



Family members of Robert Bollie Stanley from left are Vivian Stanley, granddaughter; Leroy Hill, grandson; Ellis Stanley, grandson; Deborah Bolin, granddaughter; Fred Stanley, grandson; Anna White, granddaughter; and Joe Stanley, cousin.

Robert Bollie Stanley receives military-style WWI marker

On Tuesday, May 7, the Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range, along with members of the Brunswick Town Chapter National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, paid tribute to Pvt. Robert Bollie Stanley, WWI Brunswick County veteran and the only known POW.

The flat military style marker that was installed and dedicated was purchased with funds donated by Allen Dunstan, an out-of-town visitor who was deeply touched by Pvt. Stanley's sacrifice.

Seven of Pvt. Stanley's descendants along with a friend attended the ceremony and received the thanks and recognition for his sacrifice.

Norma Eckard, president of the Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range, read a short biography during the ceremony.

Robert Bollie Stanley was born and raised in Shallotte. He was called to duty for World War I on March 29, 1918, training in Camp Grant, Ill. Pvt. Stanley served with the 92nd Division, nicknamed the Buffalo Soldiers in honor of African American troops that served in the American West after the Civil War. There were only two divisions in World War I having African American combat units: the 92nd Buffalo Soldiers and the 93rd Blue Hat Divisions.

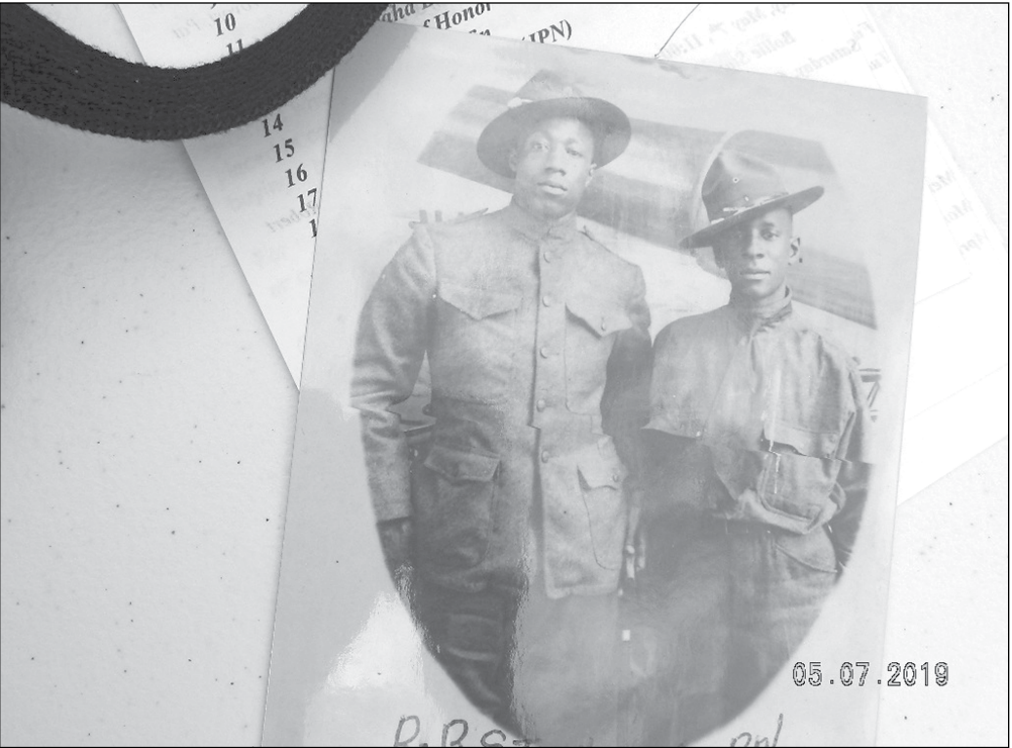
Robert Stanley was one of only nine known

African American men from Brunswick County that served in a combat position. During the Meuse-Argonne Offensive on Oct. 29, 1918, Pvt. Stanley was captured by the enemy. He was released about a month later on Nov. 27, 1918. Pvt. Stanley returned to America on March 24, 1919, with his right leg amputated at the thigh. He was discharged from the U.S. Army on Aug. 25, 1919, with a 95 percent disability.

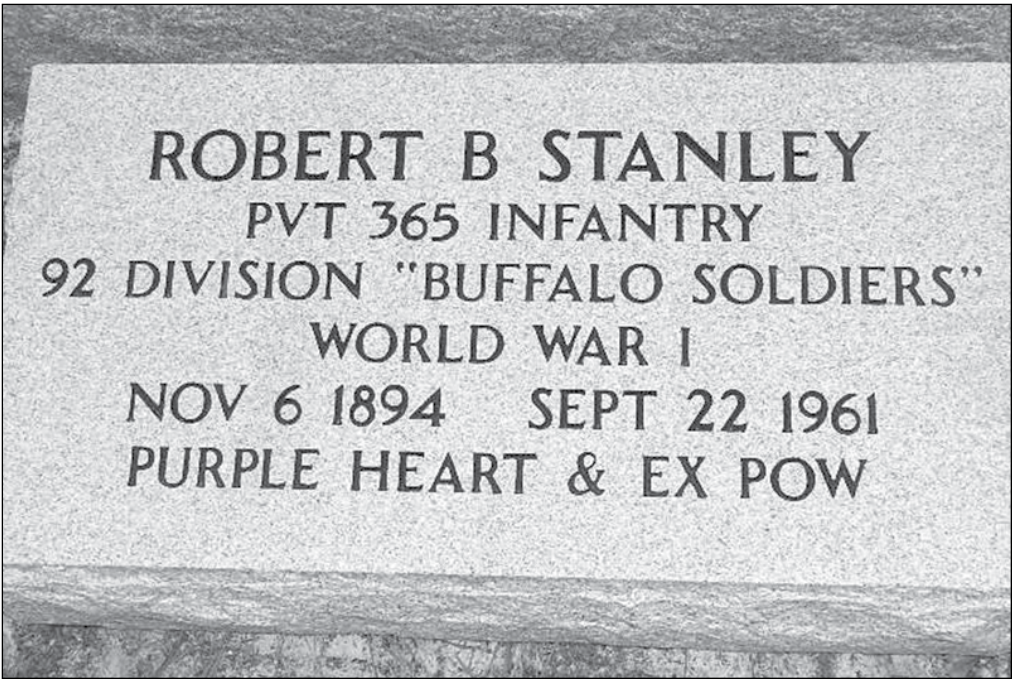
Stanley married and raised several children. He was laid to rest on Sept. 22, 1961, at age 66. During the dedication ceremony, Joe Stanley unveiled the marker. After the prayer, Taps were played. Pvt. Robert Bollie Stanley's WWI Profile can be read for more details at caswell-riflerange.com. The script for the ceremony is also available on the website.

The family shared a photo of Pvt. Stanley in uniform, which stirred emotions as we recalled his sacrifices.

Following dedication of the marker, family members were invited to share stories of Pvt. Stanley. Fred Stanley, grandson, was 17 years old when his grandfather "took his last breath." He remembered him being in frequent pain but rarely complained. Fred and his grandfather were always together. Both he and cousin Joe Stanley commented that their grandfather rarely spoke about WWI.



Robert Bollie Stanley in his WWI uniform, left, is shown with a friend.



Pvt. Stanley's military-style flat marker.

Deborah Bolin, granddaughter, was wearing a brooch owned by her grandmother, Pvt. Stanley's wife Ethel E. Stanley. She shared that her grandmother was very special to her.

Joe Stanley remarked that Pvt. Stanley was "a fabulous man."

More memories may be added to the website later.