



Camp of the One Hundred and Thirteenth Field Artillery, Camp Sevier, S. C., with the regiment in the foreground.

Images contributed

Camp of the 113th Field Artillery, 30th Division, Camp Sevier, S.C. with the regiment in the foreground



STRUGGLING ON THROUGH THE ARGONNE
Struggling on through the Argonne. Every man who served in the regiment would have many pictures like this in his mind. Trucks, caissons, fourgons and "slat wagons" struggling along through the mud and long straggling lines of engineers and pioneer infantry lads carrying German shell baskets full of rocks and dumping them into the mud-holes.



Logs were used for drilling (training) at Camp Sevier, S.C.

The World War I profile of Pvt. Martin Newman Mintz

BY NORMA ECKARD
SPECIAL TO THE BEACON

Martin Newman Mintz's World War I North Carolina Service Card shows he served with the 322nd Infantry (81st Division) and was wounded Oct. 30, 1918. While reading through combat history of the 81st Division, the regiments were resting before their big operation in early November. It seemed unlikely Martin was wounded at that time.

Pulling the passenger lists for transport to France showed he was not serving with the 81st. He actually served with the 113th Field Artillery of the 30th Division. He was included in the rosters in the historical documents written about the 113th. His injuries were documented also as being gassed Oct. 29, 1918.

Pvt. Mintz likely was originally training with the 81st Division. When he was ordered to report for military duty, he was sent to Columbia, S.C., to Camp Jackson, which is where the 81st trained. The 81st Division had many men transferred to other units, mostly the 30th Division. Mintz was likely transferred at some point, although it is unknown when.

It's fortunate many documents exist to help verify mistakes on records, as well as add rich details to their experiences. The 113th Field Artillery was well documented.

Martin Newman Mintz was born and raised in Brunswick County. He was the eldest of four brothers, all serving in World War I. Forney Boston Mintz was the first to enlist in the U.S. Army in 1913 at 21. Half-brother Samuel Leob Mintz enlisted in 1916; Martin and Owen Ransom Mintz were drafted. All four brothers served overseas. Martin, Forney and Owen were wounded. Leob and Forney made a career in the Army.

Martin's World War I Draft Registration shows he was living in Mill Branch, Brunswick County, single, and working on his own farm. He was ordered to report for duty Sept. 18, 1917, and accepted for duty Oct. 3, 1917.

He likely began training with the 81st Division, which was at Camp Jackson, S.C. Because it is not known when he transferred to the 113th Field Artillery, his experiences cannot be described accurately until his name is listed on the transport record to France on May 27, 1918.

Some background on the 113th Field Artillery of the 55th Artillery Brigade, 30th "Old Hickory" Division: The 113th Field Artillery was created in June 1917, when the

War Department announced it would accept a regiment of field artillery from the state of North Carolina. This was a source of pride as almost all counties were represented from North Carolina and included "lawyers, teachers, doctors, preachers, farmers, merchants, mechanics, accountants, bankers, manufacturers, engineers, scientists, clerks, students, stenographers, typists, newspaper men."

The 113th Field Artillery was one regiment of the 55th Artillery Brigade. It included the following regiments. The tables list the Brunswick County men who served in them. There is a document that includes the 55th Artillery Brigade World War I experience and includes rosters and pictures of the men below.

The following lists and references are available on the World War I Army/Marine Division Rosters webpage.

Documentation (with rosters): Bacon, William James (1920) History of the Fifty-fifth Field Artillery Brigade, 1917, 1918, 1919. Nashville: Benson Printing Co.

113th (light) Field Artillery: Pvt. 1st Class Ralph T. Davis, Wagoner James V. Gore of Supply, Pvt. Henry R. Hewett and Pvt. Martin N. Mintz, gassed Oct. 29, 1918.

Documentation (with rosters): Fletcher, Arthur Lloyd (1920) History of the 113th Field Artillery, 30th Division. Raleigh, NC: History Committee of the 113th F. A.

114th (light) Field Artillery: Pvt. 1st Class Hilburn B. Evans.

115th (heavy) Field Artillery, 105th Trench Mortar Battery, 105th Ammunition Train: Junius J. Adams.

They completed most of their training at Camp Sevier, S.C. The land needed for field artillery training at Camp Sevier was almost completely cleared by the 113th using axes, saws, picks, and mattocks. Supplies were scarce and the winter of 1917-1918 was the worst the South had experienced since 1898 with terrible blizzards and high winds that ripped tents to shreds. Without winter clothing, training was difficult. The measles and mumps epidemic at the camp, which took the life of Brunswick County veteran Carl Jefferson Danford, added to the difficulties.

The Supply Company, which included Wagoner James Varney Gore, was responsible for 1,000 head of horses and mules, feeding, grooming, hauling bedding and manure daily, while also feeding and clothing the regiment: seven days hard labor

each week.

Despite the 59th Artillery Brigade being part of the 30th Division, they never served at the front with them. The Allies felt there were enough artillery and requested infantry and machine gun outfits first. The 59th Artillery Brigade was left behind when the 30th Division left for France. In May, they finally made preparations for transport.

Private Martin Mintz boarded the Armagh on May 27, 1918. The Armagh was a British freighter carrying beef from Australia and New Zealand and had been hastily converted into a transport, which made it an uncomfortable voyage. British food was served and was disagreeable to the men.

When reaching the coast of Ireland, dirigibles, airplanes, and destroyers kept watch over the Americans. They were greeted in Liverpool with enthusiasm.

After arriving in France, the 113th was overjoyed to have guns for all. However, since the American 3 gun was used for training, the men had to relearn everything to adjust to the French 75mm gun. In a few short weeks, they were ready for battle. The men hoped to rejoin the 30th Division, but were needed elsewhere.

Their first taste of battle was during the Battle of St. Mihiel, supporting the 89th Division. This was typically a quiet sector where raw troops were seasoned. This was about to change.

At 1 a.m. Sept. 12, 1918, the artillery began the barrage. The infantry were to come out of the trenches at 5 a.m. In those four hours, the American guns fired more than 1 million rounds.

When the infantry joined the battle, the artillery rolled a protective and offensive accompanying fire. If the Doughboys could not take out a concrete machine gun nest, or "pill-box," they called the artillery for assistance.

Here was where the artilleryman found a task to his liking and up across the fields and through the woods on a dead run would come a gun section, the men clinging for dear life to the bouncing carriages and lying low over the necks of their horses.

When deep trenches and wrecked roads and bridges would confront them in what had been No Man's Land and in the territory back of the old German lines, the horses were unhitched from the carriages and led, pulled and shoved across, while willing hands seized the guns and caissons and carried them

over places that looked to be impassable. There was no time to wait for the engineers to build roads and time and again on that memorable day the regiment did the impossible.

Because of the success at St. Mihiel, the Battle of the Argonne was prepared quickly. Typically, fighting did not occur at this time of year but waited until the end of winter. The Allies had chosen to take advantage of their momentum.

On Sept. 26, 1918, the 59th Brigade supported the 37th Division (Ohio) as the Doughboys began at 5 a.m. The Germans were caught napping.

German resistance stiffened the next day. The 37th Division was withdrawn on Sept. 30th, and the 32nd Division (Michigan and Wisconsin) relieved them. The 59th Artillery Brigade remained in position, this time with the 32nd Division.

On Oct. 6, the 42nd Division relieved the 32nd. The 59th Artillery Brigade was prepared to remain in position yet again but they were ordered to withdraw. After two weeks of desperate fighting, followed close after a forced march and the St. Mihiel battle, their horses were depleted. They had entered the forest with 1,050 horses and only 247 remained. The guns were no longer mobile and there were no horses to be had.

They marched from Oct. 9-12 to the Woevre Sector, SE of Verdun.

"Join the Army and see the world," some soldiers would yell down the line. "Join the artillery and RIDE!" others would reply sarcastically.

They were to rest and be re-equipped, but instead went into the line immediately, supporting the 79th Division until Oct. 25, then the 33rd Division (Illinois). The artillery was kept busy with harassing fire at night and protecting raiding parties. The Germans were doing the same, but with German regularity.

"The firing started at the same hour every night, the length of the bombardment never varied five minutes, and all of the points singled out for attention received practically the same number of shells every night."

Pvt. Martin Mintz was gassed Oct. 29, 1918. His name was listed in the 113th Field Artillery regimental history book. The Official List of Casualties includes his name. There were many other men gassed at the time. He was sent home in December with the other sick and wounded and honorably dis-

charged near the end of January, indicating he required more medical attention upon his arrival.

Martin Mintz returned to farming, married, and raised a family in Brunswick County. He passed away in 1975 at 87. He was laid to rest in Mintz Cemetery in Ocean Isle Beach with military honors.

The 113th Field Artillery is credited with 67 days occupying active sectors and firing. Only two divisions (1st and 3rd) are officially credited with longer service in active sectors.

The 59th Artillery Brigade served with the following American Divisions: 89th, 79th, 30th, 33rd, 37th, and 32nd.

If you would like to help us honor Brunswick County World War I veterans, go to caswellriflerange.com or email ftcaswellriflerange@gmail.com. Three hundred fifty Brunswick County World War I veterans have been honored to date.

Another roll calling event will be Saturday, April 6, at the rifle range starting at 11 a.m. The yearly fundraiser will be Saturday, May 4.

A monument was placed at the site of the rifle range in Caswell Beach Veterans' Day 2018 in honor of the men and women from Brunswick County who served

their country. A book, "To All Those Who Served in World War I from Brunswick County, N.C.," is to be published this year containing all 724 names, as well as a historical overview of the 1918 World War I Rifle Range Target Pit Storage Room.

We would like the public to review the names of the following Brunswick County men who died during World War I to make certain they have not forgotten anyone who may have perished or missed someone while researching names that should be on this list.

Killed in action: Pvts. 1st Class Walter S. Brock and Erastus I. Nelson, Pvts. Harvey T. Chadwick, Jimmie Griffin and Harry L. Pigott, Cpl. Herbert B. Ward

Died of wounds: Pvts. William C. Hewett and Benjamin B. Smith

Died of disease: Pvts. William F. Brooks, Carl J. Danford, Manning Hall, Claudie H. McCall, Elijah Milliken, Kendrick W. Outlaw, Cecil S. Pierce, Samuel C. Swain, Guy E. Watson, David Williams and Fred Wilson, Pvt. 1st Class John W. Carlisle, David L. Doshier (cook), Seaman James C. Edwards, Sgt. Robert G. Farmer

Norma Eckard of Caswell Beach is president of Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range Inc.