

Pigeon and Pigeoneer Facts - 1943

The Army's Signal Corps used pigeons for communications from WWI, and into the Korean War; to this end, the Pigeon Service was active at Fort Monmouth until its discontinuance in 1957. On 1 October 1943, an article titled "A Pigeon Company Reports" appeared in *The Signal Corps Message*. This article shares some facts about the 828th Signal Pigeon Replacement Company. The 828th Signal Pigeon Replacement Company at this point in time, was stationed at Camp Edison, an outpost to Fort Monmouth that was a former National Guard Encampment located near Sea Girt, NJ. It had been leased by the Signal Corps for a training center.

Facts noted included:

The majority of the pigeoneers, or "men", as the article states, had handled pigeons since they were boys and many of them followed in the footsteps of their fathers.

Mexico, Brazil, Great Britain, Canada, and Australia had sent officers to the 828th for training.

All of the "men" had gone through basic training, and were qualified as Soldiers, and they continued to have drill periods each week.

The Commanding Officer, MAJ Joseph F. Spears had attended University of Kentucky, and formerly was in the infantry.

The Company had recently taken part in its second parade and had taken first honors.

In addition to training pigeons as messengers, the Company had its own breeding station.

Training at the 828th included a course in handling of a shot gun; each platoon was issued this weapon for use against hawks-a traditional enemy of the pigeon.

Doves of peace that were found in possession of Italian prisoners of war in North Africa were turned over to the 828th.

The Company had an excellent "spirit de corps with every officer and "man" being interested in doing the best possible job.