

147th Field Artillery doctors display heroism in World War 1



Near Bois de Bantheville, France the 89th Division, of which the 147th Field Artillery was a part, fought farther into the country as the war with Germany was nearing an end. It was at this time that two officers in the 147th Field Artillery were recognized, not only by their unit, but by the allied soldiers who saw them in action.

Two South Dakota National Guard medical officers, Capt. Edward W. Jones, of the 1st Battalion and Capt. Roy F. Sackett of the 2nd Battalion were written about by their peers. Of Capt. Jones one of Division officers wrote, "In tribute to our little medical man, the danger was never too great for him to go to the aid of the man needing him. Prompted by duty alone and never protecting himself he risked his life time and time again and deserved a cross or a crown, but I presume he never got either."

On August 18, 1918 Capt. Sackett and six enlisted men from the Medical Section were gassed near Courville. One of the gassed enlisted medics was Pvt. 1st Class Walter H. Morgans who was the father of a well-known retired Watertown, South Dakota National Guardsman, Master Sgt. James Morgans.

From June 8, 1918 until August 21, 1918 the 147th Field Artillery remained on the front. During that period one officer and seven enlisted men were killed, two officers and 20 enlisted wounded, and eight officers and 49 enlisted men were gassed.

Another commander gassed was Captain Eugene Foster who had a bad case of mustard gas, and was hospitalized for a month.

The loss of horses was appalling. Battery D alone, between August 1st and August 25th, lost 14 horses to shellfire, and 30 more were evacuated because of wounds. Protective masks were issued for horses.

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