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WWI Profile: Susan Adkins Williams

1879-1938



Susan Adkins Williams
Southport, Brunswick County, NC
Navy Nurse
Served:
June 27, 1917 – March 8, 1919
Overseas:
September 12, 1917 – November 11, 1918

U.S. Navy. Base Hospital No.1, Brest, France: Personnel- Nurses

Source: Digital Collections at US National Library of Medicine

Susie Williams was born and raised in Southport, Brunswick County, NC. Her father, mother, step-mother, and three siblings are buried in Old Smithville Cemetery in Southport. Susie and her remaining four siblings eventually moved to New York and New Jersey, living together at times. Only two sisters out of eight siblings married and had children, none of which remained in Southport. Their gravesites are unknown.

Susie graduated with high honors from the Long Island College Hospital Training School for Nurses in May 1908. [Source: *Southport Herald*, 07 May 1908, p. 4.]

Poster from Library of Congress



This poster may have inspired Nurse Williams to offer her services to the Navy on June 27, 1917. (*The British and French governments requested that only graduate nurses be sent overseas.*) Nurses served without rank or commission and were not trained as soldiers, which was modified after the war, perhaps due to these women's extraordinary service and bravery.

September 1917, Nurse Williams boarded the U.S.S. *Henderson* to serve at the first base hospital the Red Cross organized for the Navy, Navy Base Hospital No. 1, in Brest, France. Chief nurse Francis Van Ingen was given the task of staffing. Her account can be found starting on page 734 of *History of American Red Cross Nursing*. Some excerpts follow, describing Nurse Van Ingen's efforts beginning September 11, 1917, accomplishing an amazing feat in six days. (*Susan Williams was one of the forty nurses described below, the first group of nurses sent overseas.*)

At noon on September 11th, while I was stationed at the United States Navy Hospital, Brooklyn, the commanding officer told me to have forty nurses ready to sail for France in two days. It's still hazy in my mind just what did happen during those two days. Kind people helped me 'phone, others loaned their automobiles or ran errands themselves, the Red Cross stretched forth its mighty arm and the full equipment, including the uniforms, appeared. On September 14, 1917, the unit left Grand Central Station. It was early enough in the war for our uniforms to be new to the public. A regular officer of the Navy, Dr. L. S. Von Wedikind, with Dr. Vickery, took charge of the unit. Our destination was the Navy Yard at Philadelphia and we walked from the train to the U.S.S. *Henderson*. It was the first time officers and crew had ever had women traveling with them and the nurses found things as interesting as the crew found us.

The following Sunday evening, the Sixth Division of Marines came aboard, about 1500 men under Major Hughes. Comparatively few of this division lived to come back. Two thirds of the officers were killed. After the Armistice Colonel Hughes passed through our hospital on crutches on his way back to the United States, a mere shadow of his former vigorous self.

Monday morning [*September 17, 1917*] we slipped from our moorings out between the men-o'-war.

In our convoy was the Cruiser *San Diego* [*later sunk by a German submarine*], with its great observation balloon which was up most of the time; two destroyers; a tanker; and two transports, the *Finland* and the *Antilles*, which was sunk on her return trip.

Van Ingen gives a detailed story of the grueling experience at the base hospital with its inefficient heat, water supplies and cesspool; numerous mice, rats, maggots, and flies; and unsanitary operating conditions. The main building of the hospital was 4 stories, requiring multiple flights of carrying stretchers, food, water, coal, and excrement. She also writes of serving in field hospitals at the front lines and experiencing gas attacks.

Back in Southport, NC, on November 18, 1917, *The Wilmington Dispatch* published the following account of a meeting of the Southport Civic Club.

At the same meeting a Christmas box was packed to be sent to Miss Susie Williams, a Southport girl, who is a Red Cross nurse in France. She went with a Red Cross unit from New York. She writes that she wants to know of any Brunswick county boys who may be sent to France so she may look after them with particular interest and care.

Some entries of note in the account from Van Ingen, given that the majority of the casualties of the war were from disease, were her descriptions of the transport ships from America. In December 1917, Van Ingen writes:

Our most serious cases were the measles and meningitis, especially the measles cases coming from the transports. The transporting of them from the ships to the hospital proved fatal to many. They were carried from the ship to the lighter, from the lighter to the dock, from the dock to ambulance, from ambulance to hospital. It sometimes took from six to eight hours to accomplish this. At this time these lighters were uncovered boats, mere barges, so that these sick boys were exposed for hours to the cold and rain.

The following year, September 1918, was when the flu pandemic began, or as commonly called, "Spanish Flu." (*A subsequent post on the pandemic is planned, due to the many deaths of Brunswick County veterans.*) Van Ingen writes:

In September we began to get the "flu" cases from the States. Men brought in off the battlefields shattered and bleeding were not as tragic to me as these that came from our own ships. Men with the pallor of death on their faces, laboring for air, yet begging for food, their lips and tongues so glued together they could hardly articulate, and before we could care for them they would be out of their agony, beyond the want of food and water. Many died on their way to hospital or as they were put on their beds. ... I think we all aged with the awfulness of it, and have our nights haunted with the memories of those weeks.

The 1918 Issue of *The Trained Nurse and Hospital Review* reported this item from New York.

A service flag containing thirty-four stars, representing the number of members of the Long Island College Nurses' Alumnae Association who are in the country's service, was unfurled recently at the rooms of the association, 186 Amity Street, Brooklyn. There were a number of visitors present and the Rev. G. Ashton Oldham, pastor of St. Ann's Presbyterian Church, made an address.

One of the nurses now in the service, Esmee Everard, has been to the front three times. The nurses represented by the stars in the flag are as follows:

Margaret Ainslee, Ruth Bentley, Caroline Ballantine, Agnes Brankin, Lulu Brady, Caroline Bradshaw, Manon Bryant, Ann Burgess, Lettie Bellinger, Mary Badger, Lelia Church, Margaret Caldwell, Margaret Enright, Esmee Everard, Lottie Grass, Florence Grand, Maude Hicks, Alice Hamilton, Isabel Holden, Helen V. Kenney, Lulu Kinsella, Elizabeth Mignon, Rose McMullen, Mildred Overton, Florentine Ryan, Helen Spaulding, Bertha Spearman, Anna Thompson, Margaret Vassie, Emma Waiss, **Susan Williams**, Alice Zeigler, Laura Brown, Blanche Swan, Pauline Rose.

Nurse Williams boarded the U.S.S. *Leviathan* on February 3, 1919, returning to America along with Chief nurse Van Ingen, who made the same trip with her to France at what must have seemed a lifetime ago. Like many other nurses, Susie returned to private nursing, perhaps assisting war veterans as many former Navy nurses did. And like many military nurses, she never married.

Susan Adkins Williams succumbed to pneumonia on February 23, 1938, and was laid to rest at Flushing Cemetery, Queens, NY.

The *State Port Pilot* published her obituary.

**Former Resident Dies Saturday
Miss Susie A. Williams, Who Was Born And Reared Here, Died In New York City Of
Pneumonia**

Miss Susan A. Williams, who was born and reared in Southport, died Saturday in New York City following a short illness with pneumonia.

The deceased, who was 58-year-of-age, was the daughter of the late Captain and Mrs. J.A. Williams, of Southport. She was a registered nurse, and for the past few years has held a responsible position with the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.

She was a member of the American Legion by virtue of her service in France during the World War, and last summer she paid another visit to French soil.

She has no immediate relatives in Southport, but is survived by one brother, Raymond S. Williams, of New York; three sisters, Miss Leila Williams, Mrs. Beatrice Potter, of New York, and Mrs. George Reid [Reeves], of New Jersey.

Her funeral services were conducted in New York, and interment was made there.

WWI Profile: William Frederick Brooks

1892-1918



Photo courtesy of findagrave.

William Frederick Brooks
Shallotte, Brunswick County, NC
US Army
Private
Served:
March 29, 1918 – June 13, 1918
Died of Disease: June 13, 1918

William Frederick Brooks was born and raised in Shallotte, NC, where most of his family remained throughout their lives. The 1900 Census lists his father Fred (1850-1922), with mother Mary E (1885-1927) having seven children, all living. Besides those listed: Charles J (b.Mar.1885), Carrie D (1887-1929), Hattie J (1889-1969), William F (1892-1918), and Mary E (1900-1972), the 1880 Census lists John (1871-1937) and Joseph B (b. 1873).

His father, mother, and sisters Hattie and Carrie are buried in Pleasant View Cemetery. His brother John's death certificate also shows his burial at Pleasant View Cemetery, and his sister Mary's death certificate shows her burial at Bellevue Cemetery in Columbus Co, NC, but neither are included in findagrave. His other brothers' gravesites are unknown.

William's WWI Draft Registration of June 1917 lists his occupation as farmer in Shallotte, NC, and unmarried.

William was ordered to report for military duty on March 29, 1918. (*source:ancestry.com*) He was one of a total of 25 African American men from Brunswick County ordered to report that day. The destination was Camp Grant, in Rockford, IL.

Very few African Americans were given the opportunity to serve in combat units during WWI. But the War Dept had created two divisions, the 92nd and 93rd, which were comprised of primarily African American combat units. Most of the officers (up to the rank of first lieutenant) in the units were African American.

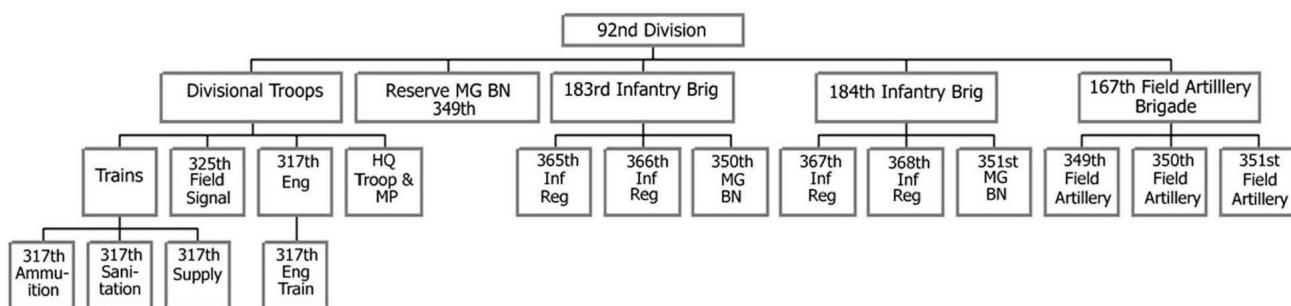
Camp Grant, Rockford, Illinois

Source: National Archives.



At Camp Grant, only three of the draftees from Brunswick County out of the original 25 were chosen for the honor of a combat position in the 92nd Division. The three men were **William Frederick Brooks**, **William James Gordon** and **Robert Bollie Stanley**. These men began training with Company H, 365th Infantry, 92nd Division in preparation for combat in France.

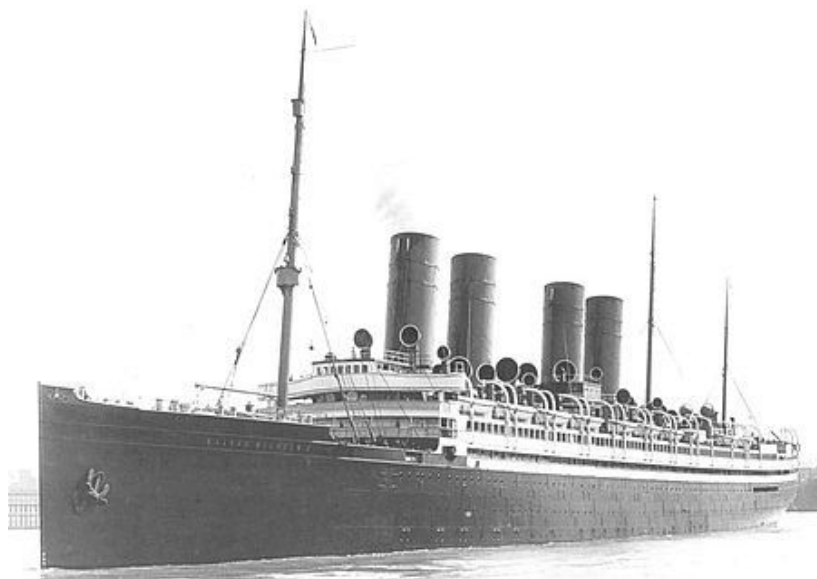
Photo source: 92nd Division WWI History.



There are no photos of Pvt Brooks, but presumably a photo like the one here would have been taken of all three soldiers. This photo is Richard E. Pennington of Macon, N.C, who served with Company E (rather than Company H), 365th Infantry, 92nd Division.

Photo courtesy of Warren County, NC, WWI Service Records.

The 365th Infantry was scheduled to board the *U.S.S. Agamemnon* at Hoboken, NJ, on June 10, 1918, to travel overseas to France.



The second SS Kaiser Wilhelm II, named for the German Emperor, was a passenger ship built at Stettin, Germany, completed in the spring of 1903. The ship was seized by the U.S. Government when it declared war on Germany on 6 April 1917, and work soon began to repair her machinery, sabotaged earlier by a German caretaker crew, and otherwise prepare the ship for use as a transport. She then served as a transport ship under the name U.S.S. Agamemnon. There were rumors during the war that Kaiser Wilhelm had offered a reward of 5000 marks to the sub commander that hit it, but this goal remained elusive. The U.S.S. Agamemnon was victorious and returned troops home after the war.

Source: Ancestry.com. U.S., Army Transport Service, Passenger Lists, 1910-1939 [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2016.

127	FRAZIER, BURTON	2073815	SGT	MRS. ANNA SARAH FRAZIER	MOTHER	CHICAGO, ILL. 3720 ELMWOOD AVE., CHICAGO, ILL.
128	BROOKS, WILLIAM FREDERICK	2091138	PVT	FRED BROOKS	FATHER	ROUTE 1, BOX 12, SHALLOTE, N.C.
129	THARPE, SAM T.	2090817	PVT	MRS. HATTIE THARPE	MOTHER	ROUTE 3, NEUSE, N.C.

All three men's names are listed on the US Army Transport Service passenger list. Private William Brooks' name is crossed out.

Sadly, Pvt William Frederick Brooks died of meningitis three days later on June 13, 1918. A death certificate has not been found. He could have remained in Illinois while the soldiers boarded the trains to NJ, he could have become ill somewhere during the trip, or he could have passed away in NJ.

Pvt William Frederick Brooks was laid to rest in the same cemetery as some of his family. A military headstone was not requested, so no WWI honors are displayed, giving no indication that he gave his life while serving his country. He was only 26 years old.

WWI Profile: William James Gordon

1891-1930



Photo source: 92ndinfantry.org.

William James Gordon
Southport, Brunswick County, NC
US Army
Private, First Class
Served:
March 29, 1918 – April 9, 1919
Overseas:
June 10, 1918 – February 11, 1919
Wounded: November 4, 1918
Gunshot wound

William James Gordon was born May 29, 1891, in Southport, Brunswick County, NC, the son of Franklin H. Gordon (1855-1939), a public school teacher (**and first black educator in Brunswick County**), and Nannie Gordon (1860-1943). His father is buried in Smith Cemetery in Southport. His father's headstone shows William had two siblings, Cenelius and Frank. The locations of his mother's and brothers' gravesites are unknown.

Note: The John N. Smith Cemetery in Southport was named by the Wilmington Foundation as the most threatened historic site in the Cape Fear region for 2017. The 1918 Fort Caswell Rifle Range is on this list as well. The Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range support the recovery and restoration of this important cemetery.



William was married on June 4, 1912, in Southport to Evelyn Frink (1891-1957). His 1917 WWI Draft Registration shows he was married with a 4 year old son. He is listed as a laborer working in Philadelphia. His son, William James Gordon, Jr. (1913-2004) had a very distinguished career in education like his grandfather, served his country like his father, and is buried in Lebanon National

Cemetery in Kentucky.

As the previous WWI Veteran Profile recounted, William was honored with a position in the 365th Infantry, 92nd Division, along with William Frederick Brooks, who sadly had died of meningitis days after the infantry left for France, and Robert Bollie Stanley, all from Brunswick County.

Before leaving for France, the 92nd Division chose their insignia and nickname. The 92nd was nicknamed the “Buffalo Soldiers” in honor of African American troops who served in the American West after the Civil War. The patch is shown above.

Company H of the 365th Infantry, which included Pvt Gordon and Pvt Stanley, embarked at Hoboken, NJ, on June 10, 1918, and reached Brest, France, on the 19th day of June, 1918. The camp was established at Bourbonne-les-Bains, a small resort area in the northeast of France, about 60 miles from the front. They immediately began an eight week period of intensive training in offensive and defensive tactics.

On July 6, 1918, **Pvt Gordon was promoted** to Private First Class.

Photo source: 92nd Division WWI History.



This map shows the approximate location of the front lines in western Europe when the 92nd Division was deployed.

The soldiers of the 92nd and the 93rd infantry divisions were the first Americans to fight in France.

In August, they took up positions in the St. Die sector, where they received their first contact with the enemy. They fought with honor through many engagements on the Meuse-Argonne front and won numerous awards from the French.

Photo source: net.lib.byu.edu/estu/wwi/comment/scott/Stn06.htm



October 29, 1918: Pvt Robert Bollie Stanley (Pfc Gordon’s fellow soldier from Brunswick County) was reported missing.

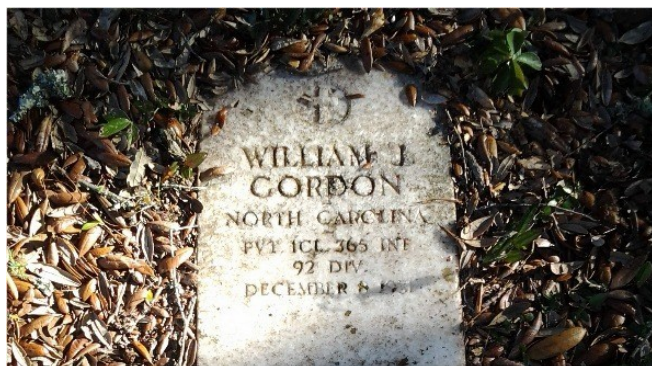
November 4, 1918: Pfc Gordon was wounded.

November 11, 1918: The armistice between the Allies and Germany was signed.

In the 365th's final battle, there were 43 Killed in Action or Died of Wounds, 583 Wounded, and 32 Missing, most of whom were killed or succumbed to wounds. Of the three initial Brunswick County soldiers in the infantry, **Pvt William Frederick Brooks** died of disease before leaving the United States, **Pfc William James Gordon** was wounded, and **Pvt Robert Bollie Stanley** was missing.

On February 25, 1919, Pfc Gordon boarded the U.S.S. *Nansemond* with other sick and wounded soldiers. He was discharged from the Army on April 9, 1919.

William passed away in 1930 from heart disease [source: *ancestry.com*]. His death certificate lists a contributory cause to his death as "paralysis left side due to bullet wounds received in world war."



He was laid to rest in Smith Cemetery with his father. A military headstone was requested in 1937 and remains there today.

In the years following the war, the 92nd Division gained fame as records of their accomplishments slowly became known. The November 7, 1942 edition of *Baltimore Afro-American*, p 20, published this account from General John J. Pershing:

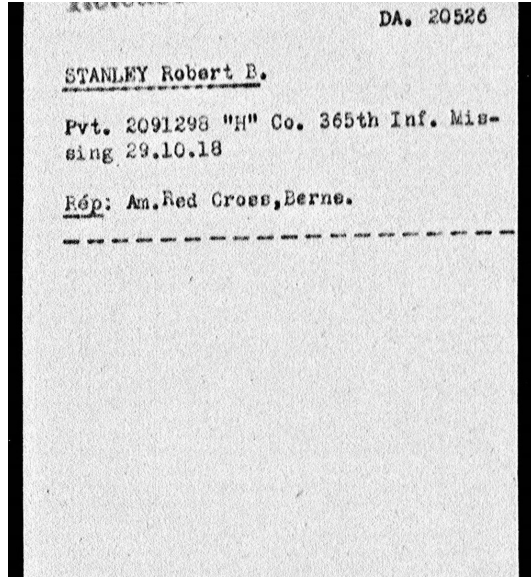
The 92nd Division has been, without a doubt, a great success. And I desire to commend both the officers and the men for the high state of discipline and the excellent morale which has existed in this command during its entire stay in France.

The 92nd Division continued their gallantry in World War II, after which segregation in the military was ended.

Most of the information gathered was from E.J. Scott, author of The American Negro in the World War, Chapter XI, which quoted the work of T.T. Thompson, Historian of the Famous 92nd Division. Another excellent reference is the website <http://92ndinfantry.org/>

WWI Profile: Robert Bollie Stanley

1894-1961



Robert Bollie Stanley
Shallotte, Brunswick County, NC
US Army
Private
Served:
March 29, 1918 – August 25, 1919
Overseas:
June 10, 1918 – March 24, 1919
POW – Wounded: October 29, 1918

Source: 1914-1918 Prisoners of the First World War International Committee of the Red Cross historical archives

Robert Bollie Stanley was born and raised in Shallotte, NC, where most of his family remained throughout their lives. The 1900 Census lists his father George (1870-1931), with mother Francis (1870-1957) having two children, all living. Besides Robert: his sister Hattie E (1896-1936) and later, Ellen (1902-1975).

His father and mother are buried in Stanley Cemetery (Brierwood Golf Course).

Robert's WWI Draft Registration of June 1917 lists his occupation as laborer at Southport Fish Scrap & Oil Company, living in Shallotte, NC, and unmarried.

As the previous two WWI Veteran Profiles recounted, Robert was honored with a position in the 365th Infantry, 92nd Division, along with **William Frederick Brooks**, who sadly had died of meningitis days before the infantry left for France, and **William James Gordon**, all from Brunswick County.

The passing months of training, drilling, and the occupation, then command, of the St. Dié Sector, was leading up to the main offensive that eventually ended the war: the Meuse-Argonne Offensive.

A diary written by the captain of their infantry brings the countryside and experiences alive. One entry in August describes his first experience of shell fire, giving a glimpse into what Pfc Gordon and Pvt Stanley were experiencing.

I had my first experience of shell fire. It is an experience that one cannot well describe. You hear the boom of the distant gun then the rushing whine and screeching of the shell as it passes, then you wait for the terrific explosion wondering how far beyond you it will strike. It sure causes a weakness in the knees and a funny feeling up your back. The man that says he was not scared at those first shells he heard is either a damn fool or a liar.

The Meuse-Argonne Offensive

The Meuse-Argonne Offensive, September 26 – November 11, 1918, was the southern part of the great triple offensive that broke the German lines on the Western Front and ended with the signing of the armistice.

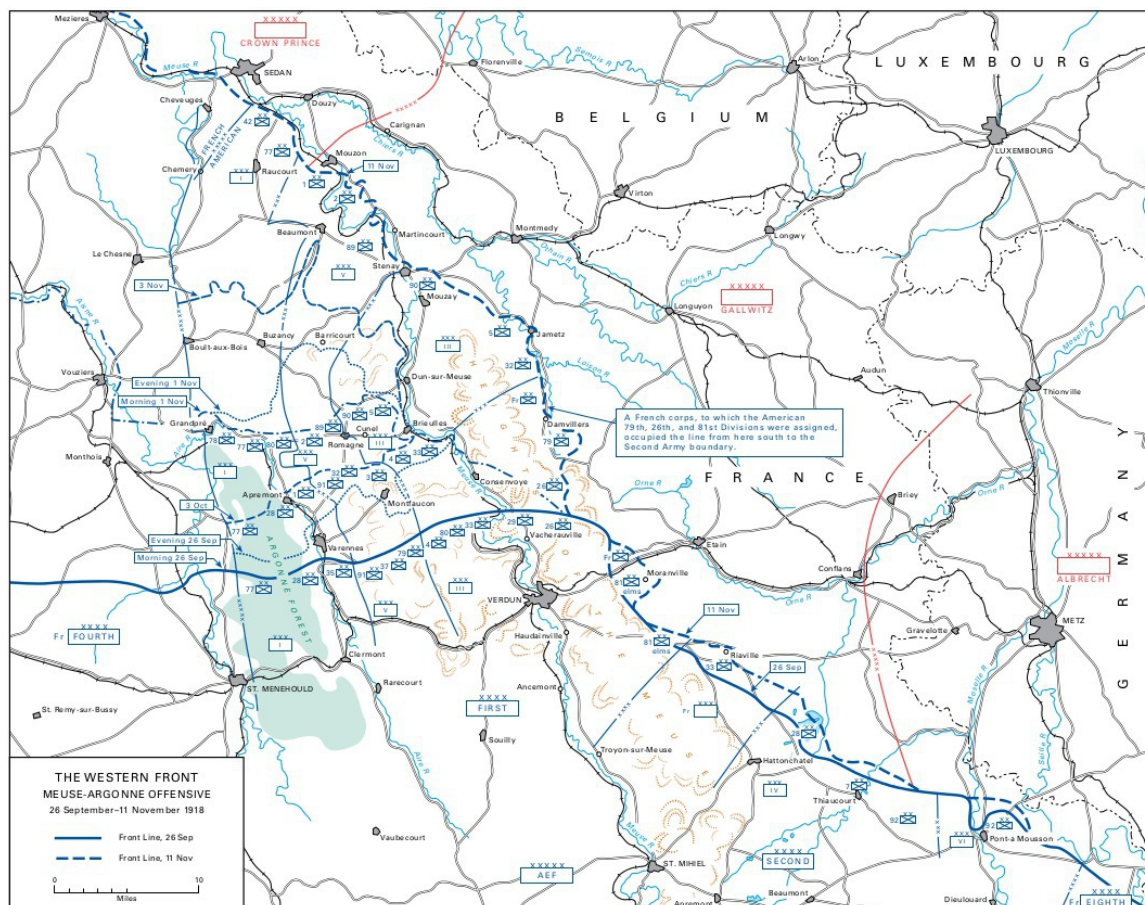
The Meuse-Argonne front (the area around the Meuse River and Forest of Argonne) had been practically stabilized in September, 1914, and, except for minor fluctuations remained unchanged until the American advance in 1918. The net result of the four years' struggle on this ground was a German defensive system of unusual depth and strength and a wide zone of utter devastation, itself a serious obstacle to offensive operations.

The strategical importance of this portion of the line was second to none on the western front. All supplies and evacuations of the German armies in northern France were dependent upon two great railway systems: the southern one, where the 92nd Division was located, being the Carignan-Sedan-Mézières line.

Should this southern system be cut by the Allies before the enemy could withdraw his forces through the narrow neck between Mezieres and the Dutch frontier, the ruin of his armies in France and Belgium would be complete.

The operations in the Meuse-Argonne battle really form a continuous whole, but they extended over such a long period of continuous fighting that they will here be considered in three phases, the first from September 26th to October 3rd, the second from October 4th to 31st, and the third from November 1st to 11th. It was during the second phase that **Pvt Robert Stanley was reported MIA.**

Source of map



On October 9, the 92nd Division relieved the French 68th Division and assumed command of the Marbache Sector. Their mission was to hold the line of the First Army east of Moselle, harassing the enemy by frequent patrols. The 183d Infantry Brigade occupied the front line with the 366th and 365th Infantry Regiments in line from right to left. The advance of the 92nd Division can be seen in the South East corner of the map shown at Pont a Mousson.

During the period October 9-31 the division was engaged in patrolling on the front.

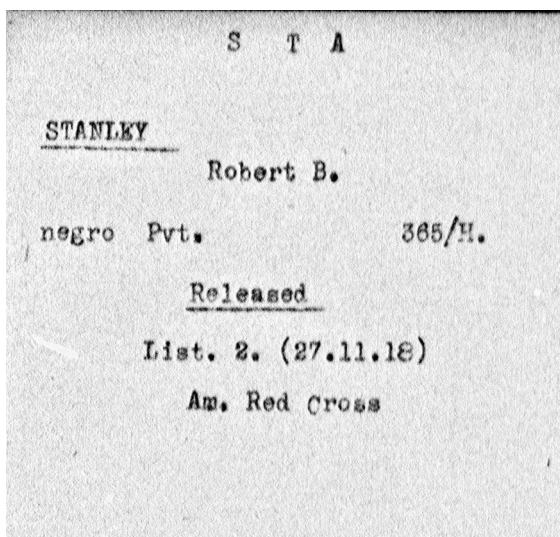
The danger of the assignment was reflected in the casualty reports. In the one month of patrolling, there were 23 Killed in Action or Died of Wounds, 362 Wounded, and somewhere in the neighborhood of 32 Missing, which included **Pvt Robert Stanley**. The French decorated members of the 365th Infantry and 350th Machine Gun Battalion for their aggressiveness and bravery.

Source: Men of the 366th during Gas mask drill. The 366th was in the 183rd Infantry Brigade with the 365th.



By the end of October, the First Army had accomplished the first part of its plan for the Meuse-Argonne Offensive and was ready to undertake the second operation, i. e., cut the Carignan-Sedan-Mézières railroad, and drive the enemy beyond the Meuse. It was planned that an attack to accomplish this would be launched on November 1.

The last week of the war took a heavy toll, especially as the Germans grew more desperate and lobbed an enormous amount of poisonous gas in their direction. Pvt Stanley was still missing.



He would not be released until November 27.

Pvt Robert Stanley returned to America on March 24, 1919, with his right leg amputated at the thigh (source:ancestry.com). He was not discharged until August 25, 1919, with a 95% disability classification.

After the war, Robert married Ethel Harrison and had several children (total number unknown). Little else is known about this hero from Brunswick County.

Robert Bollie Stanley was laid to rest September 22, 1961, in the same cemetery as his parents. A military headstone was not requested, so no WWI honors are displayed, giving no indication he made such considerable sacrifices for his country.

WWI Profile: Lawson Devaun Ballard

1896-1981

Source: NC Digital Collections

Company A, 105th Engineers Regiment, 30th Division; Camp Jackson, SC; probably 1919, before mustering out



Lawson Devaun Ballard

Suburb, Brunswick County, NC

NC National Guard

Corporal

Served:

August 24, 1916 – April 16, 1919

Overseas:

May 26, 1918 – April 13, 1919

Wounded: September 29, 1918

Severely Gassed

Lawson Devaun Ballard was born and raised in Brunswick County, NC. Most of his family is buried in Bolivia or Wilmington. Two of Lawson's brothers, John Thomas Ballard and Edgar Levett Ballard, are also WWI veterans. His family tree can be viewed on FamilySearch.

In 1916, Lawson joined the NC National Guard. A year later, the United States was drawn into the war in Europe.

January 31, 1917: Germany announced its U-boats would sink without warning all ships traveling to and from British or French ports.

March 1917: U-boats sank three American merchant ships with a heavy loss of life.

April 1917: President Woodrow Wilson urged Congress to declare war against Germany.

April 6, 1917: America entered the Great War.

When the United States entered World War I, the country faced the enormous task of creating a modern army and transporting it overseas.

World War I remains one of the defining events in the history of the U.S. Army. The conflict transformed the Army from a small dispersed organization to a modern industrialized fighting force capable of global reach and influence.

Source of table: WWI Fact Sheet

U.S. Army Statistics:

April 1, 1917:		November 11, 1918:	
Regular Army:	127,588	Increments:	3,882,617
Philippine Scouts:	5,523	• Commissioned:	• 203,786
National Guard:	181,620	• Inducted:	• 2,801,373
• Federal:	• 80,446	• Enlisted:	• 877,458
• State:	• 101,174		
Total Available:	213,557	Total Army Forces:	4,176,297

New divisions were created using existing National Guard units such as Lawson's.

Source of table: *Maneuver and Firepower: The Evolution of Divisions and Separate Brigades*

TABLE 3
Geographic Distribution of
National Guard Divisions, World War I

Old Designation	New Designation	Geographic Area	Camp
5th	26th	Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut	Greene, N.C. ¹
6th	27th	New York	Wadsworth, S.C.
7th	28th	Pennsylvania	Hancock, Ga.
8th	29th	New Jersey, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, ² and District of Columbia	McClellan, Ala.
9th	30th	Tennessee, North Carolina, and South Carolina	Sevier, S.C.
10th	31st	Georgia, Alabama, and Florida	Wheeler, Ga.
11th	32d	Michigan and Wisconsin	MacArthur, Tex.
12th	33d	Illinois	Logan, Tex.
13th	34th	Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota	Cody, N.M.
14th	35th	Missouri and Kansas	Doniphan, Okla.
15th	36th	Texas and Oklahoma	Bowie, Tex.
16th	37th	Ohio and West Virginia ³	Sheridan, Ala.
17th	38th	Indiana and Kentucky	Shelby, Miss.
18th	39th	Louisiana, Mississippi, and Arkansas	Beauregard, Miss.
19th	40th	California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico	Kearny, Calif.
20th	41st	Washington, Oregon, Montana, and Wyoming	Fremont, Calif. ⁴

¹ Division concentrated at various locations in New England.

² Delaware troops relieved from the division 8 January 1918.

³ Reassigned to the 38th Division.

⁴ Camp changed from Camp Fremont, California, to Camp Greene, North Carolina.

Lawson's new division, the 30th, was nicknamed "**Old Hickory**" after Andrew Jackson because of his historic connection between the three states (North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee) furnishing the majority of the personnel. The division's organization included the 117th, 118th, 119th, and 120th Infantry Regiments, the 113th, 114th, 115th Artillery Regiments, the 113th, 114th, 115th Machine Gun Battalions, and the 105th Engineer Regiment, along with other supporting units.

In all, six Brunswick County men served the duration of the war in the **105th Engineers of the 30th Division**. Rosters are listed in *The History of the 105th Engineering Regiment of Engineers*

Lawson Devaun Ballard	Enlisted: National Guard	August 1916	Company A
George Harker Hewett	Enlisted: National Guard	August 1916	Company A
Vander L. Simmons	Enlisted: National Guard	October 1916	Company A
Harvey T. Chadwick	Ordered to Report	March 1918	Company D
Samuel Peter Cox	Ordered to Report	March 1918	Company A
Thedford S. Lewis	Ordered to Report	March 1918	Company D

Late in the conflict, in August 1918, the distinction between National Guard, Reserve Corps, Regular Army, and National Army was legally dissolved and all four elements were fused into one organization, the United States Army. This was the first time in American history that career soldiers, citizen soldiers, and drafted men of the infantry found themselves on the same legal basis.

On May 26, 1918, Lawson boarded USS *Talthebius* to France, along with the other five Brunswick County men. After a short training period, the division was transferred to the British troops in Belgium to help construct defensive positions. This was followed by more training and offensives. Their defining battle was the assault on the Hindenburg Line, which began at 5:50am on September 29, 1918. The action was part of a series of Allied assaults known as the Hundred Days Offensive, which led to the Armistice of November 1918.

Lawson was seriously wounded by German gas shells on September 29, 1918, the day of the assault on the Hindenburg Line. (*More details on the 105th Engineers will follow.*)

Lawson's gas injury is listed on page 283 as part of the Special Order from the Headquarters of the 105th Engineering Regiment found on pages 280 – 285 of the book *The History of the 105th Regiment of Engineers*, located in the NC Digital Collections. The order gave him the right to wear a wound chevron. (Wound chevrons were replaced by the Purple Heart in 1932.)

(c) FOR BEING GASSED BY ENEMY GAS SHELLS, IN LINE OF DUTY, ON THE
DATES SHOWN OPPOSITE THEIR NAMES:

Sgt. Thurman F. Houser, 1328374, Sanitary Detch., Sept. 29/18.
Pvt. 1st Cl. Albert L. Jackson, 1328380, Sanitary Det., Sept. 29/18.
Pvt. George A. Tanner, 1328398, Sanitary Detch., Sept. 29/18.
Sgt. David E. Bass, 1328531, Company "A," Sept. 29/18.
Sgt. Clarence O. Green, 1328584, Company "A," Aug. 25/18.
Cpl. John P. Sisson, 1328435, Company "A," Aug. 25/18.
Cpl. Lawson Ballard, 1328581, Company "A," Sept. 29/18.
Cpl. Ernest B. Demnsev, 1328557, Company "A," Sept. 29/18.

Lawson returned to Brunswick County, married, and raised his family in Wilmington. In 1981, he was laid to rest alongside his wife in a cemetery there.

WWI Profile: George Harker Hewett

1897-1956



George Harker Hewett
Supply, Brunswick County, NC
NC National Guard
Corporal
Served:
August 15, 1916 – April 16, 1919
Overseas:
May 26, 1918 – April 13, 1919
Wounded: September 29, 1918
Severely Gassed

*The previous veteran profile described the birth of the **30th Division, “Old Hickory”**, created from National Guard members from North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee, supplemented by volunteers and draftees from around the United States.*

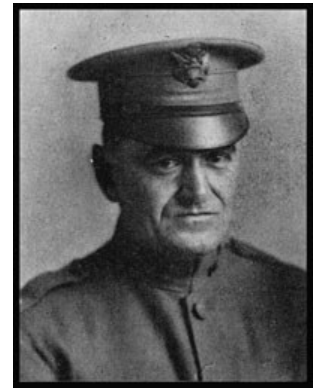
The 30th Division insignia is shown above. It consists of the “O” and “H” from the name “Old Hickory” and three XXXs, the Roman numeral for 30.

Like Lawson Ballard, George Harker Hewett enlisted in the NC National Guard in 1916. Perhaps they knew each other as their enlistment dates are the same day. According to *The History of the 105th Engineering Regiment of Engineers*, George likely was in Company A, NC Engineers, organized in Wilmington in 1916, mustered into Federal Service, then engaged at the Mexican Border. When the US entered WWI, George, Lawson Ballard, and Vander Simmons were moved into the new 30th Division, assigned to the 105th Engineers. (Later, Harvey Chadwick, Thedford Lewis, and Samuel Cox joined the 105th Engineers – see table from previous post.)

The “Old Hickory” Division trained at Camp Sevier, SC, a temporary cantonment site created for the WWI training of National Guard troops. Soldiers trained in a range of common infantry skills and in new modes of warfare, such as gas defense and the use of the machine gun.

The 105th Engineers were required to learn not only infantry skills but engineering work. Their responsibilities included the construction and maintenance/repair of trenches, barbed wire, shell- and splinter-proof shelters, roads, bridges, railroads, buildings, and finding water sources/wells for both men and horses, tested for safety. They also performed gas attacks, removed “booby” traps and mines, and tested for gas in buildings and trenches. All of this was often performed while under artillery fire!

Major (later Colonel) Joseph Hyde Pratt was second in command and then Commanding Officer and remained with them throughout the war. Colonel Pratt was from Chapel Hill, where some of his previous titles were Professor of Economic Geology at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; State Engineer and State Geologist of NC; Secretary of NC State Highway Commission; and Consulting Engineer. Colonel Pratt kept a diary of the 105th, providing us insight into the challenges of the engineers. “There is too much tendency to make us Infantry instead of Engineers but we can do either and do it well.” – August 12, 1918



1. DIVISION RIFLE RANGES, CAMP SEVIER, GREENVILLE, S. C.
Laid out and constructed under supervision of the 105th Engineers

(left) At Camp Sevier, SC, the 105th Engineers laid out and supervised the construction the rifle range.

(right) You may recognize this photo from the History section of this website. These are the target butts constructed by the 105th Engineers at Camp Sevier.



5. TARGET BUTTS, CAMP SEVIER RIFLE RANGE, GREENVILLE, S. C.



11. CONSTRUCTING PONTOON BRIDGE, JONES' POND, CAMP SEVIER, GREENVILLE, S. C.

(left) Constructing a pontoon bridge during training at Camp Sevier.

(right) A pyramid shelter constructed by the Engineers in Belgium.



29. A "CLOSE-UP" OF A PYRAMID SHELTER, BRANDHOEK LINE, CANAL SECTOR

(left) One of the many concrete machine gun pill boxes constructed by the Engineers in Belgium.



30. A MONOLITHIC CONCRETE MACHINE-GUN PILL-BOX, CANAL SECTOR, BELGIUM
Built by the 105th Engineers

Like Corporal Ballard, Corporal Hewett was seriously wounded by German gas shells on September 29, 1918, the day of the assault on the Hindenburg Line. (*More details on the assault will follow.*)

George's gas injury is listed on page 283 as part of the Special Order from the Headquarters of the 105th Engineering Regiment found on pages 280 – 285 of the book *The History of the 105th Regiment of Engineers*, located in the NC Digital Collections. The order gave him the right to wear a wound chevron. (Wound chevrons were replaced by the Purple Heart in 1932.)

(c) FOR BEING Gassed BY ENEMY GAS SHELLS, IN LINE OF DUTY, ON THE
DATES SHOWN OPPOSITE THEIR NAMES:

Sgt. Thurman F. Houser, 1328374, Sanitary Detch.,	Sept. 29/18.
Pvt. 1st Cl. Albert L. Jackson, 1328380, Sanitary Det.,	Sept. 29/18.
Pvt. George A. Tanner, 1328398, Sanitary Detch.,	Sept. 29/18.
Sgt. David E. Bass, 1328531, Company "A,"	Sept. 29/18.
Sgt. Clarence O. Green, 1328584, Company "A,"	Aug. 25/18.
Cpl. John P. Sisson, 1328435, Company "A,"	Aug. 25/18.
Cpl. Lawson Ballard, 1328581, Company "A,"	Sept. 29/18.
Cpl. Ernest B. Dempsey, 1328557, Company "A,"	Sept. 29/18.
Cpl. George H. Hewett, 1328542, Company "A,"	Sept. 29/18.
Cpl. Walter J. Padrick, 1328426, Company "A,"	Sept. 29/18.

Also like Lawson, George returned to Brunswick County, married, and raised his family in Wilmington. In 1956, he was laid to rest alongside his wife in a cemetery there.

Most of the information gathered was from The History of the 105th Engineering Regiment of Engineers, and the incredible diary Colonel Pratt kept for his wife and son.

WWI Profile: Harvey T. Chadwick

1893-1918

Source: [NC Digital Collections](#)

Company D, 105th Engineers Regiment, 30th Division; Camp Jackson, SC; probably 1919, before mustering out



[Harvey T. Chadwick](#)

Shallotte, Brunswick County, NC

US Army

Private

Served:

March 21, 1918 – September 29, 1918

Overseas:

May 26, 1918 – September 29, 1918

Killed in Action: September 29, 1918

Harvey T. Chadwick was born and raised in Shallotte, NC. His family appears to have remained in the area throughout their lives. All are [buried](#) in Gurganus Cemetery in Shallotte.

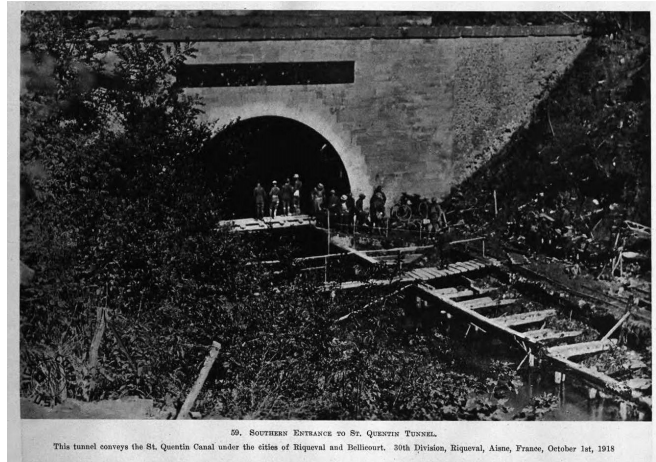
Harvey's twin brother [Harry](#) also served. He served with the Replacement Engineers in Virginia throughout WWI. He was discharged January 20, 1919, returned home and passed away many years later in 1979. Harry's [grave](#) includes a WWI plaque.

[Harvey](#) and [Harry](#) were living in Shallotte during the WWI draft in 1917. Harvey was single and listed farming as his occupation.

Harvey was ordered to report to the Brunswick County military board on March 22, 1918, with 13 other men from Brunswick County [source:ancestry.com]. Included in this group of 14 men was **Thedford Lewis** from Supply and **Samuel Peter Cox** from Bolivia. All were sent to Camp Jackson, SC. On April 24, Harvey and Thedford joined the **105th Engineers, Company D, 30th Division**. Samuel joined Company A. Their very strenuous training was at Camp Sevier, SC, which was detailed in a previous post.

As the table in a previous post listed, three Brunswick County men in the NC National Guard were already members of the 105th Engineers. They were: [Lawson Ballard](#) (Company A), [George Harker Hewett](#) (Company A), and **Vander L. Simmons** (Company A). On May 26, 1918, Harvey boarded *Talhythius* to France, along with the other five Brunswick County men.

The 30th Division soon took positions at the Hindenburg Line between the 27th American Division on the left, and the 46th British Division on the right, in front of the Tunnel of St. Quentin.



Their goal: **Break the Hindenburg Line.**

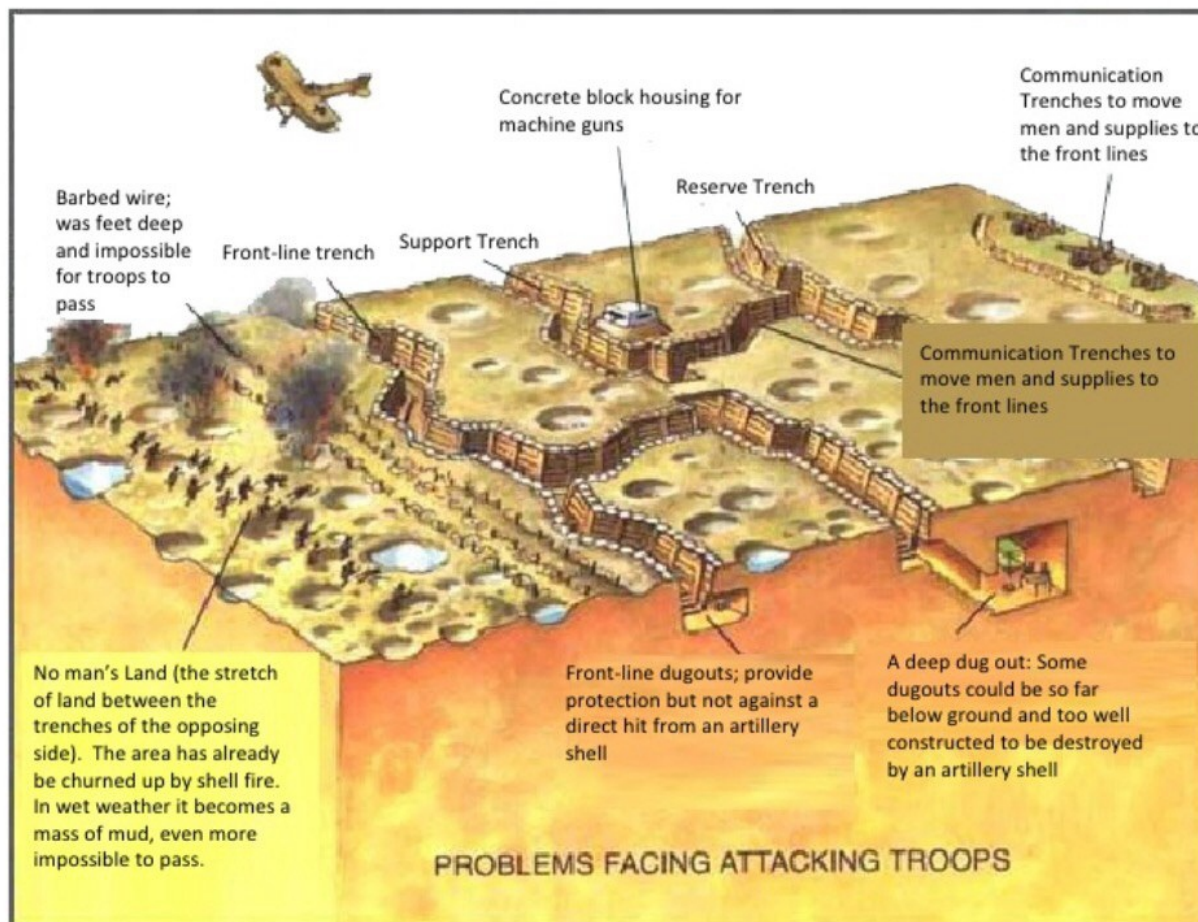
Built in late 1916, the Hindenburg Line—named by the British for the German commander in chief, Paul von Hindenburg; it was known to the Germans as the Siegfried Line—was a heavily fortified zone running several miles behind the active front between the north coast of France and Verdun, near the border of France and Belgium.

By September 1918, the formidable system consisted of six defensive lines, forming a zone some 6,000 yards deep, ribbed with lengths of barbed wire and dotted with concrete emplacements, or firing positions. Though the entire line was heavily fortified, its southern part was most vulnerable to attack, as it included the St. Quentin Canal and was not out of sight from artillery observation by the enemy. Also, the whole system was laid out linearly, as opposed to newer constructions that had adapted to more recent developments in firepower and were built with scattered “strong points” laid out like a checkerboard to enhance the intensity of artillery fire.

The Allies would use these vulnerabilities to their advantage...

Source: [This Day in History](#)

Source: By Jbulera8271 (Own work) [CC BY-SA 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>)], via Wikimedia Commons



The Germans occupied the higher ground, giving them machine gun fire on all approaches.

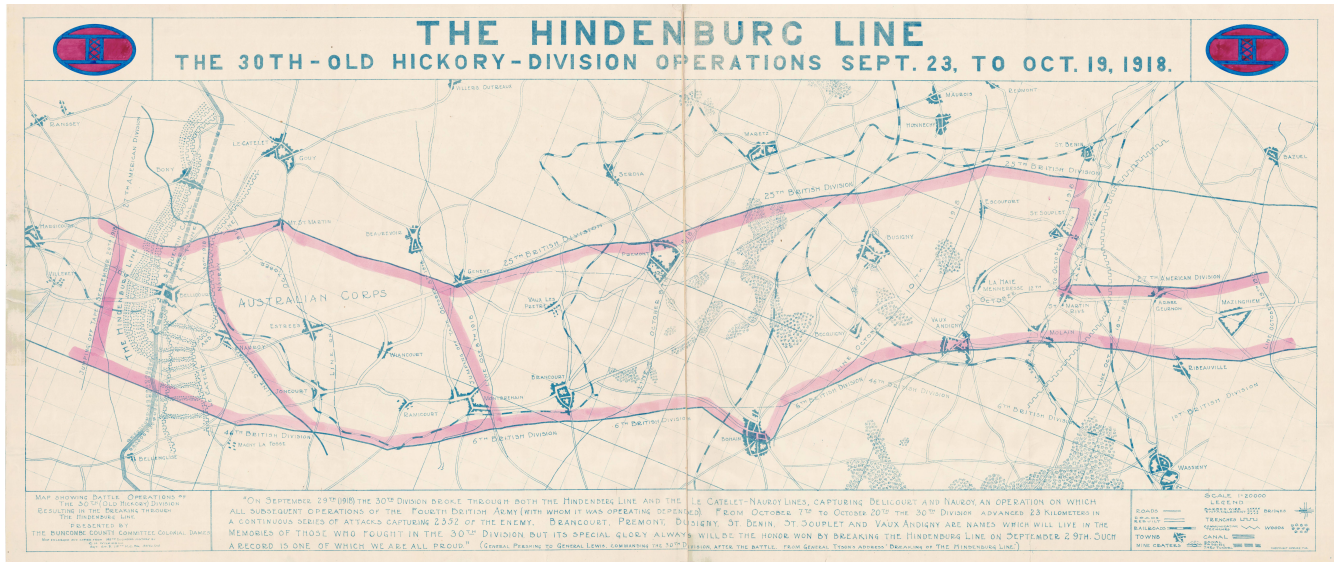
There were a large number of reinforced dugouts, wired with electricity, with steps down 30 feet, capable of protecting 4 – 6 men.

The large tunnel where the canal ran could shelter an entire division. It was wired for electricity and filled with barges. There were tunnels connecting the trenches and to the basement of a large stone building used as headquarters. This large subterranean system of tunnels with hidden exits and entrances formed a safe method for communication and reinforcement for the Germans.

See the [post](#) about the NC Museum of History's WWI exhibit. The diorama has a detailed view of trench warfare.

The assault began at **5:50am** on **September 29, 1918**.

Source: [NC Digital Archives](#)



(To zoom in further, use the map from the [Source](#).)



In the early hours before the assault began, the 105th Engineers were responsible for the laying of the “Jumping off Tape.” The [tape](#) guided the infantry and ensured they left on a straight front. According to Colonel Pratt’s diary, Lieutenant Griffin from Company A and several of his men were severely gassed, with two corporals missing. Recall that Corporals Ballard and Hewett from Company A were severely gassed on this date. There are no details on the circumstances surrounding the Brunswick County casualties. But another possibility may be found in this account of Company A’s activities (Corporals Ballard and Hewett were in Company A):

Company A: The detail of 50 men from Company A, under Lieut. Taylor, carried out its work of searching for traps, mines, captured dumps and reporting on dugouts, roads, and other accommodations. During the 29th they exploited the territory covered by the infantry to a line between G 15 d 5.4 and A 27 a 9.7. This detail suffered eight casualties from gas shells during the day. Source: Page 140 of [The History of the 105th Engineering Regiment of Engineers](#)

Pvt Chadwick was in Company D. Their activities that day are detailed on page 147. They were responsible for keeping the roads clear. They filled shell holes, removed obstacles, and filled in trenches and machine gun pits. They were constantly under fire, sometimes got ahead of infantry, and captured prisoners, some refusing to surrender. On the 29th, Company D reported 5 KIA, 42 Wounded, and 1 MIA. **Pvt Harvey T. Chadwick was Killed in Action.**

When the assault had ended, the entire Hindenburg system and beyond was captured, including numerous surrounding cities and trenches. (More on NC and [Breaking the Hindenburg Line](#))

CHAPTER XV
THE HONOR ROLL OF THE 105TH ENGINEERS

KILLED IN ACTION

Captain Bascom L. Fields, Company D, of Greensboro, N. C.
Killed in action in front of Bellicourt Sept. 29th, 1918.
1st Lieut. Ralph R. Marrian, Company B, of Watertown, N. Y.
Killed in action October 17th, 1918, near St. Souplet.
Sergeant William R. Martin, Co. F.,
Killed in action Sept. 29th, 1918.
Supply Sgt. John D. Huffman, Engr. Train, of Hickory, N. C.
Killed by enemy bomb July 16th, 1918.
Corporal John F. Compton, Co. A., of Rogersville, Tenn.
Killed in action September 28th, 1918.
Corporal Ray Stroman, Co. F., of Topeka, Kansas.
Killed in action August 28th, in gas attack Canal Sector, Ypres Front.
Corporal Albert G. McKay, Co. C., of Kannapolis, N. C.
Killed in action October 8th, 1918.
Corporal Charles H. Woods, Co. E., of Greenville, Mo.
Killed in action September 29th, 1918.
Private, 1st Class, Henry P. Demeron, Co. C., of Hickory, N. C.
Killed in action October 9th, 1918.
Private, 1st Class, Robert Dougherty, Co. D., of Charleston, Tenn.
Killed in action September 29th, 1918.
Private, 1st Class, Fred Farmer, Co. B., of Cleveland, Tenn.
Killed in action October 17th, 1918.
Private, 1st Class, Troy F. Johnston, Co. E., of Elizabethtown, N. C.
Killed in action September 29th, 1917.
Private, 1st Class, Hobson K. Knotts, Co. F., of Charlotte, N. C.
Killed in action September 29th, 1918.
Private, 1st Class, Henry V. Soard, Co. B., of New Tazewell, Tenn.
Killed in action October 17th, 1918.
Private, 1st Class, Robert G. Tate, Co. E., of Winston-Salem, N. C.
Killed in action September 29th, 1918.
Private William C. Barlow, Co. F., of Ashford, Ala.
Killed in action August 28th, gas attack, Canal Sector, Ypres Front.
Private Harvey T. Chadwick, Co. D., of Charlotte, N. C.
Killed in action September 29th, 1918.
Private Henry M. Johnson, Co. D., of Graham, N. C.
Killed in action September 29th, 1918.
Private George Klem, Co. E., of Terre Haute, Ind.
Killed in action October 18th, 1918.

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Chapter XV, the Honor Roll of the 105th Engineers, begins on page 277 of [*The History of the 105th Engineering Regiment of Engineers*](#).

Pvt Harvey Chadwick's name is on the first page, which is shown in its entirety on the left.

Pvt Chadwick's hometown is listed as "Charlotte." There were many mistakes in the names of cities in various documents, but one very common mistake seen was between Charlotte and Shallotte.

Pvt Harvey Chadwick's sacrifice was not in vain. The breaking of the Hindenburg Line was pivotal in ending the years long war. Congratulations were received from Australia and Britain, who participated in the battle with the 30th Division.

Source: [*Operations, Thirtieth Division, Old Hickory*](#)

An excerpt from one is shown below. (From Major General E.M. Lewis, Commander of the 30th Division)

To be given the task, in its initial effort, to play an important role in breaking through the Hindenburg Line, the strongest defenses on the Western Front, was a great honor, and the fact that the break-through was actually made on the divisional front is ample evidence that the honor was not misplaced, and is a credit to the fighting efficiency of the division, of the command of which the undersigned has every reason to be proud.

Another letter dated February 16, 1919 from Major General E.M. Lewis, Commander of the 30th Division, to Colonel Joseph Hyde Pratt, Commander of the 105th Engineers reads:

SUBJECT : Service of the 105th Engineers.

1. Before you pass from under my command I wish to tell you how much I appreciate the services of yourself and of the officers and enlisted men of your splendid Regiment.
2. The entire Regiment rendered splendid service in the operations of this Division and its

allied units. Called upon to perform a great variety of duties from building railroads in the back areas to accompanying attacking troops to assist in consolidating the position, its personnel has uniformly exhibited courage, fortitude and skill, and has repeatedly earned and received the commendation of Commanders. No matter how difficult the task given it there has never been exhibited the least doubt or reluctance in attempting it.

3. Upon your return to the United States may you all receive the well-earned reward of the expressions of a grateful people, whom you have well served.

Source: Page xiv of [The History of the 105th Engineering Regiment of Engineers](#)

December 16, 1921: Several years after the war, Pvt Harvey T. Chadwick's remains were returned to the United States on USAT *St. Mihiel*. [Source: ancestry.com]



His remains were [buried](#) in Gurganus Cemetery, Shallotte, with his family.

Some members of the The Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range visited the cemetery recently to pay tribute to Pvt Chadwick and take photos of his headstone.

While not an official military headstone, it does include his service.

Harvey T. Chadwick gave his life for his country.

Most of the information gathered was from [The History of the 105th Engineering Regiment of Engineers](#); and [Operations, Thirtieth Division, Old Hickory](#); as well as the incredible [diary](#) Colonel Pratt kept for his wife and son.

WWI Profile: Thedford S. Lewis

1896-1938

Source: Operations, Thirtieth Division, Old Hickory



Thedford S. Lewis
Supply, Brunswick County, NC
US Army
Private
Served:
March 21, 1918 – April 24, 1919
Overseas:
May 26, 1918 – April 18, 1919
Wounded: September 29, 1918
Severely Gassed

Thedford S. Lewis was born and raised in Supply. Most of his family appears to have remained in the area throughout their lives. Several are buried in Sharon United Methodist Church Cemetery in Supply, NC.

Thedford's WWI Draft Registration card from 1917 shows he was single and working as a farmer.

Thedford was ordered to report to the Brunswick County military board on March 22, 1918, with 13 other men from Brunswick County [source:ancestry.com]. Included in this group of 14 men was **Harvey Chadwick** from Shallotte and **Samuel Peter Cox** from Bolivia. All were sent to Camp Jackson, SC. On April 24, Thedford and Harvey joined the **105th Engineers, Company D, 30th "Old Hickory" Division**. Samuel joined Company A. Their very strenuous training was at Camp Sevier, SC, which was detailed in a previous post.

As the table in a previous post listed, three Brunswick County men in the NC National Guard were already members of the 105th Engineers. They were: **Lawson Ballard** (Company A), **George Harker Hewett** (Company A), and **Vander L. Simmons** (Company A). On May 26, 1918, Thedford boarded *Talithybius* to France, along with the other five Brunswick County men. After a short training period, the division was transferred to the British troops in Belgium to help construct defensive positions. This was followed by more training and offensives. Their defining battle was the assault on the Hindenburg Line, which began at 5:50am on September 29, 1918 and was the deadliest day of the war for North Carolina.

Pvt Thedford Lewis was in Company D with Pvt Harvey Chadwick. Pvt Chadwick's veteran profile listed their company activities on September 29, 1918, the day Pvt Chadwick was KIA. Pvt Lewis was severely gassed the same day. His NC WWI Service Card lists the date October 26 as the day he was wounded. But the 105th Engineers were relaxing and planning athletic fields and rifle ranges at that time. After more research, Pvt Lewis' name was discovered in the 105th Engineer Honor Roll and the

date shows his gas injury was September 29. Here is the extension of the list that included Corporals Ballard and Hewett, gassed by enemy gas shells in the line of duty.

Pvt. Russell D. Settlemyre, 1329342, Company "D," Sept. 29/18.
Pvt. Thedford Lewis, 1878058, Company "D," Sept. 29/18.
Sgt., 1st Class, Grover Y. Russell, 1329578, Company "E," Sept. 29/18.
Cpl. Forest P. Holland, 1329546, Company "E," Sept. 29/18.
Cpl. Phillip P. Jennings, 1329549, Company "E," Oct. 18/18.
Cpl. Joseph W. Moffitt, 1329561, Company "E," Sept. 29/18.
Cpl. Walter C. Pettus, 1329461, Company "E," Sept. 29/18.

To understand the use of gas in the war, some background information is needed.

This photograph was taken at Fort Dix, NJ, as soldiers prepared to learn how to use their gas masks by entering trenches filled with tear gas. [Source: Library of Congress] Details were given and are shown below.



In order that these soldiers might be properly taught the necessity of having their masks adjusted, the army officers made use of this tear-gas trench where fumes that would irritate but not permanently injure the eyes, were used.

The soldier nearest to you is testing his mask to see if it is tight all about his face. With his hand he has removed the piece of rubber from his mouth and is exhaling his breath inside the mask.

The mask, you can see, is inflated, proof that the edges are tight. On the mask of the third soldier you can plainly see the circular spring just below the eye piece that is used to adjust and hold the nose grip in place to prevent breath entering the lungs except through the mouth.

All of these men have their masks at the "alert," that is, strapped high on their chests with the lower part firmly tied around their backs. You will notice too that the flaps of the case fold in toward the body, to lessen the possibility of water, dampness and dirt getting into the mask.

When these masks are adjusted the chin is inserted first and then the rest of the mask drawn over the face, being held in position by that rubber band which you can see passed over the top of the head and two rubber bands that pass around the head.

Months before the 105th Engineers went into battle, on June 16, 1918, Colonel Pratt referred to his men attending gas school, to prepare for gas attacks. Gas masks were fitted, tested, and the men went through the gas house.

The gas mask almost gets the best of me. I nearly suffocate with it, and can hardly control myself from tearing it off. This is one of the worst phases of the war to me.

November 11, 1918, Captain Hill from the 92nd Division (referenced in previous posts) was gassed and shared the following in his diary. He was released November 20th.

...they piled us into an ambulance and rushed us to Field Hospital #366. We expected to return the next day after a good bath—but none of us realized the terrible effects of mustard gas. Shortly after reaching the hospital my eyes began to close and for two days I was unable to see even the light of day. It was then that I realized to what extent we were gassed. I lay in bed and many, many times wondered if I would ever see again and I can assure you it was anything but pleasant. On the 14th of November we were pronounced somewhat better and moved to Base Hospital #82 at Toul. There in the gas ward the sights that we necessarily saw were anything but encouraging: big fine American soldiers, blind, burnt completely over their bodies and physical wrecks—all the result of mustard & other gases. Sure was enough to take the heart out of you.

Source: CDC

Sulfur mustard or Mustard gas was used for the first time by Germans in 1917. Sulfur mustard sometimes smells like garlic, onions, or mustard and sometimes has no odor. It can be a vapor (the gaseous form of a liquid), an oily-textured liquid, or a solid.

The advantage of using it during wartime is the fact that it can have no odor or that the nose quickly adapts to it and no longer notices it. The symptoms typically take time to appear, sometimes not appearing for 24 hours. Also, it can last in the environment for days or even months under very cold conditions.

In its liquid or solid form, you can drink or eat contaminated water or food, or touch it and get it on your skin or eyes. In vapor form, you can breathe it or get it in your eyes or skin.

It can affect:

- Skin: redness, itching, blistering, second and third degree burns and death
- Eyes: pain, swelling, temporary or permanent blindness
- Respiratory tract: sneezing, bloody nose, shortness of breath, chronic respiratory diseases, lung cancer
- Digestive tract: pain, diarrhea, fever, nausea, vomiting
- Bone marrow: affects blood cells and platelets, leading to weakness, bleeding, and infections

After breaking the Hindenburg Line, the 105th Engineers continued to push forward. It's unlikely that any of the gassed men from Brunswick County participated in this push. But Corporal Vander Simmons and Private Samuel Cox were unharmed and eventually Corporals Ballard and Hewett, and Pvt Lewis likely rejoined the 105th Engineers for the cleanup. Sadly, Pvt Harvey T. Chadwick had been laid to rest, although his remains were returned to Shallotte years later.

Source: The History of the 105th Engineering Regiment of Engineers



The engineers had an enormous task ahead of them. Besides supporting the infantry, the enemy was destroying everything as they retreated and repairing it was the engineers' task.

There were also "booby" traps, and mines in buildings, churches, and trenches. These had to be found and removed by the engineers. There was also the continual search for safe and tested water, which seems to dominate many of the maps and orders located in the book.

Company A returned on USS *Martha Washington*, while Pvt Thedford Lewis (Company D) returned on USS *Zeelandia*. The troops traveled to Camp Jackson, SC, where they were mustered out. Thedford married and began raising his family.

Thedford passed away in 1938 at age 42 and was laid to rest before any of his family members. A military headstone was not requested, so no WWI honors are displayed.

Most of the information gathered was from The History of the 105th Engineering Regiment of Engineers; and Operations, Thirtieth Division, Old Hickory; as well as the incredible diary Colonel Pratt kept for his wife and son.

WWI Profile: Carl Jefferson Danford

1893-1917

Source: Library of Congress
105th Engineers at Camp Sevier, March 1918
Trenches built by the engineers can be seen in the foreground.



Carl Jefferson Danford
Southport, Brunswick County, NC
US Army
Private
Served:
September 18, 1917 – December 8, 1917
Died of Disease: December 8, 1917

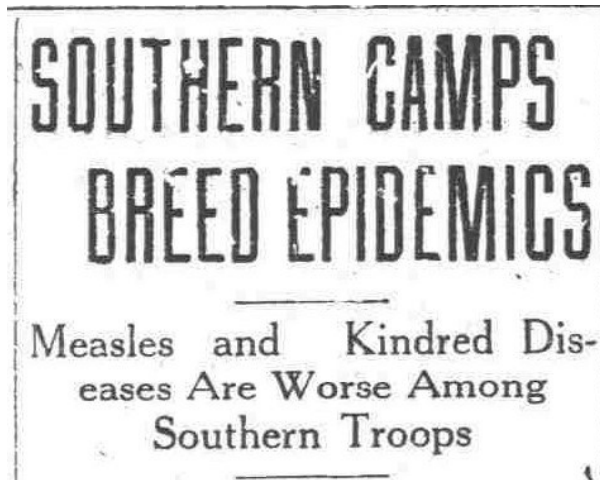
Carl Danford was born and raised in Brunswick County, NC. In 1915, he married Luola Lewis. His first and only child, a daughter, was born in August 1916.

His WWI Draft Registration lists his occupation as farmer, living in Bolivia with wife and child. On September 18, 1917, he was ordered to report for duty [Source:ancestry.com], sent to Camp Jackson, SC, and eventually assigned to the **105th Engineers, 30th “Old Hickory” Division**, training at Camp Sevier, Greenville, SC.

Camp Sevier was built in a very short span of time. In those few months from June to November 1917, land had to be acquired, facilities built, and supplies found and stocked to train and house 46,000 men and women. Sanitation was an issue. Most military camps did not have running water for toilets, so pit toilets were used. Soldiers began using neighboring woods, which resulted in complaints from land owners. *[Read more here on the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources blog.]*

Many training camps were built in the South to avoid harsh winters. However, this particular winter was unusually cold and supplies and proper winter clothing and uniforms were scarce.

Source: *Wilmington Dispatch*, Dec. 1, 1917, p. 2



In November 1917, a measles epidemic was declared at Camp Sevier. The camp was quarantined and civilians were not allowed to enter without a pass from the city board of health. Each day, deaths were announced. Near the end of the month, a mumps epidemic had begun.

The quarantine of the camp was lifted on December 3, 1917. Reports indicated a total of about 2000 cases of measles, 175 cases of pneumonia, and 15 of meningitis. There were 60 deaths reported.

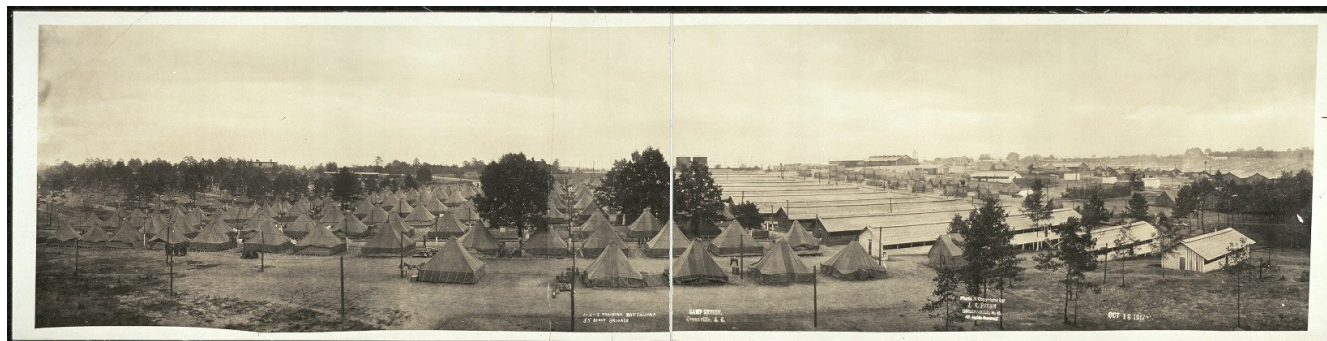
On December 8, 1917, Pvt Danford died of "broncho pneumonia following measles." A total of five men died that day. 4000 men were still under quarantine.

Carl Jefferson Danford was laid to rest in the same cemetery as some of his family. No military or WWI honors are displayed to indicate that he lost his life while serving his country.

WWI Profile: Samuel Claudius Swain

1890-1918

*Source: Library of Congress
Camp Sevier, SC
October 18, 1917*



Samuel Claudius Swain
Bolivia, Brunswick County, NC
US Army
Private
Served:

October 7, 1917 – January 7, 1918
Died of Disease: January 7, 1918

Samuel Claudius Swain was born and raised in Brunswick County, NC. Most of his family is buried in Bolivia or Wilmington. On April 25, 1917, Samuel Swain married Myrtle Clemmons.

Samuel was ordered to report for duty on October 6, 1917, then accepted into the military at Camp Jackson, SC, on October 15, 1917. [Source: ancestry.com] He eventually was assigned to **Company C, 119th Infantry, 30th “Old Hickory” Division** and began training at Camp Sevier, SC. *More details on the 119th Infantry to follow in later posts.*

Three months later, on January 7, 1918, Pvt Samuel Claudius Swain died of pneumonia. His was the first known casualty in the 119th Infantry from Brunswick County. His death certificate was filed from Camp Sevier and shows that he had been ill since December 14, 1917. His death was a month after Pvt Carl Danford lost his life from pneumonia following measles, when 4000 men were still under quarantine. Recall from Pvt Danford’s profile that the entire camp was under a quarantine during the month of November 1917.

This table from Chapter 32, *Military Hospitals in the US*, shows the statistics from the base hospital in Camp Sevier. The hospital opened in September 1918. The patient totals for several months, with resulting deaths are shown below.

November 1917: 2,228 total patients; **82 deaths**

December 1917: 1,217 total patients; **56 deaths**

January 1918: 2,082 total patients; **31 deaths**

The pandemic of 1918 was yet to occur, beginning in September 1918 with a peak in October of nearly 7000 patients and 332 deaths in one month. *More information on the pandemic, commonly referred to as the "Spanish Flu" is planned for a later post.*

Samuel Claudius Swain was laid to rest in the Antioch Baptist Church Cemetery in Bolivia, NC. *The Wilmington Morning Star*, 10 Jan 1918, p. 6, published this account.

Brunswick Soldier Dead.

News of the death of Private Samuel Claudius Swain, stationed at Camp Sevier, S. C., resulting from pneumonia, was received by relatives yesterday. He was 29 years old and had been in the service but a few months. He was a son of Mr. B. F. Swain, of Suburb, Brunswick county, and is survived by his wife, one sister, Mrs. Walter Clark, and three brothers, Preston, Cleveland and Roger. The funeral and interment will take place probably today at his old home. The bereaved family have the tender sympathy of a host of friends.



Several members of the Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range recently visited his gravesite to pay respects and take photos of a very nicely restored headstone, as well as identify whether military honors are shown.

Samuel Claudius Swain lost his life while serving his country.

WWI Profile: Luther Marvin Benton

1891-1966

-1-

COMPANY "A" 119TH INFANTRY.
List of officers and men present who sailed May 11th,
1918.

	NUMBER	RANK	✓ EMERGENCY ADDRESS
✓ Cantwell, Paul L.		Capt.	Sara C. Cantwell (wife) Wilmington, N.C.
✓ Abbott, Johnnie R.	1314678	Pvt. Icl.	J.R.W. Abbott (father) Henderson, N.C.
✓ Alexander, James M.	1314647	Sup. Sgt.	Jacob N. Alexander (father) 124 Montford Ave, Asheville, N.C.
✓ Austin, Robert L.	1314713	Pvt.	I.F. Austin (father) Hatteras, N.C.
✓ Austin, William H.	1879817	Pvt.	Rufus Austin (brother) Oaksboro, N.C.
✓ Bachelor, Clinder C.	1314714	Pvt. Icl.	E.W. Bachelor (father) Chinquamin, N.C.
✓ Bailey, David E.	1314653	Sgt.	N.A. Smith (friend) Rocky Mount, N.C.
✓ Baker, Robert L.	1314715	Col.	T.E. Baker (brother) Drexel, N.C.
✓ Barrus, David R.	1314716	Sgt.	N.S. Barrus (father) 107 E. Gordon St. Kinston, N.C.
✓ Bass, Lonnie E.	1314679	Col.	Embro Bass (father) Rocky Mount, N.C. Route #2.
✓ Battisti, Frank R.	1879138	Col.	Mary Pfeiffer (sister) Statesville, Ind.
✓ Benton, Luther M.	1878368	Pvt.	M.C. Benton (father) Ash, N.C.
✓ Beadles, William S.	1879486	Sgt.	William Harvey (Uncle) Stendale, Ind.
✓ Beck, Lawrence L.	1879394	Pvt. Icl.	John J. Beck (father) Salem, Ind.
✓ Bergbower, Cornelius.	1999743	Pvt.	John Bergbower (father) Newton, Ill.
✓ Blanchard, James H.	1314654	Col.	J.W. Blanchard (father) New Hill, N.C.
✓ Brendle, Lester.	1314635	Col.	Myra Brendle (wife) Lawndale, N.C.
✓ Britt, Robert E.	1314637	Pvt. Icl.	Hilary T. Britt (brother?) Henderson, N.C.
✓ Brown, George F.	1314793	Pvt.	Jacob Brown (father) Pikeville, N.C.
✓ Brown, John T.	1999323	Pvt.	Edna T. Brown (wife) 1323 E. Cherry St., Olney, Ill.
✓ Bowen, James S.	1314718	Pvt.	Edward F. Bowen (father) Whiteville, N.C.
✓ Buck, Robert.	1314609	Pvt. Icl.	Matilda Buck (wife) Goldsboro, N.C.
✓ Butters, Ulysses E.	1879231	Pvt. Icl.	Fred Butters (father) Vevay, Ind.

Source: 119th Infantry Unit Rosters for Company A to Company C, Page 2.

Luther Marvin Benton was born and raised in Brunswick County. He was ordered to report to duty on March 22, 1918 [Source: [ancestry.com](#)]. His WWI Draft [Card](#) shows he was single and a farmer. He was sent to Camp Jackson, SC, then joined the 119th Infantry, 30th "Old Hickory" Division at Camp Sevier, SC, on April 24, 1918.

Refer to the previous posts outlining the history of the division. (Only information specific to the 119th Infantry will be included here.)

The 119th Infantry had been training since the Fall of 1917. From [History, 119th Infantry, 60th Brigade, 30th Division, U. S. A. Operations in Belgium and France, 1917-1919](#)

A system of trenches was constructed by the 105th Engineers and these used extensively by the Regiment, in order that the men might become somewhat familiar with trench life, and their tactical use. A large target range was also constructed and on this the men were trained in the art of shooting accurately and rapidly, in order that they might protect their own lines in time to come.

Pvt Benton had little time for training before boarding the British Steamship *Ascania* in May with the

Luther Marvin Benton
Ash, Brunswick County, NC
US Army
Private
Served:
March 21, 1918 – April 7, 1919
Overseas:
May 11, 1918 – April 2, 1919
Wounded: August 17, 1918;
October 17, 1918

rest of Company A.

In May 1918 when they left for France, the 119th Infantry included 1,800 men from the State of North Carolina, 900 from Tennessee, and 700 from the States of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin. The company roster of enlisted men begins on page 60. The following Brunswick County men were located in the roster, which includes the date returned to service after injury.

Name	Co.		Returned to Duty
Cpl Mack D Atkins	G	Wounded: 09/11/1918	12/02/1918
Cpl Edgar L Ballard	B	Slightly Gassed: 10/29/1918	11/27/1918
Pvt Luther M Benton	A	Wounded: 08/17 & 10/17/1918	12/02/1918
Pfc John W Carlisle	K	Died of Disease: 02/16/1919	
Pfc Perry G Carlisle	I	Sick: 10/31/1918	12/22/1918
Cpl Joseph W. Chinnis	I	Transferred: 01/29/1919	
Cpl Calmer T Clemmons	F	Wounded: 09/29 & 10/18/1918	
Wag William P Comron/Cameron	Sup		
Pvt John F Cox	E		
Cook Henry B Danford	I		
Pvt Herman D Fulford	L	Severely Wounded: 10/14/1918	
Pvt Samuel G Fulford	C	Wounded: 10/17/1918	11/26/1918
Pfc James R Ganey	MG		
Cpl Elder E Heath	I	Severely Wounded: 09/29/1918	12/02/1918
Sfc Van G Mintz	E	Wounded: 10/10/1918	11/01/1918
Cook Alvah H Nance	I		
Cpl Lindsey Piggott	B	Severely Wounded: 09/29/1918	
Pvt Herbert Rabon	I		
Cpl Rufus E Sellers	I	Wounded: 09/29/1918	10/17/1918
Pvt Everet J Skipper	I		
Cpl George L Skipper	D		
Pvt Benjamin B Smith	A	Severely Wounded: 09/29/1918; Died of Wounds	
Cpl Curtis L Smith	G		
Pvt Goodman Smith	A		
Pvt Percy A Smith	H		
Capt Benjamin West			
Pfc Albert W Williams	M	Severely Wounded: 10/10/1918	11/14/1918
Cpl Henry D Williams	M		

Note: [Pvt Samuel Claudius Swain](#) and [Pvt Harry Lee Doshier](#) do not appear on the roster above because they were no longer among the 119th Infantry in May 1918 when the roster was created.

An earlier [WWI Profile](#) covered **Pvt Swain's** death on January 7, 1918. He was in Company C.

Pvt Doshier was given a Surgeons Certificate of Disability (SCD) release on March 3, 1918. He had been ill for some time at Camp Jackson [Source: Wilmington Dispatch, 10 Mar 1918, p. 9] He was in Company G.

Additional note: **Pfc Perry G Carlisle** is listed as sick from October 31 – December 22, 1918. [His NC Service Card](#) does not indicate he was wounded or gassed, and no reports were found in newspapers that list the wounded. The assumption is he was actually ill, likely from the influenza pandemic of 1918.

Three British Transports, *Ascania*, *Haverford* and *Laomadon* met in the Harbor at Halifax, Nova Scotia, formed a convey with nine others, and sailed for England. The convoy was escorted by the British Cruiser *Cornwall*. On Friday, May 24th, the convoy reached the “danger zone”, and held numerous “abandon ship drills.” Many accounts and diaries of this time express gratitude for the US Navy. *The following two excerpts are from the [119th Infantry document](#) referenced above.*

At daylight of the 25th several United States Submarine Destroyers were seen chasing all around our convoy, and remained as our best friends until the convoy landed.

About 11:30 p. m., May 26th, a German submarine was sighted within very close range, but it immediately submerged and was not seen again. The crafty Destroyers were on their job and dropped several “depth bombs” at the spot where the submarine had been seen. No disorder or confusion among the troops was caused during these crucial moments.

After reaching England, it took several days before the Regiment arrived in France.

About 9:30 a. m., May 27th, 1918, the convoy filed through the Irish Sea and in a few minutes docked at Liverpool, England. All troops remained on board until 5:00 o'clock that afternoon when the Regiment debarked, and marched a short distance to the train which left at 10:00 p. m., for Dover, England's chief Channel Port for the exportation of troops. The train passed through London about midnight and arrived at Dover about 8:00 o'clock on the morning of the 28th.

Beginning at 11:00 a. m., on the same date, the Regiment moved by small detachments from Dover, England, across the English Channel to Calais, France, and by the afternoon of May 29th the entire Regiment was once more assembled in camp, located about one and one-half kilometers from Calais.

The 119th Infantry received their gas respirators, ammunition, and swapped their American rifles for British rifles, because they were to serve with the British.

The first night of arrival, the Regiment experienced their first air attack. Colonel Pratt, whose [diary](#) has been used in previous veteran profiles, wrote about the experience of an air attack.

You know you are perfectly helpless and if he can make a direct hit on your hut or tent, you are a “goner.” ...as you lie in bed listening (if you are awake) to the air planes coming nearer, you and your tent or hut begin to grow larger and larger until it seems to you as though you were bigger than anything else out doors, and that you stand out so distinctly that you just know the air plane is going to drop its bomb on you. It is a very disagreeable

feeling. It is a helpless feeling. There is nothing you can do to further protect yourself and you lie “awake” expecting the bomb to hit your tent or hut. It is not only one night, but night after night.

Source: NC Digital Archives



The 119th Infantry was the first American unit to enter Belgium. After endless marching, they finally settled in a camp two kilometers southeast of Watou, Belgium. (*First Battalion, pictured at left, includes Pvt Benton's Company A.*)

Pvt Benton's first injury occurred on August 17, 1918. At that time, during the night, the 119th Infantry was relieving the 98th British Brigade. The orders can be found on page 17 of the document referenced above. During this period of time, spanning the remainder of the month, 64 enlisted men were killed, 208 wounded, 12 Died of Wounds, and 2 were Missing.

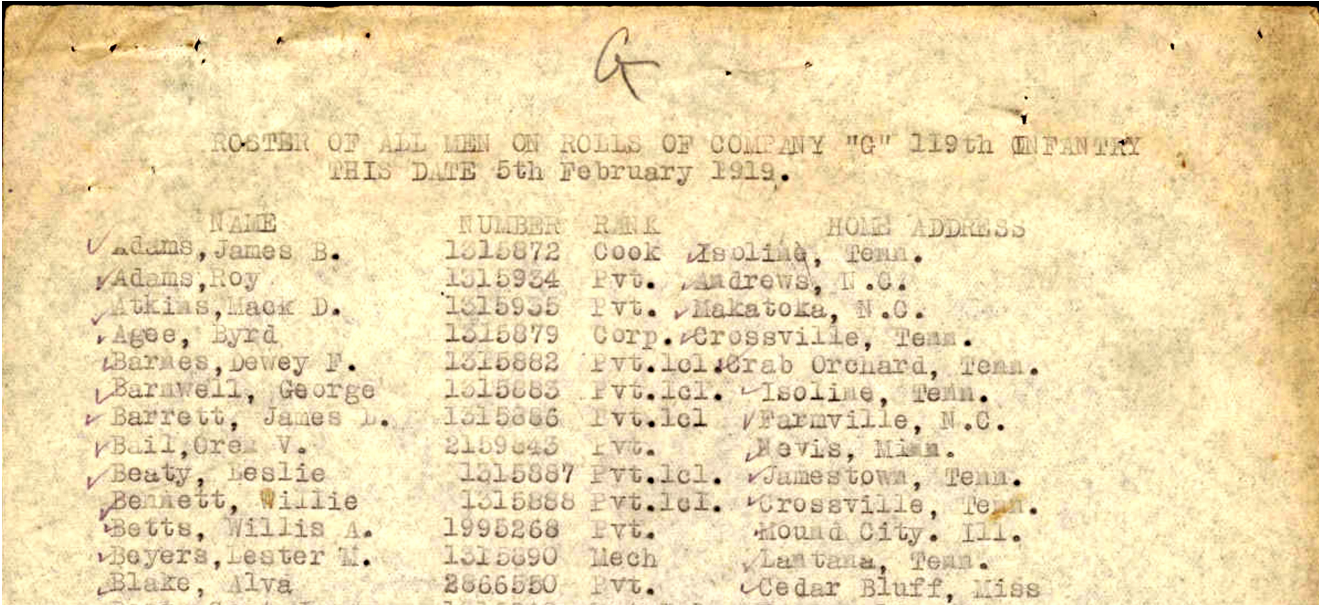
Pvt Benton's injury was not severe enough to be sent home, as he resumed serving and was wounded a second time, on October 17, 1918. Activities during that time will be covered in a future post. (Pvt Samuel Fulford was wounded on that date.) As the chart above shows, he recovered from the injury received in October and returned to service on December 2, 1918.

Pvt Benton returned home with Company A in March 1919. He married and raised his family in the area. Luther Marvin Benton was laid to rest in 1966. Military honors are shown.

WWI Profile: Mack D. Atkins

1893-1930

Source: 119th Infantry Unit Rosters for Company E to Company G, page 24.



ROSTER OF ALL MEN ON ROLLS OF COMPANY "G" 119th INFANTRY
THIS DATE 5th February 1919.

NAME	NUMBER	RANK	HOME ADDRESS
✓ Adams, James B.	1315872	Cook	Isoline, Tenn.
✓ Adams, Roy	1315934	Pvt.	Andrews, N.C.
✓ Atkins, Mack D.	1315935	Pvt.	Makatoka, N.C.
✓ Agee, Byrd	1315879	Corp.	Crossville, Tenn.
✓ Barnes, Dewey F.	1315882	Pvt. 1cl.	Grab Orchard, Tenn.
✓ Barnwell, George	1315883	Pvt. 1cl.	Isoline, Tenn.
✓ Barrett, James D.	1315886	Pvt. 1cl.	Farmville, N.C.
✓ Bail, Orel V.	2159643	Pvt.	Mevis, Minn.
✓ Beaty, Leslie	1315887	Pvt. 1cl.	Jamestown, Tenn.
✓ Bennett, Willie	1315888	Pvt. 1cl.	Crossville, Tenn.
✓ Betts, Willis A.	1995268	Pvt.	Mount City, Ill.
✓ Bayers, Lester M.	1315890	Mech	Lantana, Tenn.
✓ Blake, Alva	2666580	Pvt.	Cedar Bluff, Miss
✓ Best, Carl E.	1315840	Pvt. 1cl.	Isoline, Tenn.

Mack D Atkins
Makatoka, Brunswick County, NC
Regular Army/US Army
Sergeant
Served:
October 31, 1914 – July 20, 1919
Overseas:
May 11, 1918 – April 2, 1919
Wounded: September 11, 1918

Mack D. Atkins was born and raised in Brunswick County, NC.

His NC WWI Service Card is complicated and there are discrepancies between it and other sources. Using the service card and the following sources, a timeline can be pieced together.

- *Ancestry.com. U.S., Army Transport Service, Passenger Lists, 1910-1939 [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2016.*
- *History, 119th Infantry, 60th Brigade, 30th Division, U. S. A. Operations in Belgium and France, 1917-1919*

October 31, 1914: Mack D. Atkins enlists in the Regular Army at Fort Caswell. He serves with 19th Company, Coastal Artillery Company, Fort Caswell.

April 6, 1917: America declares war on Germany.

June 1, 1917: Pvt Atkins is promoted to Private, First Class.

September 6, 1917: Pfc Atkins is promoted to Sergeant.

September 22, 1917: Sgt Atkins is assigned to Quartermaster Corps at Camp Sevier, NC.

January 30, 1918: Sgt Atkins is now ranked as Private. The assumption is this is due to him being reassigned, below.

February 14, 1918: Pvt Atkins is assigned to Company G, 119th Infantry, until discharge.

March 1, 1918: Pvt Atkins is promoted to Corporal.

At this point, Cpl Atkins is training with the **119th Infantry, 30th “Old Hickory” Division** as explained in Pvt Luther Benton’s profile.

May 11, 1918: Cpl Atkins boards *Haverford* to France.

September 3 or 11, 1918: Cpl Atkins is wounded or becomes ill.

The roster of Brunswick County men in the 119th Infantry displayed in Pvt Benton’s veteran profile was taken from the 119th Infantry history source shown above. It is not always clear whether soldiers had been wounded or became ill. In some cases, soldiers were gassed, but were listed as “sick.” The roster shows that Cpl Mack Atkins became sick on September 11th, yet his service card shows undetermined wounds on September 3rd. Newspaper accounts at the time report that he was wounded.

Cpl Atkins’ injuries occurred during the occupation/operation as described below. His service card shows he was engaged at Ypres and the Canal sector, and the date of September 3 matches this timeframe. His service card lists wounds as “undetermined” and the 119th history shows he was sick, so possibly he was gassed.

Kemmel Hill/Mont Kemmel/Kemmelberg



The Canal sector was the general line extending from immediately southeast of Ypres, about two miles southwest to Elzenwalla, inclusive, on both sides of the Ypres-Commines Canal and the country on this immediate front was very low and wet, thus causing many hardships upon the troops occupying it. To the right of the Canal sector stood **Mount Kemmel**, from the top of which the Germans had a dominating view of the entire sector,

thus causing camouflaged screens to be erected on all main roads leading towards the front, and making it very difficult to move about during the day. On the left of this sector was the remains of Ypres, after the great battle the British fought in July, 1916, when the Germans used gas for the first time. — Page 18, *History, 119th Infantry, 60th Brigade, 30th Division, U. S. A. Operations in Belgium and France, 1917-1919*

According to Col Pratt’s diary, the 105th Engineers and some infantry performed a gas attack on August 28th, which resulted in many engineers and infantry being gassed. An investigation was ordered.

Then Col Pratt wrote the following on August 31, 1918, the **30th Division's first contact with the enemy**.

The unexpected happened. The Germans are off of Mount Kemmel and the "German Eye" will no longer watch us as we work. ... The British were on top of Kemmel early this morning and moving over the slope. Our Division also advanced a short distance, capturing fifteen prisoners and one machine gun. They (the Germans) are not retiring on our front and we are meeting with considerable resistance. I received orders to assign one company of engineers to each Regiment in the line, which I did. Company F with the 120th Infantry; Company E with 119th Infantry. Our troops are attacking and we have actually come in contact with Germans in a fight.

The German retirement is very probably due to his desire to straighten his line and thus cut down the number of troops necessary to hold it. He will probably try and withdraw to the old Hindenburg line and make a stand there. He is fighting hard and giving way as slowly as possible so as to be able to withdraw all his guns and ammunition.

Kemmel Hill/Mont Kemmel/Kemmelberg in 1918



Col Pratt writes of many German gas shells throughout the operation.

(The 30th Division were then moved to the Hindenburg Line and did not participate in the Battle of the Peak of Flanders.)

While evidence points to Cpl Atkins being gassed, whatever injury/illness he suffered, his recovery took 3 months. By then, the war was over.

December 2, 1918: Cpl Atkins returns to service.

December 16, 1918: Cpl Atkins becomes a Private. The assumption is his previous rank was a field promotion.

March 21, 1919: Pvt Atkins boards USS *Huron* in France to return to the US.

July 20, 1919: Pvt Atkins is discharged [Source: 119th Infantry demobilization camps rosters, Camp Jackson, Page 17]. Pvt Atkins immediately re-enlists.

August 3, 1919: Mack Atkins marries Mattie Caison.

January 6, 1920: The 1920 Census shows Cpl Mack Atkins serving at Camp Jackson, SC. His wife Mattie was living with family.

Mack Atkins and his wife had two children. But Mack's life ended soon. He passed away on February 25, 1930 at age 37. His cause of death has possible connections to mustard gas exposure.

Mack D. Atkins was laid to rest in Hope Mills, NC.

His application for a military headstone does not match the above service information. It shows he was in the 48th Infantry, 20th Division. The 20th Division was created in October 1918, never went overseas, and was demobilized in February 1919. It could be a mistake, or previous and later service could explain this. Anyone with information, please contact Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range.

WWI Profile: Rufus Earl Sellers

1899-1946



Rufus Earl Sellers
Supply, Brunswick County, NC
NC National Guard
Corporal
Served:
May 7, 1917 – April 7, 1919
Overseas:
May 14, 1918 – April 2, 1919
Wounded: September 29, 1918

Rufus Earl Sellers was born and raised in Brunswick County, NC. A family tree is located in FamilySearch. Rufus had two brothers who also served in WWI, Pvt Oscar David Sellers and Mechanic Chesley Burgwyn Sellers.

Rufus' NC WWI Service Card shows that he enlisted in the NC National Guard on May 7, 1917. He was 18 years old. He actually was a member of a group of young men who answered the call of Boys' Brigade, which was then accepted into the NC National Guard. The story behind this is an interesting one.

The Boys' Brigade was a national organization that gained popularity in the 1890's. It was similar to Boy Scouts, with a civic and military focus. In 1895, Colonel Walker Taylor, a prominent businessman in Wilmington and regional commander in the state militia, organized a local group that was admitted to the United Boy's Brigades of America as Company A, First North Carolina Regiment, the first company of its kind ever organized in the state.

Col. Taylor supplied muskets and bayonets. There were uniforms consisting of white pants, shoes, caps and blue jerseys. There were annual encampments and drilling at the State Guard. Members were required to attend a Sunday School of their choice and regular drills with the brigade.

In 1903, Col. Taylor bought a house at Second and Church streets in Wilmington and an armory was constructed for Brigade members. The photo is shown above. The building included an auditorium, dining room, kitchen, gymnasium, dressing rooms, a bowling alley and a 2,000-volume library. Membership swelled to nearly 500 boys. Sports, clubs, vocational classes and more were added. The Boys' Brigade was disbanded in 1916, then later became part of the Boys and Girls Clubs of America and still exists today.

The armory was used for various military functions during the early part of the war such as troop quarters for North Carolina Cavalry and the Field Artillery infirmary. Near the later

part of 1918, Carolina Shipbuilding Corporation leased it for employees. The building eventually fell into disrepair and was demolished in 1962.

On May 18, 1917, six weeks after the United States formally entered the war, the U.S. Congress passed the Selective Service Act giving the president the power to draft soldiers. The first draft, June 5, 1917, was required for men between the ages of 21 and 31.

Likely anticipating the draft and age ranges, the former Boys' Brigade leaders must have realized that younger men would have an interest in serving. These former leaders organized meetings in Wilmington.

On March 29, 1917, a call was made to former members to organize an infantry company. It was their hope that the NC National Guard would accept this infantry once assembled.

“These young men are now anxious, in the country’s crisis, to offer their services to the government in any capacity... They have announced that they are willing and ready to go anywhere their country may call them, even to Europe.”

At an April 2 meeting, Col. Walker Taylor told the young men that they should answer their country’s call, saying that it would be much more pleasant to serve with friends than with utter strangers.

On May 16, 1917, the list of recruits was published, which included the following young Brunswick County men. Wanted were those between 18 and 30 years of age, who weigh at least 120 pounds and stand at least 5’4”. Training was planned at Camp Royster in Goldsboro, NC.

Edgar L. Ballard, age 19
Calmer T. Clemmons, age 22
Elder E. Heath, age 19
Alvah H. Nance, age 21
Lindsay Pigott, age 21
James R. Potter, age 18
Rufus Earl Sellers, age 18

The Boys' Brigade was soon accepted into the NC National Guard and Rufus was eventually assigned to **Company I, 119th Infantry, 30th “Old Hickory” Division.**

Previous posts described training with the 30th Division at Camp Sevier, SC, the transportation to France, and events up to and including the Hindenburg Line assault.

Cpl Rufus Sellers was wounded on that tragic yet victorious day when the Hindenburg Line was broken. Recall that *History, 119th Infantry, 60th Brigade, 30th Division, U. S. A. Operations in Belgium and France, 1917-1919* reported the casualties in the 119th Infantry on that day were as follows:

**146 KIA
691 Wounded
16 Died of Wounds
37 Taken Prisoner
12 MIA**

Cpl Rufus Sellers was described as “slightly wounded” and returned to duty October 17, 1918. The war had less than a month to go.

After Cpl Rufus Sellers was discharged, he married and raised a family. He passed away on June 23, 1946, at age 46. According to his obituary on the front page of the State Port Pilot [June 26, 1946], he worked for many years at the U.S. Army Engineers office in Wilmington.

Rufus Earl Sellers was laid to rest in Supply. No military honors are shown.

The information on Boys' Brigade was gathered from the following sources.

Dudley, First Lieutenant E.P. "The Boy's Brigade." The Wilmington Morning Star, 18 Jul 1897, p. 1.

"Boys Brigade Members are Ordered Out." Wilmington Dispatch, 29 Mar 1917, p 5.

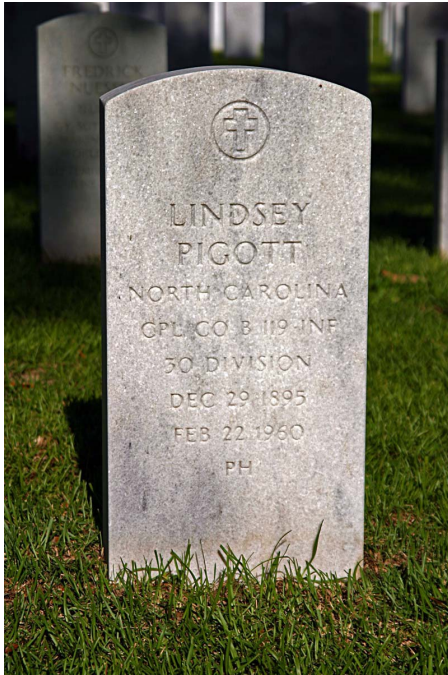
"Boys Brigade in Line." Wilmington Morning Star, 03 Apr 1917, p. 5.

"Boys Brigade Unit." The Wilmington Morning Star 19 May 1917, p. 5.

Star News (Wilmington, NC) Ask a Reporter of Feb. 2011.

WWI Profile: Lindsey Pigott

1897-1960



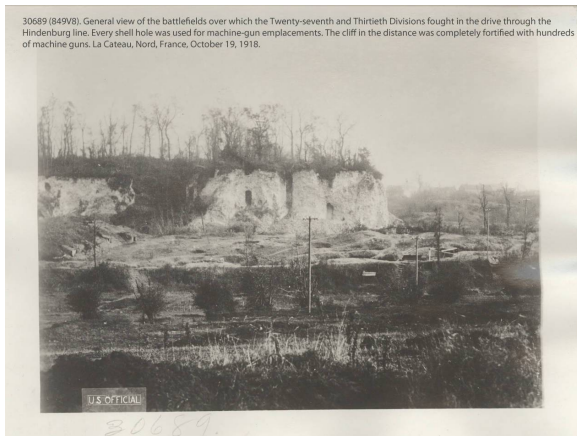
Lindsey Pigott
Supply, Brunswick County, NC
NC National Guard
Corporal
Served:
May 5, 1917 – March 6, 1919
Overseas:
May 11, 1918 – January 19, 1919
Severely Wounded: September 29, 1918

Lindsey Pigott was born and raised in Brunswick County, NC. A partial family tree is located in FamilySearch.

On May 5, 1917, at the age of 21, Lindsey enlisted in the NC National Guard by way of the **Boys' Brigade**, as described in a previous post.

In October, the 30th Division was created from NC National Guard units. Pfc Lindsey Pigott was assigned to **Company B, 119th Infantry, 30th "Old Hickory" Division**. In December, he was promoted to corporal.

Previous posts detail the 119th Infantry's operations up to the assault on the Hindenburg Line on September 29, 1918. The assault itself is also covered in previous posts about the 105th Engineers, also part of the 30th Division.



Very early in the morning of September 29th the 60th brigade [119th Infantry, 120th Infantry, and 115th Machine Gun Battalion], with some units of the 117th regiment, assaulted this terrible line on a front of 3,000 yards, captured the whole Hindenburg system, then advanced still further and took the tunnel system with all the German troops hidden in it and next captured the towns of Bellicourt, Nouroy, Riqueval, Carriere, Etricourt, the Guillaîne Ferme (farm) and Ferme de Riqueval; in this part of the assault advancing 4,200 yards and defeating two German divisions of average quality and taking from these (the 75th and 185th) 47 officers and 1,434 men. – Source

Corporal James E. Gregory, Company M, 119th Infantry, shared these memories of being “sent to the Somme front in France to help the Australians break the famous Hindenburg Line at Bellicourt.”

“Here we learned we were used as storm troops for the English 4th Army.”



Source: NC digital Archives

“At 5:50 a.m., September 29th, our Division attacked the Hindenburg Line on a front of three thousand yards. For four long hours the barrage continued without one minute of let up from both sides. It looked to me as if the destruction of the world had begun.

I couldn’t hear myself think, shells were falling everywhere, and shrapnels filling the air

with their horrible whistles, and men were moaning and groaning at every side, pleading for someone to help them.

German prisoners were coming over with hands up yelling 'Kamerad,' enemy aeroplanes whizzing low to the earth and sending showers of bullets down on us, friends everywhere falling dead and wounded.

I was in a continuous struggle for life and almost unconscious of what was really happening, when the hardest of the battle was over and we had reached our objective, the tunnel of St. Quentin and the entire Hindenburg Line at Bellicourt. We spent the night in a German dugout seventy feet under ground, where the night before Hindenburg's men never dreamed of having to give up.

On the morning of the 30th we began to gather up the remainder of the dead and wounded. Horrible sights

were to be seen. I saw men piled beside the shell-torn road in piles of from two to a dozen, and Australians hauling men to bury in wagons like we haul wood-a dozen or fifteen to a load. At the burying ground some of the men could not be identified for only half a man could be found, sometimes his body being blown to pieces and the identification tag lost.

Cpl Lindsey Piggott was among the severely wounded. He would not return to fight again.

On January 10, 1919, Cpl Lindsey Pigott was transported from Camp Hospital 40, Liverpool, England, to *Lapland* for home [Source: ancestry.com]. On March 6, 1919, he was discharged from the US Army with a 50% disability.

Lindsey lost his left hand and wrist in the battle and sustained serious injuries to his left side. More tragedy awaited after returning to the United States. A shotgun fell from a counter and discharged, resulting in the loss of both legs. But Lindsey didn't lose his fighting spirit.

An article on the front page of the State Port Pilot [1946, Dec 25] announces Lindsey Pigott as the new manager of the Gulf Station and lunch room at the corner of Routes 74 and 17 near the Brunswick River bridge.

Folks who know Mr. Piggott regard him as a very striking illustration of independence despite adversity. ...[Un]daunted by the loss of both legs and a hand and wrist, Mr. Pigott, who is married and has two young children, has worked for several years operating concessions with the R & S Amusement company. Tired of having to be constantly on the road, he decided to engage in a business of his own.

On February 22, 1960, Lindsey Pigott was laid to rest in Wilmington National Cemetery. His headstone with military honors is shown above. *The notation "PH" indicates a purple heart was awarded.*

WWI Profile: Benjamin Bunte Smith

1893-1918

Source: Soldiers of the Great War, Vol. II



Benjamin Bunte Smith
Ash, Brunswick County, NC
US Army
Private
Served:
September 19, 1917 – October 17, 1918
Overseas:
May 11, 1918 – October 17, 1918
Wounded: September 29, 1918
Died of Wounds: October 17, 1918
Awarded Distinguished Service Cross; British Military Medal

Benjamin Bunte Smith was born and raised in Brunswick County. There is a partial family tree in [FamilySearch](#).

His WWI Draft Registration from June 5, 1917, shows he was single and working on his family's farm.

Benjamin B. Smith was one of 16 Brunswick County men ordered to report for duty on September 19, 1917. Included were John Carlisle, Samuel G. Fulford, James R. Ganey, and William P.

Comron/Cameron, who were all eventually assigned to **119th Infantry, 30th "Old Hickory" Division**, to train at Camp Sevier, Greenville, SC.

Previous posts described events up to and including the Hindenburg Line assault.

This account of the assault can be found in the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources blog:

At 5:50 AM on the morning of September 29, 1918, the North Carolinians of the 30th Division—then serving under British command as part of the Fourth Army—emerged from the safety of their trenches and formed up in a single line, each man standing shoulder to shoulder, roughly four to six feet apart.

As they moved across the field under a cacophony of machine gun and artillery fire, the men did their best to stay abreast and maintain unit cohesion. Due to the poor visibility, the difficult nature of the terrain, and battlefield obstacles, however, the lines began to waver almost immediately. Enemy artillery fire punched at the Allied lines as a thick cloud of fog and smoke enveloped the field. "[Y]ou could hardly see your hand before you," remembered Luther Hall, a Surry County native attached to the 119th Infantry Regiment.

Pvt Benjamin Smith died later from wounds received that day. According to *History, 119th Infantry, 60th Brigade, 30th Division, U. S. A. Operations in Belgium and France, 1917-1919*, the casualties the 119th Infantry reported that day were as follows:

146 KIA
691 Wounded
16 Died of Wounds
37 Taken Prisoner
12 MIA

Also included was this description.

The field over which this fight took place, on the 30th day of September, presented a miserable appearance, as dead soldiers were scattered broadcast over its area. Shell holes were so numerous that one could not walk three steps without falling into one. Huge masses of barbed wire had been partly cut by the bombardment and the Tanks. Not a telephone pole nor a tree had been left standing by the sweeping Artillery fire. The town of Bellicourt was a complete wreck.

Pvt Benjamin Smith died of his wounds on October 17, 1918, over two weeks after the Hindenburg Line assault.



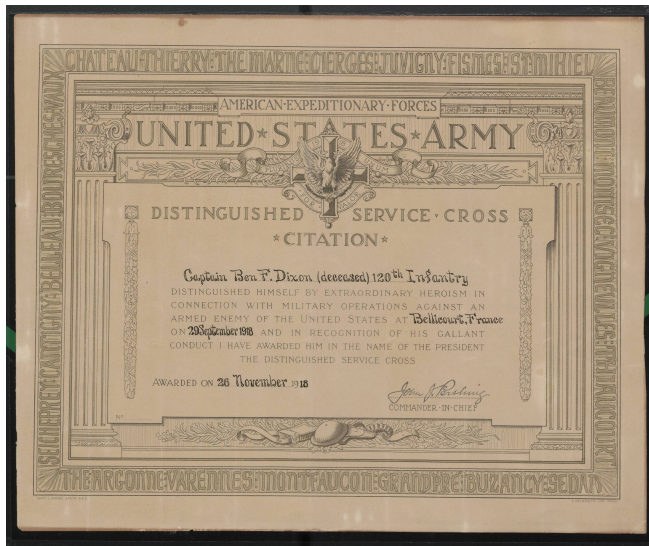
On November 18, 1918, he was recommended for both a British and American military medal.

Pvt Benjamin Smith was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross (pictured left) by the United States Army for great bravery in battle.

His NC WWI Service Card and page 8 of the 119th Infantry military honors recommendations list shows he was also awarded the British Military Medal (pictured right).



On July 8, 1918, the United States Congress approved an act permitting members of the military forces of the United States serving in the World War to accept and wear certain foreign decorations.

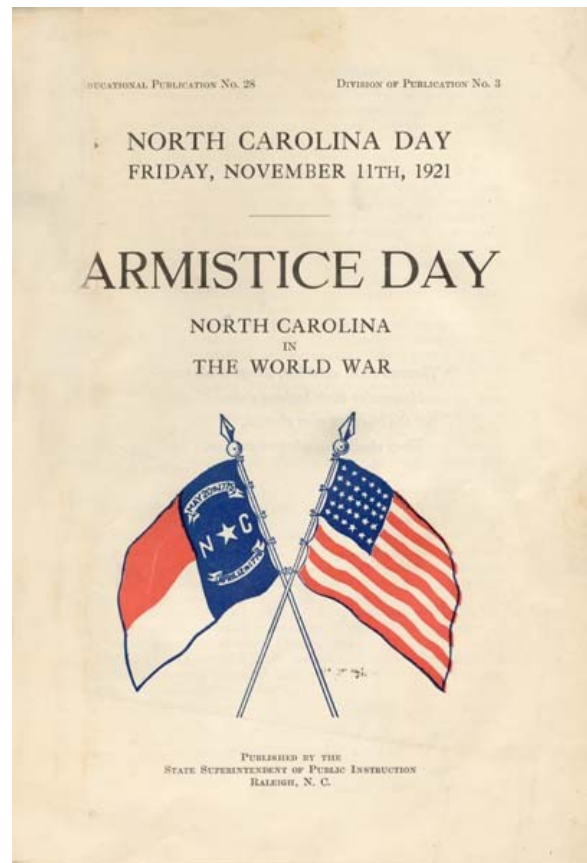


This is an example of a Distinguished Cross Citation that Private Benjamin Smith would have been awarded.

This citation was awarded to Captain Ben F. Dixon, who was KIA during the same battle to break the Hindenburg Line.
[Source: NC State Archives]

An account of his bravery can be found in a NC Armistice Day program in 1921.
[Source: North Carolina Day. Friday, November 11th, 1921. Armistice Day. North Carolina in the World War; North Carolina. Dept. of Public Instruction]

BENJAMIN B. SMITH, private, Company A, 119th Infantry. For extraordinary heroism in action near Bellicourt, France, September 29, 1918. After being wounded twice in making attacks with his own organization, he joined Australian troops and attacked with them, being wounded a third time before he consented to be evacuated.



Included in the program is this table:

NORTH CAROLINA'S WAR RECORD (A TABLE)

73,000 men in the Army.
9,000 men in the Navy and Marine Corps.
1,600 men gave their lives.
1 man awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.
200 men awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.
12 men awarded the Distinguished Service Medal.

The 1921 NC Armistice Day program ended with this dedication

Eighty-two thousand North Carolinians fought in the war. One thousand six hundred of these gave their lives in battle. These are the men whom we should especially honor today. Some day their names and homes will all be known. But scholars will have to work a long time to get them all right. In the meantime you should learn as many as you can of the men from your own county who died. Their names should be read on Armistice Day, and hymns sung and prayers offered in their memory. Some of these men have been brought back from France and are now buried in their home cemeteries. Their graves should be visited this day, and decorated with flowers. Remember that these men died for us, and honor them always.

The remains of Private Benjamin Bunte Smith were returned from Belgium on the USAT *Wheaton* on July 2, 1921 [Source: ancestry.com]. He was laid to rest in the Smith Family Cemetery near Ocean Isle Beach.

WWI Profile: Edgar Eugene Heath

1895-1960

ROSTER OF COMPANY "I" 119TH INFANTRY.

Name	Rank	Left US	Address.
✓ Bell, Ernest H.	Eapt.	May 12/18	✓ Edenton, N.C.
✓ Beyce, Carrell, A.	1st.Lt.	" "	" "
✓ Reimhardt, John P.	Capt.	" "	✓ Gastonia, N.C.
✓ Deiner, John V.	1st.Lt.	June 9-18	✓ Green Bay Wis.
✓ Waddell, Maurice C.	1st.Lt.	May "2/18	✓ Selma, N.C.
✓ Baker, John I.	2nd.Lt.	Oct 6-1917	✓ Worcester, Mass.
✓ Graham Edward, L.	Capt.	April 25/18	✓ Lexington, Va.
✓ Calias, Charles	1st.Lt.	May 12/18	✓ Fayetteville, N.C.
✓ Darby, Earl, M.	1st.Lt.	" "	" "
✓ Keepe, Roger	2nd.Lt.	" "	" "
✓ Prince, David, M.	2nd.Lt.	May 12/18	✓ Goldsboro, N.C.
✓ McDonald, John R.	2nd.Lt.	May 11/18	✓ Oswego, N.Y.
✓ Beckman, Carl, F.	2nd.Lt.	May 11/18	✓ Buffalo, N.Y.
✓ Daniel, Thomas H.	2nd.Lt.	May 12/18	✓ Goldsboro, N.C.
✓ Brown, Oscar, H.	1st.Sgt.	May 12/18	✓ Edenton, N.C.
✓ Moss, George, W.	Sgt	" "	✓ Reckingham, N.C.
✓ Ingram, Archie.	"	" "	✓ High Point, N.C.
✓ Gardner, William, H.	Cerp.	" "	✓ Edenton, N.C.
✓ Price, Lane, C.	Cerk.	" "	✓ Ferrast City, N.C.
✓ Rudder, John H.	"	" "	✓ Weedsdale, N.C.
✓ Hayes, Roland, H.	"	" "	✓ Lake View, S.C.
✓ Garland, Bascom, H.	"	" "	✓ Tecane, N.C.
✓ Hill, Elzie.	Bugler	" "	✓ Hope Mills, N.C.
✓ Sawyer, Herbert, J.	"	" "	✓ Plymouth, N.C.
✓ Lassiter, Charles.	Mech.	" "	✓ Edenton, N.C.
✓ Seiffert, Walter, L.	"	" "	✓ Belleville, Ill.
✓ Schoen, Mike.	Pvt.lcl.	" "	✓ Belleville, Ill.
✓ Ferehand, Walter, S.	Sgt.	" "	✓ South Mills, N.C.
✓ Britt, James, H.	"	" "	✓ Merry Hill, N.C.
✓ Garganus, Edward, P.	"	" "	✓ Rocky Mount, N.C.
✓ Williams, Daniel, W.	Cerp.	" "	✓ Edenton, N.C.
✓ Kinney, Brack, M.	"	" "	✓ Albemarle, N.C.
✓ Skoster, John W.	Pvt.lcl.	" "	✓ Williamston, N.C.
✓ Vaughn, Sam, T.	Pvt.	" "	✓ Greenwood, S.C.
✓ Buchanan, Rufus.	"	" "	✓ Dillsboro, N.C.
✓ Earight, Bryan.	"	June 5/18	✓ Cleveland, Ohio.
✓ Parker, Eugene.	"	May 12/18	✓ Suffolk, Va.
✓ Galloway, Lewis.	"	" "	✓ Mt. Gilead, N.C.
✓ Blue, Daniel, A.	"	" "	✓ Carthage, N.C.
✓ Heath, Elder, E.	Cerp.	" "	✓ Bolivia, N.C.
✓ Setliff, Percy, J.	Pvt.	" "	✓ Winston-Salem, N.C.
✓ Thomas, Ervin, E.	Pvt.	" "	✓ Henning, Minn.
✓ Helcombe, James, R.	"	" "	✓ Marshall, N.C.
✓ Houk, James, L.	"	" "	✓ Iren Station, N.C.
✓ Hanvey, Hiram.	"	" "	✓ Dara, Ala.
✓ Lloyd, Luther, S.	"	" "	✓ Beaufort, N.C.
✓ Deerr, Otto, J.	"	" "	✓ Stewart, Minn.
✓ Cartwright, Hillery.	Cerp.	" "	✓ Elizabeth City, N.C.
✓ Petts, Herman, L.	Pvt.	" "	✓ Warsaw, N.C.
✓ McCleney, Robert, L.	Pvt.	" "	✓ Hadbeurn, N.C.
✓ Stinebaugh, Lloyd.	Pvt.lcl.	" "	✓ Wadena, Minn.
✓ Miller, Zeb T.	Pvt.	" "	✓ Merry Hill, N.C.
✓ Darrettt, John H.	Pvt.	" "	✓ Roxboro, N.C.
✓ Graham, William, E.	Pvt.	" "	✓ Letitia, N.C.
✓ Gindling, Joe, P.	Pvt.	" "	✓ Breckville, Ind.
✓ Hagvel, Stanley, J.	Cerp.	" "	✓ Ophir, N.C.
✓ Bailey, Oscar.	Pvt.	" "	✓ Pine Level, N.C.
✓ Stone, Mitchell.	Cerp.	" "	✓ Reckingham, N.C.
✓ Harris, Charlie.	Pvt.	" "	✓ Weedsdale, N.C.
✓ Jones, James, W.	Pvt.	" "	✓ McCall, S.C.
✓ Thomas, Francis.	Pvt.	" "	✓ Lenden, N.C.
✓ Hensley, Mack.	Pvt.lcl.	" "	✓ Burnsville, N.C.
✓ Eckert, Henry, G.	Pvt.	June 5/18	✓ South Euclid, Ohio.
✓ Cobb, Glenn, H.	Pvt.	May 12/18	✓ Farmville, N.C.

Source: 119th Infantry Unit Rosters for Company H to Company M, p. 13

Elder Eugene Heath
 Bolivia, Brunswick County, NC
 NC National Guard
 Corporal
 Served:
 May 27, 1917 – April 7, 1919
 Overseas:
 May 12, 1918 – April 2, 1919
 Severely Wounded: September 29, 1918

Elder Eugene Heath was born, raised, and lived most of his life in Brunswick and New Hanover Counties, NC.

On May 27, 1917, at the age of 19, Elder Heath enlisted in the NC National Guard by way of the **Boys' Brigade**, as described in a [previous post](#). He was eventually assigned to **Co. I, 119th Infantry, 30th "Old Hickory" Division**.

Cpl Heath's NC WWI [Service Card](#) shows he was a Private. Company rosters, such as the one pictured above, US Army Transport records to and from France [Source: ancestry.com], casualty lists printed in

newspapers at the time [see below], and his military flat marker refer to him as Corporal Elder E. Heath. *It is not unusual for discrepancies in historical records, and the evidence is overwhelming that the service card is incorrect.*

Before settling at Camp Sevier, SC, the soldiers were at Camp Jackson, SC. There, photographs were taken. This photograph is Pvt Thomas Newton Bryson (on the left) with three unknown fellow soldiers. [Source: [NC State Archives](#)] Pvt Bryson also served in the 119th Infantry. *More about Pvt Bryson later.*

Previous posts described training with the 30th Division at Camp Sevier, SC, the transportation to France, and events up to and including the Hindenburg Line assault.

Cpl Elder Heath was seriously wounded during the assault on the Hindenburg Line, along with many of his comrades in the 30th Division. Recall that [History. 119th Infantry. 60th Brigade, 30th Division, U. S. A. Operations in Belgium and France, 1917-1919](#) reported the casualties in the 119th Infantry on that day were as follows:

146 KIA
691 Wounded
16 Died of Wounds
37 Taken Prisoner
12 MIA

KILLED IN ACTION	
Corporals	
Hays—Clyde E. Watkins.	
Privates	
Hillsboro—David Clint Dixon.	
WOUNDED SEVERELY	
Sergeants	
Woodsdale—Hubbard Bray.	
Franklinton—Orian D. Freeman.	
Grassy Creek—William E. Jones.	
Corporals	
Hendersonville—Obie K. Jones.	
Bolivia—Elder E. Heath.	
Privates	
HORGOOD—JESSE C. HYMAN	



This (partial) casualty list appeared in many newspapers after he was wounded.

Pvt Newton was also severely wounded that day. He recuperated in France and had this photo taken, again, with an unknown fellow soldier. [Source: [NC State Archives](#)] Pvt Newton's photographs give us a glimpse into the experience of the other soldiers from the 119th.

Cpl Heath luckily had a complete recovery, returning to duty December 2, 1918. [Source: [119th Infantry Roster](#), Page 91] The war had ended a month earlier.

When he boarded USS *Huron* on March 21, 1919, to return to America, the passenger list shows **All Class "A"** (fit for duty).

After Cpl Elder E. Heath was discharged, he married. It doesn't appear he had children.

Elder Eugene Heath was [laid to rest](#) in Columbus County, NC in 1984. He was 88 years old.



WWI Profile: Calmer Thomas Clemmons

1895-1965

Photo Source



Calmer Thomas Clemmons
Supply, Brunswick County, NC
National Guard

Corporal

Served:

May 5, 1917 – February 28, 1919

Overseas:

May 11, 1918 – January 30, 1919

Wounded: September 29, 1918; October 16/18, 1918

Calmer Thomas Clemmons was born, raised, and lived most of his life in Brunswick and New Hanover Counties, NC.

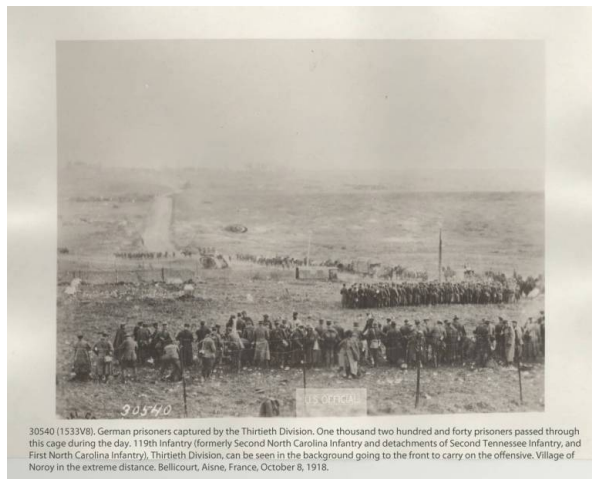
On May 5, 1917, at the age of 22, Calmer enlisted in the NC National Guard by way of the **Boys' Brigade**, as described in a previous post.

In October, the 30th Division was created from NC National Guard units. Cpl Calmer Clemmons was assigned to **Company F, 119th Infantry, 30th "Old Hickory" Division**.

Previous posts described training with the 30th Division at Camp Sevier, SC, the transportation to France, and events up to and including the Hindenburg Line assault.

Recall the following description of the operation.

Photo Source



30540 (1533V8). German prisoners captured by the Thirtieth Division. One thousand two hundred and forty prisoners passed through this cage during the day. 119th Infantry (formerly Second North Carolina Infantry and detachments of Second Tennessee Infantry, and First North Carolina Infantry), Thirtieth Division, can be seen in the background going to the front to carry on the offensive. Village of Noroy in the extreme distance. Bellicourt, Aisne, France, October 8, 1918.

Very early in the morning of September 29th the 60th brigade [119th Infantry, 120th Infantry, and 115th Machine Gun Battalion], with some units of the 117th regiment, assaulted this terrible line on a front of 3,000 yards, captured the whole Hindenburg system, then advanced still further and took the tunnel system with all the German troops hidden in it and next captured the towns of Bellicourt, Nouroy, Riqueval, Carriere, Etrécourt, the Guillaîne Ferme (farm) and Ferme de Riqueval; in this part of the assault advancing 4,200 yards and defeating two German divisions of average quality and taking from these (the 75th

and 185th) 47 officers and 1,434 men. – Source

Cpl Clemmons was slightly wounded during the heroic assault on the Hindenburg Line on September 29, 1918. This injury was reported on his NC WWI Service Card. But he faced more serious injuries a few weeks later. *Details of that battle will be covered in later posts, as several Brunswick County men were wounded during that time.*

Source: Rockingham post-dispatch. [Rockingham, NC], December 05, 1918, p. 9

Missing in Action.
Frank Reece, Franklin
Joe Davis, Scotland Neck
Brown Buchanan, Hawk
Duther Giffith, Reidsville
Theodore Freeman, Concord
Lt Hargrove Bellamy, Wilmington
Cpl Reggie Auman, Asheboro
Eazor F Brown, Seagrove
Donnie Gobwin, McCollers
Samuel Pyatt, Nealsville
Harrison Mangum, Monroe
John Holmsley, Lincolnton
Oscar Nelson, Patterson
Robert Fowler, Simpsonville
Russell Gregory, Topton
Joseph Matthews, Angier
Allen McDonald, Grand View
Samuel Paysour, Lincolnton
Emmett Smith, Heaton
Walter McKnight, Salisbury
Hiram Sprouse, Mooresboro
Cpl Wm Daniels, Elk Park
John Simpson, Reidsville
Willie W Wicker, Sandford
Alfred Adams, Elon College
Thereon Simpson, Waxhaw
William Perry, Durham
Cpl Calmer Clemmons, Supply
Cpl T C Johnson, Smithfield

Cpl Calmer Clemmons was seriously wounded on October 16 [NC WWI Service Card] or 18 [119th Roster]. The date was probably recorded incorrectly because Cpl Clemmons was initially reported missing.

Cpl Clemmons never returned to service due to the seriousness of his injuries, which are unknown. On January 22, 1919, he left US Army Base Hospital No. 40 in Southern England and boarded USS *Plattsburg* to New York. His passenger list stated that all passengers were “Walking Cases.” [Source: ancestry.com]

The Charlotte Observer [Charlotte, NC] 1919 Feb. 13, p. 14 reported the following.

52 Carolina Soldiers, Wounded, Arrive Here

Sent to Camp Greene Base Hospital for Medical and Reconstruction Treatment.

Fifty-two Carolina soldiers, wounded in action in France but now almost well again, from a New York army hospital, arrived at the base hospital at Camp Greene for medical and reconstructive treatment, according to information given out there yesterday. With relatively few exceptions these men formerly were with the famous Thirtieth division. Others were with labor battalions, medical corps unit and artillery regiments.

[...]

Corporal Calmer Clemmons, Company F, 119th infantry.

[...]

Bugler William R. Smith, Machine Gun company, 322d infantry.

[...]

(Bugler William R. Smith was also from Brunswick County. His WWI Profile is coming soon.)

Calmer Clemmons was honorably discharged on February 25, 1919, with no reported disability. He married and appears to have lived with his wife and son in Wilmington until his death. Calmer Clemmons was laid to rest on September 26, 1965. Military honors are displayed.

WWI Profile: Van Grissett Mintz

1893-1929

Photo Source: Findagrave

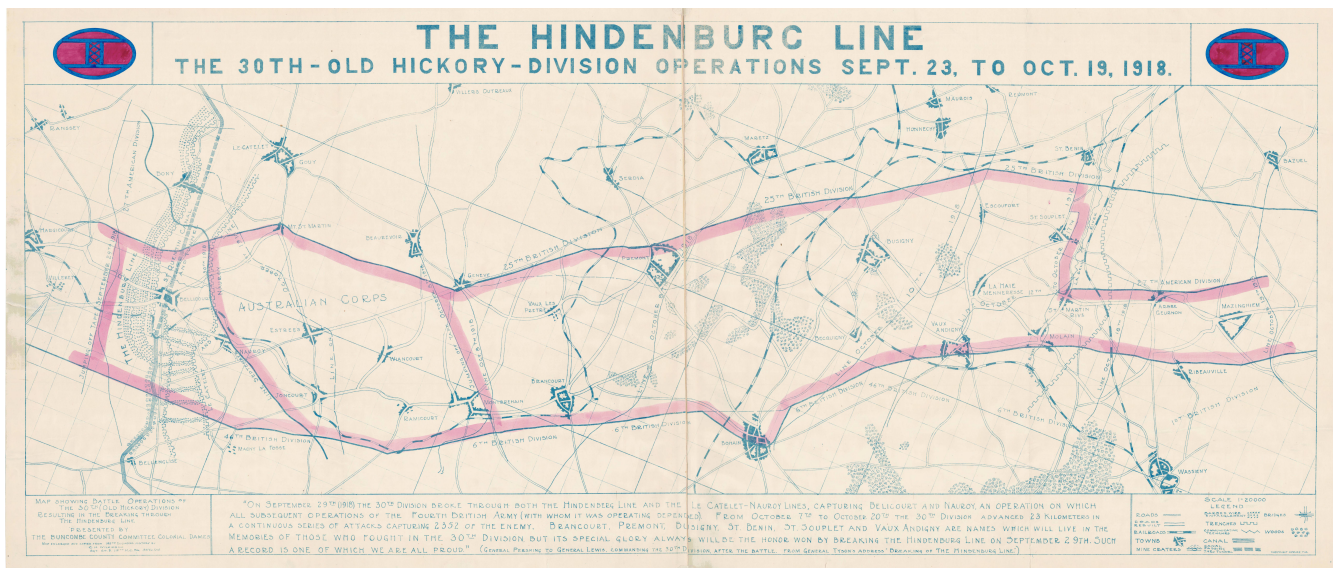


Van Grissett Mintz
Goldsboro, NC
NC National Guard
1st Sergeant
Served:
June 23, 1916 – August 13, 1919
Overseas:
June 5, 1918 – April 2, 1919
Wounded: October 10, 1918

Van G. Mintz was born and raised in Shallotte, Brunswick County, NC. Van had one brother who also served in WWI, Pvt James Roland Mintz.

On June 23, 1916, Van enlisted in the NC National Guard, served in Mexico, then was eventually assigned to **Company E, 119th Infantry, 30th “Old Hickory” Division**.

Previous posts described training with the 30th Division at Camp Sevier, SC, the transportation to France, and events up to and including the Hindenburg Line assault.



The advance continued, as shown on the map.

The 119th Infantry began advancing at 3:30am October 8. They formed at Premont [see map]. They began capturing material and liberating French citizens who had been under German control for four years.

Upon the entrance of the Americans into the village and before the Germans had been driven entirely out, the civilians were in the streets offering the soldiers hot coffee. They could not be too kind to their liberators. It seemed to surprise them greatly that the troops occupying their town then were friendly Americans. They thought that the British had freed them and it was sometime before they could believe the truth.

They arrived close to Busigny, then waited until the following morning to resume their advance. Regimental HQ had moved to Premont and a runner was used for communications. *Wires had been nearly impossible to maintain throughout the barrage, so pigeons and dogs were also often used for communications.*

The advance continued without meeting very strong resistance until the town of St. Souplet on the west bank of the LaSalle River was reached; about 3:00 o'clock that afternoon.

Here the enemy apparently had time to make some preparation and to bring up a few reserves, as the Heights immediately east of the River were well protected. Heavy Machine Gun and Artillery fire was received from the entire ridge covering the Regimental front. It was practically impossible to advance up this open incline without the sacrifice of a great number of lives. Repeated efforts were made to cross the River, and at a few points were successful but due to the nature of the terrain and the terrific Machine Gun fire, it was deemed necessary to dig in and hold the line along the west bank of the River, as a counter-attack was anticipated, but never materialized. The left flank of the Regiment at this time was connected with the 25th British Division but the right flank was exposed as the 120th Infantry had not kept up, causing the line to bend back in front of several fortified Machine Gun posts.

Confronting these conditions, the line was ordered to halt and make good a general line along the west bank of the LaSalle River and gain contact with the 120th Infantry, which was done later that night. During the day's operation the Regiment advanced to a distance

of 4,000 yards and captured the towns of Escaufort, St. Souplet and St. Benin, liberating 706 French civilians. A large number of Machine Guns and several field pieces were captured with a large supply of ammunition.

That afternoon about 2:30 o'clock Regimental Headquarters moved from Premont to Busigny.

The night of the 9th-10th of October was spent in consolidating the captured position and to gain contact with the unit on the right which had been held up by Machine Gun fire. It was the plan that as soon as this connection had been made an Artillery Barrage was to be laid down on the whole front thus enabling the entire line to advance. The German position could not be taken without this preliminary preparation by the Artillery so strongly was it defended.

The Regiment then rested for five days. Cpl Metz was slightly wounded during these operations. He returned to duty on November 1, 1918. The Regiment had completed another intense advance while he was recovering. They were now replenishing and filling their ranks with replacements for those killed or wounded. Van Metz was now Sgt Metz for "gallantry under fire" [see below]. The Regiment would not fight again, as the Armistice was signed before they were ordered back to the battlefields.

After returning to America, 1st Sgt Van Mintz required more hospitalization and was finally honorably discharged on August 13, 1919. He was reported as 35% disabled.

News and Observer [Raleigh, NC] 21 Aug. 1919, p.3, published this news from Goldsboro.

Sergeant Van G. Mintz, of Co. E, 119th Infantry, who served under Capt. E.H. Bain, of this city, in Mexico and later in France, and was promoted to sergeant for gallantry under fire, and who has been a patient at the government hospital in Asheville since the return of his division, has arrived in Goldsboro and is being cordially greeted by his many young friends here.

Camp Sevier, SC, became a tuberculosis treatment hospital for discharged soldiers after the war. Van Mintz was a patient there in 1920.

He was married in 1922 in Greenville, SC. According to the published notice, he had accepted a government job in Waynesville, NC, outside of Asheville. [Source: *The Greenville News* (Greenville, SC), 22 Nov. 1922, p.8.]

Van Grissett Mintz passed away on May 13, 1929, at age 36. His death record lists his occupation as salesman. He left behind a wife and young daughter (Elizabeth *Mintz* Hair).

Van G. Mintz was laid to rest in Mintz Cemetery. A military headstone is shown.

The information quoted above was from History 119th Infantry, 60th Brigade, 30th Division. U. S. A. Operations in Belgium and France, 1917-1919

WWI Profile: Albert Warren Williams

1894-1985

Submitted by Harry David Williams' grandson



*Henry David Williams (sitting),
Albert Warren Williams (standing)*

Albert Warren Williams
Shallotte, Brunswick County, NC
US Army
Private, First Class
Served:
September 18, 1917 – April 7, 1919
Overseas:
May 12, 1918 – April 2, 1919
Severely Wounded: October 10, 1918

Henry David Williams
Shallotte, Brunswick County, NC
US Army
Corporal
Served:
October 7, 1917 – April 7, 1919
Overseas:
May 12, 1918 – April 2, 1919

Albert and Henry Williams were brothers born and raised in Shallotte, NC. A partial family tree is located in FamilySearch. Albert was 22 in 1917 when the country entered WWI. Henry was 25.

Albert's WWI Draft Registration form shows he was single and a farmer. Henry was a widower, having lost his wife and infant a year earlier. He was also a farmer.

After receiving orders to report to the military board (Albert received orders for September 18, 1917; Henry for October 5, 1917), Albert and Henry were assigned to **Company M, 119th Infantry, 30th "Old Hickory" Division**. Refer to the previous posts outlining the history of the division and their famous Hindenburg Line assault.

Henry was not injured during his service. He was promoted to Private First Class on June 1, 1918; then to Corporal on October 15, 1918.

Pvt Albert Williams was wounded in the push after the September 29th Hindenburg assault, as the Allies continued their advance, capturing French cities and liberating the citizens.

Using the map and description of the advance during October 8-10, detailed in the previous post, it is possible to pinpoint the approximate location where Albert was severely wounded on October 10, 1918.

Page 59 shows that during the period of time when Albert was wounded, the following casualties were reported by the 119th Infantry.

56 KIA
6 Died of Wounds
66 Severely Wounded
110 Slightly Wounded

**31 Gassed
1 Taken Prisoner
7 Undetermined Wounds**

No sources were found that describe his injury. Pvt Albert Williams returned to duty November 11, 1918. The war ended that day.

Albert was promoted to Private First Class on January 1, 1918.

When Albert and Henry returned aboard the USS *Huron* on March 21, 1919, [source: ancestry.com] the passenger list described all as "Class A" which means fully fit.

Both Pfc Albert Williams and Cpl Henry Williams were honorably discharged from the US Army on April 7, 1919.

The 1920 census for Henry showed a familiar name. Henry was in New Hanover County, boarding with Harry Chadwick and his wife. (Harry Chadwick was the twin brother of Harvey Chadwick, who was Killed in Action in 1918.) Henry and Harry were working together as ship carpenters. (Henry's first wife was the sister of Harry's wife.) A 1920 census for Albert was not found, but he was married around the time of the census.

Albert married in March 1920. Henry was married in November. Both raised families in the area.

Henry passed away on December 8, 1972, at age 80. He was laid to rest in Gurganus Cemetery. No military honors are shown in findagrave. No obituary is available.

Albert passed away on August 2, 1985, at age 90. His obituary was published in the August 8, 1985 issue of Brunswick Beacon.

Albert W. Williams

Albert Warren Williams, 90, of Hubert and formerly of Shallotte Point, died Friday in the Veterans Hospital in Fayetteville.

The funeral was held Monday at Village Point United Methodist Church, with burial in the Gurganus Cemetery, Shallotte Point.

Williams was a veteran of World War I, serving in the U.S. Army. He was a member of the American Legion and lifetime member of Village Point United Methodist Church. Williams was also a past chairman of the church board.

He was the husband of the late Stella Lee Williams and the son of the late John L. and Susan Gurganus Williams.

Survivors include a daughter, Mrs. Vivian Milligan, of Hubert; five grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.

Albert Warren Williams was also laid to rest in Gurganus Cemetery in Shallotte. Military honors are shown.

Most of the information gathered was from History 119th Infantry, 60th Brigade, 30th Division. U. S. A. Operations in Belgium and France, 1917-1919

WWI Profile: Curtis Lee Smith

1897-1982



Curtis Lee Smith
Mill Branch, Brunswick County, NC
NC National Guard
Corporal
Served:
September 11, 1916 – April 9, 1919
Overseas:
May 11, 1918 – April 2, 1919
Awarded Silver Star

Curtis Lee Smith was born and raised in Brunswick County, NC. A family tree is located in FamilySearch.

On September 11, 1916, Curtis enlisted in the NC National Guard. In November, he was promoted to Private First Class.

In 1917 when the United States joined the war, Pfc Smith was assigned to **Company G, 119th Infantry, 30th “Old Hickory” Division**. *Refer to the previous posts outlining the history of the division, training at Camp Sevier, SC, and their famous Hindenburg Line assault.* After arriving in France, in August 1918, Curtis was promoted to corporal.

Cpl Smith was not injured during the Hindenburg assault or the push afterwards that wounded both Pfc Albert Williams and 1st Sgt Van Mintz. But his gallantry on October 10, 1918 earned him a Silver Star. *(Events of that operation are described in the two profiles of those fellow soldiers.)*

Corporal Curtis Lee Smith received the following citation.

By direction of the President, under the provisions of the act of Congress approved July 9, 1918 (Bul. No. 43, W.D., 1918), Corporal Curtis L. Smith (ASN: 1315927), United States Army, is cited by the Commanding General, American Expeditionary Forces, for gallantry in action and a silver star may be placed upon the ribbon of the Victory Medals awarded him. Corporal Smith distinguished himself by gallantry in action while serving with Company G, 119th Infantry Regiment, 30th Division, American Expeditionary Forces, in action near St. Souplet, France, 10 October 1918, in alone going forward and operating his machine gun, after the rest of his squad had become casualties.

After the war, he returned to Brunswick County, married, and began raising a family. Some time after 1940, he relocated and eventually lived in Archdale, NC, in Randolph County. Curtis Lee Smith passed away on September 7, 1982, almost two years after his wife. He is buried in Floral Garden Memorial Park, High Point. There is no photograph of his grave site to confirm if military honors are shown.

Corporal Curtis Lee Smith was one of three known soldiers from Brunswick County to be awarded medals during WWI.

WWI Profile: Herman Dan Fulford

1892-1977

Photo Source: NC State Archives



Herman Dan Fulford
Supply, Brunswick County, NC
US Army
Private
Served:
September 18, 1917 – January 19, 1919
Overseas:
May 11, 1918 – December 26, 1918
Severely Wounded: September 29, 1918 or October 14, 1918

Herman Dan Fulford was born and raised in Supply, NC. A family tree is located in FamilySearch.

Herman's WWI Draft Registration form shows he was married with one child, working at a sawmill in Supply.

After receiving orders to report to the military board on September 18, 1917, Herman was assigned to **Company M, 119th Infantry, 30th "Old Hickory" Division** and trained at Camp Sevier, SC. *Refer to the previous posts outlining the history of the division and their famous Hindenburg Line assault.*

Pvt Herman Williams was severely wounded either on September 29th during the Hindenburg assault [Source: NC WWI Service Card], or in October as the Allies continued their advance, capturing French cities and liberating the citizens [Source: History 119th Infantry, 60th Brigade, 30th Division. U. S. A. Operations in Belgium and France, 1917-1919, p.84.]

The previous posts describe the details of the operations at the time. No information was found to pinpoint the exact date of Herman's injury. What is known is that it was severe and he did not recover completely.

Pvt Herman Dan Fulford left Base Hospital No. 29 in London on December 26, 1918, and boarded at the Tillbury Docks, England, on *Saxonia* with other sick and wounded soldiers [source: ancestry.com]. He was honorably discharged on January 19, 1919, with a reported 25% disability.

Later census records show that Herman Fulford was working in the fishing industry. He and his wife had several more children and remained in the Supply, NC, area.

Herman Fulford passed away at age 84. His obituary cannot be found online, but his wife, who lived to age 94, included him in her obituary from *The Brunswick Beacon* [Shallotte, NC] 4 June 1992, p.10A.

Lovie Jane C. Fulford

Lovie Jane C. Fulford, 94, of Route 1, Supply, died May 31 in The Brunswick Hospital.

The funeral was June 2 at Sabbath Home Baptist Church, Supply, with the Rev. Sidney Britt and the Rev. Weston Varnum officiating. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Mrs. Fulford was born in Supply on Feb. 1, 1898, the daughter of the late Jim Thomas and Julia Fulford Caison. She was a member of Sabbath Home Baptist Church. She was preceded in death by her husband, Herman Fulford, and a daughter, Alene Robinson.

Her survivors include a son, Jabie Fulford of Supply; five daughters, Beatrice Fulford, Violet Fulford, Mable Corbett and Vera Carlisle, all of Supply, and Marie Del Re of Washington, D.C.; 16 grandchildren; 24 great-grandchildren; and 11 great-great-grandchildren.

Herman Dan Fulford was laid to rest in Holden Beach, NC. Military honors are shown.

Source: findagrave



WWI Profile: Edgar Levett Ballard

1898-1975

WWI helmet with 30th Division insignia.

Source: Photo from Pvt Roy E. Jones at purpleheartsnorthcarolina.com



Edgar Levett Ballard
Bolivia, Brunswick County, NC
NC National Guard
Corporal
Served:
May 7, 1917 – April 8, 1919
Overseas:
May 11, 1918 – April 2, 1919
Gassed: October 13, 1918

Edgar Levett Ballard was reportedly born in Little River, SC, and raised in Bolivia, NC. Only one reference to Little River was found, on his NC WWI Service Card. All other sources list his birth location as Brunswick County.

A family tree is located in FamilySearch. Two of Lawson's brothers, **John Thomas Ballard** and **Lawson Devaun Ballard** are also WWI veterans. Lawson Devaun Ballard's WWI Profile was posted earlier.

On May 7, 1917, at the age of 19, Edgar enlisted in the NC National Guard by way of the **Boys' Brigade**, as described in a previous post.

In October, the 30th Division was created from NC National Guard units. Pvt Edgar Ballard was assigned to **Company B, 119th Infantry, 30th "Old Hickory" Division**.

The photograph above shows the 30th Division's insignia in a horizontal position. If you remember from previous posts, the insignia contains an "O" for "Old" and "H" for "Hickory" as well as "XXX" the Roman numerals for 30, the division number. The insignia was designed to be worn vertically as shown here. According to division history, during WWI it was worn incorrectly and not discovered and corrected until the 1920s.



Refer to the previous posts outlining the history of the division and their famous Hindenburg Line assault. Details of the operations following the Hindenburg Line assault are included in 1st Sgt Van Mintz's profile. This took place during October 8-10, 1918. The next contact with the enemy was October 17-19.

Pvt Ballard's NC WWI Service Card indicates he was slightly gassed on October 13. *History 119th Infantry, 60th Brigade, 30th Division. U. S. A. Operations in Belgium and France, 1917-1919* lists October 29, 1918, and shows he was "Sick." However, sometimes that designation corresponds to poisonous gas exposure. Military casualty lists published in newspapers listed him as wounded slightly, so it seems to indicate gas exposure. Neither date fits with the operations of the 119th Infantry, but the effects of gas exposure often takes time to appear. However, without more information it is difficult to determine the exact date and location where the gas attack took place.

The 119th Infantry documentation shows he returned for duty on November 27, 1918. At that point, the war had ended. He was quickly promoted to Private First Class and then Corporal. He returned to the United States on March 17, 1919, with his company on USS *Madawaska*.

Edgar Ballard passed away in 1975. His obituary was published in *Statesville Record and Landmark* (Statesville, NC), 1975 Dec. 26, p.18].

Ballard, 77, Dies

Edgar Levitte Ballard, 77, route 10, Statesville, was dead on arrival at Iredell Memorial Hospital Wednesday at 4:30 p.m. Death was attributed to a heart attack.

At native of Brunswick County, he was a retired auto mechanic and lived on the Buffalo Shoals Road. He was an Army veteran of World War 1.

His parents were the late B.T. and Myrum Ballard, and he was born on Dec. 12, 1898.

Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Mary Woodsides Ballard; two sons, Thomas Ballard and W.L. Ballard, both of Statesville; one daughter, Mrs. Flake (Marium) Stewart of Taylorsville; two brothers, Johnny Ballard of Bolivia and Lawson Ballard of Wilmington; three sisters, Mrs. Casper Norton of Bolivia, Mrs. Pearl Stanley and Mrs. Henry King, both of Wilmington; 10 grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren.

The funeral was scheduled at 2:30 p.m. today in Westmoreland Chapel of Bunch-Johnson Funeral Home. Burial was to follow in Iredell Memorial Park.

Edgar Levett Ballard was laid to rest in Statesville, NC. No military honors are shown.

WWI Profile: Samuel Goodman Fulford

1894-1966

Source: findagrave



Samuel Goodman Fulford
Supply, Brunswick County, NC

US Army

Private

Served:

September 19, 1917 – April 8, 1919

Overseas:

May 11, 1918 – April 2, 1919

Wounded: October 17, 1918

Samuel Goodman Fulford was born and raised in Brunswick County, NC. A family tree can be viewed in FamilySearch. His WWI Draft Registration shows he was single, farming, and living in Supply, NC.

Samuel was ordered to report to duty on **September 19, 1917**, and was accepted for service on October 4, 1917 [source: ancestry.com]. On October 16, 1917, he joined **30th “Old Hickory” Division, 119th Infantry, Company C**. Previous posts describe training, transport to France, and battles, including the breaking of the Hindenburg Line, until the beginning weeks of October 1918.

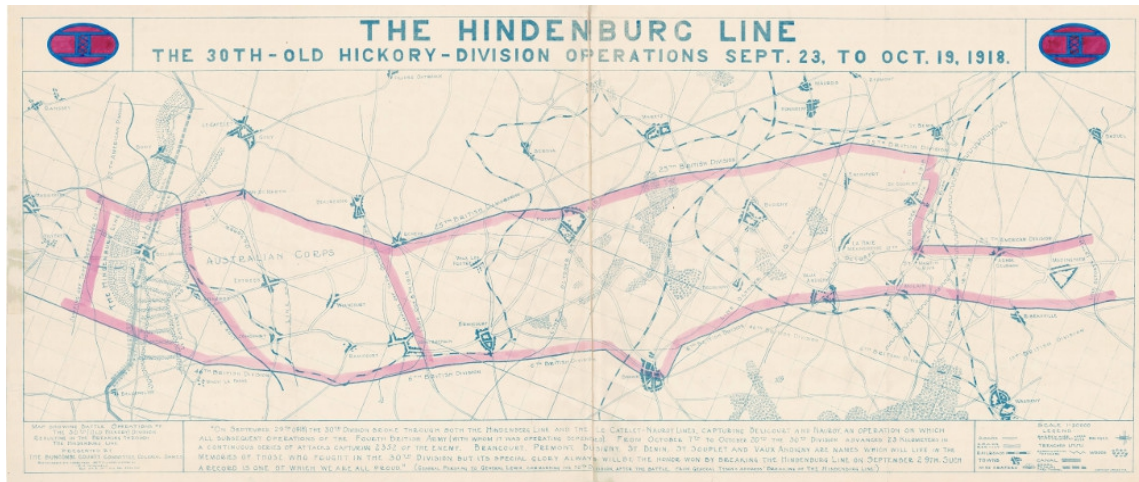
The 119th Infantry’s final contact with the enemy occurred during **October 17-19, 1918**. It was during that time that Pvt Fulford was wounded, and Pvt Luther Benton and Cpl Calmer Clemmons were wounded a second time. Pvt Fulford and Pvt Benton recovered by the end of November and early December, returning to duty at that time. Cpl Clemmons’ injuries were severe and required additional hospitalization after returning to the United States. *Recall that he was initially reported missing.*

The operation that resulted in the three men being wounded began before daybreak on **October 17, 1918**. The 119th Infantry had just rested for 6 days following their earlier push immediately after the Hindenburg Line assault. Before daybreak on October 17, they lined up at the eastern outskirts of La Haie Mennerese and bore on Vaux Andigny, advancing under an artillery barrage. *You can follow their progress on the map below, starting on the middle right and advancing toward the east (right side of map).*

Companies A (which included Pvt Luther Benton), B, E, and H led the assault with the others in

support. At one point, they experienced a very heavy counter barrage from the enemy. At around 11am, the infantry advanced to a railroad cut 2,000 yards west of the village of Ribeauville. The men dug in for the night. This position was very heavily shelled and there were many casualties. **Pvt Benton and Pvt Samuel Fulford were wounded at some time during the day's maneuver.**

Source: NC Digital Archives



(To zoom in further, use the map from the Source.)

The 120th Infantry (also in the 30th Division) and a British Regiment on their flanks had fallen behind so little movement was made during the day of the 18th. At 8pm, they began to advance over rough country with only a compass and moonlight. After reaching the eastern edge of Ribeauville, the shelling became heavier and mustard gas shells were falling. They captured Ribeauville, liberating one French civilian, then advanced further, halting at 1:30am on October 19. **Cpl Clemmons' severe injuries were received during this maneuver.**

There were no more injuries among the remaining Brunswick County men in the 119th Infantry at this time. Refer to Pvt Luther Benton's WWI Profile or the World War I Army/Marine Division Rosters for the infantry roster. The infantry continued pushing forward on October 19, but made little progress due to open country and deadly machine gun fire by the Germans. During these three days, the infantry had pushed forward for a total of 5 miles. They then halted, were relieved, and saw no more battles for the remainder of the war.

Between October 16-20, the casualties reported by the 119th Infantry were the following:

KIA: 31
Died of Wounds: 5
Severely Wounded: 47
Slightly Wounded: 145
Gassed: 45
Wounds undetermined: 7

Pvt Samuel Fulford returned to duty on November 26, 1918. The 119th Infantry was transported back to the United States in April 1919 and were mustered out at Camp Jackson, SC. Samuel resumed farming.

Samuel Goodman Fulford passed away on **May 8, 1966, at age 71**. He had never married. He was laid to rest in Sabbath Home Baptist Church Cemetery in Holden Beach, NC. A military flat marble marker is displayed.

WWI Profile: John W. Carlisle

1887-1919



John W Carlisle
Mill Branch, Brunswick County, NC
US Army
Private, First Class
Served:
September 19, 1917 – February 13, 1919
Overseas:
May 12, 1918 – February 13, 1919
Died of Disease: February 13, 1919

Source: Soldiers of the Great War, Vol. II

John Carlisle was born in Mill Branch, NC, in 1887. He married Lizzie Fowler or Walker (records aren't consistent) in 1911. His draft registration shows he was married with two children, working as a farmer in Mill Branch. Records show his children were born in 1913 and 1916.

John was ordered to report to duty on September 19, 1917 [Source: ancestry.com]. He was 31 years old.

A third son was born during his training, January 7, 1918, confirmed by the 1920 Census.

Pvt John Carlisle was initially assigned to the 322th Infantry, 81st Division. Many from the 81st Division were moved to supplement the 30th Division and this included Pvt Carlisle. On February 20, 1918, he was transferred to the **119th Infantry, 30th "Old Hickory" Division**, and eventually Company K. He served in that division throughout the war, according to his NC WWI Service Card.

Previous posts described the operations of the 119th Infantry until the war ended on November 11, 1918. At that point, the 30th Division moved by rail to Beaumont-sur-Sarthe, Southwest of Paris. They remained there until February 11, 1919, when orders were received to march approximately 30 km to Le Mans, to prepare for embarkation to the United States.

Source: Ancestry.com. U.S., Army Transport Service, Passenger Lists, 1910-1939 [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2016.

72.	MUNDEN, BERNARD C.	PRIVATE COMPANY	MRS. WILLIAM REED SISTER, ELIZABETH
	1,316,598.	INFANTRY, "K"	CITY
		119TH	NORTH CAROLINA.
73.	JOHN W. CARLISLE	PRIVATE COMPANY	WILLIAM CARLISLE BROTHER, SOUTH
	1,316,598.	INFANTRY, "K"	NORTH CAROLINA
	SOLDIER DIED IN HOSPITAL FEBRUARY 13, 1919.		
74.	NORTON, JOHN R.	CORPORAL COMPANY	CHARLES W. NORTON BROTHER, WILSON,
	1,316,527	INFANTRY, "K"	NORTH CAROLINA
		119TH	

Pfc John Carlisle did not participate in that march. His name was scratched from the passenger list for USS *Huron* for return to the United States on March 21, 1919, with the notation, "SOLDIER DIED IN HOSPITAL FEBRUARY 13, 1919."

Pfc John Carlisle died of pneumonia on February 13, 1919. There has been no record found for the return of his remains to the United States.



Some members of the The Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range visited Griffin Cemetery in Ash, NC, recently to pay tribute to Pfc Carlisle and take photos and rubbings of his headstone.

While not an official military headstone, it does include his service on the back of the headstone, as shown.

Notice the American flag displayed.

Rubbings show the words:

JOHN W. CARLISLE PVT. 1316552
CO. K 119TH INF. DIED FEB. 13, 1919

NO. 63
F

The meaning of "No. 63 F" is unclear. Anyone with information is asked to contact the Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range.

John's second son died of hepatitis in May 1919 and was buried in the same cemetery as his father. He was three years old. His oldest son died in 1993 and is buried in Brunswick County. His youngest son fought in many battles in the Italian Campaign in WWII and was awarded a Purple Heart. He died in 1994 and was buried in Salisbury National Cemetery, in Rowan County, NC, with military honors.

This is the last profile for the 119th Infantry. Next week, posts begin for the 120th Infantry of the 30th Division.

WWI Profile: Erastus I. Nelson

1893-1918

*Source: Randolph County Public Library
120th Infantry at Camp Sevier, SC
March 16, 1918*



Erastus I. Nelson
Leland, Brunswick County, NC
US Army
Private First Class
Served:
September 19, 1917 – August 22, 1918
Overseas:
May 12, 1918 – August 22, 1918
Killed in Action: August 22, 1918

Erastus Nelson was born and raised in Brunswick County. A partial family tree is located in FamilySearch. The 1910 Census and his WWI Draft Registration shows he was working on his father's farm.

Erastus had a brother who also served, Walter Decator Nelson.

Additional details concerning Walter Nelson's military records

Walter was a Wagoner with the 117th Engineer Train, 42nd "Rainbow" Division. The 117th Engineer Train was created entirely with North Carolina men. Wagoner Walter Nelson served with Wagoner Dorman Mercer and quite a few other Brunswick County men. *More information will be available when the 42nd Division is covered in later profiles.* This is confirmed by his NC WWI Service Card and his US Army Transport Passenger lists [Source: ancestry.com] for both outgoing and incoming, as well as the Roster for the 42nd Division. Yet, his application for military headstone and his military flat marker show "155 Depot Brigade." The Depot Brigades were to receive, train, equip, and forward replacements (both officers and enlisted men) to replacement divisions of the corps. Walter Nelson had enlisted in the NC National Guard in July 1917, was a member of the 117th Engineer Train in October 1917 when he was transported to France, and remained in the

117th Engineer Train through April 1919 when he returned to the United States.

With all of this evidence from multiple records and the published roster, the assumption is his military flat marker is incorrect.

On **September 19, 1917**, Erastus was ordered to report for duty [Source: ancestry.com].

The **120th Infantry** was formed with the 119th Infantry, as part of the 30th “Old Hickory” Division as described in previous posts. The roster contains quite a few Brunswick County men. *All of the rosters can be found on our World War I Army/Marine Division Rosters webpage.*

30th Division, 120th Infantry

Name	Co.		
Pfc Kinnie Benton	H		
Pvt William C Hewett	C	Died of Wounds	10/25/1918
Pvt Hanson H Leonard	I	Wounded	09/19/1918
Pvt Jesse J Leonard	D	Wounded	10/09/1918
Pvt Claudie H McCall	Sup	Died of Disease	04/13/1919
Wag George M Milliken	Sup		
Pvt Edward A Mills	M	Severely Wounded	09/01/1918
Pfc Erastus I Nelson	C	KIA	08/22/1918
Pvt Harry L Piggott	M	KIA	09/29/1918
Pvt Andrew J Robbins	F		
Pvt Byron Stanley	I		
Pvt Martin R Willis	A		

The 120th Infantry trained at Camp Sevier, SC, along with the other units of the 30th Division. They soon began training with French and British instructors covering the use of bayonets, bombs, scouting, trench-warfare and open-warfare. The middle of December 1917 brought an unusually frigid winter that interfered with training and caused hardships, but the men were able to resume training in January.

The trip to NYC to prepare for embarkation began in May 1918. All men had an opportunity to visit the city, which was a great experience for “most of the men.” (*no further explanation was given*)

Transport from Boston to London was provided by an Australian transport service. The food, therefore, was Australian and not appreciated by the men. The boats were crowded but the weather was good and all submarine attacks were unsuccessful.

The trip to France was completed on **June 5, 1918**, when all men were given a copy of an autographed letter from His Majesty, George V.

At first, the men were anxious to join the battle.

...for a long time the constant query was “When do we go South?” but in course of time it was changed to “We don’t want to go South.” At Calais the distant thunder of guns could be heard, and the nightly air raids with the accompaniment of bombs, taking their nightly toll of women and children, gave the first touch of war, and opened the eyes of many to the

kind of enemy they were to fight.

They were the first troops to enter Belgium. It was July 4th and the village had Belgium and French flags flying from the houses in honor of the American holiday.

In early August, the men were thrilled to have an inspection by King George. It was over in a few minutes but enjoyed by all.

Training was finished and the Division prepared to relieve British troops at the Canal Sector at Ypres.

The entire sector is a ghastly monument to the tenacity and courage of the British soldiers. For four long years they held it against bitter attacks by a determined enemy; to-day it is consecrated ground made sacred by the bodies of hundreds of thousands of Britain's finest sons; and the few Americans who lie "where poppies bloom"

On the night of August 17-18, the 120th and 119th Infantry relieved the British troops. At this time, Pvt Luther Benton of the 119th Infantry was wounded, as shared in his WWI Profile.

The ground was very low, easily flooded, and the water so near the surface that each shell hole became a little pool. All of the high ground, Observatory Ridge, Passchendaele Ridge, and the famous Mont Kimmel, was held by the enemy. These points of observation enabled the enemy to detect any movement within the sector, and, as a result, daylight movement was of necessity reduced to a minimum, for even small parties would provoke instant and heavy shelling. The Salient was so deep and so narrow it was subjected to shell-fire from front, flanks, and rear. Oftentimes the men in the forward systems believed they were being shelled by their own artillery, when as a matter of fact the shells were from enemy guns on our right and rear.

It was during these operations, on **August 22, 1918**, that Pfc Erastus Nelson was killed in action.

Between July 4th to September 5th, 1918, the following 120th Infantry casualties were reported.

34 KIA
216 Wounded
1 POW

The Wilmington Morning Star [Wilmington, NC] 29 Sept. 1918, p.8 published this about his death.

The following is a copy of a letter from Lieut. Gross [George] McClelland, chaplain, 120th infantry, 30th division, American Expeditionary forces, to Mr. and Mrs. John C. Nelson, R.F.D. 1, Leland, notifying them of the death of their son, Erastus I. Nelson, who was killed in action August 22:

"Your son met death instantly yesterday afternoon by a direct hit. He was in the line of his duty and died like a man. I wish, as the officiating chaplain at his burial, to command you to the great Comforter of hearts in this your dark but proud hour.

"We buried your son this morning at Nine Elms cemetery with due military honors. A number of the boys from our regiment were present at the service.

"I should like to get a line from you at any time. Meantime, assuring you of my personal sympathy, and with every high personal regard."

A friend of Private Nelson has received a letter from him, which was written August 17, five days before he paid the supreme price. The letter follows:

“There are so many laws concerning what a soldier can and cannot write that I hardly know what a fellow is allowed to say and get his letter past the censor. Anyway I am well and getting plenty to eat, although it is far from being your table.

“We are not working so hard now. This much talked about ‘Sunny France’ is not what I expected to find. Its lots colder here than at home, and is at least 100 years behind the good old U.S.A. in every respect. The more I see of it the more I appreciate America.

“I am having quite a lot of fun with my French. By using my hands I can generally make myself understand. I think I am going to be able to speak French soon. I find more trouble trying to count the money than anything else.

“We are billeted in a French village, but am not allowed to give the name. At present am sleeping in a barn, which is not so bad so long as we are under a roof.

“If at any time you do not hear from me for quite a while do not worry for if anything happens you will be notified at once.”

His remains were returned to the United States in 1921 [Source: ancestry.com] and laid to rest in Nelson Cemetery in Leland, NC.

Source: findagrave



PRIVATE ERASTUS I. NELSON
SON OF J.G. & HARRIET S. NELSON

BORN OCT. 8, 1893
DIED AUG. 22, 1918

KILLED IN ACTION WHILE
SERVING AS AN INFANTRYMAN
WITH AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY
FORCES IN BELGIUM

[Remaining illegible]

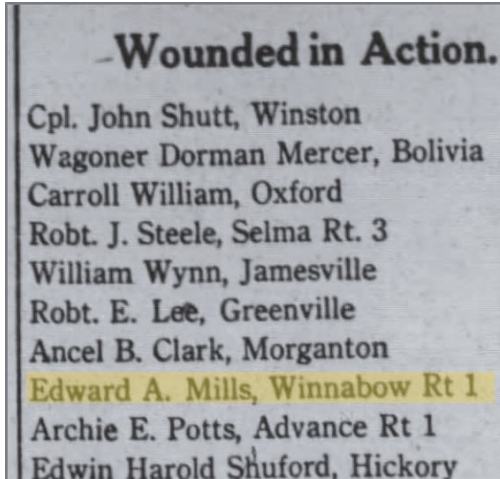
**Pfc Erastus Iredell Nelson was the first KIA from Brunswick County.
There would be four more.**

Information regarding the 120th Infantry was gathered from Official History of the 120th Infantry “3rd North Carolina” 30th Division, From August 5, 1917, to April 17, 1919. Canal Sector Ypres-Lys Offensive Somme Offensive

WWI Profile: Edward Anderson Mills

1891-1953

Source: *Rockingham Post-Dispatch* (Rockingham, NC) 21, Nov. 1918, p.9



Edward Anderson Mills
Winnabow, Brunswick County, NC
US Army
Private
Served:
September 19, 1917 – February 11, 1919
Overseas:
May 17, 1918 – January 21, 1919
Wounded: September 1, 1918

(Note that Wagoner Dorman Mercer appears on the list. However, they did not serve in the same division.)

Edward Mills was born and raised in Brunswick County, NC. His Draft Registration shows he was single, living at home, and working on the family farm.

Edward was ordered to report for duty on September 19, 1917. He was initially assigned to the 322nd Infantry (81st Division). Many from the 81st Division were moved to supplement the 30th Division and this included Pvt Mills. In April 1918, he was transferred to the **120th Infantry, 30th "Old Hickory" Division**. In May, they left for France, as detailed in the previous post. *See previous post for details of operations through mid-August.*

Pvt Edward Mills was severely wounded on September 1, 1918. A previous profile for Cpl Mack Atkins of the 119th Infantry describes the activities of the 120th Infantry at the time. There was a gas attack performed by the 105th Engineers that resulted in some of the infantry being gassed. This is one possibility for Pvt Mills' injuries. But there are also more details about the operations involving Mont Kemmel that went beyond the details in that post.

The 120th Infantry was originally to be relieved by the 117th Infantry after the gas attack, but there was increased activity on the front so it was canceled. When it appeared the Germans were withdrawing from Mont Kemmel (as described in the profile for Cpl Atkins), patrols were sent forward to confirm, and this resulted in some casualties. Then, an attack was ordered.

On the morning of September 1st an attack was made by the Second British Army. The 1st and 3rd Battalions, this Regiment, was ordered to push forward 100 to 1,000 yards, establishing a new line from Lock No. 8 on Canal, running north of Lankhof Farm to Zillebeke Lake. The principal objective was Lankhof Farm, a strongly fortified position surrounded by a moat. The fighting was very bitter, but, with the cooperation of the artillery, who maintained close liaison with the commanding officer of the 1st Battalion, the new line was taken and consolidated, for the consolidation troops were sent up from the 2nd Battalion and from the engineers. The 119th Infantry made a successful advance on the right, taking Voormezele.

Given the date he was wounded, September 1st, it is likely this was when Pvt Mills was wounded. His injuries were severe and he did not return to duty.

Between July 4th to September 5th, 1918, the following 120th Infantry casualties were reported.

34 KIA
216 Wounded
1 POW

On January 2, 1919, he was taken aboard USS *DeKalb* from Base Hospital No. 29 in Liverpool, England, with other sick and wounded soldiers, headed for Camp Merritt for more treatment and recovery [Source: ancestry.com].



FIG. 135.—Surgical building, Base Hospital No. 29

Base Hospital No. 29 was organized at City and County Hospital, Denver, Colo., on April 5, 1917, and was mobilized at Camp Cody, N. Mex., during March, 1918. The nurses (some 100) were all graduates of Colorado State University and were equipped by the Denver Red Cross Chapter.

The unit trained at Camp Cody and at Camp Crane, Allentown, Pa., until July 5, 1918, when it left for Hoboken, N. J., arriving there on July 6, 1918. It

embarked on the *Empress of Russia*, and sailed the same date for Europe. The unit arrived in England on July 17, 1918, and was assigned to duty at North Eastern Fever Hospital, London, where it arrived on the night of July 19, 1918. It took over the hospital from the British on August 1, 1918. The hospital cared for 3,976 cases, of which 2,351 were surgical and 1,625 were medical.

Base Hospital No. 29 ceased operating on January 12, 1919; sailed for the United States on the *Olympic*, February 18, 1919; arrived in the United States on February 24, 1919, and was demobilized at Fort Logan, Colo., on March 13, 1919. [Source: *The Medical Department of the United States Army in the World War*, Chapter 24, and *Lost Hospitals of London*]

After returning to the United States, it would be a few more weeks before Pvt Mills completed recovery. He was honorably discharged on February 11, 1919, with no reported disability.

Edward returned to the family farm, and married years later in 1930. The 1940 Census shows that he and his wife had three daughters. The final number of children is unknown.

Tragically, Edward was killed by a falling tree in 1953. He was laid to rest in Robbins Cemetery in Town Creek. Military honors are shown.

Information regarding the 120th Infantry was gathered from Official History of the 120th Infantry "3rd North Carolina" 30th Division, From August 5, 1917, to April 17, 1919. Canal Sector Ypres-Lys Offensive Somme Offensive

WWI Profile: Hanson Hillard Leonard

1888-1936

Source: *The Charlotte News* (Charlotte, NC) 08, Feb. 1919, p.9

SECTION 4.	
The following casualties are reported by the commanding general of the American expeditionary forces:	
Wounded (degree undetermined)	276
Wounded slightly	413
Total	689
Corporals.	
William M. Fine, Mrs. Jane Fine, 251 South Preston street, Spartanburg, S. C.	
Broadus E. Hunter, Mrs. W. O. Hunter, 917 East Whites street, Rock Hill, S. C.	
Edward R. Sanders, John E. Sanders, Kline, S. C.	
Privates.	
Hanson H. Leonard, Henry Leonard, Shalotte, N. C.	

Hanson Hillard Leonard
Southport, Brunswick County, NC
US Army
Private
Served:
April 2, 1918 – April 18, 1919
Overseas:
May 17, 1918 – April 13, 1919
Wounded: September 19, 1918

Hanson Hillard was born and raised in Brunswick County, NC. A partial family tree is located in FamilySearch.

Hanson had a brother who also served, Stacy Harvey Leonard. See below for additional details about his brother's service.

Hanson's 1917 Draft Registration Card shows he was single and working as a farm hand for Hiram McKeithan in Southport.

Hanson was ordered to report to duty on April 2, 1918. [Source: ancestry.com] On April 26, he was assigned to **Company I, 120th Infantry, 30th "Old Hickory" Division**.

Previous posts describe activities until September 1, 1918, when Private Edward Mills was wounded. A few days later, the Regiment was relieved by the British.

September 5th and 6th were devoted to cleaning up. The entire Regiment was deloused and bathed at "Kill Bug Station and Hop Factory," each man receiving a clean suit of underwear. After a period in the line the little bugs were plentiful.

The Regiment trained until the end of September when the 30th Division broke the Hindenburg Line. While Pvt Leonard's NC Service Card shows he was wounded September 19, the Official History of the 120th Infantry does not seem to indicate an opportunity. More telling is that the document does not include a list of wounded for the dates between September 5 – September 29. While it is possible that his wounds were received on the 19th, it is more likely that he was wounded during the breaking of the Hindenburg Line.

On the night of September 23, 1918, the Division was transferred to the 4th British Army, commanded by General Rawlinson. No one knew what was to take place, but each man in the Regiment felt the time had come for the Regiment to prove its worth.

The Regiment was formed in columns of twos on the road between Acheux and Forceville. Lorry after lorry rolled into place, and at 8:00 P. M. all troops were embussed and ready to

move into the night.

All night long the movement continued through Albert, Peronne, Doingt, and along the marshy Somme. With the sky growing lighter in the east the Regiment debussed at Cartigny and marched to Tincourt. Once more the flash of guns and the burst of “Very lights” could be seen.

The same day the Regiment was joined by a detail of Australian officers and men, who were to give whatever assistance the Regiment might need; and from these Australians more was learned in the short period they were with the Regiment, particularly as regards the rationing of troops in the line, than in the entire period of training.

In the afternoon the Regiment marched to Hervilly. Regimental Headquarters was in the side of a sunken road. The troops were scattered wherever room could be found, the mass of artillery, infantry, and cavalry filling the entire country.

The Regiment learned that in front of it lay the hitherto impregnable positions of the Hindenburg Line, against which many fruitless attacks had been made; that the British Army had been given the task of fighting the only **decisive battle in the World-War**; that the place of honor in this attack between Cambria and St. Quentin had been given the 4th British Army; that the 30th Division, as part of the 4th British Army, would attack in the center with the 46th British on the right and the 27th American on the left; that the 119th and 120th Infantry Regiments had been selected to do the job, with the 117th Infantry to follow and attack to the right after crossing the Canal, and 118th Infantry as Divisional Reserve.

1920 Hindenburg Line model
Source: Library of Congress



This Regiment's sector of the Hindenburg System consisted: First, of three rows of heavy barbed wire, woven so thick as to resemble a mass of vines and briars intermingled—each row was from thirty to forty feet in depth, and to which the artillery fire did but little damage; second, three rows of the Hindenburg trenches, on which four years of work had been spent; third, the backbone of the entire system, Bellicourt, the St. Quentin Canal Tunnel. This Canal passed for a distance of 6,000 yards underground from Le Catlet on the north to Recquval on the south.

It had been built by the Great Napoleon, and in some places was 193 feet underground.

The Germans filled the Canal with barges, lighted it with electric lights, and fitted it with dressing stations. On the barges accommodations were provided for a division of troops, where they could rest secure from any shell-fire.

The end of the tunnel had been closed with ferro-concrete walls with openings left for machine gun. To the trench system and to the town of Bellicourt, overhead, ran concrete tunnels through which troops could move to reinforce the front line or to occupy the prepared positions in Bellicourt; third, the Catlet-Nauroy Line, a supporting system; and, fourth, the village of Nauroy, which had been prepared for defense.

Over the entire area were machine guns without number, not only the probable approaches, but every inch of front was covered by one or more guns.

The Germans believed the position could not be taken, and even when lost, prisoners would not believe it to be possible, and laughed at those who would tell them.

It was the turning point of the war.

Between September 29th and October 1st, 1918, the three days of the Hindenburg Assault, the following 120th Infantry casualties were reported.

**202 KIA
759 Wounded**

Many months later, Pvt Hanson Leonard returned on USS *Martha Washington* with his Regiment in early April 1919, and was honorably discharged on April 18, 1919 with no disability. Nothing is known about his wound or recovery.

He married in 1928. The 1930 Census showed he was the father of two step-children. His life ended suddenly in 1936 at age 47. The 1940 Census shows he and his widowed wife had at least one child together.

Hanson Hillard Leonard was laid to rest in Pender County, where he was living at the time. There is no picture of his gravesite but an application for a military headstone was submitted and approved.

Information regarding the 120th Infantry was gathered from Official History of the 120th Infantry "3rd North Carolina" 30th Division, From August 5, 1917, to April 17, 1919. Canal Sector Ypres-Lys Offensive Somme Offensive

Additional details about his brother Stacy's service

Stacy Leonard's NC WWI Service Card shows he was a Private in 156 Depot Brigade. The Depot Brigades were to receive, train, equip, and forward replacements (both officers and enlisted men) to replacement divisions of the corps. Yet his military headstone lists "Pfc Co L, 20th Infantry." Why the discrepancy?

Luckily, Pfc Stacy Leonard's military headstone application was available on ancestry.com. The back shows that he enlisted in the National Guard on January 20, 1917, and was honorably discharged on September 16, 1917, with a Surgeon's Certificate of Disability (SCD). He was then ordered to duty (for the draft) on August 25, 1918. He served until December 6, 1918 when he was honorably discharged.

His injury or illness in 1917 had to have been recoverable as he passed the physical examination a year later and was accepted for duty. *Unless it was a service related disability, he would not have received military disability in 1917.*

This explained the discrepancy. As the highest rank achieved is credited, the Brunswick County Army/Marine WWI Veterans – Units, Dates Served was updated to reflect Private First Class. The units and dates served were modified to include both sets of service.

WWI Profile: Harry Langdon Piggott

1894-1918

American Soldiers killed during the Hindenburg Line assault



Harry Langdon Piggott
Shallotte, Brunswick County, NC
US Army
Private
Served:
September 18, 1917 – September 29, 1918
Overseas:
June 5, 1918 – September 29, 1918
KIA: September 29, 1918

Harry Langdon Piggott was born and raised in Brunswick County, NC. A partial family tree is in FamilySearch.

His 1917 Draft Registration Card shows he was married, farming, and living in Shallotte. He was married to Annie Eliza Milliken on December 15, 1916.

Harry was ordered to report to duty on September 18, 1917. [Source: ancestry.com] Records show his wife was pregnant at the time. Private Piggott was assigned to **Company M, 120th Infantry, 30th “Old Hickory” Division**, and eventually began training at Camp Sevier, SC, as reported in previous posts. In December, his daughter Rosalind Piggott was born.

Private Piggott, along with Private Jesse James Leonard (*his WWI Profile post will follow this one*), were scheduled to depart for France on May 17, 1918, but did not board the USS *Miltiades* with their Companies. Instead, both boarded *Ascanius* on June 5, with many other soldiers of the 30th Division who were detached from their units, for reasons unknown.

Soon after departing, Pvt Piggott’s small daughter passed away. She had survived only five months, dying on June 9, 1918, from whooping cough. [Source: ancestry.com] She was laid to rest where her father would eventually join her, at Gurganus Cemetery in Shallotte.

Multiple posts have included the horrific details of the Hindenburg Line and the many who were

wounded or died during the assault. Private Pigott was KIA on September 29, 1918.

Pvt Harry Langdon Pigott gave his life for what has been called the turning point of the war. Pvt Pigott and the courageous men of the 120th Infantry were the first Allied troops to break the line. It was also the Great War's deadliest day for NC.

Between September 29th and October 1st, 1918, the three days of the Hindenburg Assault, the following 120th Infantry casualties were reported.

**202 KIA
759 Wounded**

Pvt Pigott's remains were returned to the United States on April 3, 1921. [Source: ancestry.com] He was laid to rest in Gurganus Cemetery with his daughter. His headstone shows that he was Killed in Action [Source: findagrave].



This concludes the Brunswick County soldiers who died or were wounded breaking the Hindenburg Line, the conflict that led to the end of the war.

These words were written in 1923: [Source: Library of Congress]

The 2nd American Corps, under Maj. Gen. Geo. W. Read, consisting of the 27th and 30th American Divisions, was not with the main American army at the Marne and St. Mihiel and in the Meuse-Argonne. It served throughout the war with the British armies. Consequently the work of the New Yorkers of the 27th and of the Carolinians and the Tennesseans of the 30th has been somewhat obscured in our histories.

The Canal Tunnel sector of the German line north of St. Quentin was tremendously fortified, with passageways running out from the main tunnel to hidden machine gun nests. Into these nests the German gunners returned after the American assaulting waves had passed, and poured a destructive fire into their rear. But through everything the men of the New York and the "Old Hickory" divisions forced their way, supported by the Australians, until the fortified zone was conquered in **one of the most desperate single conflicts of the war.**

"In fact, in analyzing the records of our state's dead, we now know that the September 29, 1918, charge on the Hindenburg Line was North Carolina's deadliest of the war."
– NC Dept of Natural and Cultural Resources blog entry, *Breaking the Hindenburg Line*

WWI Profile: Jesse James Leonard

1892-1970

To view this or an earlier profile at any time, click on the veteran's name on the WWI Brunswick County Veteran list, which is also accessible by the blue button on the top right of the webpage.

Source: findagrave



Jesse James Leonard
Shallotte, NC
US Army
Private
Served:
October 4, 1917 – April 17, 1919
Overseas:
June 5, 1918 – April 11, 1919
Wounded: October 9, 1918

Jesse James Leonard was born and raised in Brunswick County, NC. A partial family tree is in FamilySearch.

His 1917 Draft Registration Card shows he was married, farming, and living in Shallotte. He was married to Mary Lillian Grissett on December 6, 1916.

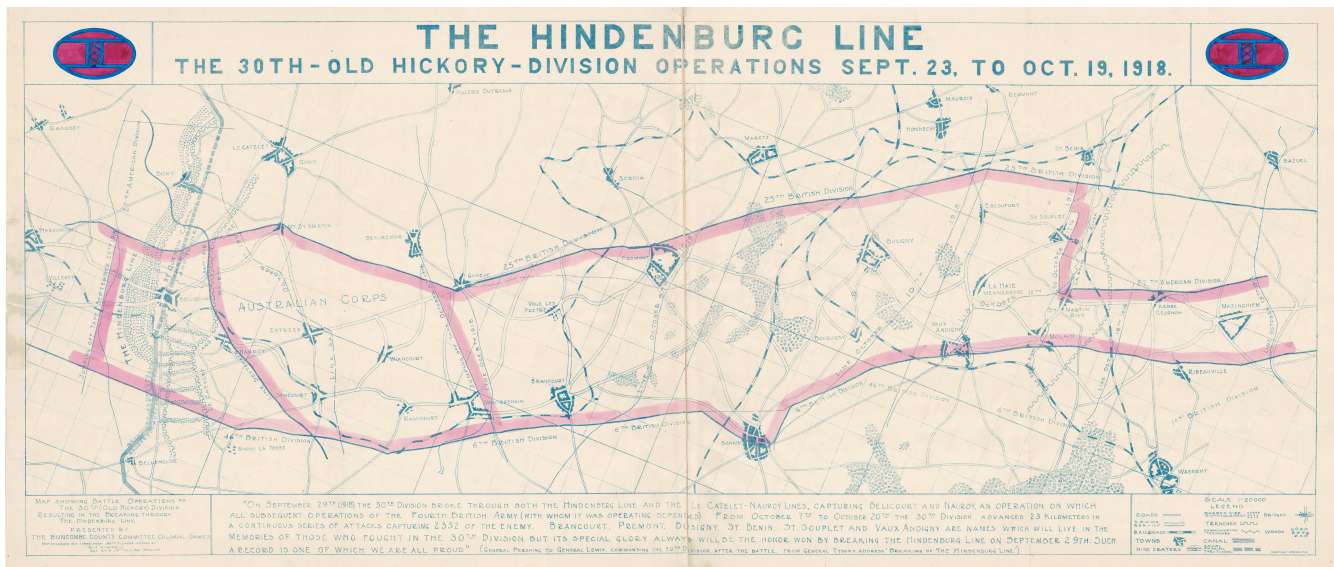
Jesse was ordered to report to duty on October 4, 1917 [Source: ancestry.com]. Private Leonard was initially assigned to **Company M, 120th Infantry, 30th “Old Hickory” Division**, then moved to **Company D**. He eventually began training at Camp Sevier, SC, as reported in previous posts.

As mentioned in a previous post, Private Leonard, along with Private Pigott, was scheduled to depart for France on May 17, 1918, but did not board the USS *Miltiades* with their Companies. Instead, both boarded *Ascanius* on June 5, with many other soldiers of the 30th Division who were detached from their units, for reasons unknown.

Multiple posts have included the horrific details of the Hindenburg Line and the many who were wounded or died during the assault. Private Leonard was not wounded at that time, but in the push

afterward. Refer to the WWI Profile post of 1st Sgt Van Grissett Mintz for more details of these operations from the 119th Infantry documents. The 120th Infantry followed similar orders.

On October the 1st, when the Division was withdrawn from the [Hindenburg] line, this Regiment moved by marching to the Tincourt Area. On October the 2nd the movement continued, the Regiment marching to Belloy, west of Peronne.



The orders were quickly prepared and distributed to those Companies and support units present with the 120th. They learned that the 118th Infantry had notified their own units but never notified the Companies of the 120th Infantry to return to their own Regiment! Companies A-H were still operating as if they were under the previous orders and command of the 118th. Companies A-H were essentially abandoned and forgotten as they moved through the area locating and "mopping up" isolated enemy troops.

In spite of the lack of assistance given by [the 118th Infantry] the battalions were located, and the battalion commanders by almost superhuman effort collected their companies and followed the 118th Infantry—the 2nd Battalion on the right, the 1st Battalion on the left, and the 3rd Battalion in support. In this and in future engagements the 3rd Battalion, in support, was engaged shortly after the attacking battalions went into action. This Regiment was to pass through the 118th Infantry, when it reached its objective, and should have done so about 10:00 A. M.

The 118th was held up, however, by machine gun fire from the right, and this Regiment did not pass through and take its objective until 4:00 P. M. The villages of Becquigny and La Haie Meneresse and the Bois De Busigny were taken, and a platoon from the 3rd Battalion was diverted to assist in taking the town of Bohain, where the unit on the right was held up.

It's not known whether these mistakes played a role in the wounding of Pvt Leonard, but he was wounded during these operations of October 9.

On the morning of the 10th the advance continued, and after severe fighting the town of Vaux Andigny was taken. This position was enfiladed from the Bellvue Farm on the right, and, as the right of the Regiment was nearly 3,000 yards in the air, the troops were withdrawn a few hundred yards to the western edge of Vaux Andigny.

On the morning of the 11th the 118th Infantry, who had come up too late to take care of the right of this Regiment, attacked through this Regiment, but was unable to advance more than 200 yards.

Between October 7th and October 12th, 1918, the following 120th Infantry casualties were reported.

38 KIA
319 Wounded
1 POW

There are no details on Pvt Leonard's wound. It was described as "slight" but the recovery period was unknown. He may have returned later, but given that the war ended soon after and little action was seen by the 120th after October 20, most of the fighting would likely have been completed by the time he was fit for duty.

Pvt Leonard returned to the United States with his Company on April 11, 1919. He was honorably discharged on April 17th and returned to Shallotte and his wife.

Jesse James Leonard and his wife lost at least two small children, as shown in findagrave, but also had at least two other children.

Tragically, his son, **Mahlon Mallory Leonard**, died while serving in Germany during World War II. The December 20, 1944 issue of the State Port Pilot reported him wounded. This was followed by his death on June 8, 1945, in a auto-truck accident in Germany. His funeral was reported in the September

14, 1948 issue of the State Port Pilot.

Funeral Sunday for Pvt. Leonard

Mahlon M. Leonard Laid To Rest Sunday In Gurganus Cemetery Following Graveside Services

Killed in an auto-truck accident in Luxomburg, Germany, on June 8, 1945, the body of Mahlon M. Leonard, well known 24-year old Shallotte Village Point man, was brought home last week and interred in the Gurganus cemetery near Shallotte, Sunday.

Funeral services were held at the graveside with Rev. Austin J. Wheeler and Rev. B.W. English, both of Wilmington.

Private Leonard is survived by his widow, Mrs. Laura A. Leonard, and a small son, Malory B. Leonard; his father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Jesse J. Leonard, and a sister, Miss Connie L. Leonard.

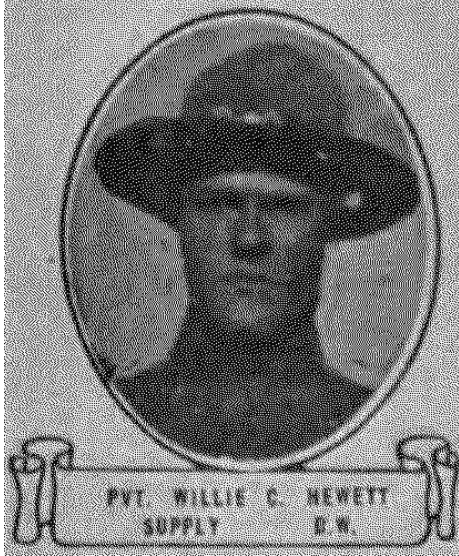
Jesse James Leonard passed away in 1970 at age 78. He was laid to rest in Gurganus Cemetery with his wife, and the three children who preceded him in death. Military honors are shown.

Information regarding the 120th Infantry was gathered from Official History of the 120th Infantry "3rd North Carolina" 30th Division, From August 5, 1917, to April 17, 1919. Canal Sector Ypres-Lys Offensive Somme Offensive

WWI Profile: William Cross Hewett

1895-1918

Source: Soldiers of the Great War, Vol. II



William Cross Hewett
Supply, Brunswick County, NC
US Army
Private
Served:
September 19, 1917 – October 25, 1918
Overseas:
May 12, 1918 – October 25, 1918
Died of Wounds: October 25, 1918

William “Willie” Cross Hewett was born and raised in Brunswick County, NC. A partial family tree can be found in FamilySearch. Willie had a half brother who also served, **Pvt Claudie Hall McCall**. *His WWI Profile will follow this one.*

Willie’s World War I Draft Registration Card shows that he was single and farming his own farm in Supply, NC.

He was ordered to report to duty on September 19, 1917, and was accepted for duty on October 3 [Source: ancestry.com]. Pvt Hewett was originally assigned to HQ, 322th Infantry, 81st Division. Many from the 81st Division were moved to supplement the 30th Division and this included Pvt Hewett. On October 16th he was reassigned to **Company C, 120th Infantry, 30th “Old Hickory” Division**. He eventually began training at Camp Sevier, SC, as reported in previous posts.

Previous posts described the heroic battle at the Hindenburg Line, which was the turning point of the war. The battle was from September 29 – October 1, 1918.

Private Willie C. Hewett died of wounds on October 25, 1918. He was 23 years old. It is not known if he was wounded during the Hindenburg Line assault or the days after, which have been described in previous posts.

His NC WWI Service Card shows only engagements up to and including the “Hindenburg defensive” which could indicate he was wounded during those dates. But the service cards are not completely accurate and few actually include names of engagements. It is unfortunate that there is no information available to clarify when he was wounded.

Given that his half brother Pvt Claudie McCall served in the same infantry, hopefully he was able to give Willie some comfort before his death.

On June 19, 1921, the steamship *Wheaton* left Belgium, returning his remains along with thousands of

others. This steamship made three trips, returning a total of almost 13,000 bodies [Source: Naval-History.Net]

At the end of the First World War, 75,640 United States Dead were buried in Europe. This included all services: Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Ambulance Services, YMCA, and others.

In January 1920, a plan was advanced by the U.S. Congress to bring all the American Dead home. This was projected to cost some \$8,000,000. Immediately, a movement was mounted by parents of the Dead to allow them to rest in peace. The plan was scaled down to returning 45,000 and this was reduced further as time went on.

To further the pain of the survivors, there were reports of funeral directors and funeral homes profiteering from this movement. This misconduct affirmed many families not to have their dead returned. Measures were put into place to assure the remains would go only to the funeral directors of the families' choice.

The steamship MERCURY arrived in the United States in April 1920 with 353 bodies (all but 80 who had been buried in France). Once the movement began in earnest some 2000 bodies reportedly arrived per week. In September 1920, 6281 bodies arrived in one transport.

When steamship WHEATON arrived at Hoboken, New Jersey, on 18 May 1921 with 5212 bodies (2800 received from Cherbourg and 1000 more from Antwerp) the total of dead was brought to 23,000. WHEATON made two other trips in 1921 carrying some 7600 dead. CANTIGNY brought 2804 more in two trips in the fall of 1921.

This serves to explain the relatively “few” American graves in Europe, considering the sacrifices made.

The number of Dead repatriated was approximately 33,400 from all services or some 44 percent of the total buried in Europe.

Source: findagrave



William Cross Hewett was laid to rest in Silent Grove Cemetery in Supply, NC.