Hans Jorgensen

Hans Jorgen Jorgensen was born 2 May 1895 in Horsens, Denmark to Jens Peter Jorgensen (1877-1960) and Anna Albertine Jensen (1871-1944). Hans' father "Peter" came to America in 1907. Hans came over with his mother Anna, sister Karen (born in 1901), and brother Laue (born in 1904) in 1908. At that time, Hans' father was living in Farmington, Dakota County, Minnesota.

Hans registered for the draft on 5 June 1917 at Farmington. He was a Danish citizen but had declared his intention to become a naturalized U.S. citizen. Before the War, he worked as a farm hand in Farmington.

Hans was drafted as part of the first quote and was inducted at Hastings on 21 September 1917 as a private in the Signal Corps of the Regular Army. The Signal Corps was responsible for creating and maintaining communications for the Army. Originally assigned to Company A of the 108th Field Signal Battalion, 33rd Division, he served along the U.S. southern border during the time of the Mexican Border War. He was in the 109th Field Signal Battalion at Camp Cody in December 1917. He was stationed at Camp Logan near Houston, Texas from 21 September 1917 until 13 September 1918, when he was transferred to Camp Merritt, New Jersey until 13 October 1918, and then was sent to France with the 109th FSB, 34th Division, near the close of WWI.

Hans embarked from Hoboken, New Jersey on the SS *Baltic* on 13 October 1918, arriving at Liverpool on the 26th. In one of Hans' letters to his parents on 15 December 1918, he wrote, "On the way over we were attacked by two submarines but our destroyers done some quick shooting and both were sunk. The destroyers found some mines which had been laid for us, and they were blown up. Our ships carried a lot of ammunition and we were warned before we left New York that the subs were waiting for us."

Stationed in France, he participated in the action in St. Mihiel with the American Expeditionary Forces. "He landed in France in September last year [actually October] and after discovering his outfit would not be sent to the front line as a unit he asked for a transfer [to Co. A., 108th FSB] and got it," the *Dakota County Tribune* reported. "With this outfit he worked on the wireless in the second line trench, where he was stationed when the armistice was signed. Outside of a light shrapnel wound, he came out without any injuries."

A letter written by Hans to his parents on 5 December 1918 was published in the *Dakota County Tribune*. He said that he could now disclose his location. He said he and other troops were

staying at Trajon, a small town between Verdun and Metz, “and like all other towns around here, it has been shelled pretty badly and some of the buildings are partly gone, while others are completely wrecked…” The troops were staying in homes of French people who had moved when the Germans approached.

Hans was promoted from Private to Horseshoer on 18 April 1919, with his last assignment being with the Casual Detachment #591, Demobilization Group. Likely he was involved with handling some of the 1.1 million horses the U.S. had sent overseas for the War effort. Hans returned to the States in May 1919 and was discharged from service on 1 June 1919 at Camp Dodge, Iowa.

In the 1920 census, Hans and wife Florence are recorded in Empire Township, Dakota County. Hans worked as a locomotive fireman for the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway. He worked for the railroad his entire career. Hans and Florence lived initially in Farmington, then moved to Minneapolis and later to Richfield. They had no children.

Hans Jorgensen died of pneumonia on 18 April 1967 at the age of 71 and is buried at Fort Snelling National Cemetery in Minneapolis, Hennepin County, Minnesota alongside his wife, Florence (1901-1980). When he died, he was a resident of 6501 21st Avenue South in Richfield, Hennepin County, Minnesota. His obituary said he was a retired railroad engineer. He was survived by his wife, Florence; brother Louie; and sister, Mrs. Karen Steele, the latter two of Minneapolis.

Note: Note also in the files the detailed timeline prepared by the researcher.