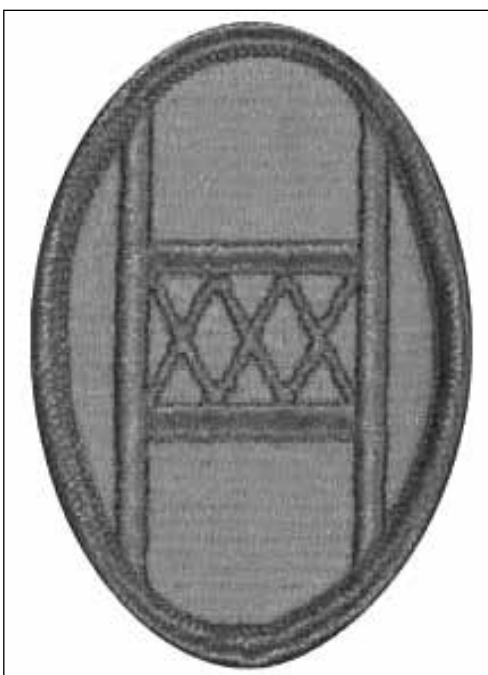




30th Division helmet



Old Hickory Patch 1918

Photos contributed

# The World War I story of Cpl. Edgar Levett Ballard

BY NORMA ECKARD  
SPECIAL TO THE BEACON

Edgar Levett Ballard was reportedly born in Little River, S.C., and raised in Bolivia. Only one reference to Little River was found, on his North Carolina World War I 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 World War I veterans. Lawson Devaun Ballard's World War I profile can be found on the website.

On May 7, 1917, at 19, Edgar enlisted in the North Carolina National Guard by way of the Boys Brigade.

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

Gassed: Oct. 13, 1918

The photograph shows the 30th Division's insignia in a horizontal position. 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. According to division history, during World War I it was worn incorrectly and not discovered and corrected until the 1920s.

The division's famous Hindenburg Line assault took place during Oct. 8-10, 1918. The next contact with the enemy was Oct. 17-19.

Pvt. Ballard's North Carolina World War I Service Card indicates he was gassed Oct. 13 (History 119th Infantry, 60th Brigade, 30th Division. U.S.A. Operations in Belgium and France, 1917-1919 lists Oct. 29, 1918) and shows he was "sick." 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 Nov. 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, 1975 Dec. 26, p.18:

*Ballard, 77, Dies*

*Edgar Levett 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.*

*A 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 I.*

*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. No military honors are shown.

If you would like to help us honor Brunswick County World War I veterans, go to [caswellriflerange.com](http://caswellriflerange.com) or email [ftcaswellriflerange@gmail.com](mailto:ftcaswellriflerange@gmail.com). Three hundred fifty Brunswick County World War I veterans have been honored to date.

A monument will be placed at the site of the rifle range in Caswell Beach Veterans' Day 2018 in honor of the men and women from Brunswick County who served their country. A book, "To All Those Who Served in World War I from Brunswick County, N.C.," is to be published during 2019 containing all 724 names, as well as a historical overview of the 1918 World War I Rifle Range Target Pit Storage Room.

We would like the public to review the names of the following Brunswick County men who died during World War I to make certain they have not forgotten anyone that may have perished or missed someone while researching names that should be on this list.

Killed in action: Pvts. 1st Class Walter S. Brock and Erastus I. Nelson, Pvts. Harvey T. Chadwick, Jimmie Griffin and Harry L. Pigott, Cpl. Herbert B. Ward

Died of wounds: Pvts. William C. Hewett and Benjamin B. Smith

Died of Disease: Pvts. William F. Brooks, Carl J. Danford, Manning Hall, Claudie H. McCall, Elijah Milliken, Kendrick W. Outlaw, Cecil S. Pierce, Samuel C. Swain, Guy E. Watson, David Williams and Fred Wilson, Pvt. 1st Class John W. Carlisle, David L. Doshier (cook), Seaman James C. Edwards, Sgt. Robert G. Farmer

The rifle range memorial and monument dedication will be held on Veterans' Day, Sunday, Nov. 11, at 11 a.m. at the site in Caswell Beach.

*Norma Eckard of Caswell Beach is president of Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range Inc.*