

THE ORIGINS OF THE REGIMENT

THE 71st Infantry Regiment was founded in the midst of an intense revival of American patriotism in the year 1850.

After the War of 1812, wave after wave of immigrants came to these shores in quest of democracy. They were a sturdy and ambitious people and they endeavored to secure all of the blessings of freedom and liberty denied to them in the Old World. They made tremendous drives in every direction and their rapid economic and political progress naturally caused some concern among the native elements.

In one respect these foreigners remained un-American. They clung together in separate racial groups and inhabited separate parts of the city. When military units became popular around 1847 because of the excitement caused by the Mexican War, these foreign elements formed entire militia regiments, composed exclusively of Frenchmen, Irishmen, Italians and Germans.

The native Americans observed these things with alarm and took political measures to guard their heritage. Someone asked a startling question "Why not an American regiment?" This proposal was made by William B. Ferguson at a political convention at 340 Broadway, New York City, in the fall of 1849.

The 71st Regiment, then known as the American Rifles was actually brought to life at the Eagle Drill Rooms, corner Delancey and Christy Streets on June Second 1850. The unit consisted of four companies and was attached as a battalion to the First Regiment of Cavalry, New York State Militia. Only native born Americans were admitted to the American Rifles for the first decade of its existence. In 1853 it adopted its now famous motto, "Pro Aris, Et Pro Focis" and changed its name to the American Guard.

From its very inception it has served the State of New York and the Nation as well. It responded to every call for duty sounded by helpless civil authorities and it served in every American war fought during its existence. The Regiment has the tradition of always being among the first called to duty. Its military record is well known to the War Department and its constant efficiency and alertness are certified in every annual report. The name "71st Regiment" is a by-word known in every one of the forty-eight states.

Its Honours State

Dead Rabbit Riot; Quarantine Riots, 1858; Draft Riots, 1863; Orange Day Riots, 1877; Buffalo Riots, 1892; Brooklyn Riots, 1895.

National

CIVIL WAR—Alexandria, Va., May 24, 1861; Aquia Creek, May 31, 1861; Matthis Point, Va., June 27th, 1861; Bull Run, Va., July 21, 1861; Tenallytown, D. C., 1862; Washington, D. C. 1862; Gettysburg Campaign, 1863; Kingston, Pa., June 26, 1863; near Harrisburg, Pa., June 29, 1863.

SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR—San Juan Hill, July 1, 1898; Siege of Santiago de Cuba, July 2,—July 17, 1898; La Guasimas, July 24, 1898.

WORLD WAR I—3040 men of the Seventy-First took part in that war. The Regiment was first called for duty on the Mexican Border in 1916 and was mustered in for the World War on March 30, 1917. 350 of its men were transferred to the 165th Infantry (69th Infantry Regiment); 1375 of its men and 22 officers were transferred to the 105th Infantry; 158 of its men were transferred to the 106th Field Artillery; 87 men to the 102nd Engineers; 12 men to the 106th Infantry 9 men to the 105th Field Artillery; the residue of the 71st Regiment was designated the 54th Pioneer Infantry. As part of the 105th Infantry the Regiment served in:

BATTLES—Hindenberg Line (Vicinity of Bony) France, Sept. 29-30, 1918; La Selve River (Vicinity of St. Souplet) France, Oct. 17, 1918; Jone De Mer Ridge (Vicinity of Abre Guernon), France, Oct. 18, 1918.

ENGAGEMENTS—Vierstraat Ridge (Vicinity of Mont Kemmel), Belgium, Aug. 31 to Sept. 2, 1918; The Knoll, Guillemont Farm, Quenemont Farm, France, Sept. 27, 1918; St. Maurice River, (Vicinity of Catillon) France, Oct. 19-20, 1918.

MINOR ACTIVITIES—East Poperinghe Line, Belgium, July 9 to Aug. 20, 1918; Dickenbush Sector, Belgium, Aug. 21 to 30, 1918. As the 54th Pioneer Infantry, the Regiment served in:

Meuse-Argonne Offensive, Sept. 25 to Nov. 11, 1918. Garrisoned German towns near Wittlich, Dec. 22, 1918. Garrisoned German towns near Coblenz. (Army of Occupation) Dec. 30, 1918.

The Regimental Motto

As used in the coat of arms of the Seventy-First Infantry, "pro aris et pro focis" may be interpreted as: "For our freedom and our home," or "For our country and our families."

"Strike—till the last armed foe expires;

"Strike—for your altars and your fires;

"Strike—for the green graves of your sires, God and your Native Land."

The Regimental Flag and Insignia

Shield: Azure, between two crescents in fess or a fasces of the like.

Crest: That for the regiments of the New York National Guard; on a wreath of azure the full rigged ship "Half Moon" all proper.

Motto: Prepared to guard.

The fasces on the Regimental insignia stands for authority and guardianship; the crescents, readiness and preparedness; hence "Prepared to Guard." The eagle in the flag represents the Government; the ship, the State; the fasces and crescents, the Regiment.

Captured Town.

