Return of the 807th Pioneer Regiment, 1919

On the return of members of the 807th Pioneer Infantry to Camp Dix, NJ. Most likely collected for W. E. B. Du Bois' proposed book "The Black Man in the Wounded World".

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Our boys overseas are gradually being returned. This week we welcomed back members of the 307th Pioneer Infantry. This regiment was formed in Camp Dix late in July and was sent overseas in September. They arrived in time to take part in that great Meuse Argonne Offensive. The band of this regiment has received unusual honors and had the distinction of being the first Army Post Band, under Lieutenant General Liggett. Some of the boys from this organization held the coveted Croix de Guerre. Bravery, cheerfulness in the performance of duty have been the marked characteristics of this regiment. The boys have suffered much, slept in rain and mud and a number of times been short of rations.

We take it as a compliment to our race, in respect to their physical fitness and fine physique of our men, to know that from living under such conditions and without any training they could qualify for the A.E.F. athletic meets and win honors. Sergeant Harvey Butler of Montclair, N.J., who is well known in the athletic circle, as an all round athlete, and Corporal Philander Clark of East Orange, hold the honor of being the fastest runners in the Advance Section of the A.E.F. and First Sergeant Edgar Thompson of N.J. as the champion discus thrower.

Early in the spring Butler, Thompson and Clark went to the city of Dijon to take part in the big athletic meet which the A.E.F. was holding. At this meet soldiers had journeyed from all over the A.E.F., white, Jew and Gentile, met on that field. In the midst of thousands of spectators Clark won the hundred yards dash in ten and two fifths seconds; Butler pushing a close second. In the high jump, after an exciting contest, Butler won first place, clearing the bar at five feet four inches. In the discus contest Thompson, who was the All American and American record holder, competed with Lieutenant Byrd, scholastic record holder, and Chaplin Thompson, all round record holder of America. Thompson threw the discus one hundred twenty seven feet six inches, giving him first place. The French were not modest in their praises for these champions.

At Launse they carried away unusual honors. Butler, Clark and Thompson were sent to Le Mans, one of the largest embarkation camps in France, to qualify for the Paris meet, they were called to Paris, but the regiment being under sailing orders, the boys were deprived of winning further honors for themselves.

We welcome all our boys from overseas and are glad they represented us in every enterprise of the A.E.F.

Boys we salute you.