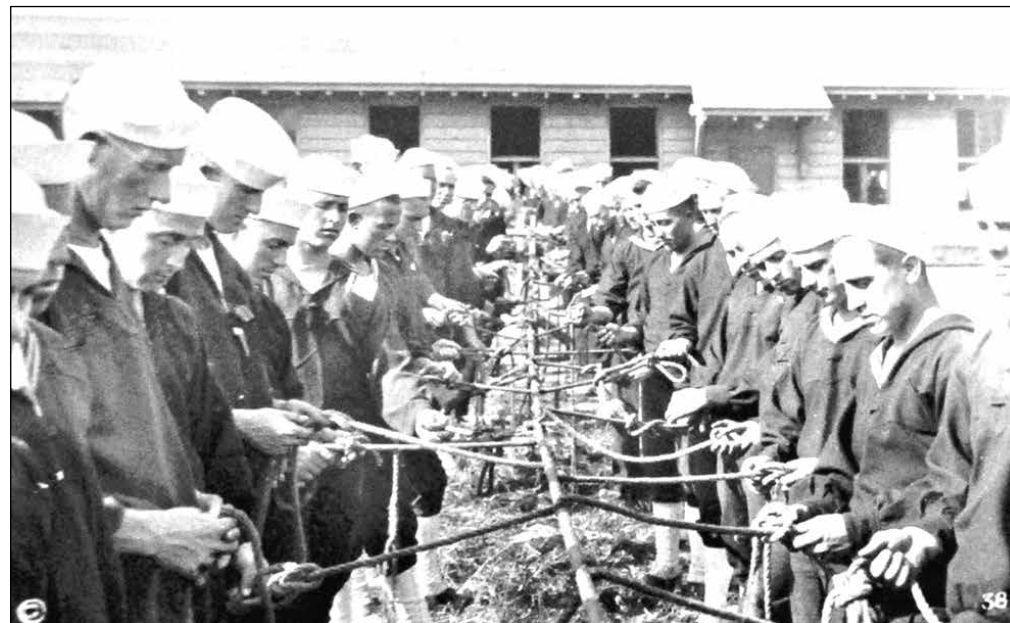




Navy sailors in formation on Gilbert Street.

Photos contributed



Navy sailors practicing knot tying.



Red Cross knitted items, knitting directions for the Red Cross packages were published in magazines and books, such as "The Delineator," July 1917, p. 37.

Complete Reports Since November 13.
 The following knitted garments have been given out by Mrs. Empie since November 13:
 H. P. Webster, Norfolk, Va., N. N. V., under Lieut. Paschauer: Socks, wristlets, muffler.
 D. E. Bowen, Norfolk, Va., N. N. V.: Socks, wristlets, helmet.
 Coy Edwards, Norfolk, Va., N. N. V.: Muffler, socks, wristlets.
 Roy Peterson, U. S. S. Strumen, Norfolk, Va., N. N. V.: Muffler, socks,

Wilmington Dispatch, James Coy Edwards.

EDWARDS, COY, seaman, N. N. V.
Enlisted: Wilmington, N. C., June 4, 1917.
Died: Naval hospital, Norfolk, Va., December 24, 1917.
Cause: Pneumonia, broncho.
Next of kin: Father, J. B. Edwards, Exum, N. C.

James Coy Edwards, seaman National Naval Volunteers.

WWI Profile: Seaman, James Coy Edwards 1885-1917



James Coy Edwards' headstone.

BY NORMA ECKARD
 SPECIAL TO THE BEACON

James Coy Edwards was born and raised in Exum, Brunswick County, of the Waccamaw Township. A family tree is available in Family Search.

The 1900 Census shows he was 15 years old, living at home and attending school. No 1910 Census record for him could be found.

The first WWI Draft registration occurred on June 5, 1917. James Coy Edwards enlisted in the U.S. Navy the day before, on June 4, 1917, in Wilmington. He served at the Naval Hospital in Norfolk, Va.

On Dec. 2, 1917, The Wilmington Dispatch reported that these Red Cross packages were sent to local men serving in the Navy. (N.N.V. stands for "National Naval Volunteers")

The creation of the modern Navy

President Woodrow Wilson signed the order creating Naval Station Norfolk on June 28, 1917. The U.S. Navy expanded from 70,000 to a half-million officers and men during World War I.

No Navy in the world had ever created a larger force or as quickly. New training methods had to be devised in a very short time.

Many rural recruits could barely read and knew little or nothing about radio and electricity. Most had never seen the ocean.

New recruits had to be isolated to reduce the spread of disease.

The training center opened on Oct. 12, 1917, and by the end of the year, held 34,000.

Read the full article at www.dailypress.com/features/history/dp-nws-navel-station-norfolk-20170627-story.html.

Statistics for the Navy from 1917

Total number of applications for enlistment: 281,957.

Applicants rejected for physical disability: 127,512.

Top reason for physical disability: underweight (31,531) followed by eyesight (29,945) and teeth (13,884).

Total enlistments: 92,413.

Total enlistment applications in Wilmington, NC: 103.

46 rejected for physical defects.

22 enlisted.

Total men in service on June 30, 1917: 128,666 (an increase of 74,432 from June 30, 1916)

Total deaths in 1917: 511.

Leading cause of death: pneumonia (200).

Number admitted to hospital for pneumonia: 1,696.

Sources:

United States of America Navy Department (1918) Annual Reports of the Navy Department For the Fiscal Year 1917. Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office.

United States of America Navy Department (1918) Annual Report of the Surgeon General, U.S. Navy: For the Fiscal Year 1918. Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office.

On Christmas Eve, 1917, Seaman James Coy Edwards passed away from bronchopneumonia.

If you would like to help us honor James Coy Edwards or another Brunswick County WWI veteran, go to caswellriflerange.com or email ftcaswellriflerange@gmail.com for more information.

Another Roll Calling event will be Saturday, April 6, at the rifle range starting at 11 a.m. A future event will be Saturday, May 4, to raise funds to publish a book of the Brunswick County men and women that served in WWI and to continue restoration on the rifle range memorial. This second event will be at the Caswell Beach Public Facility Building from 4:30 to 9 p.m. It will be a dinner, derby and dance with music by Trilogly. Call 278-7584 for more information and tickets.