THE WOODSMEN OF THE AEF: A Bibliographical Note

by David A. Clary

Regrettably, there has been no major study of the forestry units of the United States Army in World War I. The best accounts are the chapters on the subject in the two standard histories of engineers operations in France during the war: Historical Report of the Chief Engineer, Including All Operations of the Engineer Department, American Expeditionary Forces, 1917-1919 (Washington: GPO, 1919), pp. 377-89, and William Barclay Parsons, The American Engineers in France (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1920), pp. 153-66. Many brief reports on wartime forestry units may be found in contemporary forestry, forest industry, and military engineering periodicals during and after the war. See also the chapter titled “Forest and Farm Regiments” in Francis A. Collins, The Fighting Engineers: The Minute Men of Our Industrial Army (New York: Century Co., 1918), pp. 54-74. Although Collins’s book is mostly inspirational domestic propaganda, it illustrates the translation of the economic and industrial structure of the United States into a variety of military organizations largely new to American military experience.


On the Services of Supply, of which the forestry units were a part, see Johnson Hapgood, The Services of Supply: A Memoir of the Great War (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1927), and Organization of the Services of Supply, American Expeditionary Forces ... prepared by the Historical Branch, War Plans Division, General Staff (Washington: GPO, 1921). On the Spruce Production Division, Aviation Section, Signal Corps, see the official account titled History of Spruce Production Division, United States Army and United States Spruce Production Corporation (Washington: U.S. Army, [1920]). A souvenir of interest is Pictorial Review of World’s War Activities, Spruce Production Division, U.S. Army, Oregon & Washington: Spruce Helped Win the War ... (Portland: A. M. Prentiss, 1918). A scholarly work bearing on this subject is Harold M. Hyman, Soldiers and Spruce: Origins of the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen (Los Angeles: Institute of Industrial Relations, UCLA, 1963).

I have been unable to locate any published unit histories or souvenirs of units other than the 10th and 20th Engineers (merged into the 20th in 1918), nor of other units identified as having been assigned to forestry or firewood work.