

April 3, 2020

World War I Heroism in Action - 28th Division Soldier Awarded Distinguished Service Cross

(Pennsylvania Military Museum, J. Gleim, Museum Curator)

Corporal Morrison Lewis of Jeannette, PA wore this jacket as part of his military uniform during World War I. A Syrian immigrant who settled in Pennsylvania in 1904, Lewis enlisted in the military in 1914. He was just 16 years old but listed his age as 21 and two-thirds years in order to enlist without the written consent of his parents – a fact that was noted on his pension application in 1934.



107th FA Monument at the Pa. Military Museum

Upon his enlistment, Lewis was assigned to Troop F, 1st Pennsylvania Cavalry, National Guard of Pennsylvania. He and his unit went to El Paso, Texas in 1916 as part of the Mexican Border Campaign. He returned home in late 1916 but was soon called back to active duty when the United States entered World War I. In 1917, his unit was re-designated the 107th Field Artillery of the 53rd Artillery Brigade, 28th Division.

Lewis arrived in France with the 107th Field Artillery Headquarters Company in June 1918. The 107th saw no shortage of action as they fought from the Marne to the Ourcq and Vesle Rivers, participated in the Oise-Aisne Offensive, the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, and the Ypres-Lys Offensive.

For his actions in combat during the Meuse -Argonne Offensive, Corporal Lewis received the Distinguished Service Cross. On September 5, 1918, he was directing a detail in charge of running a telephone line to an advanced observation outpost. The outpost came under heavy artillery and machine gun fire, knocking out the line. Corporal Lewis instructed the detail to evacuate wounded to the rear, and in the meantime, he returned to

retrieve the body of an officer killed by machine gun fire. The evacuation was completed while Morrison and his men were under intense enemy.



Photo of Jacket, MM2018.28

Lewis was honorably discharged from service May 21, 1919 and returned home to Jeannette. His name is listed on the monument erected by the Veterans of the 107th Field Artillery in World War I that stands on the grounds at the Pennsylvania Military Museum. The monument honors “the names of men and boys who were not soldiers by profession. They were ordinary citizens of this great commonwealth when the call came. They put away their tools, closed their desk tops, covered their typewriters, banked their fires, hung up their overalls and went forth together to meet the enemy on foreign soil.”