

Camp Devens Soldiery Bristles With Eagerness To Get On Job

BY JOHN W. HAMMOND

Editor of Camp Devens Edition of Trench and Camp

Broadest, snappiest, healthiest—that's Camp Devens. Camp Devens, carved by Uncle Sam's magic, mighty jack knife out of the wooded uplands far off in northern Massachusetts. Its air is keen and tingling—some called it piercing last winter!—and its men are husky, healthy, steady soldiers of the great history-making, Hun-opposing National Army.

They are like the vigorous New England climate in which they have lived and drilled and trained during the past months, these soldiers of Camp Devens. And that enquiring look in their eyes comes from playing leap-frog with Nature through a winter as fierce as the blazing midnight sun itself can remember.

Through it all, Camp Devens has made firm its claim as the healthiest of all the National Army cantonments. The healthiest—don't forget that.

Although flashing winds and blood-freezing nights, frozen rain storms and bull dog blizzards did their best to upset the mettle of the olive drab boys who wintered here, the camp came through as the safest of them all, from a physical aspect.

Built in Record Time

One other thing is notable about Camp Devens. It was built in about the quickest time that a huge job of this sort was ever done. It holds the record among the other camps for that also.

Only those who saw this tract of 10,000 acres "before and after" can realize what happened in the four months between June 1 and September 30 of last year. But they know that Aladdin's lamp isn't in it with the big thing pulled off here in the name of Uncle Sam, the Stars and Stripes and victory for world democracy.

The old book of fairy tales is outdone and the Arabian Nights look like a wooden horse side-show beside a three-ring, big-top performance when compared to this evolution of a soldier city accommodating 45,000 men out of what was once only a wild, overgrown backwoods land, with emphasis on the WILD. The cantonment was finished before even a draft soldier passed in, and a hill over by the field artillery regiments is named Ley Hill to this day as a monument to the contractor who put the job across.

There's not a training camp in the land that can boast of such things as these. Every way you look at it, Camp Devens is a Colossus of national American achievement.

But the soldiers of Camp Devens are the most colossal thing about it. They bulk large, very large, as part of that "American reserve" force which the official dispatches from Washington talk about so serenely. They're full of the kind of vim that comes from a camp where even in these bright, sunny days of June there's a gay little breeze and the nights are far too keen to sleep with nothing thicker than mosquito netting for a covering.

They're full of something else—EAGERNESS. It's the EAGERNESS of the bloodhound, aroused to the scent and straining to slip the leash. It's the EAGERNESS of men growing more and more fit every day for

the task their country has called upon them to do and now longing intensely to get "in" and to do it.

"One day nearer France," remarked a Kitchen Police with a grin, as he polished a huge pan after evening mess. And his fellow "police-men" nodded silently, with a bit more determined look on their faces.

It's the spirit of Camp Devens. They're not exactly counting the days up here, but every day passed is dismissed with some degree of satisfaction as another step gained along the great, momentous trail that has the red glare of battle at its farther end.

They Have a Good Time

These things are hidden from outward observation as a rule. They lie deep behind the laughter and the fun and the long, hard grinds of work that fill the days of the men of Devens. Every minute is taken up, from reveille to taps, and it's not all taken up with the work of military preparation, either. Not a bit of it.

The nightly throngs in the Y. M. C. A. and K. of C. buildings, the Smilge parties at the Liberty Theatre, the soldiers of aesthetic nature who gather on the high bluffs to enjoy these northern sunsets, above all the hooting, yelling, jumping crowds that watch a score of ball games every evening as patrons of the three Twilight Leagues which embrace the entire camp—these show that the life of a soldier in training at Camp Devens is as lusty and as zestful as the bounding, surging life-blood of the nation itself.

This spring an innovation blew into camp. I say "blew-in" advisedly, intentionally and literally; in fact, I say it with malice aforethought. For the visitor that has thus arrived in unceremonious style is the very genius of all the dust storms that ever stalked across this whirling planet in all the ages past and gone.

When Uncle Sam carved out Camp Devens, he had to carve it out of a sandy soil. There never was much real vegetation here, just a scrubby, tangy undergrowth and the inevitable evergreens. The camp is too new to boast lawns, except a nicely grassed terrace in front of division headquarters, and so—and so—when the Spring winds began to blow the Spring dust began to whirl. It's not as bad as it was a few weeks ago when the camp streets were still un-oiled. There were days at that time when great clouds of yellow dust moved somewhat faster than double quick and in such dense mass formation that one barracks could not be seen from another just across the company street.

Those were days when sentries were like to have choked to death and when drill squads had difficulty in making out the figure of their commanding officers, standing directly in front of them.

But it's real life it's army life up here in the cool vastness of Camp Devens! And the men of the seventy-sixth division, who some day will cheer when the order comes to move, will hold Old Glory up with the best of all that America has among her unflinching-defenders.

Let other camps produce better soldiers if they can!



"Stick to it, boys! Give 'em hell! They can't drive you out! No Boche ever lived who could lick an American!"
Lieut. Watson.

"America is the great menace they are seeking to avoid. We, seeing the effect of the word on the Germans, rally closer around the device, 'Count on America!'"
The French Press.

"I have seen some of the American army on the western front and no finer, cleaner, healthier, more vigorous body of men ever shouldered a gun in any cause since the beginning of the world."
Mr. Preston Gibson.

"We rejoice in your gallant deeds. As on the seas you never have failed us, so on the land our army will not fail you."
Field Marshal Haig.

"Their morale is excellent. Their spirits are high; their courage is just what it ought to be and they are absolutely confident."
Herbert L. Pratt.

"The only thing to do is to do the best we can—all of us—to win this war."
General Leonard Wood.



WE CAN'T USE THEM JUST NOW.

SPORT SHIRTS. WHITE TROUSERS. BOW TIES. GOLF CAPS. STRAW HATS. PALM BEACH SUITS. DIAMOND STICK PINS. SPATS. GAMES. PANAMAS. WHITE COLLARS. FANCY SOCKS. CHAMOIS GLOVES. WAILETS. CUFFLINKS. SAVING BANK. WHITE SHOES.

Justice

GERMANY may think in terms of man power and gun power for forty years and yet we cannot fear the ultimate worst, because we sing The Battle Hymn of the Republic—"God's truth is marching on," and we believe it; it is a part of us; it is as real as our mountains and our rivers. The only real blow that we could suffer in this war, or any other, would be the destruction of this faith. It explains to us our history and those whom we call our leaders. Where it comes from or whither it will lead us we have not stopped to inquire. Like the salt that savors the sea, it has washed in from all lands. Man's spirit everywhere calls out that Justice shall be his, and Justice means understanding, and understanding means sympathy, and sympathy means brotherhood, and brotherhood means democracy—and so we come to the meaning of the great movement a part of which we are.

FRANKLIN K. LANE.

SOME GUN

A Boston man claims to have invented a powerful, centrifugal gun capable of firing 24,000 rounds of steel missiles a minute, or 555 a second. The weapon, he says, is to be driven by an electrical motor and the ammunition is to be fed through a funnel.

SEND IT HOME

The home folks want to know what's going on in your camp or cantonment, how you spend your time, what you do during working and leisure hours. "Trench and Camp" is published for the purpose of telling them. Mail this paper home regularly.

W.E. SHARPS, INC.