkansas Troops received orders on June 29 to move to Deming, New Mexico in order to replace regular troops joining the actual expedition into Mexico and prepare if Mexico reacted to the incursion. The Arkansas troops were not engaged in Mexico and returned to Little Rock in February, mustering out of service February 19–24 at Fort Roots.[14] The mobilization of the National Guard along the Mexican border was the training ground for many future leaders of the Arkansas National Guard. Many of the officers who led Arkansas National Guard units in the early years of World War I and World War II, began their service on the Mexican border.

Nineteen sixteen is not the first time that the Arkansas National Guard was mobilized to the Mexican border and even further south. During the 1840s, when the Guard was known as the Militia, Arkansas boys were sent to the border because of the Mexican War. The story of the Arkansas Militia and the Mexican–American War begins with the continuation of troubles along the ambiguous boarder between Arkansas and Mexico that had existed since the 1819 Adams-Onís Treaty. The confusion over the location of the western boundary of Arkansas in the area southwest of the Red River led to constant friction between settlers, Indian Nations, the Territorial Government and the Mexican Government. In 1836, many issues culminated in a way that affected Arkansas and its militia forces. The Texas Revolution began in 1835, and played out into 1836, at the same time that the Territory of Arkansas gained ad-

mission to the Union as the 25th State on June 15, 1836. Within days the State Governor received a request for troops to relieve federal troops in Indian Territory in order to ensure that the conflict in Texas didn't spill in to United State Territory and simultaneously free federal forces for use in Florida during the Seminole war.

Arkansans enthusiastically supported the Mexican–American War in 1846, and many future leaders of the Arkansas Confederate forces gained valuable experience during the conflict. The performance of Arkansas troops during the invasion of northern Mexico and the Battle of Buena Vista did not bring great credit upon the state. Following the Mexican–American War, the state's militia forces fell into decline until the administration of Governor Elias Nelson Conway, just before the outbreak of the Civil War.

Ironically the Arkansas National Guard found itself conducting similar missions as it did in 1916 ninety years later, during Operation Jump Start of 2006, which helped the United States Customs and the Border Patrol mostly to aid in security of the US-Mexican border.

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Featured Artifact: Lewis Machine Gun

Caliber .30, Model of 1917

By LTC Matthew W. Anderson

At the beginning of the 20th century the machine gun was beginning to emerge as a new instrument of war on the battlefield. New technologies and metallurgic processes allowed for manufacturers to develop weapons that could have one Soldier deliver a rate of fire that previously required 30 men. In the Spanish American War in 1898, four Gatlin Guns and two private purchase Colt Model of 1895s were used by the Rough Riders to modest effect, having some difficulty in mobility and reliability but further demonstrated their potential.

Following trials in 1909, the US Army approved its first machine gun for regular service, the Hotchkiss Benet-Mercie designating it the Model of 1909. While better than the improved Colt M1895 that it competed against, it also suffered from reliability issues and was complex to operate being dubbed by the Soldiers who used it as "the daylight gun" for some loading, maintenance and stoppage actions that were extremely difficult to accomplish at night. All these early air-cooled machine guns suffered similar problems. Metal parts if hardened incorrectly would become too brittle, metal made to be softer to avoid being brittle would wear or deform quickly from the heat and regular use. Making parts thicker added weight. Inconsistencies in the treatment and quality of steel also contributed. One answer to the excessive heat created from sustained rate of fire warping barrels was a water-cooled jacket. This combined with more robust parts, a tripod and a water can, made for a reliable but heavy machine gun. Heavy water-cooled machine guns such as the Vickers, Maxim and Browning became common defensive weapons on the battlefield but typically required five men to carry and operate the 100 lb. guns. Something lighter yet reliable was needed to carry forward on the assault.

Colonel Isaac Newton Lewis

In 1911, Colonel Isaac Newton Lewis was serving as Senior Director of the Artillery School at Fort Monroe. In years past he had several patents on inventions that were adopted by the Army such as the Lewis Range and Position Finder and other aids in artillery. Now he had just completed his latest invention the Lewis gun with financial backing from the Automatic Arms Company. Four Lewis guns were hand built in caliber 30.06. The Lewis Gun was a light weight air-cooled machine gun that was designed to address many of the problems that plagued previous light machine guns. He took one of his Lewis guns to Washington D.C. and presented it to the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Leonard Wood and offered it for service, expressing that he would surrender all claims to its US patents if adopted. No action was taken by the Ordnance Department.

In 1912, a representative from the Automatic Arms Company followed up with a request for a test from the Ordnance Department. Letters went back and forth but

again no action was taken. In the summer of 1912, Col. Lewis received a call from Brigadier General James Allen, Chief of Signal Corps requesting two Lewis guns for test from an aeroplane. Two Lewis guns were turned over to the Signal Corps and a test was conducted at College Park, MD on June 7, 1912. Captain Charles Chandler and Lt. Roy Kirkland took off in a Wright Model B Flyer and successfully fired the first machine gun from an aeroplane. The aircraft and two Lewis guns were then supposed to be used during maneuvers in Connecticut, however, Brigadier General William Crozier, Chief of Ordnance protested its use in the maneuvers, noting that the Lewis gun had not yet been tested. Frustrated in not being able to get a test from the Ordnance Department and now being denied their use in the maneuvers, Col. Lewis retired from the Army to seek opportunities abroad.

Another private demonstration from an aeroplane was conducted in November 1912. At this demonstration a group of Belgian bankers bought the European rights to the Lewis gun. In January 1913, Col. Lewis set sail for Belgium with the remaining two hand built Lewis guns in 30.06, where he established Armes Automatiques Lewis of Belgium. After demonstrations, a British contract was awarded to build the Lewis gun at the Birmingham Small Arms (BSA) in England in British .303. Some were also built at this factory for the Belgian Army. The two Lewis guns in 30.06 were dismantled to use in the re-engineering process for the new caliber.

College Park, MD, June 7, 1912. Captain Charles Chandler and Lt. Roy Kirkland take off in a Wright Model B Flyer and successfully fired the first machine gun.

In September 1913, a competition at Springfield Armory of seven machine guns was conducted which included the Benet-Mercie, Vickers and the Lewis. The purpose of the test was to determine if any machine gun was of superior performance to that of the M1909 currently in service. The Automatic Arms Company in America did not have any available nor were they able to build one. They sent word to Col. Lewis concerning the upcoming test. For this test Lewis had a Lewis gun hastily built at the BSA factory in England to fire the American 30.06. Time was not available to test the gun in England to make refinements before sending it to the United States. In fact these were the first two Lewis guns made at the BSA factory. As expected the Lewis gun performed poorly. The Vickers being a water-cooled machine gun won the competition and was eventually adopted for regular service as the Model of 1915.

Upon the outbreak of the First World War in July 1914, Savage Arms Company of Utica, NY under license, received contracts for the Lewis gun in British .303 for the Canadian Army. While in England, BSA was delivering its first Lewis guns designated the Lewis Model 1914 under the British contract by August 1914. In September 1915, the Ordnance Department again became interested in testing the Lewis gun following positive reports of its use in the British Army in France. The Germans who encountered the Lewis gun on the battlefield referred to it as the "Belgian Rattlesnake" and developed training manuals so that captured guns could be pressed into service.

British Army Lewis gunner on the firing step of a trench, near Ovillers on the Somme, 1916.

In April 1916, the Ordnance Department acquired and tested two Savage built Lewis guns at Springfield Armory. One was an experimental build in 30.06 and the other in .303 as used by the Canadian Army. The Savage built Lewis gun in 30.06 failed as soon as the test began and was immediately pulled from further testing. The Savage built Lewis gun in .303 performed better than the 1913 test but was tested against the Vickers M1915 and the M1909. Understandably the Lewis gun malfunctioned at a higher rate but it was able to fire the 15,000 rounds in less time than the M1909. The board noted the positive attributes of the Lewis gun weighing 28 lbs

The Pilot of an S.E.5a of No. 1 Squadron putting a fresh double drum of ammunition on the Lewis Gun on the upper plane of his machine. Clairmarais aerodrome, 3 July 1918 (Imperial War Museum)

for greater mobility and ability to fire at a comparable rate with the other guns despite the greater number of malfunctions. They were non-committal on whether to purchase other Lewis guns and instead recommended that Savage Arms continue to develop in 30.06 for further testing.

In August 1916, General Pershing received from the Ordnance Department a requested 353 Lewis guns to be used in the Mexican Border Campaign. These were Savage built Lewis guns in British .303 that had been originally built for a Canadian contract. Additionally, British .303 ammunition had to be acquired. These were obtained mainly because they were the only machine guns available for purchase on short notice. They were to supplement the Benet-Mercie M1909s still in service. A machine gun school was set up for three months at Fort Bliss, TX with instructors, contractors, manuals and spare parts to equally support both machine guns. Captain T. N. Gimperling of the 34th Infantry was one of the instructors and wrote a report to the Ordnance Department describing his experiences and comparative assessment of both machine guns. Generally, the assessment was that the Benet-Mercie M1909 could fire more than twice as many rounds with half as many malfunctions as compared to the Lewis gun in a one minute firing test. The Machine Gun Company of the 33rd Michigan Infantry was used for the test specifically for the fact that 95% of them were mechanical engineers and mechanics. For example, their commander, Captain Arthur C. Crossman was an Efficiency Engineer for Studebaker Corporation back home. First Sergeant Maxwell H. Spreen was an Assistant Chief Engineer at Chevrolet Motor Car Company. They noted that the Lewis gun was made with inferior steel, improper heat treating and improper finishing. They estimated that the actual cost per unit for 1000 units would be about $50 to $55. The government was actually charged about $1000 per unit. The Benet-Mercie was viewed as being of significantly higher quality in material and construction.

The School of Musketry also acquired thirteen Lewis guns from Savage Arms for trials in 1916. On January 7, 1917, Colonel R. M. Blatchford submitted a report to the Ordnance Department giving their assessment of the Lewis gun. They also noted poor construction and finishing. After about 2,000 rounds were fired in each, malfunctions began to occur. In all 166,180 rounds were fired with 44 broken parts, 57 worn magazines, and 17 worn parts. Colonel Blatchford went on to state "In their present condition these guns cannot be depended upon to fire a single magazine without malfunctions." The report further noted "The Lewis gun, while not a dependable weapon at present, is believed to possess great possibilities. Its lightness, the simplicity of its mechanism, the efficiency of its cooling system, and the ease with which men learn to use it, all tend to indicate that if it can be made dependable, it will be an excellent first line gun."

In 1916, there was a total of 1,430 machine guns in Army service broken out as follows: Maxim – 287, Benet Mercie – 665, Lewis – 353, Vickers – 125. The Army received authorization to increase the total number of machine guns in service to 12,000 for 1917, in anticipation that America would eventually be drawn in to the war in Europe. Funding was available for the

purchase of about 4,000 machine guns with additional congressional appropriations expected in the spring of 1917. A board was established to determine which heavy and light machine guns were suitable for immediate purchase. In October 1916, they recommended 4,000 M1915 Vickers be purchased to fill the requirement for a heavy machine gun but also recommended another test be performed at Springfield Armory on May 1, 1917, to determine a suitable light machine gun since no clearly superior weapon existed.

In April 1917, Savage submitted a much improved Lewis gun in 30.06 for testing with the Navy Department. A representative from the Ordnance Department was also present and relayed the results of the successful test. The Navy Department approved it for regular service in the Navy and Marines and ordered 3,500. On April 6, 1917, America declared war on the Central Powers. Thirteen-Hundred Lewis guns were immediately ordered by the Army Ordnance Department with existing funds and an additional 4,400 ordered on June 12, 1917, as soon as appropriated funds became available. On June 18, 1917, another 2,000 Lewis guns were ordered. The May test was conducted and confirmed that the Lewis gun with its 15 improvements was a first-class weapon and adopted for regular service as the Lewis Model of 1917. Orders continued to come in to Savage Arms as funds became available. By the fall of 1917, 42,000 Lewis Guns had been ordered and continued to increase to 86,700. Funds were also provided to Savage Arms to expand facilities in order to increase production to 3,750 units a month.

The first deliveries of the Savage M1917 Lewis gun was directed by General John Pershing, Commanding General, American Expeditionary Force (AEF) to go to the Aviation Service for the use on aeroplanes. Twenty-Thousand Lewis guns were delivered to the Army without the cooling sleeve since it was not needed for use in the air. These were delivered to the AEF by August 1917. The AEF on the ground was still in desperate need for a light automatic weapon. The Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR) had been tested in May 1917, as a light machine gun at the same time as the Lewis gun. It proved to have potential and what the Army was looking for being only 16 lbs, but additional changes to improve reliability and tooling machines for production would take another 10 months. As a stop gap measure, the AEF made arrangements to acquire from the French the 20 lb. Auto Rifle M1918 Chauchat first in French 8mm Lebel and later in 30.06 of which 25,000 were expected to be delivered by March 1918. The French were eager to provide arms to get the Americans into the fight and to use as payment for debts. However, converting to 30.06 only made a bad weapon even worse. Many were discarded by Americans in the heat of battle rather than continue to work through the frequent malfunctions.

As a result of articles published highlighting the problems of the French Chauchat, lack of American guns and seeming controversy that the Ordnance Department had not effectively prepared for America's entry into the Great War, several were called before congress to testify. On December 22, 1917 Col. Newton testified before a congressional committee concerning the test and adoption of the Lewis gun. Some of the points discussed during this testimony were whether the Ordnance Department was showing preference to the Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR). The BAR had not been fully developed, not officially accepted into service and was not ready for mass production. The Lewis gun was adopted and able to be mass produced but was being limited to aircraft use. In the meantime,

American troops were using the French Chauchat, which was already gaining a reputation as the worst weapon ever.

For the AEF, much of the reasoning for not employing more Lewis guns on the front lines was based on logistics. General Pershing directed that American Divisions operating in French sectors be armed with the Chauchat in French 8mm Lebel. This even included a brigade of Marines attached to the US Army 2nd Division who deployed with their M1917 Lewis guns in 30.06. Much to their displeasure, their Lewis guns were taken up and they received a Chauchat in return.

The US 27th and 30th Divisions served in the British Sector and fortunately received British M1914 Lewis guns in British .303. After May 1918, six American Divisions deploying overseas arrived with the new M1918 Browning Auto Rifle (BAR). Also around this time the shortage of 30.06 ammunition and supply chain was resolved so American Divisions already on the front began to receive Chauchat in 30.06. Of the six American Divisions to deploy to France only four had a chance to use the M1918 BAR in combat before the Armistice was signed on November 11, 1918. By the time of the Armistice 38 US Infantry Divisions had deployed to France. It is not clear whether the Marines or any other American units used the M1917 Lewis in 30.06 in ground combat.
Listed below are two citations of 27th Division Soldiers who earned the Medal of Honor while utilizing the Lewis gun.

FRANK GAFFNEY, private, first class, Company G, 108th Infantry. For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty in action with the enemy near Ronssoy, France, September 29, 1918. Private Gaffney, an automatic rifleman, pushing forward alone with his gun, after all the other members of his squad had been killed, discovered several Germans placing a heavy machine gun in position. He killed the crew, captured the gun, bombed several dugouts, and, after killing four more of the enemy with his pistol, held the position until reinforcement came up, when eighty prisoners were captured. Residence at enlistment: 831 Pierce Avenue, Niagara Falls, N. Y.

FRANK H. KENNY, JR., private, first class, Company H, 107th Infantry. For extraordinary heroism in action near Ronssoy, France, September 29, 1918. When his Commanding Officer fell wounded he made his way through intense machine-gun fire to his First Sergeant and notified him that he should assume command of the company. He then continued with the company until the advance was checked and the First Sergeant severely wounded, when he made his way in search of the next in command. Failing to find him, he organized a squad of slightly wounded men and, with an automatic rifle and ammunition which he salvaged, mopped up a section of the enemy trench, and then rejoined his company in its continued advance. Residence at enlistment: Gaylor Street, Tuckahoe, N. Y.

The British Expeditionary Force (BEF) highly regarded the M1914 Lewis gun. In 1916, they fielded two per infantry company, by 1917 one per infantry platoon, and by 1918 two per infantry platoon. This was in addition to the heavy machine guns that were assigned to a machine gun company in each battalion. The British also employed Lewis guns on boats, motorcycles, Ford Model T, tanks, aircraft and also found them to be very effective in an anti-aircraft role.

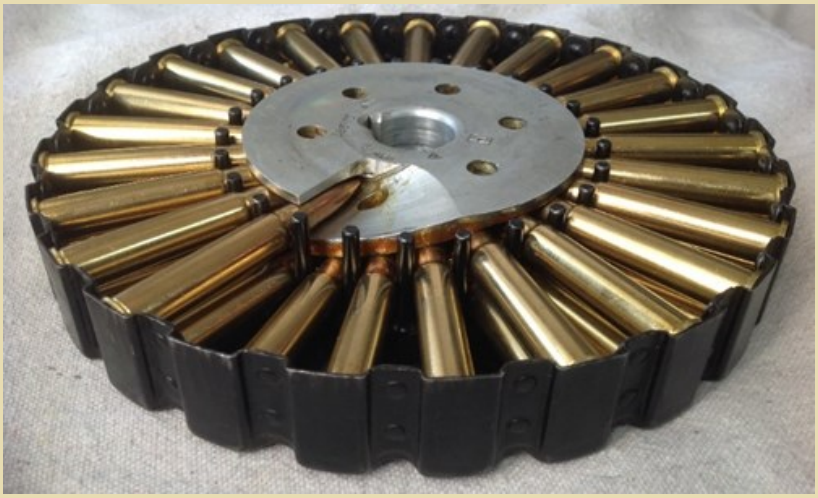
In the aircraft role the Lewis gun was found to be very well suited by the Americans, British and French. The cooling shroud could be removed to lighten the gun to 19 lbs. A spade grip and a larger 97 round drum pan magazine was used. The Lewis gun was put on a variety of rail and pivot mounts in single and twin gun configurations. The first plane to be shot down by another was a German observation plane downed by a British scout plane armed with a Lewis gun over Le Quesnoy, France in August 1914. Sopwith Camels armed with Lewis guns and new incendiary ammo downed hydrogen-filled German Zeppelin dirigibles that had been bombing England.

Following the Great War, the British selected the BREN gun as a replacement for the M1914 Lewis gun in the 1930's and put their Lewis guns into long term storage for emergency use. The American Navy and Marines continued to use the M1917 Lewis guns both on the ground and in the air throughout the interwar period. They were still in service in the Pacific at America's entry into WWII. While they were quickly replaced in the Marines, the Navy and Coast Guard continued to use them on ships and landing craft throughout WWII. Following the British losses at Dunkirk in which many machine guns were lost or destroyed, the British put their Lewis guns back into service as a temporary stop gap measure until enough BREN guns could be built. The British sent many to the Pacific to fight the Japanese in the defense of Australia and then in the early island campaigns. The Japanese had also built a version of the Lewis gun called the Japanese Type 92 Lewis gun made at the Yokosuka Naval Arsenal. Its caliber is 7.7x56mm Japanese Rimmed, which is the same as the .303. This was used by Japanese Naval infantry and found on many island defenses. The last Lewis gun was built in 1942, and was put out of service in most countries following WWII. In all, approximately 150,000 were built. Lewis guns did continue to appear in small numbers in Korea, Vietnam, Grenada and Ireland.

Colonel Newton got the rights to an earlier failed machine gun design from Samuel MacLean and made many improvements that turned a complicated design into a simplistic and effective weapon. The Lewis gun is an open bolt full automatic fire only system. It takes trapped gases from the passing bullet which escape through a gas port drilled in the bottom of the barrel and use them to push a piston to the rear. The piston drives an operating rod rearward which winds a coil spring by means of a toothed gear located below and just forward of the trigger guard. At the end of the operating rod is a vertical post with a fixed firing pin, which sits inside a bolt. With the bolt fully to the rear, the spent casing is ejected and the wound coil spring returns the operating rod and bolt to the forward position to strip the next round from the drum pan magazine. Interestingly, when the Germans developed their FG 42 for use by paratroopers in WWII they copied the bolt, operating rod and piston design of the Lewis gun. This was in turn copied from the FG 42 and used in the design of the M60 machine gun.

Note the bolt seated above the operating rod, the operating rod has serrated lower section, which mates to the gear located in the half moon shaped housing located forward of the trigger. In addition to the gear is the spring coil, which is wound tight by the rearward motion of the operating rod.

Colonel Lewis' major improvements in addition to simplifying the operation, also designed the unique 47 round drum pan magazine. The magazine was key to making the weapon compact and portable. The ammunition is inserted into an aluminum spiral plate in the center of the drum. The spiral plate is then turned to load the next round. A special tool is inserted into the center to easily turn the aluminum plate as it is loaded. When firing the outer shell turns, from the force of the coil spring while the aluminum center section remains fixed allowing the next round to drop and be caught by the bolt.



Another unique item Col. Lewis invented was the barrel sleeve. Inside the sleeve is fourteen aluminum fins projecting away from the barrel in a circular pattern for the entire length of the barrel. These do two things: first, they provide stability to a hot, soft barrel to reduce warping and maintain accuracy. Secondly, it aided in dissipating heat and channeling airflow. The muzzle of the barrel is recessed inside the sleeve. The opposite end of the sleeve is also open. The concept is that the overpressure of gases created as the bullet exits the barrel will create a vacuum drawing cooler air from the rear of the shroud up through and along the barrel and aluminum fins. A positive side effect is that the muzzle blast is masked at night making it harder to detect. Some questioned as to whether the shroud is needed and removed it, using it on the ground with seemingly no adverse effects, as long as short disciplined bursts were used.

Left: muzzle end showing the aluminum fins around the barrel. **Right:** The same aluminum fins protruding out the aft portion of the sleeve by the receiver where cooler air was intended to be drawn in while firing.

The M1917 Lewis gun in the ARNG Museum appears to be part of two different guns. The receiver with the serial number 20113 was part of the first 20,000 built by Savage Arms in caliber 30.06 under US Army contract in 1917. Assuming as previously noted the first 3,500 were built by Savage Arms under a Navy contract in 1917, then the Army contract would have started roughly around 3,501. Also noted was that the first 20,000 for the Army were sent to the AEF for aircraft use. The shroud with a separate serial number 1,942 and a Navy anchor indicating a Navy contract appears to have been taken off another gun at some point and mated to the Army contract receiver. It would make sense that if it were an aircraft gun originally, it would not have come with its own shroud resulting in someone later feeling compelled to find and install one to return it to a ground configuration. This is only an assumption.

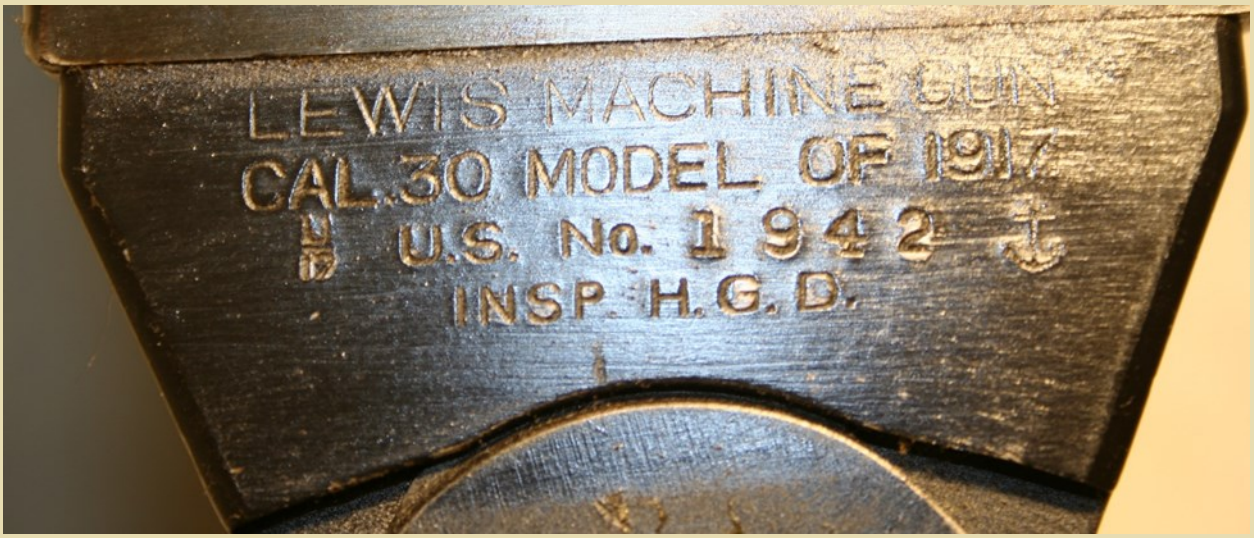
Note the dial on the side of the coil spring housing, this allows the gunner to make fine adjustments to ensure proper spring tension is applied to so that the bolt returns to the in battery position.

Top view with magazine removed. Here you can see the feeding mechanism and the ladder sight.

Right side of receiver showing the serial number 20113 making this a 1917 Savage built receiver.

Patents listed before 1911, refer back to Samuel MacLean patents that Col. Lewis obtained and refined.

Markings showing the Lewis gun manufactured in US 30.06, which would be important to confirm with Lewis guns being built in many different calibers throughout its history.



This plate is located near and part of the barrel shroud and is usually covered by the pan magazine. It has an early serial number of 1942 and an anchor indicating a Navy contract built weapon. While also built in 1917, it was originally part of another gun.

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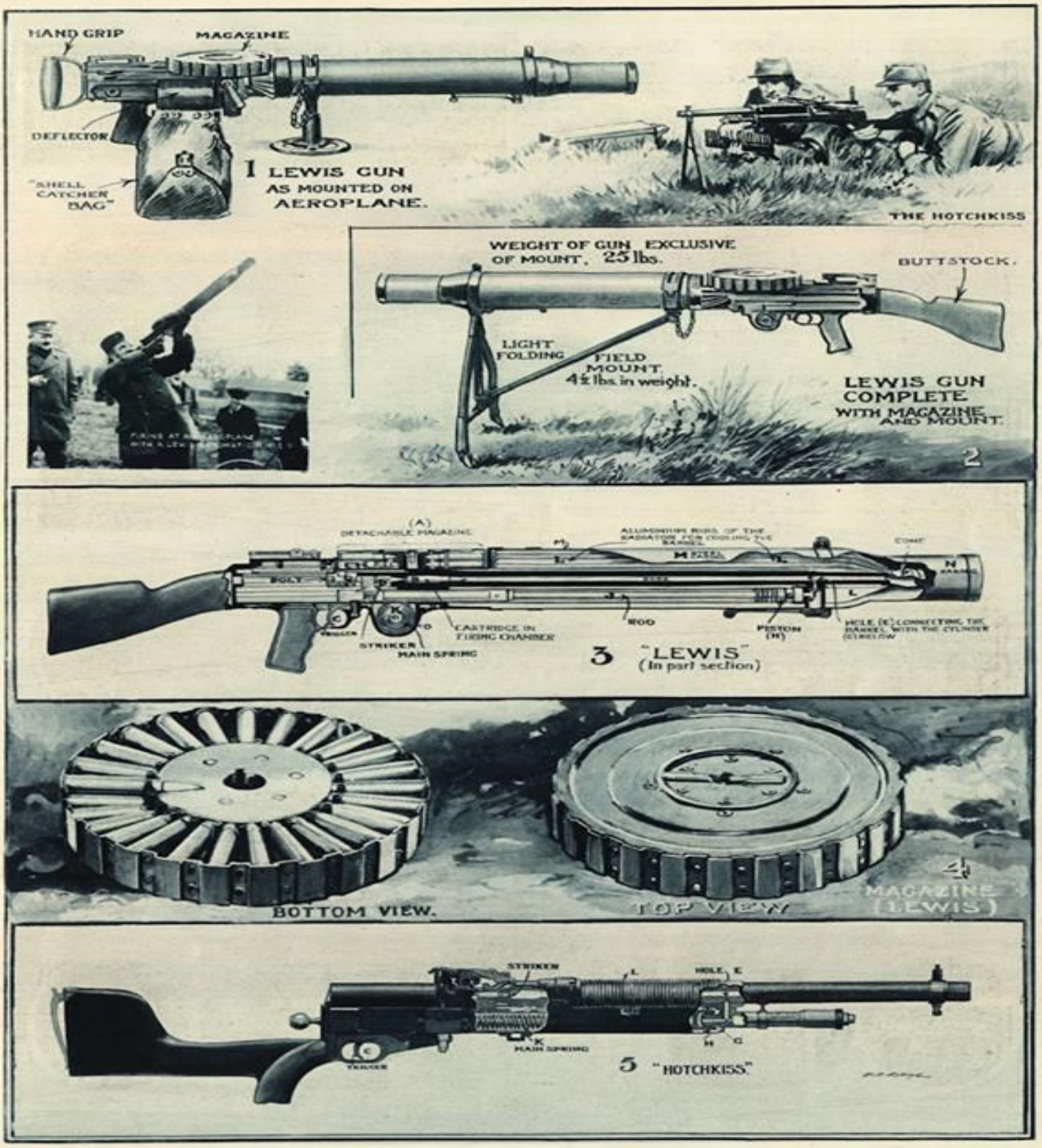
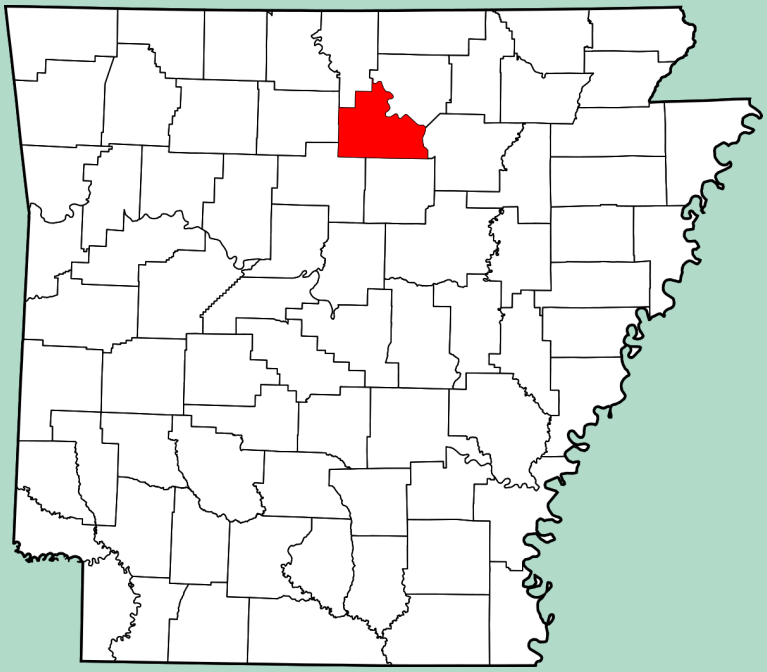
A "ONE-MAN" MACHINE-GUN: THE AUTOMATIC MACHINE-RIFLE.

By Courtesy of Hotchkiss and Co. and the Lewis Automatic Gun Manufacturing.



WEAPONS THAT FIRE HUNDREDS OF ROUNDS A MINUTE, AND CAN BE USED BY ONE MAN: TWO TYPES OF AUTOMATIC MACHINE-RIFLE—THE LEWIS AND THE HOTCHKISS.

The machine-gun proper, whose vital importance in the present war has been lately emphasised, is used for the most part for defensive purposes. The machine-rifle is a lighter and more portable weapon, which a strong man can even fire from the shoulder. Consequently it can be used, not only for defence, but for attack. It is especially useful in trench-warfare, and in close-range fighting. Its mechanism and use are fully described in an article on another page, dealing with two of the best weapons of this type, the Lewis Automatic Machine-Gun, and the Hotchkiss "mitrailleuse portative," which is used by the French Army. These two models, illustrated above, act on the same general principles, though they vary in details of mechanism. The Lewis machine-gun attains a rate of continuous fire of as many as 440 rounds a minute.



Herbert "Hub" Willis Interview

World War I Veteran from Stone County, Arkansas

Hub Willis was born in Kentucky on December 10, 1893, and died in Mountain View, Arkansas on November 16, 1977. SGT Willis was in the 143rd Infantry in WWI and did some of his training at Camp Pike. This interview was conducted by Phillip R. Rushing, superintendent of the Rural Special School District in Stone County. Others in the room were students from the school. The interview took place at Rural Special High School during the 1975-76 school year.

During the interview Mr. Willis showed the students photographs and other items he brought back from the war and discussed them.

The recorded interview is located at the Arkansas National Guard Museum located at Camp Robinson.

P R O C E E D I N G S

HUB WILLIS: In April of 1917 when war was first declared, I was flatfooted and had adenoids and they wouldn't have me. Now I came back and sawed staves all summer at a stave mill and that fall there was some businessman, I believe they said he lived over here on the Red River, he had a lot of unfinished business to attend to and he wanted an exemption of three months in order to get his business took care of. And you have to get somebody to go in his place because he was in the first call that was made. And incidentally – I went and offered to go or I volunteered to go in his place and went out in the first call 19th day of September 1917. I reported for duty here at Camp Pike, Little Rock. I took about something like two months training up there at Camp Pike and then they transferred me into the 153rd Infantry of the First Arkansas National Guard, and they moved their Regiment down to ah, what is now Fort Polk, Louisiana, it was Beauregard then. And then the 26th day of January of 1918, the order come in for so many men to go, be transferred out of the 153rd and the 154th Infantry to go to Washington, D.C., the American University Camp. We all got booned up and thought we were doing something smart, we was going up there to go to school is what we really thought. And so we went, and then when we got to American University Camp in Washington, D.C., we dog gone soon found out that we was not on the right track. They issued us overseas equipment and the 26th of January we was on our way to France. I boarded ship at Hoboken, New Jersey or New York rather. We boarded the British ship *Olympic* supposed at that time to be the biggest ship afloat. It was built in competition to the *Titanic* and the big ship that the German's built that they call the *Fatherland [Vaterland in German]*. But the British ship, *Olympic* was in port and was used as a troop carrier and we went across on it. We were onboard ship ten days. We landed at Hoboken — no, we landed at Liverpool, England. We went from Liverpool by rail over to a camp there in England, Morn Hill Camp I believe they called it, stayed there just a few days, drew some more equipment, and they moved us across the channel then. Then the next time we got on the ground why you could see the reflections of shellfire against the harbor up in northern France. At the time that this was all happening, I had been transferred to a construction engineer gang. We were supposed to do construction work of buildings, stuff like that but the main thing we constructed was roads leading up to the front to keep the ammunition trucks and the supply trucks on the move. And I stayed in that vicinity clear on up til, most the time, the biggest part of the time I stayed there until the armistice was signed. When the armistice was signed shortly after that they moved us back down in central France or let's see, I guess it would be, the south central part of northern France I imagine would be the way it would be set out; I didn't get the directions very well. They moved

us down there and put us in charge of a bunch of German prisoners. And we guarded German prisoners for a while and I fell on the brilliant idea of getting out of that man's army. I wrote ah, they wasn't censoring our mail at that time and I wrote home and told dad what to do and how to do, give him a kind of a breakdown on how to manage it, and give him some of the alibis to use, that the war being over I was needed worse at home than I was over there. Dad wanted, he wanted me home all right and so it didn't take long til he had things lined up. The late Dr. J. D. Luther was a very intimate friend of mine and he acted

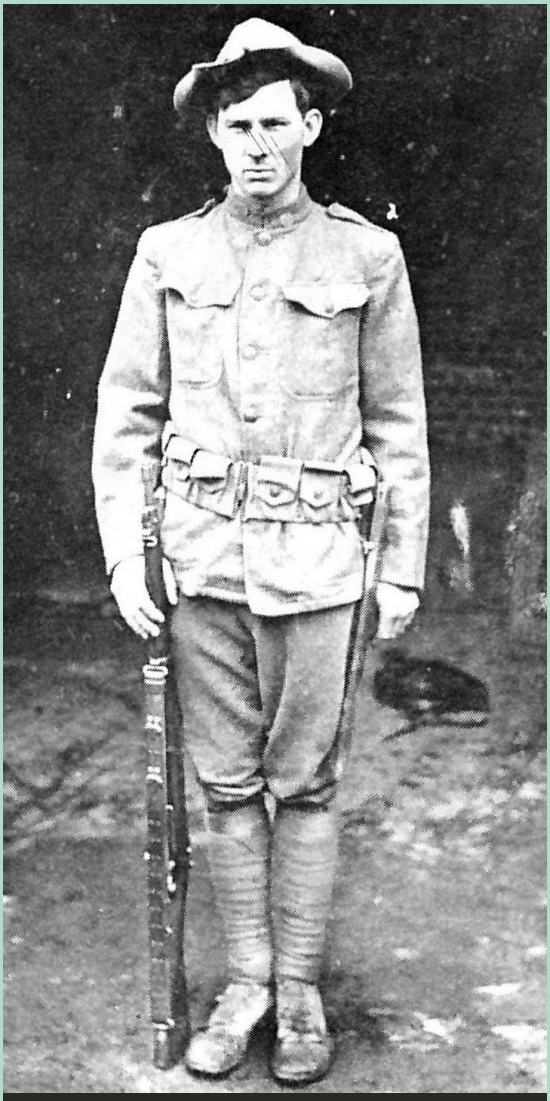


Photo of Hub Willis during WWI. Photo provided by Renee Rushing Carr of Stone County

as a medical authority on the matter. They fixed that up, fixed up a petition and sent it back over there to me. Well, they didn't censor my mail as I've done stated, and having a little rank this give me an advantage there and so I got the captain to sign it, he first said he wouldn't, he said that I wasn't any better to stay over there and guard them German prisoners than he were – he couldn't get out. But I kept talking with him and he signed this paper and we sent it down to general headquarters to General Pershing and then he signed it or his secretary did and sent it back, and in that way I got home before some of the rest of 'em did. I was in close to two years from the time I went in to the time I was getting out. And in the service in that kind of a way you'll find a lot of times that there's things that's very funny and interesting and you'll laugh about it even though it's under serious conditions. On the other hand you'll find times when you don't do much laughing; it ain't funny. If you're up under shellfire, why anybody that's ever been under shellfire will vouch for my statement that, that is definitely not funny. Well, that's about the sum and substance of the, of the service. I was discharged at Long Island, New York out on Camp Island, I forgot the name of the – well, it was out on Long Island in New York, I was discharged there and given transportation home. I've got some pictures here that some of you, most of you have read a lot about, that great heroine Joan d'Arc of France, I have the picture of the church that she attend and the, the little church and school combined that she attended when she was a girl growing up. If any of you are interested you can pass it around and have a look. That's the church and school that Joan d'Arc went to when she was a girl. I've got the pictures of some churches here or cathedral buildings. They had peddling carts over there just the same as they do over here in the states and I've got a picture of a couple of people that was operating a peddling cart; that was their way of peddling. That's that cathedral building at Reims; they're all the same pictures but different views.

PHILLIP RUSHING: I'll just hold these up here and I think they can see. This is the Reim, France Cathedral here, you can see the architectural they've got there; this is a picture of the same thing. That's the same sign.

WILLIS: Now there's one, that laundry scene there, some of these girls might be interested in that.

RUSHING: Down at the river, it looks like.

WILLIS: They did their laundry work in the rivers or canals. They had canals dug though the central part of France there that they used to operate canal boats. They were dug by hand and they walked a horse with a tow line to the canal boat and then the horse walked out on the edge of the bank. He was trained and he pulled that canal boat and they'd go to those canals or to a small river and they had gadgets fixed, boards, great big wide board eight, ten, some maybe twelve foot long, that board sit back there on the end of the, or the end of the board sit back there on the bank and here at the front end of the board they had nailed a ledge nailed on there

about a foot and a-half or two foot, one on each side, and they were nailed about oh, about so far from the end of the board; let that board stick out in front. Now they would set them boards down with them legs down in the water to where this front end hung out over the water a ways and they'd stand on their knees just like that picture showed, they would stand on their knees by the way with a scrub brush and soap and they'd dip that scrub brush in that water and their clothing, whatever they were washing, was laying up across the end of that board. And they'd scrub it with that scrub brush and that was their method of washing, doing their laundry work. They'd get the clothes clean but it took a long time and a lot of hard work.

PHILLIP RUSHING: You might explain maybe if you would those canteen and mess kits and so forth here how they were used and who used them and so forth.

WILLIS: Well, this is the canteen that the French army used to – they usually carried wine in the darn thing because that was their favorite drink, red wine. Now they carried it in them they had, they had a strap here that went over their neck and they was ah, kind of ah, a sky blue covering around that to keep it, in other words there, a carrying case we'll say. Now this was holler [hollow] and they kept that plugged up and they had a stopper there and they carried their wine in that and that's most of what they carried. Now we, we carried, this was our canteen. We carried that, and we carried water principally. Once in a while somebody might slip a little cognac in one [laughing in background], but mostly we carried water in ours. This was the German canteen and it had a cover over it and a strap that you could carry it by. Now they carried beer. So this was our drinking cup and we had a case attached to our belt that we carried the cup and ah, the cup and canteen in. This was our mess gear that we eat out of.

RUSHING: You've not eaten out of that lately have you?

WILLIS: No, not for a long time but I'm going to tell you what, I've eaten a lot of slumgullion out of that pack when I was in service. You go around, you go around in a mess line when you was going around in a chow line to get your chow, you go around with that canteen cup in one hand and you'd soon learn after you'd spilt your chow a few time, you'd soon learn how to carry that without spilling it. You'd carry it like that. They'd lay your bread up on that and once in a while if you had meat, solid meat, they'd put your meat and bread both on this lid. Whatever other food you might have why they dumped it in to the mess kit all together and you went back somewhere or another and eat it. The canteen was always fastened to your belt. I've had to do a little military police work a few times while I was in there and they issued you that for an armband. Now if you wanted to get cussed out, get out where most anybody could see that armband because everybody hated a MP. Well, let's see. Now this is an identification tag. Here was the identification tags that we wore with a cord attached through that ring and we carried them around our neck, identification in case we was lost, accidentally killed, or anything like that. There was two of them, one of 'em was in headquarters and one of 'em you carried. And so here's the ones that the German's had; they were all together. They had a ring, they carried them around their neck. But if you noticed they're perforated there to where they're easy broke off. And the Germans, both of those this top and bottom piece are both alike, they both got the same thing on 'em, the writing, the name of the man, his serial number, and so on, and if he got killed and ah, they went to taking him up, they would break that off and leave one piece on him and one piece the people that the guys that were taking 'em up, the bodies, the burial squad in other words, they collected one piece and kept it and turned it in and the other piece they left it on him. I suppose it was taken off after – before he was put in the ground maybe or maybe it was ah, they'd drive down in burying, in burying them they'd drive, they would ah, lay 'em side-by-side in a long trench and they'd put up a stob at the head of the grave and this extra piece was put to that to where when they took 'em up why they could identify 'em there. One piece was turned in and one piece was nailed to that cross, I believe was the way they managed that. And, I don't know, if I remember right, I think I give the German prisoner a chew tobaccer for that identification tag and then I gave him another little piece of tobaccer or two for the shoulder tabs off of his blouse. Those shoulder pads and that outfit, that plate they both come off of the same man. There was your tools that you eat with at the table when you was lucky enough to get to a table.

RUSHING: If you had a table?

WILLIS: Well yeah. A lot of the time I have used them when I didn't have a table [laughing in background]. That old helmet there was issued to me back while I was in the service. And when I was discharged I was allowed to bring it home, and did. It had straps in it here to go under your chin and it was in pretty good shape but it's been kicked around there. We raised three great big ole chuckleheaded boys and they

kicked that around there quite a lot and played with it as they was a-growing up and its laid around home there until it's rusted out; it don't look like it did when I came out of the service. But anyhow, the old helmet was issued to me in service, while I, thought I was in service. If you were in very [inaudible] service they were a pretty handy things to have. Now there's a picture of the kitchen police and the cooks that did our cooking and dishwashing. That a rusty looking bunch to say the least but they did a pretty good job.

UNIDENTIFIED: Do you mind if we pass that picture around to this group?

WILLIS: Yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED: I think they'd like to see that.

WILLIS: There's one guy there, there's a guard there with a gun buckled around him, he was just, he was a-guardin some prisoners that they had around there and he don't belong with the cooks and the KP's.

RUSHING: Any of you have any questions you'd like to ask him you might get something here that you'd be interested in.

STUDENT: Where did you get the tobacco that you bribed the German's with?

WILLIS: Huh?

STUDENT: Where did you get your tobacco that---

WILLIS: Well, they had canteens there; the YMCA usually had a commissary around, [inaudible] post; especially if you was back behind. If you was back behind the lines where they had the tanks why the canteen ah, the ah, YMCA and the Red Cross and the Salvation Army would have commissary and camps around in these ah, I mean ah, a little store surrounding these camps and they, they furnished, sold all kinds of chewing and smoking tobaccer. The Red Cross, if you'd put up the right kind of a spiel and didn't have no money, they'd give you a little tobaccer. And if you had the money the YMCA would hand it out; if you didn't why you'd better depend on mooching [laughing in background] because they didn't give out much. The Salvation Army, if you had money they'd sell you this stuff and take your money and glad to get it. But if you didn't have no money you got it anyhow. The Salvation Army was the best of the three welfare organizations, the Salvation Army meant more to the serviceman than either one of these others did or it did with me anyway. In donations to charity causes now, I never passed up a Salvation Army, if I've got a dime I'll divide it with the Salvation Army. And if I've got several dimes, pretty well hooked well, I'll give the Red Cross some, but I've got to have a lot of it and be in a mighty good humor if I give the YMCA a darn thing [laughter].

RUSHING: What about the submarines, did you have any submarine problem getting over?

WILLIS: We had two attacks, they didn't either one of 'em amount too much. As I stated a while ago, we went over on the British ship *Olympic* and it was at that time the biggest ship afloat, that is supposed to be; it wasn't, there was two that to make ah, it's rather a long story, but Germany, England, and America all competing against the other, each one of 'em trying to do something to outshine the other, they built three ships. The German's built the *Fatherland*, the English people built the *Olympic* and the American built the ah – what is that?

UNIDENTIFIED: The *Titanic*.

RUSHING: The *Queen Mary* or?

WILLIS: No, that wasn't it.

UNIDENTIFIED: The *Titanic* I believe.

WILLIS: It was a ship that was sunk on its maiden voyage.

RUSHING: The *Titanic* was the one that was sunk on its---

WILLIS: Yeah, the *Titanic* is what I'm trying to think of; the American's built the *Titanic* [the *Titanic* was a British ship]. Well okay, the *Titanic* hit an iceberg and was sunk on its maiden voyage and it rocked on and it wasn't very long after that if you'll remember, for any of you that's old enough to remember; some of you may not admit to being that old. But anyhow, it rocked on and when Germany or when the United States declared war on Germany, it so happened that the *Fatherland* was in an American port and by the way, the American Navy just clanked down and interned the *Fatherland* and took it over and the Americans changed the name and they called it the *Leviathan*, it was known as the *Leviathan* and it was at that time supposed to be about the biggest ship there was a-going except the *Olympic*. And, when I was sent overseas I sailed on the *Olympic*, and that's not explaining, what in the devil was it you asked?

RUSHING: Well, this submarine, what about the submarine?

WILLIS: We sailed in January of '18 and about oh, three or four days we went around by the, what they call the Irish coast, the coast of Ireland; took a roundabout course, submarines was thick. And about the third day we was out, it was on a Sunday evening, there was a sub come up, showed up right over just to one side and our escort had done picked us up; we had an escort of two French ships and two American ships, these little chasers, these little sub chasers, and they were out in kind of a square. One of 'em was out here in front to the right and one to the left in front and the same rotation, same formation back behind here. Well, this sub come up, and they went to shooting at it and it went down, submerged. And I don't know whether they hit it or not, but they claimed that there was oil slicks showed up. Well, that could have been — those Germans are pretty smart people, they sometimes had ways and means of sending up oil slicks and let somebody think they had done something when they hadn't. It rocked on then until I think, it was about two days before we landed, we had another one showed up and it was a little bit bolder and under about the same circumstances. It showed up off over here to the right in front and they fired a torpedo after us and they missed us; it went in front, they overshot, and it didn't miss very far but that's how close they come to getting us. The first one they made it so hot for him he went down without putting out anything, but the second one did get off a torpedo at us and missed us. Coming back, we come back, and I come back on a little ole American cruiser. I was trying to think of the name of it – *U.S.S. Charleston*. But in coming back in all that hot weather, the weather was calm and all that, but by the way coming back I got plenty seasick. The only thing that kept me from throwing up my socks I had on tolerable stout supporters [laughing in background]. Sick, if any of you ever swallowed a housefly you can kind of halfway figure about how sick you'll get when you're seasick [laughing in background].

STUDENT: What kind of places did they have for you to sleep in your ship?

WILLIS: Huh?

STUDENT: What kind of places did they have for you to sleep in the ship?

WILLIS: Well, part of 'em have bunks, kind of an iron bunk. There'll be one bed up here and one down here and in a lot of cases on ship, onboard ship they have hammocks and you sleep in a darn hammock. And any of you that hasn't tried it has missed a whole lot in life. In going over on that English ship, that big ship, going over on it they had bunks, they had iron bunks. No, no, no, wait a minute; I'm getting the cart in front of the horse. They had some bunks, and some you had to sleep in hammocks. And I was unfortunate as usual, I didn't get a bunk. I had to, I had to take a hammock. And there was part of the time I couldn't find no place to hang the thing, and I spread it out and made me a pallet on the floor and used it that way. In coming back I had a little the advantage, I'd picked up a little rating, you boys that's been in service, I'd made a three striper overseas, and coming back why I pulled a little bit of water and I had a bunk to sleep in there coming over home, and it beat sleeping on the floor a whole lot. But in going over there, there was times when I couldn't find a place to hang that hammock and I just spread it down on the floor and keep it from getting my blankets as dirty as possible and rolled up in the blankets that they give you and hoped that morning would come as quick as possible [laughing in background].

RUSHING: What about the trenches, did you see much of the trenches?

WILLIS: Well, I've seen some of it. They were dug in all kinds of shapes and they was usually dug down where you'd oh, anywhere from waist deep — it depend on how much time you had while you was digging 'em [laughing in background]. Anywhere from waist deep or some of 'em would be up oh, I've seen a few trenches that was practically shoulder deep. They were dug in a way to where, I don't know, whoever laid out that system left an opening for a lot of surprises because you could be, you could, they'd have dugouts, there's some of them trenches would have dugouts dug down in from the trench after you got down in the trench well, you'd have a dugout. But, I never got the advantage of a trench much of time. Being in that construction engineer bunch I had to stay out making ways, helping make ways for the other fellow to get a little closer to the front or to hide himself.

RUSHING: Did you ever see any soldiers that had a trench foot?

WILLIS: Huh?

RUSHING: Did you see anybody with a trench foot?

WILLIS: Well I've, I've seen people, I've seen men with their feet all tore up that they called it trench foot.

STUDENT: What kind of guns were you issued or were you issued any?

WILLIS: What did he say?

RUSHING: What kind of guns or what kind a gun did you carry?

WILLIS: Well, the standard rifle for an infantrymen, infantry soldier was just a ah, that Enfield rifle. But they had a lot of those old, old Springfields over there the old obsolete that they done a lot of training with but in going up they used a lot of those Lee Enfield rifles. The artillery and Calvary, the Calvary used mostly side arms, .45's. I thought just a little bit about bringing my old .45 along, I've got my old army .45 and the government holster over there at the house but it's a violation of law to carry 'em and I, you know, I didn't know what somebody might tell so I just didn't bring it. But ah, the artillery, practically all the artillery had a .45 buckled around them and they were short on these .45 automatics. The Remington people put out a .45 automatic during the war, and they were good guns, but they used all the Colts they could. The Calvary or part of the Calvary had short rifles, I think they were French. The French army rifle was generally shorter than ours, or the ones I saw was.

RUSHING: Any other questions you'd like to ask him while he's---

STUDENT: Did you see many airplanes? Was there many airplanes used?

WILLIS: They had a few. They, they, they didn't ah, they wasn't or they didn't have air power then like they have now. I've seen a few, I've seen a few airplanes in action but at that time the planes were small. Our planes were small and two, two hundred pound bombs was a planeload generally speaking for those small planes. But they didn't have nothing like the air power then that they've got now. What they had was pretty good. I saw one little stampede there one time, there was a German plane that had come over; it was at a place called Saint-De-nis back behind the Tou-louse and Verdun section quite a little ways it was a supply tank ah, not a supply tank but a replacement tank, replacement and supplies. This German plane come over and they dropped a couple of bombs, one of 'em fell way down in a cow pasture and the other one fell down on the switch tracks down in the lower end of town. It tore up a switch, it didn't hurt the cow but there was a small plane went up after it and the antiaircraft was a-shootin, and they got that one, it come down, got a direct hit and it come down and about halfway down from the ground, to the ground that it just burst into a ball of fire, and it come on down and of course the thing burnt up before you, you couldn't go near it forever so long, it burnt up, but back then those small planes they usually just had one man and there was only one man in that one, and he was just charcoal you might say when they got to where they could go to him.

STUDENT: What was a hardtack?

WILLIS: Huh?

RUSHING: Hardtack. He wanted to know what hard tack was if you know, did you ever see any?

WILLIS: Yeah [laughing in the background]. What do you think about that Glen?

GLEN: I figured you had seen a few of 'em; yes, sir.

WILLIS: I've seen a bunch of 'em yeah. Hardtack was a cracker, and hardtack was an appropriate name [laughing]. You had to have good teeth to chew them things; they would keep forever. You could just carry them on and on and on. They were baked in a manner where they would stand a lot of punishment [laughing]. You couldn't hardly rot one of the things and they was kind of an emergency ration. They'd give you a box, a box about like these ten, you know these ten cents little square crackers that comes in small ten cents boxes—well, not ten cents any more, they used to be a dime. But anyhow, the hardtack was packed in a little box about that long and it was the size of these small square crackers. And it was considered emergency rations and they'd give you a can of corn beef, corn willy we called it. They give you, two men coming around together they'd give one of 'em a can of corn willy and one of 'em a box of that hardtack. And they were supposed to go off and cut that box of hardtack in two and divide the can of corn willy and they made a mess, that made a meal for two of 'em. That learnt you stay close together because if you got off with nothing but the hardtack and your corn willy partner wasn't along, why you was in trouble because them hardtacks didn't, they were not very appetizing if

Hardtack from France 1918,, from the Arkansas National Guard Museum Collection (2006.13.79)

you had to eat 'em by yourself. I'd a much rather eat a can of corn willy by itself than to have tried to eat the hardtacks.

UNIDENTIFIED: Did they have some kind of an insect or something over there they called the cooties?

WILLIS: Cootie? [laughing] Well, they called them cooties over there but we just called them straight out body lice here at home. Some people will deny the fact that they ever had lice, they consider it a disgrace. But I'm kind of by lice, like a neighbor of mine some of you might have known him or heard of him, he's John Foster's [Parker's?] daddy, Thurman Foster [Parker?]. Thurman had a house full of children and way back yonder years ago you didn't think you'd been to school if you didn't get the itch. And there was an epidemic of itch broke out there in that Rixwood School and Thurman was talking about it and he was just cussing up a storm; man, he was cussing every breath. His children had got the itch. He said it wasn't no disgrace to get the itch that where he figured the disgrace was, was people being too ornery to do anything about it and they just try not, just going ahead and keeping it; he said he thought that was a disgrace. Well, I was a whole lot that way about body lice. Now there ain't no use in say you ain't had 'em. Now I never did have 'em in civil life, but brother I've had these so-called gray back, cooties, body lice or whatever you want to call 'em; I've had 'em in the army. I remember on one occasion I got infested with them things and I finally was fortunate enough to pull enough water to get a change of clothing and I took them, I went out and changed clothes and took a bath in cold water and brother it was cold, it was colder that what we had to drink. I took a bath in cold water and pulled them doggone infested clothes off and piled them down in a pile and set them afire. I burnt the whole shooting match of 'em [laughing] and put on these others; that's the way I got rid of my body lice. And ah, they won't sneak up on you, if they ever get on you why they're not sneaky; you'll know you've got 'em.

STUDENT: Wasn't there something called mustard gas in World War I?

RUSHING: Mustard gas?

WILLIS: Well, mustard gas was a form of gas that they could put out there. I never did get it but I've known of others a-getin it and I've seen people that have had it. And it will just absolutely burn the hide off of you; that's where it, it will just burn like hot mustard only a whole lot worse. That mustard gas is kind of a burning gas and when you get it on you why if — well, I reckon it will just blister you. I never did get it, I've heard a lot of talk about it and I've seen a few people that claimed that they've had it.

UNIDENTIFIED: Mr. Willis during World War I wasn't the horses and mules---

WILLIS: They used quite---

UNIDENTIFIED: weren't they used quite a lot then?

WILLIS: they used a lot of horses and mules back them days because these supply wagons every regiment, every infantry of regiment they had what they called a supply company and the supply company, almost all of 'em were mule drivers. And they had wagons and teams and they delivered — well, they done most of their transportation around camp, they done the principle part of it with horses and mules; mules mostly. They went more for mules than they did horses. Of course as time passed why everything went modern and they had [TAPE RAN OUT] they motorized. But in World War I there was a whole lot of horses and ah, mules mostly used.

RUSHING: What about the tanks, did they have quite a few tanks? Did you ever see too many of them?

WILLIS: Well tanks, they just commence to using tanks in World War I that I knew anything about; they had some. They didn't have nothing like they had later.

UNIDENTIFIED: On this artillery didn't they have observation balloons they put up?

WILLIS: Yeah. Well, they was observation, there was an observation balloon company that went up and they would, they would pass signals back and help out the infantry. Of course they was more help to the artillery than they was to the infantry because the artillery was, sending them big shells over and these observation balloons they'd go up there, you was suspended in a basket under the balloon; most of 'em. You go up there and look around and take these observations and you signal back to the ground and you could direct your artillery fire. Now a good observer up in one of those balloons he could, he could direct the artillery to where he could place them shells pretty accurate. He could tell you how to shoot over the top of a hill and drop a shell and of course he was up there where he could see and he could tell you how bad you was missing.

STUDENT: Did they have uniforms or did they just wear what they could get?

WILLIS: How do you mean?

STUDENT: Well, I mean did they issue uniforms?

WILLIS: Yeah, we had a regulation uniform.

STUDENT: And you had to wear 'em?

WILLIS: Yeah. You was subject to a court-martial if you got caught out of uniform. I had some French friends in a town there one time there ah, back behind the lines aways and there was a town we wanted to go to and ah, the American soldiers was barred from that town; they wasn't allowed to go there. And I had some French friends that I follered going there or I'd got acquainted with some and they furnished me some clothes and I rigged up as a French civilian. And I'm telling you, we went in and I hadn't been in very long until one of these hawkeyed MP's spotted me and I done some of the doggonest talking that I ever done in my life to get lose to keep him from hanging on. I talked him out of it and got on away from there and got back out and I got back into that olive drab uniform [laughs].

STUDENT: They had a special name that they called you over there did you? You weren't called a doughboy were you?

WILLIS: Huh?

RUSHING: What did they call American soldiers over there, the Frenchmen?

WILLIS: There's too many kids in here [laughter]. Ah, the French ah, most of 'em the French and English both referred to an American soldier as a yank and usually had a prefix to that [laughter]. The English soldiers were usually called Tommys and the French, the English and the Americans called them frogs.

STUDENT: Frogs?

WILLIS: Uh-huh. But we, the Americans were usually referred to as a Tommy or a yank--not a Tommy, the English, they called the English Tommys; the Americans were called yanks.

STUDENT: How old are you?

RUSHING: How old are you?

WILLIS: If I live to my next birthday I'll be 82 year old.

STUDENT: When is his birthday?

RUSHING: They want to know when your birthday is.

WILLIS: Now wait a minute [laughter]. There's an old lady that's a correspondent for the *Marshal Mountain Wave* over here close to Yellville and she gets all the names of everybody she can get, that corresponds to that paper and doggone her old hide she sends them all postcards. She sends 'em, she finds out their age, she sends them Christmas cards, New Year's cards, Easter cards, she a postcard fiend. And I know her tolerable well and she's always a hammering at me about something or another; I write a letter for that Marshal paper once in a while and I got acquainted with her through that way and she, she's a good old woman, I respect her in a general way but she makes a pest of herself. And I'd be might near afraid to tell anybody how old I was, afraid they'd start out like Pat Harper. That Patsy Harper, man if she knew my birthday I'd get, I'd get a postcard from her just every little bit.

STUDENT: Can you remember much about what the towns looked like over there in France?

RUSHING: The towns in France, what were they like?

WILLIS: Well, they've got everything streamlined pretty well and they've got some wonderful looking places. I've got a bunch of the hotels here and now these pictures here, these are pictures of hotels most of 'em, and I've been in the town where these was at. That's a picture of a depot in that same town.

STUDENT: Did you ever flirt with any of those French girls? [laughter from background]

RUSHING: He wants to know if you flirted with any of the French girls.

WILLIS: Naw; I wouldn't do nothing like that [LAUGHTER]. There's a picture of an iron foundry. Now you had to be pretty well careful if you stayed over there very long and got very well acquainted. Here's a bunch of pictures of buildings over there. There's a picture of a depot there; there's about two of 'em that shows a depot and one of 'em shows and iron foundry and one of 'em shows ah, they refer to it there, the name of it is Casino.

STUDENT: You mean Casino?

WILLIS: But ah, it's a place of entertainment, sort of like, sort of like you use your legion hut out here or like they use the legion hut over at--in other words the culture center over at Mountain View. And incidentally the one they had there in that town is just about as rotten as the culture center. No, they have those big fine buildings there and them hotel that you can see there, there ain't any telling how many hundred thousand dollars it cost to build one.

STUDENT: How old were you when you went into the army?

RUSHING: How old were you when you were drafted or you went into the service?

WILLIS: I was 23 year old, I lacked a little being 24.

STUDENT: And you wanted to go in? You wanted to go in?

WILLIS: Well I, I tried to enlist; I wasn't burnt up to go but I knew that I'd sooner or later have to go and the country needed help at that time. And I figured it was as much my country as it was anybody else's and there was so darn many that didn't want to go, I felt like a few of us ought to try to go [laughing].

STUDENT: Did you ever wish that you'd been in another place instead of building roads?

WILLIS: Do what?

RUSHING: Were you glad you were in an engineering company building roads or would you rather been somewhere else in the war?

WILLIS: I'd rather been somewhere else.

RUSHING: You had to be right up front a lot of the time didn't you?

WILLIS: Well, we was, there was a lot of the time we was right up, right in the big middle of it and then there was other times we was back quite a little ways. But you wasn't armed with anything more than the—I carried sidearm but what good would an .45 automatic do you [laughing], by the way when maybe somebody is shooting a rifle gun at you? I'd a rather been in the infantry; that's where I got my training. I'd rather been in the infantry than to be in the engineers because I leastways would have had a rifle, maybe a machine gun. As it was, if you were buckle footing around up there maybe in the mud knee deep with a darn .45 automatic strapped around you and they shooting at you from way over yonder somewhere, shells falling around you and busting and throwing shrapnel, mud, and you couldn't get back at 'em.

RUSHING: When did they have the big snow here in 1918; was that after you got back or was that while you were in France? They'd supposed to had a terribly big snow about 1918.

WILLIS: They had that just as I was a-leavin; it was just a-going off as I was a-leavin. If you remember, it come just a little after Christmas or that is my part of it did. Now when that snow overtook us I was in Washington, D.C., getting a-ready to go over and by the time we got our equipment issued to us and ah, got ready to board ship why it was about all gone. Dad and mother was a-writing and telling me all about it all the time and from what they said it was bad. From what a lot of my friends told me after I got back it was bad. But listen brother, it was bad up there around Washington, D.C., too if you ask me.

RUSHING: Anybody else have any questions? He might be getting a little tired.

WILLIS: We spent some time there around Washington, D.C., and then they showed us before we got ready to go over, we had to wait a little while to get transportation, we were down on the banks of the Potomac River at a camp they call Belvoir, Camp Belvoir, that was down closer to Alexander, Virginia than Washington, D.C.

RUSHING: Well, we appreciate you coming out Mr. Willis and I guess maybe you might be a little tired [TAPE TURNED OFF].

* * * * *

Issue Sidearms of the U.S. Army of World War I

By Sgt. Michael Jeu

This article is a condensed version of one that was originally published in the Winter 1992 edition of the Arkansas Military Journal. *The article here has also been edited to correct misspellings and for clarity.*

The United States Army has the reputation of issuing the finest and most modern firearms available to their troops. This has been demonstrated historically by the issuing of such renowned battle rifles as the 1903 Springfield rifle, the M-1 Garand, the M-14, and presently the M-16 rifle. These rifles all have been battle proven and have played a vital role in our Army's history. Every soldier can vividly remember the rifle that served with them.

The tradition of issuing the best rifle available to the soldier also carried over to the issue side arm of the soldier.

In approximately 1892, the Army decided to do to a .38 caliber handgun for issue to the troops. This was a decision that was submerged in controversy. There were repeated stories of the failures of the .38 caliber on the battlefields. What was needed was a hand weapon that would put the adversary out of the fight the instant he was hit, whether fatally or not. It is important to note that by the early 1900's that Army was called out of retirement the .45 Colt caliber single action revolvers and reissuing them to the troops in the field. As a stopgap measure in 1909, the .45 Colt caliber was once again adopted as the standard issue by the Army. The newly adopted side arm was the Colt double action New Service Model, or designated as the Model of 1909. Model 1909 fired a cartridge composed of a 255 grain lead bullet backed by 84 grains of RSQ smokeless powder and the casing had a slightly wider rim to facilitate extraction. The reason that the Model 1909 revolver and its .45 Colt caliber was considered a stopgap was the Army had already decided to go to a semiautomatic pistol for issue. That came two years later with Colt's Model of 1911 that fired a rimless .45 acp (automatic colt pistol) caliber.

Colt Model 1909

As America continued on course with the ominous clouds of War in Europe, the need for the newly adopted pistol to be perfected was imperative. One of America's inventive geniuses, John Browning, answered the call by perfecting his design of the Colt Model 1911. There are volumes of information on this particular handgun and it has served the Army admirably during its reign from 1911 until 1985.

Colt Model 1911

The Colt Model 1911 was of the semiautomatic design, blued finish, and fixed sights, magazine capacity of seven cartridges, wooden grip panels, and lanyard ring.

The Colt .45 acp fired a 230 grain jacketed bullet at a nominal 830 feet per second. This combination gave the bullet the impact of a sledge hammer, and a man hit went down every time. The 1911Colt was the straightest shooting pistol ever produced in this country. It was found that any average soldier with average training could hit what he was shooting at with the Colt.

At the time that America entered World War I only a few men of each Infantry regiment carried pistols. As history would have it, in almost the first skirmish this weapon proved its superior usefulness in trench fighting.

The Army made a decision by midsummer of 1917 to supply the infantry a much more extensive equipment of automatic pistols than had been prescribed by regulations, to build them by the hundreds of thousands where we had been turning them out by the thousands. In February of 1917, with war in sight, realizing the limitations of our capacity then for producing pistols, the Army took up with the Colt Company the proposi-

tion of securing drawings and other engineering data which would enable us to extend the production of this weapon to other plants. This work was in progress when in April of 1917, it was interrupted by the military necessity for the production of rifles.

In order to supplement the pistol supply, although the Colt automatic was the only weapon of this sort approved for the Army, the Secretary of War authorized the Chief of Ordnance to secure other small arms, particularly the double action .45 caliber revolver as manufactured by both the Colt Company and Smith & Wesson. These revolvers had been designed to use the standard Army caliber .45 acp piltol cartridgese. The revolver was adopted in the emergency only to make it possible to provide sufficient numbers of these arms for the troops at the outset.

Smith & Wesson Double Action Revolver, Caliber .45 Model 1917.

At the beginning of hostilities the Colt Company indicated that it could tool up to produce pistols at the rate of 6,000 per month by December 1917, and could also furnish 600 revolvers a week beginning in April. A contract was made with Colt for 500,000 pistols and 100,000 revolvers and to Smith & Wesson for 100,000 revolvers.

In December of 1917, the Remington Arms Union Metallic Cartridge Company was instructed to prepare for the manufacture of 150,000, Colt Model 1911s, at a rate to reach a maximum production of 3,000 per day. There arose a problem in that the drawings and designs in the hands of the Colt Company did not reflect the mechanical problems that had been discovered and modified. The drawings were completely redrawn and gave interchangeability parts between the companies. During the summer of 1918 the demands for the Colt 1911 pistol was enormous. In order to fill these request contracts were given to a number of other companies.

During the war, difficulty was experienced in securing machinery to check the walnut grip panels for the pistols, and to avoid delay in production, the Ordnance Department authorized the use of Bakelite for pistol grips in all the new plants which were to manufacture the gun. Bakelite served as a replacement substitute for hard rubber or amber.

While the Colt Model 1911 .45 acp pistol overshadowed all other handguns in World War I, there are two revolvers that played an important role. These two revolvers were designated and authorized to supplement the production of the Colt, they were the Colt and Smith & Wesson Model 1917 .45 acp revolvers.

Both revolvers were of the large frame design, double action, six shot, blued finish, fixed sights, five and a half inch barrel, wooden grip panels, and lanyard ring. Both fired the standard .45 acp cartridge. These revolvers were proven in battle and demonstrated the accuracy and reliability needed by our troops, while at the same time, filling an important gap for the Colt Model 1911.

Issue service handguns have changed somewhat over the years and controversy still surrounds their existence. Both the revolver and the semiautomatic pistol still survive and are being used by our troops throughout the world. While the Colt Model 1911, Colt Models 1909 & 1917, and the Smith & Wesson Model 1917 have taken their places in history, the issue sidearm will always play an important role with our troops where ever they may deploy.

Arkansas National Guard Museum

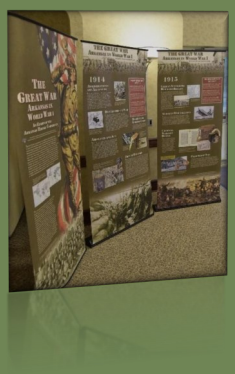
Camp Pike Exhibit

Grand Opening

Thursday, July 20, 2017
10:30 am
History of Camp Pike Program
Following at 11:30 am

Traveling Exhibit on Display at the Arkansas National Guard Museum
July 5th through July 28th

The Great War: Arkansas in World War I



The Great War: Arkansas in World War I showcases images from the Arkansas State Archives' holdings, including original documents, photographs, posters, maps and historical objects that tell the story of Arkansas's role during World War I, at home and on the battlefields. The panels cover the chronology of the war as well as various facets of the conflict: training troops in Arkansas, actions overseas, the Home Front, providing for the war,

Special Thanks to the Arkansas Humanities Council

On behalf of the board of directors and the staff of the Arkansas National Guard Museum, we would like to thank the Arkansas Humanities Council for awarding us the funding to develop new panels for the Pike Room. The panels tells the story of the Great War as well as the construction of Camp Pike. The panels of this exhibit goes on to tell the story of activities that occurred at Camp Pike following the Great War and tells of the Pandemic of 1918, Camp Pike College, Camp McRae, the Citizens Military Training Camp, the Civilian Conservation Camp as well as the name change from Camp Pike to Camp J.T. Robinson.

Camp J.T. Robinson

Building 6400 (Corner of 6th & Missouri), North Little Rock, AR 72199

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