



Photo contributed

These were Pvt. Claudie Hall McCall's nurses at Camp Hospital No. 52, established in August 1918 at Le Mans, Department Sarthe.

The World War I profile of Pvt. Claudie Hall McCall

BY NORMA ECKARD
SPECIAL TO THE BEACON

Claudie Hall McCall was born in Brunswick County in 1888, son of Alice McCall. In 1892, Alice married David Hewett. She had several children with David, including Willie Cross Hewett, another Brunswick County World War I veteran.

Claudie's Draft Registration Card from the June 5, 1917, draft shows he was single, living in Supply and working on his own farm.

On Feb. 7, 1918, Claudie married Lundie Frink. The marriage certificate is difficult to read, but seems to show he was married in his house, with three witnesses: Allen Stanley, Daniel H. Wilcox and Joe Hunter, all from Wilmington.

Claudie was ordered to report to duty April 2, 1918. After a very short training period, he was assigned to Supply Company, 120th Infantry, 30th "Old Hickory" Division on April 26, 1918. He then boarded Bohemian in Boston with his Company on May 12, 1918.

On Oct. 4, 1918, his son, Claudie Hazelwood McCall was born.

On Oct. 25, 1918, his half-brother Pvt. Willie Cross Hewett died of wounds.

Pvt. McCall nearly made it home, but he was not with them when his company when it boarded USS Pocahontas in France on March 28, 1919, to return home. His name was crossed out, indicating he entered Hospital 52 on March 5, 1919.

Claudie Hall McCall died April 13, 1919, from an abscess of the lung.

Having the hospital number provides an opportunity to investigate further. According to the Official History of the 120th Infantry, the 30th Division was marched to Forwarding Camp at Le Mans in early January 1919. They remained there until early March, when they were moved to Embarkation Camp at St. Nazaire. The Camp Hospital in Le Mans is No. 52, which means this is the hospital where Pvt. McCall died.

Camp Hospital No. 52 was established in August 1918 at Le Mans, Department Sarthe, intermediate section, its personnel being taken from the American Expeditionary Forces at large. It was located in the old monastery, which had been occupied by the French complementary hospital No. 49. The monastery was poorly suited for hospitalization, for its large halls and high ceilings and stone floors made it damp and difficult to heat. Plumbing and wiring were insufficient and a large force of men was required to keep the building in repairs.

Using the full passenger list (excerpt shown above), it is also possible to identify other soldiers in Supply Company from North Carolina who spent his last days with him.

Wagoner Dewey C. Bulla from Asheboro was admitted March 26, recovered and returned to the USA on May 12.

Pvt. George V. Burnett from Black Mountain was admitted March 1, recovered and returned to the USA on June 2.

Cpl. Henry G. Dallas from Reidsville was admitted March 14, recovered and returned to the USA on April

24.

Wagoner James W. Vickers from Rutherfordton was admitted March 5 and passed away March 13 from bronchopneumonia.

Pvt. Claudie Hall McCall was laid to rest in the Oise-Aisne American Cemetery and Memorial in France, which is located at the very spot where the 42nd "Rainbow" Division fought. The cemetery is the site of 6,012 American graves.

Many Brunswick County World War I veterans fought with the 42nd Division.

Claudie's mother, Alice Lenore McCall Hewett, was given the opportunity to take a Mother's Pilgrimage in 1929 to visit his gravesite.

All three mothers listed from Brunswick County declined.

Claudie's son, Claude Hazelwood McCall, lived to be 95, dying in 2013. His obituary is printed below:

NEW BERN — Claude "Mac" Hazelwood McCall, 95, of New Bern, passed away December 5, 2013, at Carolina East Medical Center. Mac was born on October 4, 1918 to Claudie and Lunda McCall Jones in Brunswick County. He graduated from New Hanover High School in Wilmington, NC, in 1936 and Wake Forest University in 1940. While at Wake Forest, his attaining the ACC Welterweight Boxing Championship was notable.

Mac was employed at the Wilmington, NC shipyard during WWII. He met his beautiful bride, Catherine Virginia Ensley, during the war and they married in February 1945. In 1946, Mac began a long and distinguished career in the airlines industry. After working for Eastern and Piedmont Airlines in accounting management, Mac became Director of Revenue Accounting for the Air Transport Association in Washington, DC in 1957. He also served with distinction as Secretary-Treasurer of the Airlines Clearing House from 1968 until his retirement in 1984. Mac thoroughly enjoyed participating in the "golden years" of the airlines industry.

Mac was heavily involved with the Baptist church throughout his life. He enjoyed teaching Sunday school, and was a member of First Baptist Church in New Bern for over 25 years. In his early family years, he was President of the Springfield, VA Babe Ruth Baseball League for five years.

He is survived by his son Keith McCall (Karen), his daughter Claudia Bryan, his grandchildren Shannon and Michelle Bryan and Scott, Ryan and Kimberly McCall, and six great-grandsons. Mac was preceded in death by his wife Catherine, three half-brothers and one half-sister.

Funeral service will be held at 11 a.m. December 14, 2013, at First Baptist Church in New Bern with Dr. Richard Seagle officiating. Entombment will follow at Greenleaf Memorial Park. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service at the church.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to First Baptist Church or St. Jude, P. O. Box 1000, Dept. 142, Memphis, TN 38101-9908.

Online condolences may be made to the McCall family at www.cottenfuneral-home.com.



The gravesite of Claudie Hall McCall at Picardie, France

Arrangements are by Cotten Funeral Home & Crematory.

This concludes the Brunswick County World War I veterans who were wounded or killed while serving in the 30th "Old Hickory" Division.

A memorial to the 30th Division was erected on the northeast corner of the North Carolina state capitol grounds in Raleigh on Sept. 29, 1930, the 12th anniversary of the breaking of the Hindenburg Line. In all, the "Old Hickory" division lost 8,415 men.

The division garnered several outstanding distinctions in the war, including the first to break the German Hindenburg Line on the Cambrai-St. Quentin front, and was awarded more Congressional Medals of Honor than soldiers in any other American division.

If you would like to help us honor Brunswick County World War I veterans, go to caswellriflerange.com or email ftcaswellriflerange@gmail.com. Three hundred fifty Brunswick County World War I veterans have been honored to date.

A monument was 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 who 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

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