

ASHER MINER PUT IN COMMAND

From the History of 109th Field Artillery

(Continued from last week)

Usually the mere presence of troops was sufficient to maintain peace and quiet. There was an occasion in 1902 when a negro, who had been cooking for men trying to break the strike in a Plymouth colliery, decided he was going to visit Wilkes-Barre. As soon as he appeared outside the colliery a group of small boys congregated and called him various vile names and threw stones at him. The colored man was badly frightened and as the boys closed in he drew a knife and cut one of them. He then made his way back to the colliery but the mischief had been done. A mob bent on instant retaliation soon formed. A telephone message to our regimental headquarters brought the third battalion to the scene in the dark of night and in a train without lights. The mob became quiet as we approached and those in the rear could hear the rhythm of marching feet, the sharp business-like command to form line and the impressive sound of fixing bayonets. Rifles were then brought to the port and our companies moved forward slowly while the members of the mob fled as rapidly as they could in the opposite direction.

On another night someone had turned a railroad switch and nearly wrecked a freight train. A company was ordered out on patrol until dawn when it was decided the immediate need of their services had passed and they were relieved. As they were marching to the street car that would taken them back to quarters and a warm breakfast, it was in late October, they heard shrill screams and cries from a nearby colliery. The noise was unmistakably to the officer in command—it could only come from another mob. He double-timed his company for a half mile, hoping to arrive before too many people were hurt. The double time became a run for the noise increased as the company drew nearer to its source. As they made a column left around a large building they spied the source of the "unmistakable" noise. It was a yard full of idle mine mules braying at the morning sun. Officers and men halted without comment and laughed so loudly that the mules stopped braying. The members of the company thought they were fully recompensed, however, by a breakfast of ham and eggs generously provided for everybody by the colliery cook until the final reckoning came when Colonel Dougherty reprimanded the officers for accepting the hospitality of one of the parties to a dispute which they were trying to adjust.

1903-1904

In 1903 the Federal Government took cognizance of our existence by officially designating us "organized militia." From that time on to the present our organization has been prescribed for us and we keep up to it as closely as we can, for sometimes the changes have been quite rapid. That which started out as the hospital corps, for instance, became the sanitary detachment, medical detachment and medical department detachment in turn although their duties never changed. They still wore their Red Cross brassards, carried out their missions of mercy in war time without weapons for their defense and in peaceful times they harassed all of us about the necessity of sanitation and cleanliness for keeping us fit. We opened a new rifle range at Sugar Notch Gap in 1904.

Our brigadier commander, General Gobin, who had attained his rank of brigadier general by brevet in the Civil War included the following statements in his official report this year:

1905

"In preparing for this encampment I concluded first to eliminate board floors throughout, the expense of these had become burdensome and where they were owned by organizations the expense of transferring them and the trouble of handling them was equally so. The result was a decided improvement in my judgment and as a rule tents were kept cleaner and no private refrigerators under the floor were in existence. The men appeared just as well contented and few complaints were heard.

"It is difficult to break up old customs and yet the gradual increase in the use of lumber in National Encampments is one that is not only decidedly obnoxious to the old soldier, but is not in keeping with any reasonable purpose for which a National Guard Encampment is conducted. The quicker we get rid of the picnic feature of our National Guard Encampments the more rapidly will our military efficiency increase. It is efficiency we are seeking; it is what we are working for, and it can not be acquired by luxurious quarters and an effeminate surrounding."

At camp that year he marched us from Mt. Gretna to Bellaire, more than ten miles on a blazing day, and back by a longer road on the next.

The roads of Mt. Gretna seemed always dusty or muddy and one of the tasks of the quartermaster was to obtain enough civilian farmer wagon transportation to provide for the camp needs. As camps are

CAPT. DANIEL SHAVER, THEATRE OWNER, CALLED BY U. S. ARMY RESERVE

Latest of Shavertown's businessmen who have been in the U. S. Army Reserve to be called to service for a year is Daniel Shaver, owner of Shaver Theatre. He has been notified to report for duty June 3 at Carlisle. He will have the rank of captain. Later he will go to Jefferson Barracks, St. Louis, Mo., where he will be stationed with the Army Air Corps. Capt. Shaver served two years at the front with the United States Cavalry in France during the World War and has retained membership in the Army Reserve since that time. Mr. Shaver has two daughters aged 7 and 2½. Mrs. Shaver was the former Yvonne Coles of Washington, D. C.

usually "in the midst of the haying and harvest" there was an inevitable shortage at the making and breaking of camp. The wagons were of all varieties from the light spring wagon, which usually broke down, to the generously large farm wagon with the hay rigging, which was usually overloaded. As the drivers were civilians, the quartermaster would mark with chalk on the side of each wagon the organization to which it was assigned. It was not considered unethical to alter these designations, a custom which had the effect of still further confusing the situation. Much of the baggage was carried between camp and railroad siding on the backs of the men.

At this time there were two regiments of semi-military organization in the valley embarrassing us in the competition for recruits and wearing the same uniforms as we did. Their other attractions were a summer camp free of any serious responsibility and a lack of any obligation to any government.

1906

When Colonel Dougherty was promoted this year he was succeeded by Frank L. McKee who was then the lieutenant colonel. He had been a member of the regiment since 1888 and had served with the Plymouth company until he had been made a major.

At this time of our existence the Wilkes-Barre companies kept close to the public by battalion drills and parades, band concerts, basket ball games and dances. Admission was by invitations which, judiciously handled, gave us much dignified advertising and interested desirable young men in the regiment.

1907-1911

Asher Miner became our twenty-sixth commanding officer in 1907 after intermittent service with us since 1884. Those of us who sponsor this history knew him so well and loved him so sincerely that it is necessary for us to guard against over-praise. He was unusually loyal to his subordinates, a quality which endeared him to the officers and men of the regiment. He was the beau-ideal of the citizen soldier. He was wounded in action in the Meuse-Argonne battle during the World War and received the Distinguished Service Cross for his deeds of valor that day. While the first aid men were wiping the blood from a wound on his face he was turning over the affairs of the regiment to his successor. For his ser-

VICES in administering the regiment he was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal. That is enough history for any soldier to understand the kind of officer he was. While he was in command, the history of the regiment was his history.

The commanding officer arranged a trip to the Jamestown Exposition this year by obtaining considerable financial aid towards it by popular subscription so that the members of the regiment made the trip at a merely nominal expense. We traveled by train to Washington and by boat to Norfolk and held a number of formations while at Jamestown. Our band playing "Dixie" became popular with visitors.

Colonel Miner in his report advocated pay to men for attending drills in this year. Eighteen officers of the regiment spent several days at the War College in Washington at their own expense in 1909. Ordinarily, one can not learn much in two days but in this case the time was significant. The professional soldiers of that day were just learning the value of small maneuvers and the instructors at the War College who gave several days of intensive training to our officers were the leading exponents of the new idea in the Regular Army. It was a time of change in systems of training following the Spanish-American War and the organization of the first General Staff. Our officers came back with a realization of the value of tactical walks and map maneuvers and problems as military training.

A rifle range accessible to Wilkes-Barre and Pittston companies was established at Hilldale in 1910. We also made our acquaintance with the McCall incinerator at camp in this year. This was a system of incinerating excreta which was being tried out experimentally. "May we never meet or smell them again," was the official reaction of our regimental commander.

1912

At this time regimental commanders were elected by vote of the officers and when Colonel Miner decided that he could not accept the responsibility for another five-year term, he, with some other of the senior officers, selected one whom they wished as his successor. In this way Captain Dorrance Reynolds, a junior officer became our next colonel and commanded us for four years. The World War brought him back into service and he had an excellent war record thought not with our regiment. In the battle of Meuse-Argonne in 1918 Colonel Reynolds was second in command of the 112th Infantry when they made the attack on Chatel Chehery. After his regimental commander was killed and he himself was wounded he wrote an exceptionally clear message to his brigadier commander, which evoked the admiration of some of our officers on duty at the same brigade headquarters.

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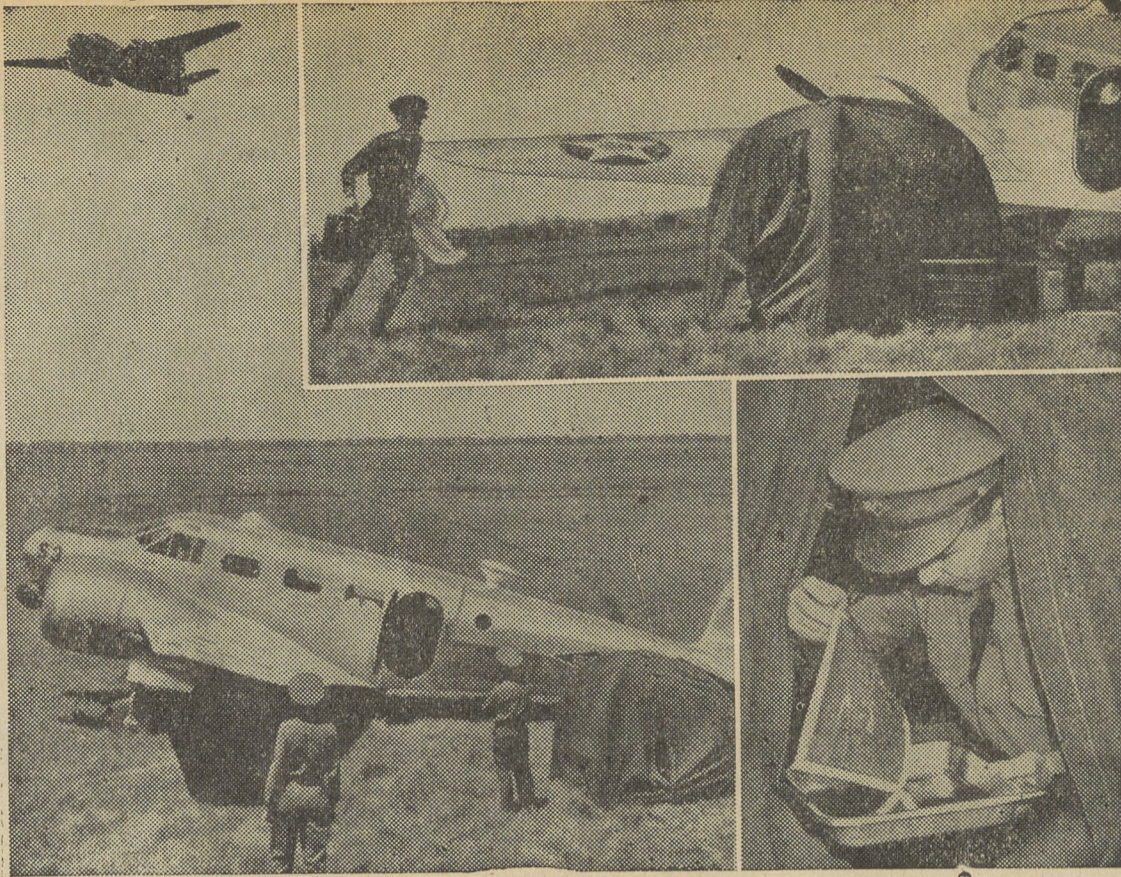
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U. S. Army Develops High-Speed Photo Service



A high-speed photo service for reconnaissance work, developed by the U. S. Army Air Corps, is demonstrated for ranking army officials at Wright Field, Ohio. Left, a photographic plane drops by parachute a batch of films of "enemy positions." Top right, Sergeant L. D. Vickers rushes the container of negatives to the portable dark room. Five minutes later Sergeant A. E. Matos produces a finished print. (Central Press)

WILLIAM H. CONYNGHAM HEADS SUPPLY COMPANY FIFTY YEARS

Among the Luzerne County business institutions that have enjoyed an enviable reputation for quality merchandise and fair dealing throughout the past fifty-two years is Eastern Pennsylvania Supply Company, headed by a man whose interest in, and love for the rural region makes him an outstanding citizen of the Dallas community.

The Eastern Pennsylvania Supply Company is one of the oldest and largest jobbing houses in Northeastern Pennsylvania. The business was originally organized as a partnership in 1889 under the name of the Pennsylvania Supply Company by Messrs. Woodward Leav- enworth and John N. Conyngham,

exemplary business executive of this community.

The business was established primarily to furnish supplies to mining companies in which the above gentlemen were financially interested.

Messrs. William H. Conyngham, R. M. Green, Fred Turner and David Gallen were subsequently admitted to partnership.

The present company was chartered under the laws of the State of Pennsylvania December, 1909. Between the time the company was organized and incorporated all the foregoing named gentlemen except William H. Conyngham withdrew from the company and Mr. Conyngham became the executive head of

the institution, and in that position still takes an active interest in the control of the business.

Under the direction of William H. Conyngham the company has materially expanded — occupying quarters in two distinct brick units, 56-62 South Pennsylvania avenue, and maintains a warehouse and large pipe shed on the opposite side of the street.

To the original line of mine supplies has been added a full line of plumbing, heating, mill, contractors' and tinners' supplies as well as paints, roofing materials, pumps and tools. Only reputable lines of merchandise are handled. The company caters to the territory comprising Luzerne County and the greater portion of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

The company employs eight house salesmen and six road salesmen. The executive personnel of the company includes Wm. H. Conyngham, president; H. N. Brees, vice presi-

Youths Accused Of Farm Thefts

Reapers, Plows, Tools Stolen To Sell As Junk

Charged with the theft of hundreds of pounds of farm machinery, motors and tools in the Hunlock Creek area, which they later sold to Wilkes-Barre junkyards, five youths ranging in age from 15 to 22 years were arrested last Friday by Shickshinny detail of the State Police.

Two of the youths, Martin Crane, 18, and his brother, Bruce Crane, 22, of Hunlock Creek R. F. D., were taken to Luzerne County prison while the other three, Harold Wolfe, 18, Hunlock Creek; Ted Spencer, 16, West Nanticoke, and Vernon Stackhouse, 15, also of West Nanticoke, were released in the custody of their parents.

Their arrest followed an investigation by Private N. G. Munson, who discovered a score of farmers had lost plows, reapers, binders, harrows and all types of tools while he was checking the theft of some pipe from the saw mill owned by Frank Covert.

The youths, State Police charged, broke into a school at Fairmount Springs last month and ripped doors and other metal off furnaces. In addition the youths admitted stealing motors from a saw mill at Huntington Mills and breaking into a gasoline station on the outskirts of Shickshinny on April 15.

Police said they learned the identity of the boys while checking theft of some pipe sold to a junkyard in Wilkes-Barre. They planned to pick up the Crane brothers but Martin Crane fled to Elmira. When he returned home last week they nabbed him and the four others.

H. D. Deemer, secretary; W. J. Stout, treasurer and general manager, and John M. Miles, assistant manager and director of sales. William H. Conyngham has been actively identified with the company for fifty years; H. N. Brees forty-seven years; W. J. Stout, thirty-one years; John M. Miles, thirty-six years; Elwood May, fourteen years, and many of the other employees from ten to twenty years.



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"DEAR BILL:

"I don't think I care to go out with you again. Most of last evening was wonderful, Bill. But the drive home spoiled everything.

"You behaved so nicely and acted so considerately up till the minute you got your hands on the wheel and we headed home. Then you suddenly were transformed into what seemed to me a bad-mannered and irresponsible gorilla.

"You yelled at people who had just as much right on the road as you. You disregarded white lines and signs put there for your safety. You scared my wits out by going at an absurd speed.

"That might have been considered smart once upon a

time, but I assure you it's silly and childish today. Call me stuffy and prudish if you like. But I don't relish dying quite yet.

"Nor do I want to get in one of those accidents where I am just hurt. I have sense enough to realize that you and the rest of the boys wouldn't be ringing my phone if my face and body were inexpertly rearranged by a smash-up in your automobile.

"So I don't think I'll go out with you again, Bill. At least not until you've grown up enough to behave decently as a driver, and not until you realize that you owe a certain responsibility to the person you ask to share your car with you."

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