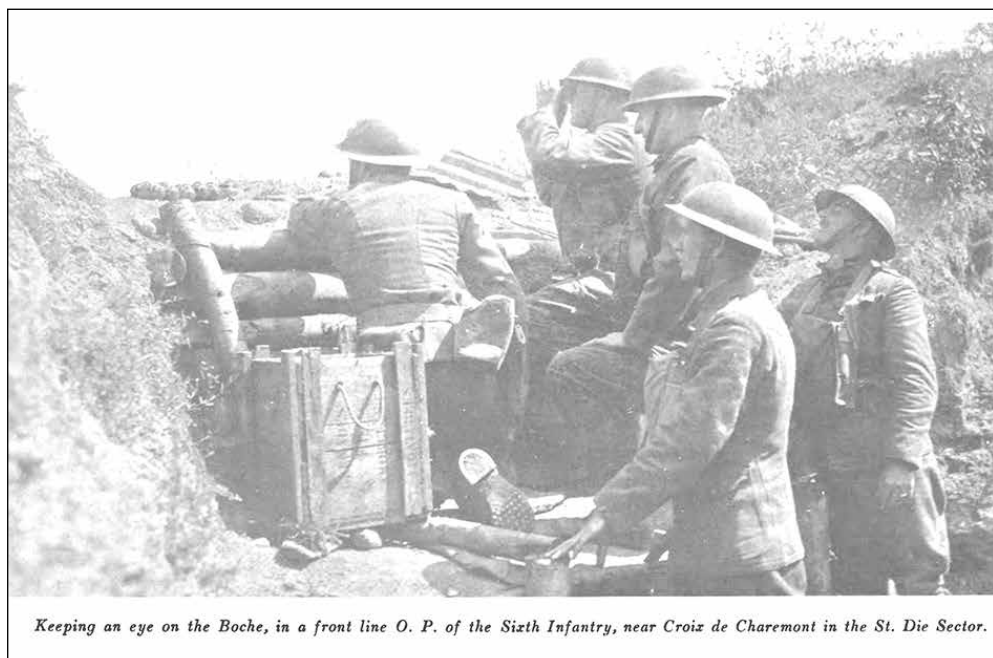


5th Division Insignia.



A gun of Battery D, Twenty-first Field Artillery, in action during the Frapelle engagement. Nayemont-le-Fosse.

5th Division History, Photo 6th Infantry.



Keeping an eye on the Boche, in a front line O. P. of the Sixth Infantry, near Croix de Charenton in the St. Die Sector.

Photos contributed

5th Division, Frapelle Engagement.

WWI Profile: Pvt. Barfie Randel Long 1895-1947

By NORMA ECKARD

Barfie Randel Long was born and raised in Brunswick and Columbus counties, N.C. His daughter's birth record shows his name as Barfield Randal Long. His findagrave listing and death certificate shows he was born in Columbus County, whereas his WWI Draft Registration and N.C. WWI Service Card shows he was born in Brunswick County. He had one brother who also served, Pvt. Vanderbilt Long.

In 1900, he and Vanderbilt lived with their family in Shalotte. By 1910, they were both working on the family farm in Chadbourn in Columbus County.

His Draft Registration in 1917 shows he was single and working as a mechanic at R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company in Winston-Salem.

Barfie was ordered to report for duty on Sept. 18, 1917, in Winston-Salem. He was accepted for service on Oct. 16, 1917, at Camp Jackson, S.C. A handwritten notation states that they were intended for the 321st Infantry of the 81st Division, but as previously included in the 81st Division history, many soldiers were transferred to other needed divisions.

Pvt. Long eventually was assigned to Company M, 6th Infantry, 5th Division. The division was not organized until December and did not unite as a division until the following spring in France, so Pvt. Long likely remained in S.C. or transferred to Georgia (Camp Forrest) where the 6th Infantry trained. Because it is not known when his transfer took place, it is not known exactly where he trained.

The 5th Division insignia is shown. The nickname is "Red Diamond" or "Red Devils." They were also referred to as "The Meuse Division" after WWI because of their crossing of the Meuse River and establishing a bridgehead in an area considered impregnable.

The 5th Division's capture of the riverfront and points east was called "one of the most brilliant military feats in the history of the American Army in France" by General Pershing. Some details will be shared in the WWI Profile of Pvt. Owen Ransom Mintz.

There are five known Brunswick County men who served with the 5th Division, as shown below. The rosters are also available on the World War I Army/Marine Division Rosters webpage.

5th Division, 6th Infantry

CPL Charles Byron Drew, HQ
PFC Barfie Randel Long, Company M, severely wounded, Aug. 17, 1918
PFC John William Mills, Company M

5th Division, 11th Infantry

Pvt. Owen Ransom Mintz, Company C, slightly wounded, Oct. 12, 1918

CPL Herbert B. Ward, Company M, KIA, Sept. 12, 1918
Pvt. Long boarded Covington with the 6th Infantry on April 9, 1918, for France The movement of the entire 5th Division overseas was piecemeal.

The atmosphere of France was a shock after the cheer of England.

Those days of April and May were grave and menacing to the French, for the Germans had launched their last great offensive that was to win or lose the war.

As each unit arrived, it began immediate and intensive training for the front. They were introduced to the French method of conservation: not just concerning food, but methods of firing to save the largest amount of ammunition and construction using an economy of materials.

In late May, the division was declared ready for introduction to the front. They were placed under command of the French and entered the Upper Alsace and Vosges Mountains as the first American troops in that sector. There they participated in patrols, and harassing and raiding the enemy. They experienced their first casualties in June and later a gas attack killed and wounded many. As the Americans became more familiar with trenches, the Americans took over command of the division.

On July 15, the division moved into the St. Die sector. Here, the Germans controlled No Man's Land. They had visibility of all American daylight movement. German airplanes were constantly monitoring. The 5th Division took a more offensive stand. Sniping was developed until the enemy dare not show himself.

Hungry Huns attempting to reach their cabbage and vegetable gardens by crawling on hands and knees were often forced to scuttle to some protecting shelter by our snipers or machine guns turned on sensitive points.

The patrolling and raiding grew bolder and stronger as the

5th Division became experienced in the trenches. Then the first real engagement was booked. The mission was to capture the village of Frapelle, about 9 kilometers east of St. Die, as well as Hill 451, just north of the town.

This mission was assigned to the third battalion of the 6th Infantry. (Third battalion includes Companies I, K, L, M.) Privates Barfie Long and John William Mills along with the rest of Company M were to lead the attack with Company L. Private Long was severely wounded during this attack.

They were positioned just behind the lines at Charmont, about one kilometer west of Frapelle. The second battalion (Companies E, F, G, H) was at Nayemont, about 4 kilometers west of Frapelle. The first battalion (Companies A, B, C, D) was at Vanifoss on the Fave, about 4 kilometers southwest of Frapelle. Thirty-six batteries had moved up to concealed emplacements more favorable to fire on the area of attack. The Ammunition Train had moved ammunition and the 99th American Aero Squadron was ready to give air support. "H" hour was set at 4 a.m. of August 17.

At 3:54 a.m., the artillery opened up on the enemy's lines with a heavy barrage. For 10 minutes the rain of high explosive and gas poured on the town of Frapelle and Hill 451 on the Hun trenches and on every known enemy battery.

At four, the bombardment changed to a box barrage, smoke shells were thrown into enemy observatories, and behind the curtain of shell the infantry went over the top.

Companies L and M led the assault while I and K occupied the trenches from which the former departed. Companies A and C were held in support. Each assaulting company was deployed in four waves and had "moppers-up" of engineers and infantry. A platoon of machine guns accompanied each company in its advance.

Evidently the enemy was prepared for the attack, for his counter-barrage came down upon the departure trench at exactly 4:06 a.m. and caught the second, third, and fourth waves. With considerable losses the troops pressed through the heavy and accurate barrage toward their objectives. Company M encountered a heavy machine gun barrage on Hill 451 and was held up for a time. The lines were re-formed, the enemy was rushed and the height was won. Company L advanced without serious opposition and occupied Frapelle. With the aid of the engineers enemy shelters were blown up and dugouts and houses searched.

No sooner had the troops gained their objectives than the German artillery was turned on Frapelle and Hill 451. At 6:30 a.m., the deluge of fire began, which lasted with varying intensity for three days and nights. The men of the Signal Battalion had carried their telephones and wire over the top in the first assault waves, to establish communication to the rear from the forward command posts. So continuous was the shelling that the telephone lines had to be abandoned.

Large quantities of gas were used, with concentration of mustard. The wooded areas, overgrown with thick underbrush and filled with depressions, were drenched with fumes. Gas overcame many of the parties working at night on the entanglements and the trenches.

The operation received considerable comment in the French and American press. It was the only change that had taken place on this front in three years.

Casualties reported:

81 KIA
5 Died of Wounds
18 Missing
80 Severely Wounded
237 Slightly Wounded
More than 150 of the wounded were gas cases.

It is unknown what type of wounds Pvt. Barfie Long experienced. Perhaps it was gas, given that he had several lung diseases at his death many years later.

In addition, Pvt. John W. Mills was reported missing in U.S. newspapers on Oct. 31. He was later reported found in reports published in newspapers in December. Newspapers were very much behind reporting casualties so it could have been from this operation or a later one, which will be covered in the next WWI Profiles of the 5th Division.

Private Long returned with his unit in July 1919 and was honorably discharged July 29. A 1920 Census could not be located.

The 1930 Census shows Barfie living with his mother in Chadbourn, farming his land. His father had passed away a year earlier.

In 1936, his brother, Pvt. Vanderbilt Long, died of influenza at 41 and was laid to rest in Chadbourn.

The 1940 Census shows Barfie now married to Emma Lou-

ise Long, age 20, from South Carolina. They had a 2-year-old daughter, Helen Elizabeth Long, born in North Carolina. Barfie's mother is still living with him. Barfie continued to work his farm.

At age 51, Nov. 6, 1947, Barfie Randel Long passed away at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Oteen, N.C., near Asheville. He had multiple diseases of the lungs.

The Asheville Citizen-Times published an obituary on Nov. 8, 1947, on page 2:

BARFIE R. LONG

Barfie R. Long, 51, of Chadbourn, Columbus County, a veteran of World War I, died yesterday morning in a hospital here following a long illness. Surviving is the widow, Mrs. Emma Long. The body was sent to Chadbourn for funeral services and burial. Morris-Gearing and Black funeral home was in charge of arrangements.

His mother applied for a military headstone, which is in Chadbourn, N.C., where Pvt. Long was laid to rest. His mother was laid to rest near him at her death in 1959 at age 89.

Records of his wife could not be found, nor is it known whether they had more children. However, his daughter married and raised a family in Brunswick County.

Sources:

The Society of the Fifth Division (1919) The Official History of the Fifth Division USA, During the Period of its Organization and its Operations in the European World War, 1917-1919. New York, Wynkoop Hallenbeck Crawford Company.

If you would like to help us honor Barfie Randel Long or another Brunswick County WWI veteran, email the Friends of Ft. Caswell Rifle Range at fcaswellriflerange@gmail.com or go to www.caswellriflerange.com.

A future fundraiser, Oktoberfest, is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 12, at the Caswell Beach Town Public Service Facility Building (fire station) from 4 to 9 p.m. to raise funds for publishing the book of Brunswick County men and women that served in WWI; to continue historic preservation on the rifle range memorial; and to honor Brunswick County WWI veterans. There will be a dinner and dance with music by The Back Porch Rockers. More information will follow.

Another Roll Call is planned for Monday, Nov. 11, Veterans Day, at 11 a.m. beside the Fort Caswell Rifle Range Memorial in Caswell Beach.