

MSS 401 - World War I Officer's Diary

Summary

This diary likely begins on January 1st, 1919 but April 6th is likely the first date that the author recorded an entry in this diary. The reasoning behind this logic is that by January 1st the author was in Luxembourg which was by January 1918 firmly behind the front lines of the Central Powers. However, by January 1919 American troops were inside of Luxembourg. Another major date that gives us an indication of the time of this journal is the official cessation of hostilities in the Western Front on November 11th, 1918 where the author mentions that the fighting has stopped. The last important dates that help establish the timeline for this journal is that by April 7th, the author is likely departing from Charlotte, North Carolina, and by April 12th departing from Jersey City, New Jersey to Liverpool, United Kingdom where he arrives by April 21st. These dates give the most logical sense that the author started their journal on April 6th 1918 and wrote in it until December 31st 1918. Instead of using a new journal the author continued writing in the same journal for the first three full months of 1919. This also matches the movement of the author's company from France to Luxembourg on Dec 11th, where they were present until March 25th of that year.

Other entries of significance include a mention by the author on April 9th, that the first battalion was to accompany Marshal Philippe Pétain who was Commander-in-Chief of the entire French Army at the time. After April 25th the author appears to be in training in the Bur-sur-Aube area of France. By May 26th the company passed inspection by General John J. Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Forces. It appears that by June 29th the author mentions witnessing combat for the first time. By July 15th the author appeared to join the front at Mouron, France. Descriptions in September match the Battle of Saint-Mihiel and placement of the author during, and after this time indicate the division were likely participants at the battle. On the date of March 7th the author mentioned acting as counsel at the trial of Clifford A Fairchild.

Events

January 1919

Jan 1st New Year's Day party in Oberkorn, Luxembourg

Jan 7th travel to Esch-sur-Alzette?, Luxembourg

Jan 19th travel to Differdange, Luxembourg

Jan 24th travel to Differdange, Luxembourg

Jan 27th travel to Esch-sur-Alzette?, Luxembourg for demonstration and lecture on tanks

Feb 19th Oberkorn, Luxembourg horse show author won first

Feb 21st Brigade horse show in Esch-sur-Alzette?, Luxembourg

Feb 26th trip to Luxembourg City, Luxembourg

Mar 7th acted as counsel at trial of Clifford A Fairchild

Mar 17th Arrival in Paris, France

Mar 20th Day in Metz, France

Mar 21st return to Oberkorn, Luxembourg

Mar 24th departure from Oberkorn, Luxembourg
Mar 25th arrival in Paris, France
Mar 26th arrival in Monfort?, France
Mar 27th arrival in Tuffé, France

April 1918

April 6th chronological first entry in journal
April 7th departure from Charlotte, North Carolina
April 9th 1st Battalion? To escort Marshal Philippe Pétain
April 10th 20 men deserted before departure to Europe from Jersey City.
April 12th departure from Jersey City, New Jersey.
April 21st dock at Liverpool, United Kingdom
April 22nd departure for South Hampton, United Kingdom
April 25th Arrival in Bar-Sur-Aube, France?
 March to the village of Baroville, France.
May 2 trip to Bar-Sur-Aube, France
May 12th trip to Beurville, France
May 18 trip to Troyes, France - met French Secret Service agent on train en-route
May 26th company passed inspection by General Pershing
May 30th division called to the front, German advances at Sors, France? Reported.
June 1st Battalion split up a and b to front and other companies sent to the 61st
 Travel to Bar-sur-Aube, France
June 2nd Travel to Châtillon-sur-Seine, France
 Travel to Troyes, France
June 4th trip to Châtillon-sur-seine, France
June 29th first indications of combat in journal
July 1st arrival to Epinal?, France
July 3 movement to Brigade HQ at Arches, France
July 4th celebration in Epinal?, France
July 5th return to Dounoux, France -likely where unit is located
July 7th visit to Epinal?, France
July 12th- front order, left Dounoux, France to Arches, France and then possibly to Réville?, France
July 15th trucks from Binarville, France deliver guns to the front, company made trek up a mountain to Mouron, France, relieved French forces in the trench
July 19th, hiked from gun positions at Malfosse, France to Saint-Prayel, France to obtain information about new gun positions
July 21st traveled with company to Saint-Prayel, France
July 23rd 1st platoon to set up gun position near Étival-Clairefontaine?, France
July 26th Captain Patrick and Lt. Peters traveled to Lajus, France to look at new gun positions, company moved to Lajus, France and started advancing toward Les Colins, France author was separated from company and was forced to return to Lajus, France and regroup
July 27th arrived at Les Colins, France and relieved French troops
July into August, fighting around Les Colins, France

August 12th quartered for the night in town of Claire Fontaine, France
August 20th trip to St. Die, France
August 22nd author recommended to captaincy
August 23rd left Claire Fontaine, in car to Dounoux, France traveled to Epinal, France in the evening with Chaplin
August 29th traveled in car to Charmes, France
August 30th arrived in Saint-Remimont, France
September 2nd left Saint-Remimont, France and arrived in Lorry, France
September 12th diary entry consistent with details of Battle of Saint-Mihiel
September 19th travel from either Martincourt or Manoncourt, France to Villey-Saint-Étienne, France
September 20th author celebrated birthday in town of Villey-Saint-Étienne, France
September 21st travel Toul, France
September 28th Author left Villey-Saint-Étienne, France
Blank pages between September 30th to October 19th
Oct. 20th entry mentions promotion to Captain that occurred on Oct. 7th
Oct. 25th took command of company D
Oct 26th company moved to Aincreville, France
Blank pages between October 29th to November 10th
Nov 11th End of the war- Armistice Day
Travel to Charmois Chatteau, France and then to Lion-Devant-Dun to celebrate
Nov 24th orders to move to Milly, France
Dec 11th arrived in Garnich, Luxembourg
Dec 18th arrived in Oberkorn, Luxembourg
Dec 25th company celebrates Christmas
Dec 26th trip to Differdange, Luxembourg
Dec 30th travel to Esch-sur-Alzette?, Luxembourg for division inspection
Dec 31st New Years Eve party with landlady