

WAR DEPARTMENT

THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE

WASHINGTON

AG 291.21 (4-26-39) Exec. Order No. 11810, May 19, 1939. *371st Infantry*, by Chester Hayward, Captain, *371st Infantry*, *Commonwealth Press, Boston, Massachusetts.*

*My Colored Battalion, 2d Central Postal Directory, 371st Infantry*, by W. A. Ross, published by W. A. Ross, Chicago, Illinois.

*The Presentation of Colors to 367th Infantry and Parade of the Regiment in New York City, March 25, 1918*, name of

Mr. John W. Riley, published by S. L. Parson & Company, 40 Morningside Avenue, New York, New York.

*Artillery in France*, by William J. Ross & Duke L. Slaughter, published by the Afro-American Company, Baltimore, Maryland.

Dear Sir: records of this office show that during the World War a total of 137 colored organizations were sent abroad for service with the American Expeditionary Force. I have received your letter of April 28, in which you ask if you might have access to the War Department files should you find it necessary to seek further information than that furnished to you by this office on April 6, concerning the participation of colored soldiers in the World War. Field Artillery, and 1 Engineer, 3 Machine-gun battalions, 1 Field signal battalion, 1 Trench mortar battery, 2 Headquarters & troop. For many years it has been a rule of the War Department not to permit persons other than employees of the Department to have access to its records, except in the cases of historical investigators of recognized standing who have complied with the provisions of paragraph 9, of the inclosed copy of War Department Orders of March 26, 1912. The principal reason for the establishment of this rule lies in the danger of loss of the records through mutilation, destruction, or misfiling. Another reason is that, in any event, no person unfamiliar with the records and the manner in which they are filed would be able to make a successful search of them without the aid and attendance of a trained employee, and inasmuch as the Department would necessarily lose the service of such employee for the time being, there would result a proportional interference with the handling of current work. Other reasons, equally cogent, might be cited. Moreover, the personal records of individual soldiers have consistently been regarded by the War Department as confidential and not open to public inspection. With reference to the author of the publication mentioned in my letter of April 6, it may be stated that he (Dr. Emmett J. Scott) was special assistant to the Secretary of War during the period of active hostilities, and while so serving doubtless had access to the records of this Department.

Miss. # 2367

Other unofficial publications relating to the activities of colored troops in the World War, that may contain data of value to your purpose, include: *Participation of American Organizations according to the race of color of the recipients thereof* has never been attempted by this Department. It *"Negro Combat Troops in the World War, The Story of the 368th Central Postal Directory, 368th Central Postal Directory, 368th Central Postal Directory"* March 27, 1921, that the French cross is given with silver star. Company C, 370th Infantry - French cross is given with silver star.