

George Frank Hastings

George was born on January 20th 1885 in Vancouver Washington to natural born citizens of the United States. He moved to Minnesota to find work as a lineman working for the State Telephone Company located in St. Paul. After finding a job George took up residence in the Continental Hotel in Saint Paul. In his endeavors to locate to a different location no family came with him and his nearest relatives were back in Oregon.

On August 4th 1916 George was inducted into the Marines. He was assigned to the 16th Co., of the 5th Marine Regiment, 2nd Division. He was immediately sent to Paris Island where he trained from November 10th 1916 to June 14th 1917. After his training was completed he boarded a transport ship and was off to France on June 14th 1917. On June 27th 1917 he arrived in St. Nazaire France. He then trained near the front lines from January 3rd 1918 to March 15th 1918 and obtained his first combat experience at Verdun. He proceeded to fight in the battles of Belleau Wood and Chateau-Thierry. George's unit was of strategic importance during the Battle of Belleau Wood. The 5th Marine Regiment held secure lines around the Belleau Wood Forest after a French Retreat. While moving up to secure the French lines French soldiers urged American troops to turn around and retreat with them but the Marines refused. In some of the fiercest fighting that was experienced by American Soldiers in World War One the 5th Marines managed to go on and clear the forest of German troops mostly using hand to hand combat. The 5th Marines played a major role in trying to capture Hill 142 in the first moments of the battle while also playing a role in the overall attack on the woods itself. The 5th Marines tenacity at the Battle of Belleau Wood earned them the nickname "The Devil Dogs" which has been cemented in Marine lore. The French, in recognition of the Marines sacrifice, renamed Belleau Wood to Bois de la Brigade de Marine which translates to the Wood of the Marine Brigade. During the battle at Chateau-Thierry George was seriously wounded by being gassed and by taking high explosive damage to his body. He spent time at three different field hospitals in France before being shipped home on June 6th 1919 and was discharged from Marines on July 3rd 1919.

After the war George could not continue his work as a lineman due to his injuries he sustained in his left leg. He died in California.