

## **JACK DILLARD COLLECTION, CAMP GREENE RECORDS, 1917-1919**

**9.3 cu.ft. (4 document boxes, 3 flat boxes, 17 panoramic photographs, 12 posters)**

### **ABSTRACT**

Camp Greene was a training camp for American soldiers during World War I, 1917-1918. Located about three miles west of uptown Charlotte, North Carolina, it quickly grew to surpass the size of the city, reaching 60,000 troops at its height. The majority of soldiers came from the northern states, in particular Massachusetts, and although segregated, included both black and white troops. The first troops arrived in September 1917, and continued until the armistice was signed on November 11, 1918. Camp Greene closed shortly thereafter, and all structures and furnishings were to be removed by March 1919.

This collection contains correspondence, newsletters, publications, photographs, postcards, posters, and artifacts.

### **ACCESS**

This collection is open to the public without restriction. The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material.

**Note:** some artifacts, posters, and panoramic photographs may require special handling. Please contact the Robinson Spangler Carolina Room at 704-416-0150 or [ncrstaff@cmlibrary.org](mailto:ncrstaff@cmlibrary.org), if interested in viewing these materials.

### **PREFERRED CITATION**

Cite as: Jack Dillard Collection, Camp Greene Records, 1917-1919, Robinson-Spangler Carolina Room, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library

### **ACQUISITION**

Presented by Jack Dillard, December 2008.

Processed by Hannah Cox, 2014.

## **HISTORICAL NOTE**

Camp Greene, named for Revolutionary War hero General Nathaniel Greene, was one of 32 camps in the United States dedicated to training World War I draftees. Originally encompassing 2,400 acres, it occupied the area between what is now Wilkinson Boulevard and Tuckaseegee Road. Charlotte beat out many larger cities for the training camp, largely due to the lobbying efforts of such city fathers and business leaders as Zebulon Taylor, David Ovens, Cameron Morrison, and Joseph Garibaldi, among others. Charlotte's mild winters, access to transportation systems, large source of water, and available land encouraged its selection as well.

Work began on Camp Greene late in the summer of 1917, and was completed in less than ninety days. The first troops began arriving in September of 1917, and would continue through the end of the war, reaching a peak of 60,000, which was twice the population of Charlotte at the time. Charlotteans welcomed the soldiers with open arms, providing the men with friendliness and hospitality. Many of the soldiers would remember this thoughtfulness later, and returned to Charlotte following the war's end to marry local women and settle in the area.

Although many of the men training at Camp Greene were from northern states, they had been sent to Charlotte for the more favorable climates during winter. The winter of 1917-1918 proved to be the worst on record in over fifty years, however, with severe cold, snow, and ice storms. Once the ground melted, mud nearly one foot in depth bogged down men, animals, and machines, and disrupted training greatly. The Influenza outbreak of 1918 the following fall added to the difficulties of camp life, and by October, everyone was quarantined for two weeks to prevent the further spread of illness. Nearly three hundred soldiers had died of influenza by the end of the outbreak.

Following the war's end on November 11, 1918, Camp Greene closed quickly. A farewell dinner was held on December 19, 1918 by the Headquarter Company of the Fourth Division Recruit Camp. All structures and furnishings were set for removal by March 15, 1919. By April, little of the camp was left, and the area was returned to fields and a few vacant buildings. Many of these were torn down through Charlotte's expansion to the west during the 1970s.

While Camp Greene only operated from September 1917-early 1919, it left a lasting legacy on the community. The population swelled with returning servicemen who had fond memories of Charlotte and her people and chose to relocate after the war's end, as well as the laborers who helped build Camp Greene and stayed to continue the city's expansion. Today there are few references that Camp Greene existed, although Dowd

House, a private residence that served as the camp headquarters, and Remount Road, referencing the stables where the cavalry officers saddled their horses, remain.

## REFERENCES

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library, Robinson-Spangler Carolina Room. "The Doughboys & Camp Greene." <http://www.cmstory.org/doughboys>

Dillard, Jack. "Camp Greene—A WWI Crossroads for Thousands." *Charlotte Viewpoint*, 2012. <http://www.charlotteviewpoint.org/article/2900/Camp-Greene--A-WWI-crossroads-for-thousands>

## RELATED MATERIALS

*Camp Greene* [electronic resource]: *Photos from the Collection of Jack Dillard*. Charlotte: Jack Dillard, 2003. (CALL NUMBER: NCR 940.37567)

Consolidated Engineering Company. *Camp Greene Ledgers Collection: Journal Book*. (CALL NUMBER: NCR VAULT 2)

Dillard, Jack. *City of Canvas* [DVD]: *The Story of Camp Greene, a Film*. Charlotte: Deuce Chaps Production, 2011. (CALL NUMBER: NCR 940.3756 C581 DVD)

*History, 20<sup>th</sup> Century-World War I (1914-1918), Camp Greene*. (CALL NUMBER: NCR VERTICAL FILES)

*History, 20<sup>th</sup> Century-World War I (1914-1918), Camp Greene, 116<sup>th</sup> Engineers*. (CALL NUMBER: NCR VERTICAL FILES)

*History, 20<sup>th</sup> Century-World War I (1914-1918), Camp Greene, Festivities, etc.* (CALL NUMBER: NCR VERTICAL FILES)

*History, 20<sup>th</sup> Century-World War I (1914-1918), Camp Greene, Publications*. (CALL NUMBER: NCR VERTICAL FILES)

Johnson, Jane, compiler. *Selected Records of Camp Greene, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, 1917-1919*. Charlotte: Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, 2010. (CALL NUMBER: NCR 940.3756 J67s)

*Trench and Camp* [microform]. (CALL NUMBER: NCR 940.37567 FILM)

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

The Camp Greene Records consist of items relating to Camp Greene and the soldiers stationed there from 1917-1919. Encompassing primarily the years 1917-1919, the series includes Correspondence, Ephemera, Publications, Postcards, Photographs, Artifacts, and Posters.

**Correspondence, 1917-1918**, consists of a few letters sent to and from soldiers in camp.

**Ephemera, 1917-1918**, includes items such as a soldier's pass and a punch card for a store.

**Publications, 1917-1944**, comprises publications primarily from 1917-1918, with one exception of a related item from 1944. These include such items as campaign brochures and fliers; camp, division, general, and war histories; newsletters; and songbooks.

**Photographs, 1917-1919** includes small, personal photographs such as soldier's pictures, Camp Greene, and Charlotte or nearby areas visited. It also encompasses large, panoramic prints portraying a large portion of camp, and certain companies or divisions.

**Postcards, 1917-1918**, contains postcards depicting soldier life at Camp Greene, Charlotte and the local area, general army issue, photographic postcards, and humorous postcards. Many are blank, although several were sent to or from soldiers stationed at Camp Greene.

**Artifacts, 1917-1919**, consists of a number of different items: buttons, coins, felt pennants, handkerchiefs, letter opener, pins, prophylactics, table-toppers, and wall-hangings.

**Posters, 1917-1919**, comprises posters from war campaigns, a Roll of Honor, an enlarged newspaper highlighting the closure of Camp Greene, and reproduction prints for war campaigns.

## **SERIES LIST**

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<i>History of the Third Division, United States Army in the World</i>	2	2

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