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Remembering the Past, Sharing How it Affected My Future

Elizibeth Eckford Speaks

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Cover Photograph: From haikudeck.com in a presentation about the Little Rock Nine that was created by Blair James and Emerson Graham. Published on November 18, 2015.

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Message from the Editor

In this edition of the *Arkansas Military History Journal* we are pleased to bring to you the transcript of the Arkansas National Guard Museum's 2018 Black History Month program. Elizabeth Eckford, one of the Little Rock Nine, delivered a wonderful talk. The Museum had more than 150 in the audience, which was one our biggest over the last three years, since we resurrected the History Roundtable presentations in January 2015.

The second article is a photograph montage of the 1st Arkansas Infantry during the Mexican Border Campaign in 1916. The photos were taken by CPT John Buford Daniels.

Finally, after a one issue absence, we return to the Featured Artifact article provided by LTC Mathew Anderson. LTC Anderson views the US Rifle Caliber .30, Model of 1917. Thank you for taking the time to read this latest issue of the Journal.

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Elizabeth Eckford Reminisces About Her Experience at Central High 1957

Black History Observation 2018, Hosted by the Arkansas National Guard Museum and the Processional Education Center

Article developed from Speech given by Elizabeth Eckford at the Arkansas National Guard Museum, February 22, 2018.

Before I introduce Miss Eckford, who is also a historian and one of the Little Rock Nine… I would like to tell you one quick story because it is relevant to this. When I was in either elementary school or junior high in Kansas, where I grew up, they showed us a documentary or footage of the Central High Crisis. It didn't make any sense to me, I was appalled. I saw Miss Eckford, I saw her out there, and of course I never thought I would ever meet her. Why was there an issue? Why was there an issue with the races going to school together? In my hometown it wasn't an issue. Well I found out later that my hometown was segregated, legally, in the 50s and before, so I guess [segregation] wasn't as unique as I thought…. Miss Eckford is a national treasure….

[Dr. Screws then introduces Miss Eckford and the Audience Claps as she takes the podium.]

Miss Eckford addresses the audience first by saying, "Thank you, but in the future can you please do the deaf clap? I have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and loud noises kind of unravels me."

Many of the Little Rock Nine talked about how it was inside school for 30 years, but I started talking about it in 1999 when a very persistent teacher kept calling me and asking me to come speak to his students who were coming from California on a civil rights tour. I changed my mind when 100 students wrote to me because my heart is with students. I continue occasionally to talk about the past because I have done my own exposure therapy, I use to cry off and on during my presentations, but now there are no more tears. It is because of the students that I have talked to. It has made it so worthwhile to talk to students. I want to thank you all for coming this morning. I feel a bit overwhelmed and I'm so, so grateful to you for your interest, but remember

don't clap, do the deaf clap, please.

I'm going to take you back 60 years in my life, I'm now 76 and I don't remember from one moment to the next, but my long-term memory is still intact.

I asked my son once, "Why do people still recognize me?" He said, "Mom, you haven't changed your hairstyle in 40 years."

Left Picture: Through a Lens, Photo from Vanity Fair. Right Picture: Photo from Arkansas State University, Beebe.

I came to Camp Robinson once before when Major… Sanders was stationed here. She taught some courses and was a Public Affairs Officer and is now retired Lieutenant Colonel. She comes to Little Rock often and is a co-writer with me on my book.

I'm going to start off by saying some brief remarks about the United States because sometimes people think nothing has changed. We are living in a very challenging time when hate speech has returned at very high volumes. The country started off with that crazy inalienable rights. It really applied to white male property owners. At one time for reasons of [inaudible] in congress, slaves were not considered human beings. They were considered 3/5 of a person to determine how many representatives each state would have. Later the US Supreme Court said that slaves or former slaves had no rights that had to be respected.

Another Supreme Court decision said that the country should have separate systems, as long as they were equal. However, with white supremacy there was no pretense for equality. I remember seeing a photograph of a one room school room in West Memphis, Arkansas where the little ones were sitting on the laps of big ones. It looked like there were more than 35 people in that classroom.

My parents are Arkansans, my mother left her farming community and did not receive her education past the 8th grade. In many parts of Arkansas for both whites and blacks, education only went to the 8th grade. Central High School was not the first school in Arkansas to desegregate, but it is symbolic of the resolution of a constitutional conflict between State and Federal Government. It is significant in television history because now people were able to see events as they unfolded without having to have someone explain to them what had happened. Those images shown on the television are what finally compelled President Eisenhower to act; he had been talking to the Governor of Arkansas who had been using the all-white Arkansas National Guard to keep us out of school…..

I'm from a very old fashion household. My mother and father had been known as benevolent [inaudible], we were truly good kids, but we could not talk back. I was a very shy, submissive child. When I asked my mother in the spring of 1957 if I could go to Central, instead of saying no, she said, "We'll see."

I call my mother, who is passed, like I have permission now, to call her as she was, the ***Queen of No***.

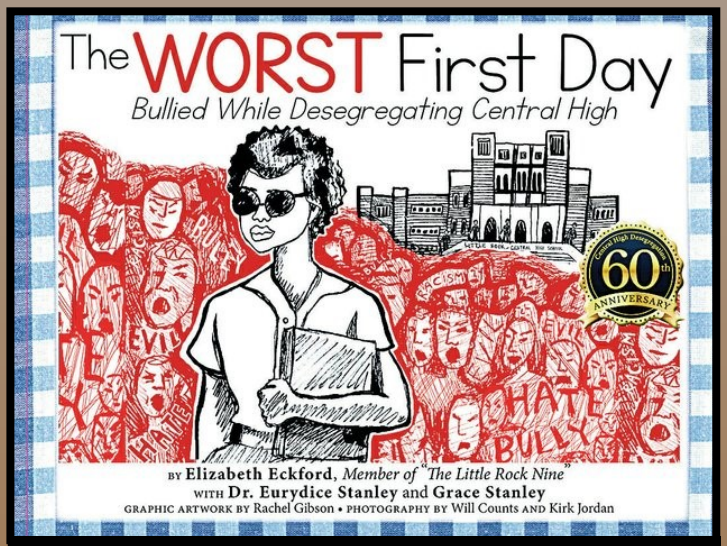
Those students that were interviewed by the superintendent of the school, were told that they could not participate in any extracurricular activities or clubs at Central. They could merely go to school, not talk back, and not strike back. In the 1950s, violence in school was not ordinary, but it was part of our daily experience; however before then it was not ordinary.

Let me go back a little bit to the creation of Central High School. It was built in 1929. The American Association of Architecture said it was the most beautiful high school in America. It was built on European Collegiate Goth Design except in the center where the [inaudible] steps are art deco.

In 1957, the school had about 2,100 students and after the boycott, it had about 1900 students. On September 4, 1957, I rode a bus to about two blocks from Central High School and this was the only time I was able to go to school by bus. I had heard the

Governor say that he was going to call out the Arkansas National Guard and that he anticipated violence and that the Guard was to preserve peace and good order. So, when I approached the guards, who I had seen break ranks to admit white students, I did not expect them to bar me. I did not realize until after I had attempted to go through their lines three times, that they were there to bar me. On that day, teachers had to serve in the cafeteria and they had to pick up around the school because the only non-whites in the school were the food services workers and the janitors – and they were not admitted until they got special identification.

So after I was turned away, I stepped out into the street and angry demonstrators swarmed behind me and immediately in front of me was a huge contingent of the press walking backward and asking me questions. I did not say anything. At one point I said my name and I had a southern accent where my voice would trail off at the end of the sentence. It's different now, I had to include some hard sounds in my speech so that the press would get their answers, and get gone. If I had talked like I talked before, they would have been there longer asking me questions.



Little Rock Nine's Elizabeth Eckford returns to '57 in book 'Worst First Day' relates ordeal, seeks to inspire tenacity. Photo from Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, January 10, 2018.

I'm a former Military Reporter, but for a long time, I resented the press because of my experiences that day. So when they turned me away and those people swarmed around me, Central was two blocks wide and I knew there was another bus stop at the opposite end of the street. So, I headed there and I kept that in mind, it sounds ridiculous today, but I thought that when I got to that bus bench [it] would mean safety for me. Meanwhile, people were threatening me. I heard someone say, "Get a rope, let's hang her from a tree." There were all kinds of threats and racial slurs.


The St. Louis Argus

On-The-Scene

ARKANSAS HATE!

Shove Six Boys From School Bldg.

She Walked Alone

Eisenhower To Confer With Faubus

15 Year Old Girl Is

Funeral Rites

Photo from the St. Louis Argus, Friday, September 13, 1957.

In anticipating going to Central, I thought I would hear some hateful speech, but I thought that as people got to know me, they would accept me. You see, my neighborhood is like a lot of neighborhoods in Little Rock, there were little clusters of one ethnic group right next to another ethnic group without any barriers like across the pond, across the railroad tracks or out back somewhere.

I do know now that after I got in the school, that at first, I couldn't understand white people's southern speech. People don't talk the same way now. I think because of the influence of television, but I had to get accustom to hearing their voices to understand them.

When I got to the bus bench there were two white reporters who talked to me and tried to sooth me and one man put his arm across my shoulder con-

Eckford waiting for bus outside of Central High School and Lee Lorch addressing the crowd. Photo from Arkansas Times.

soling me, the crowd became more incensed that a white man was touching me. It took a long time sitting there waiting for the bus. A white woman confronted the group, telling them they should be ashamed. With my encounter with some of those people, I know that many of them were not ashamed because bigotry and racial hatred is taught in the home and it is difficult to overcome. Most of us have prejudice that we are not aware of, including those people who suffer from prejudice. Whenever you think that the other is not entitled to what you have or is not entitled to more then what they have, that is bias. Even from people you have no contact with, like what people call the Eskimos, people have ideas about them that are not true. It has become entrenched in us and we need to challenge ourselves. When people are taught white supremacy, it is very difficult to overcome that.

The crowd got angrier when she said that she wanted her little girl to go to school with Negro boys and girls. By the way, I use those terms that we called ourselves depending on the timespan I'm talking about because throughout history in the United States, we have struggled to divide ourselves so you will hear me hear me say Negro, Black and African American. When I was growing up we were taught to be ashamed of black and that Negro was our features such as our nose, our lips and heavier hips were not attractive. I'm a heavy person, so I have learned to camouflage that by the way I dress; but there are some things I cannot camouflage.

The bus finally did come, but before that, I walked across the street where there was a drug store attempting to call a cab and the proprietor locked the door. So I had to go back and wait longer for the bus. When the bus did come, I got on. Mrs. [Grace] Lorch, the woman who had confronted the group, got on with me and two teenage boys attempted to get on and she kicked them away, the driver closed the door quickly and we turned toward Wright Avenue. I lived then what was called the West end of town and is now called Southcentral Little Rock. I live in the same home that my parents bought when I was 8 years old. It is now mine and when I go, it will be my son's.

I was taught to love. My grandmother Beatrice talked about the Eckford's all the time. My grandfather had a grocery store and he always had something else, like a café or he sold sandwiches. One time it was a barber shop or a store. My grandfather had a great love of family, but he was a very stingy man. He gave us apples and oranges for Christmas; every now and then we'd get a free soda pop.

When I was going to Central, one day I could not stay the whole day, so I called my grandpop to come pick me up. He closed the store and came and got me. It was a demonstration of his deep love for family….

There was a 17 day interim where it was uncertain when we would go to school and where we would go to school. After we were turned away, we turned to the NAACP for legal help. The Superintendent had been very careful to weed out people associated with the NAACP.

First, over 200 students signed up to go from Dunbar Junior High School and from Horace Mann Senior High School. Then it was whittled down to less than 200 and finally down to 17. When I saw the names of the 17 people who were going to Central, I saw their names in the paper in August. I told my parents that we were running out of time and that they had to decide if I could go to Central. It was unusual for me to pursue something repeatedly. Usually, I was easily turned away with "No." I called my mother the Queen of No because when it was announced we couldn't participate in school activities it wasn't a barrier for me. It wasn't a disappointment, the Queen of No had never allowed us to participate in things that required us to be after school or at night. When I went to my 9th Grade Prom, I was picked up by my daddy.

Eckford: Does anyone have any questions at this point?

Audience Person: Do you know Mr. Terrance Roberts?

Eckford: Oh yes, he was one of the 9…. He's a retired college dean and he's a psychologist. His family was forced to leave Little Rock when his parents could not get any work, so they moved to California. At one point after schools were closed, there were only four of us left. There had been one senior, Ernest Green; but out of eight of us, there were only four left.

My mother had lost her job, she worked at the Arkansas School for the Negro Deaf and Blind and she was not rehired.

Gloria Ray's mother who had two degrees, she had been a state employee, but the only work she could get was as a maid.

You see, during my childhood, my grandfather was the only person I heard talk to white people honestly. He had survived being from Mississippi, he had survived being in trench warfare in World War I, plus it was just his personality. When people came in the store he didn't know, his first question was, "Who are your people?"…. After the Little Rock I didn't know anything about it. He gave me information on two generations of his family because of the questions he had asked over his life.

I think he had worked since he was twelve years old…. Shortly after [I was born he] had a grocery store. He was self-employed and when he encountered white people, they were sales people coming to sell him something. The sales people had Negros [sitting on] hay on the back of the truck, they carried the hay in wooden cases of soda pop. They were not paid as the driver. The garbage trucks were driven by white men and the garbage pails were handled by Negro men.

When I went to the drug store, there were no non-white employees. When I went to the grocery store, no non-white employees. When I went downtown to shop, no non-white employees. The only positions that were acceptable were the janitors. You see, our people were very limited.

When Dunbar was built in 1927, the school district did not have enough money to finish it. It was built with funds from Julius Rosenwald, a Sears Executive who had previously built one room school houses for Negros in the South. Dunbar is built on the model of Tuskegee…, so Negro males had a chance to learn occupations [they couldn't learn elsewhere], but they got training at Dunbar which was a six year high school in auto mechanics, printing, bricklaying, carpentry, and plumbing. So those people were successful with these classes, successfully eventually, opening their own businesses. Imagine the difference between the income of a person who is a janitor or a dish washer to a person who was a trained craftsman. These craftsmen would work for contractors; a master bricklayer was employed as a bricklayer's houseman. There was no sense of equality at all.

Dunbar High School, Little Rock, AR. Photo from Arkansas Times, Cover Story "Separate and unequal."

Going back Central High, I was with Mrs. Lorch, the white woman who confronted the group, I didn't need her help any longer and she got off the bus about four blocks later. What I desperately needed was my [mother]. I rode the bus to a couple of blocks from the Arkansas School for the Negro Deaf and Blind and when I went in the building, they told me my mother was downstairs, she worked in the laundry room. When I went in there, her back was to me. When you know someone very well you can tell from their body attitude what's going on with them. My momma had been praying and crying because she had heard on the radio that I had been injured. Meanwhile, my father had been driving around trying to find me. I never remember at all what we talked about, but I do remember being embraced and held by my mother.

Eventually, I walked home from school, where my brother also went to school. The school was five blocks from my house and it was in the section of the neighborhood that was all Negro. So there was no danger at that time. My mother never allowed me to go to school by bus again. I thought that she was overly protective, so in the summer after school was over, I did ride the bus and people did recognize me and threaten me and chuck rocks at me until I got into my own little section of the neighborhood.

There were 17 days when we didn't know where we were going to go to school, and through a court suit that uncertainty was resolved. It was the end of a constitutional conflict when the court said that the Governor could no longer use the Arkansas National Guard to bar us from school.

Photo of Central High School and Military Jeeps in front. Photo from ualr.edu.

Now he could have let the Guard remain there to preserve peace and order; instead, he removed them and the local police set up barricades and tried to control the crowed, but they had not had training in crowd control. The first day, 250 people; 17 days later, 1000 people. We snuck into school in a side door and they were on the opposite end of the two block area at the service station.

It took about an hour and a half for students throughout the school and the crowd outside to realize we were in their school. There were a couple of students who panicked and jumped from second floor windows. They were able to walk away miraculously.

Outside, when the crowed learned we were in "their" school, which is a direct affront to white supremacy, they were about to overrun the police barricades, but the Police Chief went into the school and had us gather in the Principal's Office. He said he had to remove us for our own safety because he couldn't hold back the mob.

They were beating reporters from elsewhere, what they call outsiders. They were beating three Negro reporters because they felt they had been decoys; whether they were intending to or not, they were decoys. Two of those reporters ran, but the third one, Alec Wilson, chose to not run. He said he had run before, but he wasn't going to run this time. He said he had fought for our country, he had been a Marine. So, there's a series of pictures that people saw around the world of him being pummeled, kicked, knocked down, and hit with a brick on the head. When President Eisenhower saw this, he said, "mob rule could not prevail." It was the time of the Cold War where American propaganda and Soviet propaganda were confronting each other, where people saw this ugly reality of the United States, the President acted. He sent 1000 paratroopers from Fort Campbell, Kentucky and he took Federal control of the Arkansas National Guard because every president is commander and chief over all armed forces.

Eisenhower and the Little Rock Crisis.
Photo from America's Library

The first thing the paratroopers did was affix bayonets to their rifles and they disbursed the crowd in every direction. There were photographs of armed

soldiers on top of the building. I didn't learn until a full eight years later that they had no ammunition for their rifles.

In the center of Central High School its five stories high, most of the building is only three stories, but in the middle it's five stories high and there were these soldiers traversing the rooftop. There were soldiers in the street disbursing the mob and soldiers stationed around the grounds of the two block width of the school.

On September 25th, which we consider the anniversary of the desegregation Central High School, we were taken to school by soldiers. We arrived to school in a military station wagon – today they are called SUVs – but there was a gun mounted jeep in front then our car and a gun mounted jeep in back. The soldiers marched us up the steps of Central High School in a formation on each side of us, in front of us and behind us. So that is the image that is on our Congressional Gold Medal, those soldiers surrounding us and getting us into the school. Having first making it possible for us to go to school.

Soldiers escort Little Rock Nine to School.
Photo from ShareAmerica.

Now, they have made tremendous changes over the decades. This morning I met Major Phillips who had been risen to an E4 in the regular Army and risen to E5 in the Reserves and now is a Major in the National Guard. I don't know what year it was when the National Guard became desegregated, but significant political and economic changes made incrementally and at a slow pace.

I have a neighbor who was an x-ray technician and eventually became the supervisor of the technicians. I asked him where he worked and he had been in the National Guard for a number of years, but he quit because he got tired of waiting for a promotion. There were obstacles that people had to overcome over time. Today, the National Guard is overused in repeated combat deployments and has much better training.

Little Rock Nine Escorted by Soldiers of the 101st.
Photo from Encyclopedia Britannica

There's a saying from a soldier from the Roman Empire that says, "We who are about to die, I salute you."

In school the Principal told us again that we couldn't fight back or strike back and that we were to report to the Vice Principal any incidences that happened. You know, I discounted all the hatred that I heard, but I did report being knocked down stairs and being scolded in the gym showers. That only happened four times, but I do remember that girls would stand beside me during this altercation in the gym shower and turned the water to hot. They didn't all flush the toilets all at once to make the water scalding hot, but there were bystanders that knew what was going to happen.

There were many bystanders, there were over 100 students organized by adults who planned their assaults on us every day afterschool. Many passed out hate pamphlets and cards printed with hateful words. These people were organizing their attacks on us. It was up to the soldiers to protect us,

whether they were 101st or the National Guard, but we never knew whether or not if they had reported what they had seen or heard.

I'm an old soldier and I realize that military service is more attractive to southerners then to people in the other parts of the United States. I joined the Army during the Vietnam War. The Army was different then because there were…proportionately more educated people in military. There was more of the cross section of the United States. I served at Fort McCullum, Alabama where Freedom Riders had been fire bombed on a bus and beaten with chains when they tried to escape the bus. So I knew exactly where I was, there was a cab driver recruited from the Klan and he was suspended for a while.

While in school, we were pummeled every day. One thing that happened every day was being body slammed into wall lockers. Each of us devised ways to try and protect ourselves. Students remember that I always had a binder close to my chest, I used it to try to protect the upper part of my body. Most of the attacks on me were from behind.

When they were walking on our heels for about a week, Carlotta, who the guards called Race Runner, said, "Whoever is going to step on our heels is going to have to work for it." Carlotta was athletic and fleet footed, the most athletic of the group and wore the guards out every week. Jackson Thomas understood physics, so he walked down the hall with his shoulder brushing the wall lockers. He said that by doing this he didn't feel the impact as hard. Eventually, I put straight stick pins all around the edge of my vinyl binder. I bent them so they were not obvious, but now whenever a girl reported that Elizabeth had scratched her, it wasn't so. I never retaliated, but people stopped hitting me from the front. *(The audience laughed as Ms. Eckford took her seat and continued speaking.)*

Eventually, two things happened among the Little Rock Nine [inaudible]. Thelma [Mothershed] missed most of it because she had a hole in her heart and was very weak. Years before open heart surgery was possible, she didn't have that surgery until she had completed college. It wasn't until about 1964 when she had a crisis and was medevacked to Houston for surgery. We would tell Thelma every morning that she didn't have to go back to that big school, but Thelma went anyway.

People wondered why we stayed. How can we leave and leave Thelma behind? We started out as individuals, with individual motives wanting to get the best education possible. My grandfather always said, "Elizabeth when you go to college, Elizabeth when you graduate from college, you're going to teach others." So, I had grown up with the assumption that I would go to college, all the time knowing that both my parents worked two jobs to pay the mortgage, to pay the car note and to take care of six kids. I have to honor my parent's tremendous efforts to take care of us. So I knew they couldn't afford to send me to college and I knew that I had to have scholarships in order to go to college and getting the best education possible would increase my chance of getting scholarships.

So, most wanted the best education possible. After about a month, the students began to understand how weak Thelma was so they reduced the physical pummeling of her and merely poured garbage on her and threw things at her and spat on her and said hateful things to her, but stopped knocking her around.

[In] the second semester they realized that Ernest Green possibly would be the first Negro to graduate from Central High. By the way, I need to remind you, we were not the only non-whites at the school. During the 1940s, Asian-Americans and Japanese-Americans were uprooted from their homes on the west coast – lost their businesses, lost their property – and were put in concentration camps that we call internment camps. There were two of them in Arkansas, the Governor said that he did not want them in Arkansas, but they were released in 1945. Most left Arkansas, but there were three families that remained and there were three Japanese-American boys at school while I was there. Prior to that, there was one Japanese-American girl that had already graduated. After they were released from

the Rohwer Internment Camp one family became farmers and became the largest property owner in Scott, Arkansas. Money talks because these students were welcomed into the "white" school. When they were interviewed years later, many of the said they had friends among the student body, but I remember this was a time when people would unconsciously say "Japs."

Picture Left: Rohwer memorial cemetery headstones for infants. Photo from Calisphere. Picture Right: World War II Japanese Relocation Camp in Rohwer. Photo from Life at 55 mph.

Remember, I said there is bigotry among all of us, some of us are not aware of it. I met one of those people who still are in Little Rock, he's now a financial advisor. I went on a field trip to Rohwer, Arkansas and the only thing left of the internment camp is a smoke stack; but there is a cemetery of twenty-five people who died while incarcerated, some of them were infants. At that cemetery, there is a memorial in honor of their tremendous courage during World War II, so there's a monument to them. This monument displays the names of the dead and there's another military monument as well. When you go to tour there, you can listen to recordings of things that happened there. It was a long time before I realized that there had been two internment camps in Arkansas.

The people in the local area of Rohwar, Arkansas began to resent the Japanese-Americans because they had gotten better food because they saw the trucks bringing food to them. Families were jammed into small areas, they suffered tremendous loss and so some of them, when they left the camps, dispersed to other places in the United States because they had heard about the discrimination and open hated that they would face on the west coast.

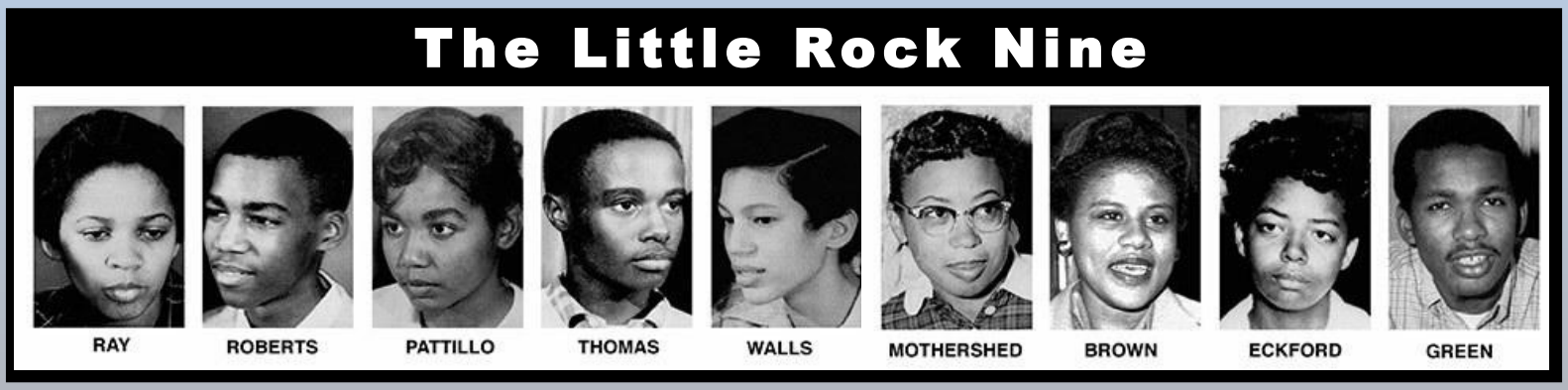
Eventually, toward the end of school, they allowed us to only come to school on the days we had exams, so that was a reprieve. Ernest Green graduated and when he walked across the stage, the only applause was from his family and their guest, Martin Luther King.

Martin Luther King had come to Arkansas because he had been invited from a college in Pine Bluff, AM&N, which is now called University of Arkansas Pine Bluff. Because that school had invited him to [be] the graduation speaker, the school's finances had been reduced for a number of years as a punishment to the school.

After school was over, we went on a tour of the United States. It was a fundraiser, but it felt like a vacation for us. It was a reprieve. I got to go to a Broadway show and was able I meet the head of the United Nations. I was still very shy and didn't know how to make conversation with people but I had an autograph book and I asked people to sign it. That was my way of trying to connect with people. So, I don't mind signing autographs, understanding what that meant to me.

During that year of turmoil at the Central High Crisis, the only public voices were from the ministers and the attorneys associated with the White Southern Council. That was more attractive to people, it didn't have the violent legacy of the Ku Klux Klan. A law had been passed where people couldn't vote to desegregate all the schools at once or to close schools. People in Little Rock voted to close school, so all high schools were closed [during the 1958-59 school year]. This affected 3,666 students, both Negro and White. It was at a time when the only other option was to get students to schools into county schools or some of the country towns around the area. There were not many openings and not many people could afford to send their kids elsewhere to live with relatives and go to school. For some peo-

The Lost Year at Central High School. Photo from thelostyear.com.



ple, they had to get jobs and it was the end of their high school education. There were 44 teachers and administrators, some of them not even associated with Central High School, that were fired because they were thought to be sympathetic to desegregation. This was at a time [when] teachers were highly regarded.

The closing of the schools and the firing of teachers and administrators are what began a change in Little Rock. We hadn't heard from the normal leadership of Little Rock before, but now they began to speak up. One of the people, who was the new president of the chamber of commerce, happened to be the father of one of two students who talked to me every day in my speech class. Can you imagine a shy person feeling at home in the last class of the day and it being a speech class? In this class, nobody called my ugly names and two people engaged me in conversation every day. I didn't know what this might cost them, I didn't learn until 36 years later when we were reunited.

The boy, he had an aspect about him that spoke to his spirituality. The girl, told her Sunday school class that she looked back and saw me alone. She saw a different person, but she could empathize what she thought I must be feeling by being set apart, so she reached out to me.

[Eckford stood up from her seat, and addressed the crowed by saying, "this is important, especially to you young people."]

I never ask anyone to defend anyone who is being harassed, but I ask you to do what anybody could do. It is so terrible when you reach out to support someone who is being harassed, when you let them know that you don't hate them because of their difference and that you accept their humanity. Just talk to them the way you want to be talked to, that is a power sword and is something that anybody can do.

If you don't consider yourself a bully, don't be a bystander. Be the change! You can help someone live another day, that's not exaggeration. That is not an exaggeration because you know that some people that are isolated and hated around you, commit suicide.
What I heard and what I felt in school is still deep in me. We are all deeply wounded, but life has gone on. Support someone who is being harassed, you can be very powerful just by exercising the Golden Rule and not being afraid of their difference. Please, please hear me. I'm going to stop now and pause and see if you have any questions.

Chief (Ret) Huff: If you could tell us one of the things you would regret during this time.

Eckford: Ironically, not talking back. I know the reason why I didn't was because I didn't want to get expelled. One of us was expelled for retaliating. Even though we started out as individuals, it didn't take long for us to realize that a lot of people were depending upon us. That is one of the things that helped us hold on.

Audience Person: When you joined the military, what led to that decision and what was your experience like?

Eckford: You may know, I was older than most of the trainees, I was almost 27, I think. I had not finished college and I had an interrupted life for a long time. My mother and father were nagging me to take control of my life and to move on. When I joined the Army, I realized that those 18 year olds were running away from home to a place they felt was a safe place. I anticipated having opportunities

to experience things I have not experienced before. I couldn't even type, but I wanted to be a journalist. I was sent to clerical school and after about four weeks, my typing teacher volunteered me for the finance school. She told me, "don't tell anybody that I taught you how to type." I became a military pay clerk in Fort Louis, Washington and saw these zombie like soldiers who were plucked from the jungle [of Vietnam] and brought back to the United States and discharged from the Army within 24 hours.

I understand why they starred at us, because they probably had not seen American women for a long time. I understand that combat is hell, I was once in Fort Riley, Kansas where there was a brigade of infantry men. An officer had told me that he had been deployed in combat, multiple times, and he was going to retire and go to school to become a librarian because you can only cheat death so many times.

I know that the National Guard is depended on tremendously now and that you have [had] multiple deployments. I hope the whole country appreciates your service, I certainly do.

COL Larkin: Do you believe that President Eisenhower struggled with the decision regarding the crisis at Central High School.

Eckford: Eisenhower had said that he thought that desegregation should be settled in various communities. He was essentially using the State's Right Argument, but individual rights are not obtuse to individual mandates.

In the 1954, Supreme Court decision, partly what convinced the justice system was that they had evidence from social psychologists that people felt inferior. There was an experiment conducted with dolls, where children were asked to choose from either a white doll or a dark skin doll. The majority of the children chose the white doll because they didn't think dark skin dolls were beautiful. Unfortunately, that experiment was repeated about five years ago with similar results.

Political and social changes are incremental. Today's public conversations ... lets us know that there are a lot of changes that need to happen.

Ms. Eckford was presented a certificate on behalf of the Arkansas National Guard Museum and the Professional Education Center from COL Larkin who is the Commandant for the Professional Education Center at Camp Robinson. COL Larkin also gave Ms. Eckford one of his coins and she got excited and said, "Oh, I like these."

Eckford Addresses the Boys in Blue

She said, "I want to ask the boys in blue, were you made to come here?" Many of the boys responded by saying, "Yes ma'am!" Then she asked, "Did you resent it?" Then the boys responded, "No ma'am." Ms. Eckford had a parting word that she directed toward the youth. She shared that she was a former probation officer. Eckford addressed the youth by sharing one important thing she learned while being a probation officer and that it's up to the individual to make changes to their lives. "If you go back to what you had been doing and hanging with the folks you had been dealing with, you're either going to die…or you're going to prison. Please consider that. Thank you for being here."

The Boys in Blue are the boys from the Civilian Student Training Program. The Civilian Student Training Program (CSTP) is a rigorous, multi-phase behavior management program sponsored by the Arkansas National Guard for at-risk young men, 13-17 years old. CSTP is located in the military environment of Camp J. T. Robinson, North Little Rock, Arkansas. CSTP was established in 1993 by Legislative ACT 375.

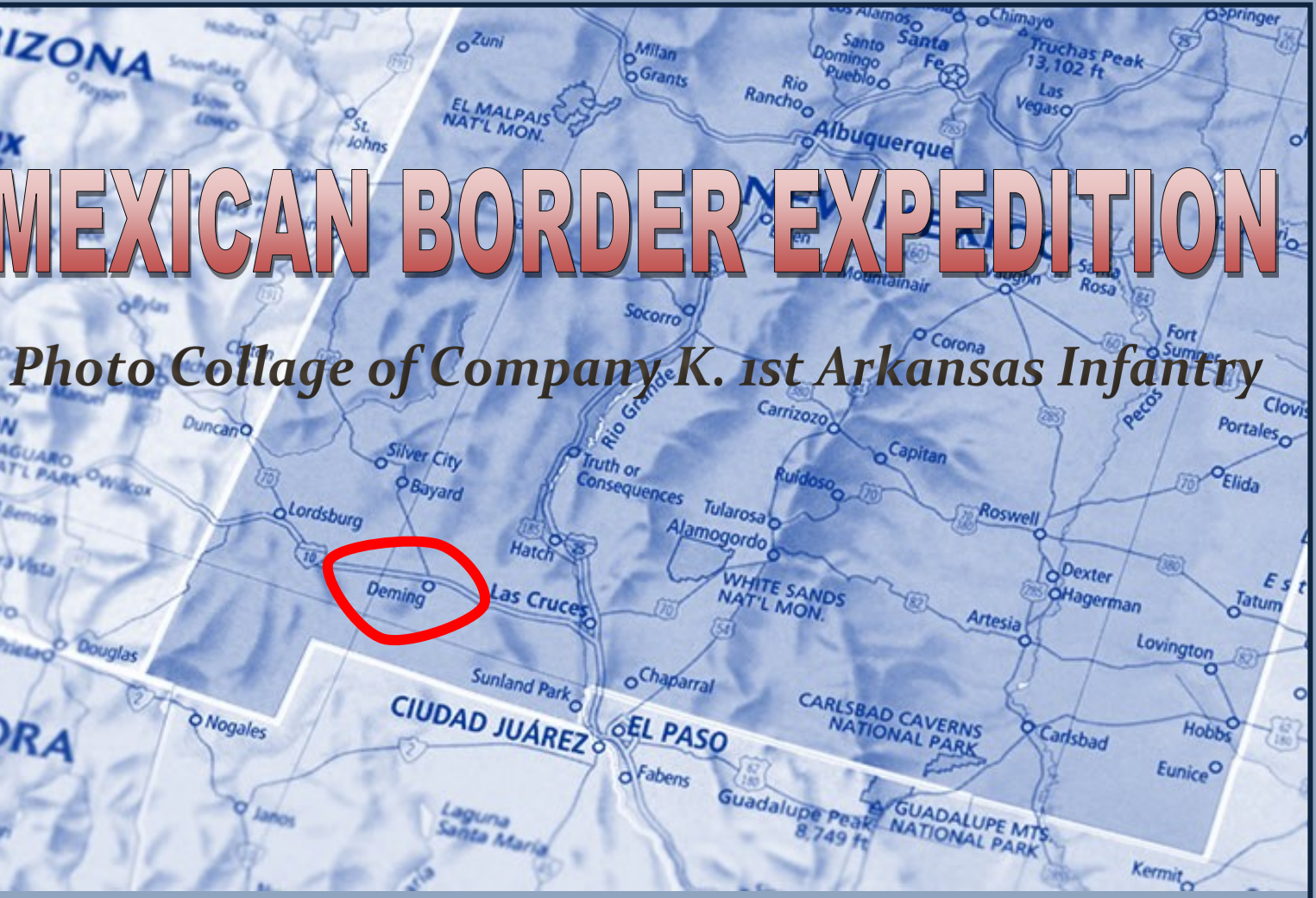
Elizabeth Eckford with Dr. Raymond Screws, Director of the ARNG Museum.

Elizabeth Eckford with Erica McGraw, ARNG Museum and SSG Claudine James, Professional Education Center Equal Opportunity Advisor.

Photos of Elizabeth Eckford while speaking at the Arkansas National Guard Museum, February 2018.

MEXICAN BORDER EXPEDITION

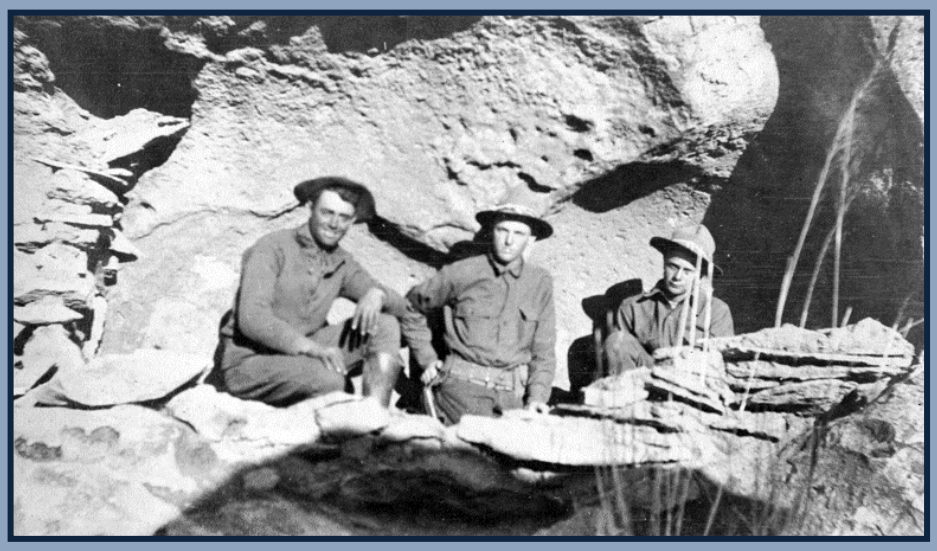
Photo Collage of Company K. 1st Arkansas Infantry

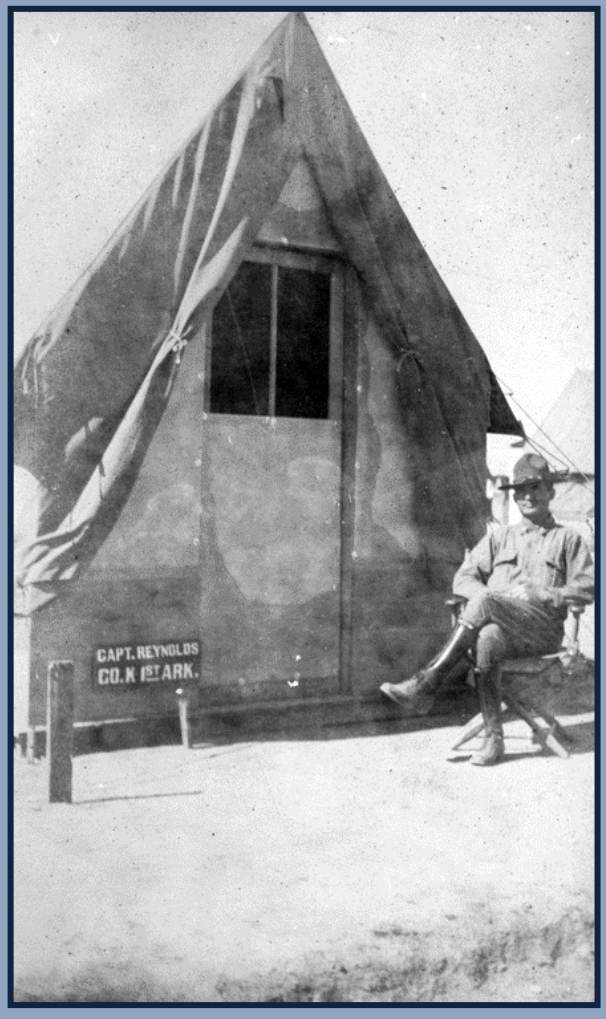


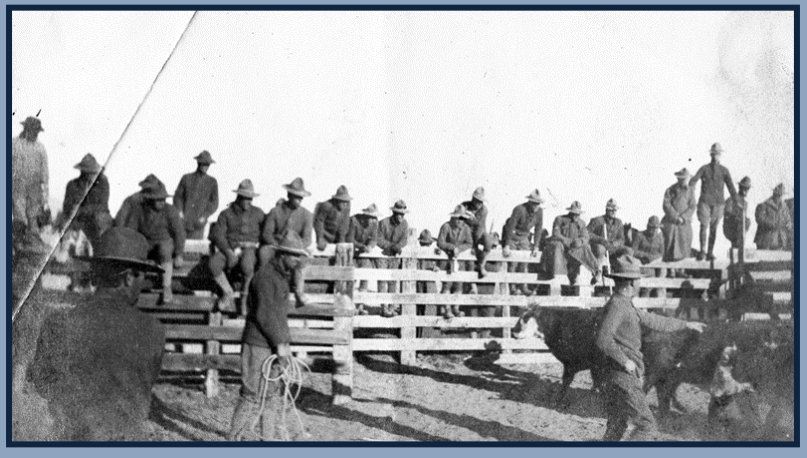
In the Summer of 1916, the Arkansas National Guard was sent to Deming, New Mexico. Earlier in the year Mexican General, Francisco "Pancho" Villa attacked the small town of Columbus, New Mexico from across the border. President Woodrow Wilson ordered a US response. For many Arkansans in the Guard, the Mexican Border Expedition was preparation for WWI in 1917 and 1918.

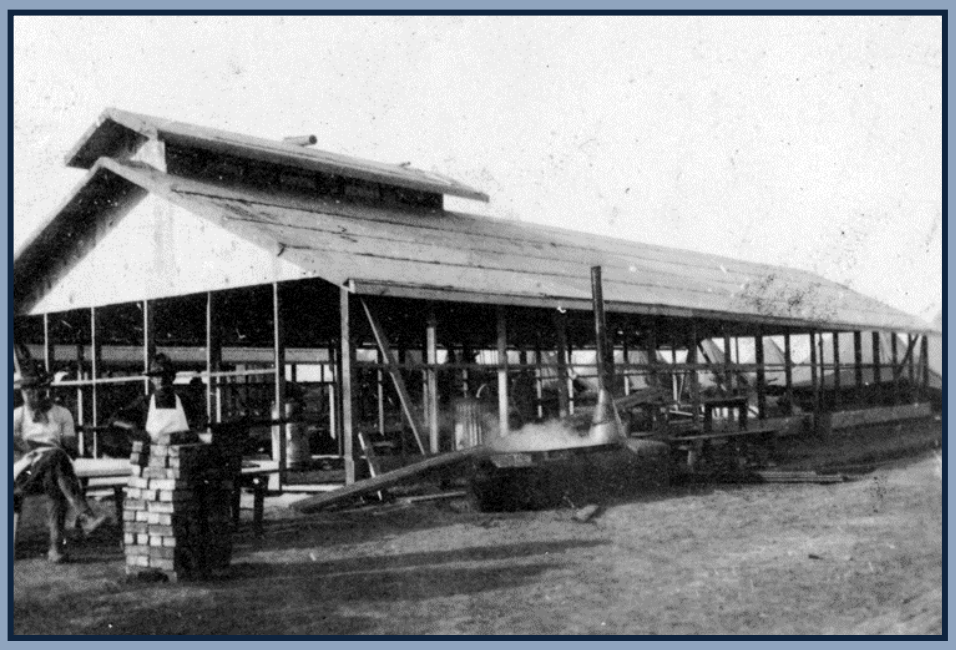
CPT John Buford Daniels (1895-1954) took these photographs of his unit, Co. K, 1st Arkansas Infantry, while in New Mexico. Shortly after returning, as with most in the Arkansas Guard, CPT Daniels was commissioned for duty in the Great War.

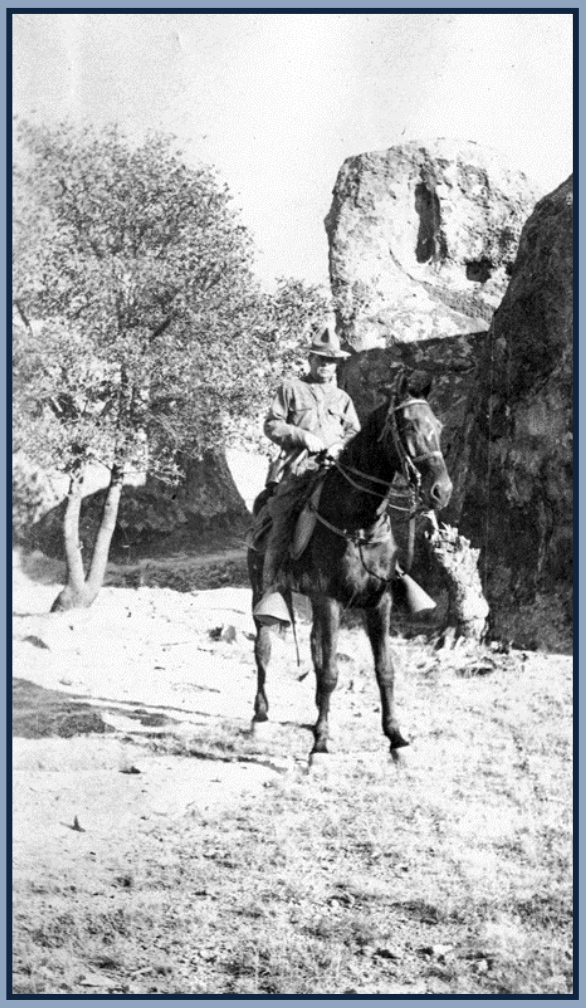
Scans of these photos were donated to the Arkansas National Guard Museum by Bob Feezor, the grandson of CPT Daniels. These are a sample of those photographs.

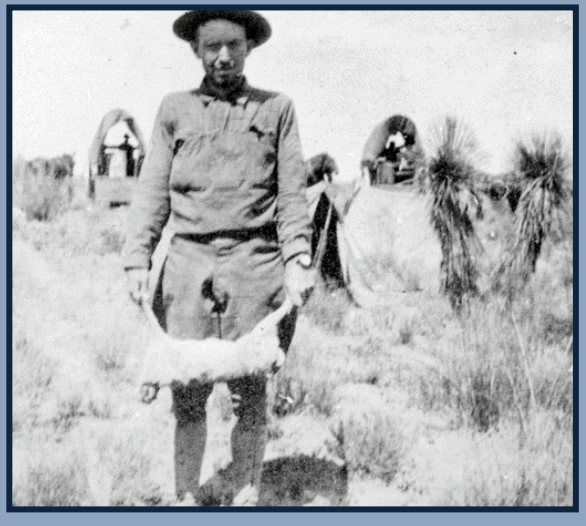


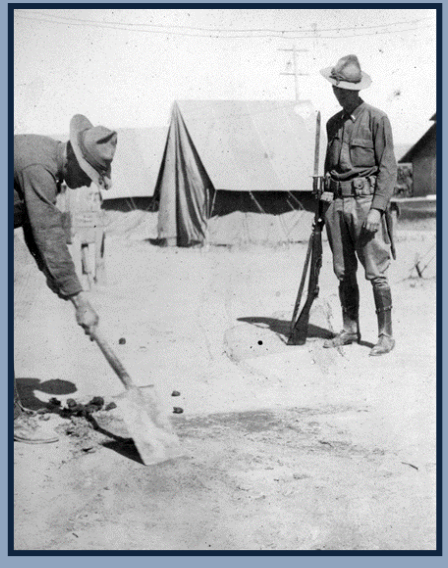

CAPT. REYNOLDS
CO. K 1ST ARK.











Featured Artifact: United States Rifle Caliber .30, Model of 1917

By LTC Matthew W. Anderson

At the turn of the last century, bolt action rifles were the standard for all modern armies. The British and Commonwealth Nations were armed with the new Rifle, Short Magazine Lee Enfield Caliber .303, No. 1 Mark III adopted in 1907, and the United States adopted the US Rifle, Springfield Caliber .30, Model of 1903. Both of these designs were the result of combat experiences against enemy forces armed with Mauser rifles in the Boer War and the Spanish-American War respectively.

In 1910, the British continued to work on development of an improved rifle and cartridge. By 1913, the British developed a rifle designated Rifle, Enfield Caliber .276 Pattern 1913. While this pattern had distinct improvements it still had some issues to work out before it could be adopted for regular service.

In July 1914, the Allied Powers were at war against the Central Powers in the First World War. Britain having factories already tooled for production of the No. 1 Mark III went to work meeting the wartime demand for arms. As a result of the impracticality of switching to the Pattern 1913 and the new .276 cartridge the plans were shelved.

With British arms manufacturing stretched to its limits, the government sought out American commercial arms manufacturers in the fall of 1915, to aid in meeting wartime demands. Winchester Repeating Arms Company of New Haven Connecticut, Remington Arms Company of Ilion, New York, and Remington Arms Company of Eddystone, Pennsylvania were approached. The No.1 Mark III was complex to manufacture and time would be necessary to ensure parts interchangeability could be accomplished with British made rifles. The solution to overcome this delay was to have American manufacturers produce the Pattern 1913 rifle in Caliber .303. The new designation would be Rifle, Enfield Caliber .303, Pattern 1914.

Each company went to work to retool and hire additional labor which had to be trained. Production began in January 1916. The first Pattern 1914 rifles accepted by the British inspectors was in May 1916, following a series of difficulties. Even so, interchangeability of parts between the three manufacturers was not totally achieved. Companies were instructed to mark all parts with a letter to identify parts to their manufacturer ‘W’ for Winchester, ‘R’ for Remington, ‘E’ for Eddystone so that unit armorers could piece together rifles damaged in combat.

By 1917, British contracts were wrapping up having met emergency demands. In all, Remington Arms of Eddystone manufactured 604,941, Remington Arms of Ilion manufactured 403,126, and Winchester Arms manufactured 235,448 Pattern 1914 rifles at a cost of $40 per rifle.

With Americas’ entry into the First World War in April 1917, the US Army had about 600,000 Springfield M1903 rifles in service. With the wartime demand outpacing production at Springfield Armory and Rock Island Arsenal, America found itself in the same position as

Britain three years earlier. As a temporary measure, it was necessary to supplement training at National Camps with 160,000 obsolete Krag-Jorgensen Rifles. Meanwhile the US Ordnance Department looked to the three companies who were completing final contracts of the Pattern 1914 rifle for a solution. They could either retool and train personnel to build the Springfield M1903, which would cause production delays similar to what the British experienced, they could accept the Pattern 1914 as is in .303 and deal with the logistics issues of having another cartridge in the inventory and parts that are not completely interchangeable, or they could make adjustments to the Pattern 1914 so that it could fire the 30.06 and have complete interchangeability.

The US Ordnance Department chose to take the time to standardize the rifle manufacturing process between the three factories and convert the Pattern 1914 to 30.06. A retired Army Officer by the name of John T. Thompson was returned to active service to take charge of the process to ensure parts interchangeability. This took approximately 30 days. In all, 50 parts were standardized, allowing one worker who formerly could only build 20 to 50 rifles a day to now build on average 250 a day.

The new rifle was designated Rifle, Caliber .30, Model of 1917. First delivery was in August 1917, and by January 1918, manufacturing caught up with requirements. Production of the M1917 outpaced the M1903 to the point that at the time of the Armistice on 11 November 1918, approximately three quarters of the rifles in the American Expeditionary Force were M1917s despite the fact that the M1903 was still the official service rifle for the US military. In all, Remington Arms of Eddystone manufactured 1,181,908, Remington Arms of Ilion manufactured 545,541, and Winchester Arms manufactured 465,980 Model 1917 rifles at a cost of $26 per rifle.

Following the end of the First World War no further P1914 or M1917 rifles were manufactured. The last rifles to be assembled from existing contracts were completed in April 1919. Existing stocks were placed into War Reserve storage or for limited use. In 1939, the British War Office brought the P1914 back into service mainly with the Home Guard and to arm Greek, Free French and Free Dutch Forces in 1944 and 1945. The US brought the M1917 back into service in 1940 and 1941 to provide an additional 734,000 rifles to the British Home Guard. The US also sent 152,000 M1917 rifles to Chinese Nationalist Forces in the fight against Japan. Other resistance forces were supplied M1917s at various times. US Forces in rear areas throughout WWII were also issued M1917s.

The most notable use of the M1917 rifle was by Sgt. Alvin C. York, Company G, 328th Infantry, 82nd Division near Chatel-Chehery, France, 8 October 1918.

G.O. No.: 59, W.D., 1919 Citation: After his platoon suffered heavy casualties and 3 other noncommissioned officers had become casualties, Cpl. York assumed command. Fearlessly leading 7 men, he charged with great daring a machinegun nest, which was pouring deadly and incessant fire upon his platoon. In this heroic feat the machinegun nest was taken, together with 4 officers and 128 men and several guns.

M1917 Specifications:

Length: 46.25 inches

Weight: 10 pounds 5 ounces

Capacity: 6 rounds in internal magazine

Caliber: 30.06

Rifling: 5 groove, 1 turn in 10 inches left hand twist

Type: Bolt action, cocks firing pin on closing

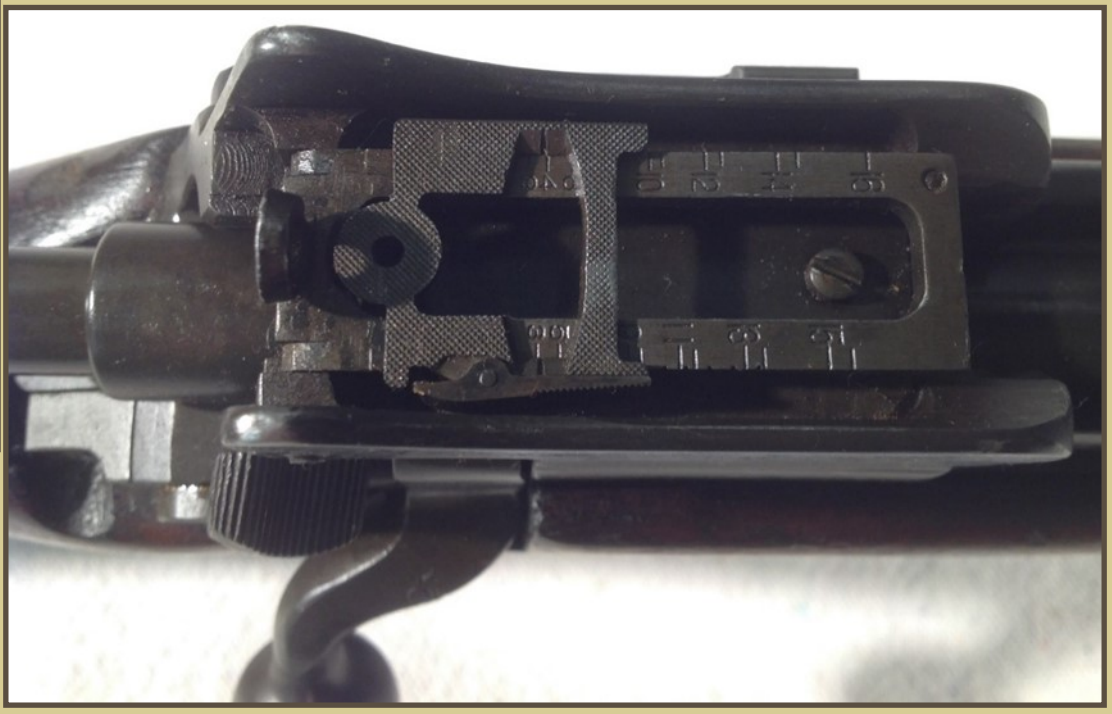
Left: The two eagle head stamps represent the assembly mark and the acceptance mark. Which identifies individuals responsible for performing these tasks on a particular rifle. Assembly marks have digits only below the eagle head while acceptance marks have a letter number combination. These marks can be found throughout the rifle.

Below: The P stamped into the wood shows that this rifle passed an arsenal inspection/rebuild firing proof test sometime in the 1940's.

Above: The stamp in the rectangle shows that this rifle went through an arsenal inspection/rebuild at Rock Island Arsenal sometime in the 1940's. The AA may represent that the rifle was at the Augusta Arsenal and some point in its history.

Right: The flaming bomb stamp is the original firing proof stamp showing it passed at the factory.

Left: The M1917 sight is the up long range position. Note that there is no adjustment for windage. This is a shortcoming that ultimately prevented the M1917 Enfield from replacing the M1903 Springfield even though many considered the sights of the M1917 to be of a better design and more accurate due to the distance between the front and rear sights compared to the M1903. Ultimately the M1903 would be modified to place the rear sight on top of the receiver and be designated the M1903A3.



Right: A battle sight 'peep' sight is up while the long range sight is in the stowed position. The battle sight was calibrated at 400 yards.

Above: The Arkansas National Guard Museums' M1917 shows it to be manufactured by Winchester Repeating Arms. With the serial number being under 50,000 this makes it an early example.

Right: The barrel is also made by Winchester Repeating Arms and has a date of October 1917, showing that this barrel is probably original to this rifle.

Left: Shows bolt in closed position.

Right: Shows bolt is open position and safety switch located above the trigger. The safety could be operated silently.

Left: Another M1917 in the Arkansas National Guard Museums' collection is of Remington manufacture. This rifle is within the last 6,000 made at Remington Arms. It was likely assembled in December 1918, since Remington Arms ceased production in the same month using up parts that were already on the shelves when the Armistice was signed until existing stocks of parts were exhausted.

Right: The barrel is also marked Remington and is dated September 1918. This was also likely original to the rifle from the factory and gives an idea of how far barrel manufacturing was ahead of final assembly.

National Guard Soldier performing sentry duty in 1920, is armed with M1917 Enfield Rifle with M1917 bayonet. Interestingly the bayonet served in the US Army longer than the rifle in that it was also used on trench shot guns through Vietnam.

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ESSAY CONTEST

Arkansas Military Historian Essay Competition

The Arkansas Military Historian Essay Competition is **state wide competition open to students enrolled in grades 9-12 in public, private, and parochial schools, and those in home-study programs.** The Arkansas National Guard Museum Foundation, recognizing the importance of encouraging young scholars and promoting research regarding Arkansas Military History, has established this $500 annual prize. The winning essay will be published in the *Arkansas Military History Journal*.

Each competitor will submit an essay that addresses the following topic:

"What military events have most shaped the social, political or economic development of Arkansas?"

The committee will judge papers according to the following criteria:

1) Clear thesis
2) Elaboration on the thesis with specific, concrete, personal example(s)
3) Evidence of critical-thinking, such as synthesis and evaluation, when reflecting on the essay question
4) Organization and fluency
5) Overall effectiveness of the student's ability to communicate the impact that military events have had on the development of Arkansas and its people?

Submission Guidelines:
Length: Submissions for the 9-12 Arkansas Military Historian Essay should be approximately 1,500 words. Formatting: Number all pages except for the title page. All pages are to be double-spaced. Use 12 pt. Times New Roman Font. Margins are to be 1" left and right, and top and bottom. Submissions must be composed in Microsoft Word. The author's identity is to appear nowhere on the paper. A separate, unattached page should accompany the paper, identifying the author, title of paper, home address, telephone number, email address, and name of school. Papers that do not adhere to these guidelines will be disqualified.

Deadline: Entries must be emailed or postmarked by the annual deadline of July 1st.

Winning papers will be announced in no later then September 1, 2018.

The Arkansas National Guard Museum reserves the right to publish in the *Arkansas Military History Journal* any essay (or portion thereof) submitted to the competition. It will do so solely at its discretion, but full acknowledgment of authorship will be given. If someone's essay is published in whole or in part, the author will receive three (3) copies of the Journal.

To submit your materials by email: Send the following materials as separate attachments in the same email (formatted in MS Word), with the subject line "Arkansas Military Historian Essay":

1. The paper
2. A page with identifying information (author, title of paper, home address, telephone number, e-mail address, and name of school.)

Email to: raymond.d.screws.nfg@mail.mil

To submit your material by mail:

Send five copies of the paper and five copies of the page with identifying information. In the lower left hand corner on the front of the envelope write: ***Arkansas Military Historian Essay Competition*** and mail to:

Dr. Raymond Screws
Arkansas National Guard Museum
Box 58, Camp Robinson
North Little Rock, Arkansas 72199

Arkansas Military Historian Essay Competition Committee:

- Dr. Raymond Screws
- COL Damon N. Cluck
- LTC Clement J. Papineau

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