

# WWI Fort Caswell Nurse Profile: Lois Mills, 1894-1971

By **NORMA ECKARD**  
AND **AMY ECKARD**

Charlotte Lois Mills Herbert  
Charlotte, NC  
Army Nurse Corps, 2nd  
Lieutenant

Served: Aug. 9, 1918 – April 17, 1922; Fort Caswell, U.S. Army Post Hospital; Aug. 9, 1918 – November 15, 1918 Overseas; Nov. 15, 1918 – Aug. 30, 1919

There are few historical records for the name “Lois Mills,” other than her NC WWI Service Card. Her name was found in newspapers in the Charlotte area while working as a nurse, but nothing after the war. Without knowing the location of her family, one avenue of tracing her life was unavailable. Without that link, it’s difficult to confirm any found “Lois Mills” is the Fort Caswell Nurse Lois Mills.

This required a different approach: use later records and work back to her family. Fortunately, online VA records exist for those who served in WWI, which made it possible to discover her married name. After an extensive search, finding the trail leading back to her family ultimately required only two records.

Her parents’ names were on the certificate, so at that point it was fairly simple to find the census records and information about them.

Her birth name was then discovered: Charlotte Lois “Lottie” Mills or from the 1900 Census, “Lottie L. Mills.”

Charlotte Lois “Lottie” Mills was born on June (or July) 1894 in Statesville, N.C. There is a partial family tree in Family Search. Her mother’s death likely occurred that year, possibly during childbirth, as her mother was 41 years of age in 1894. This cannot be confirmed, but her mother’s death did occur before 1900 as shown below.

On Aug. 1, 1900, her father died, leaving 11 children. Three were married; eight still lived at home. Lottie, as the youngest at age 5, appears to have been lost to history. No family trees include her beyond the 1900 Census. Obituaries of family members are typically used to establish a relationship but Lottie was not listed in any obituaries found for her 10 siblings who all passed away before her.

The 1900 Census, completed on June 16 before her father’s death in August, shows her father, a farmer, with eight children living at home. As mentioned, Lottie was the youngest, age 5. When her father passed away two months



Passport photo of James A. Herbert. Source: Ancestry.com. U.S. Passport Applications, 1795-1925 [database online]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2007.

HERBERT, LOIS MILLS		MILLS, LOIS		Nurse ANC	
5701 Kenwood Ave.		Chicago, Ill.		C- 1 093 551	
Sa.		Died		H- R 234 700	
Born 6 27 94		Enl. 8 9 18		Dia. 4 17 22	
K- 125 564 F		T 4 261 775		A- 3 537 564	
Ot 2 580 473		PIB			

VA FORM 3-7202a JUL 1948 Building blocks of VA Form 100, Feb. 1947, will be used. MASTER INDEX CARD 1 650 5

The WWI VA Index shows her married name, Herbert.

In February, the following named members of the Army Nurse Corps were ordered transferred to the stations indicated: to Station Hospital, Ft. Banks, Mass., 2nd Lt., Edith C. Williamson; to Station Hospital, Ft. Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, 2nd Lt., Della A. Killeen; to Station Hospital, Camp Benning, Ga., 2nd Lts., Mary Cavanaugh, Ruth A. Heagney, Frances C. Henchey, Estelle Leary; to Station Hospital, Ft. Bliss, Texas, 2nd Lt. Lois Mills; to Station Hospital, Camp

Source: The American Journal of Nursing, Vol. 21, No. 7 (April, 1921), p. 491, excerpt shown below] Also notice that because she was serving after 1920, she received the rank of 2nd Lieutenant.

after the census, the following was published in the local newspaper.

## Mr. Joseph Mills Dead Statesville Record and Landmark (Statesville, NC), 10 Aug. 1900, p. 2.

Mr. Joseph Mills died at his home near here Saturday night. Interment Sunday afternoon at Perth cemetery, with funeral services by Rev. W.Y. Love. Deceased was 51 years old and was a good man. He leaves 11 children. Of this number three are married and the others are left at home parentless. Mr. Mills had been sorely afflicted for a long time. He had overworked himself in trying to do his full duty by his motherless little ones and no doubt the cares and anxieties concerning them did much to shorten his days. Yet he was faithful unto death and has gone to claim the reward.

Lottie’s brother, who was 9 years old when their father died, was presumably located in 1910 as a hired man living with a married couple. But between 1900, when they became orphans, until 1910, it is not known if they lived in an orphanage or were taken in by other families or relatives.

In 1910, Lottie, age 15-16, was a nurse in Charlotte, NC, at Mercy Hospital. The 1910 Charlotte City Directory has her name listed as Lottie Mills.

In 1911, she was listed as a trained nurse in the Charlotte City Directory. The article lists “Lois Mills” as a graduate of Mercy General Hospital in 1912. The 1912 City Directory of Charlotte listed “Lois Mills” as a nurse and she no longer lived at the hospital. A few Fort Caswell WWI nurses used different names as a nurse. With many women having the same popular names, they may have been advised to choose a less common name.

## Catholic Hospital Training School

First Graduation Exercises at New Mercy General – One Graduate Miss Avis Hardin of Chester, S.C. – Bishop Haid Presents Diploma – Address of Dr. Wylie Moore Read.

The graduating exercises of the nurses’ training school at the new Mercy General hospital were held last evening at the hospital, the exercises being attended by many friends of the institution.

Miss Avid Hardin of Chester, S.C., was the only graduating nurse this year. She was presented with a class pin and a diploma by Right Rev. Bishop Leo Haid [illegible] S.B. of Belmont, the presentation being accompanied by a happily expressed speech. Bishop Haid also read the prepared speech of Dr. Wylie Moore, who was to have been orator for the occasion but who was prevented by professional duties from being present. The address was considered masterly in thought and expression.

In honor of the occasion, the hospital building was decorated in blue and white, the hospital colors, while potted palms and ferns added very much to the decorative effect. The flower-bearers for Miss Hardin last evening were little

Mills		Lois		white	
(Surname)		(Christian name)		Race	
406 No Poplar St		Charlotte		NORTH CAROLINA	
(Street and house number)		(Town or city)		(County) (State)	
* Born in		Statesville N C		June 27/94	
† Called into active service as		Nurse		Aug 9/18. fr CL	
Promotions:		None		---	
Organizations and staff assignments:		Post Hosp Ft Tazwell N C		to Nov/18; B H #113 to Jan/19;	
Principal stations:		B H #88 to Aug 30/19;		Demob Sta to disch	
Engagements:		None		RESERVE NURSE RELIEVED FROM ACTIVE DUTY; NOT DISCHARGED.	
Wounds received in action:		None.		---	
§ Served overseas		Nov 15/18 to Aug 30/19		---	
Hon. disch.		Sept 22/19		for convenience of the Government, services no longer required.	
Was reported		XX		per cent disabled on date of discharge, in view of occupation.	
Remarks:		Subsequent Serv ANC Oct 11/19 to Apr 17/22		---	

Form No. 84c-1 A. G. O. Mar. 17, 1921. \* Give place and date. † Insert (a) grade; (b) arm or staff corps or department; (c) date; (d) source, civil life (CL), RA, NG, ORC, NA; and (e) designation of training camp attended, if any. ‡ Strike out if he did not attend a training camp. § Give dates of departure from and return to the United States. || Give date. 3-8091

## Lois Mills NC WWI Service Card.

Misses Elizabeth Williams, Helen [illegible], Frances Williams and Bernadine Toomey. The young ladies of the convent school served refreshments during the evening, and following the completion of the graduation exercises. Those serving were misses Mary O’Neill, Thelma Phelan, Frances Williams and Alma Moody.

## State License for Eighteen Nurses – The Charlotte News (Charlotte, NC), 21 May 1918

Eighteen nurses, graduates of the six training schools for nurses in local hospitals and sanitariums, have successfully passed examinations before the state board at Raleigh for licenses to practice the profession of graduate nursing in the state, the state licenses being presented yesterday to the young women who have completed their three years’ training in the hospitals of Charlotte.

The Charlotte nurses passing the state board examinations and receiving licenses to practice graduate nursing in North Carolina are as follows:

Misses Lily Dearman, Ella Dorsett, Bertha Smith, Clara Ashcraft, Mary Dilling, Frankie Wilson, Duseka Alford, Ellie May Warlick, Eva Ailson, Mattie Helm, Lois Mills, Mary Walton, Florence Corriher, Elizabeth Mauney, Henrietta McDade, Helen Miller, Johanna Treiber, and Kathryn Stowe.

Nurse Mills was now qualified to join the war effort. Her military service began in August.

Details of her US Army service may be found on her NC WWI Service Card, shown at top, and is listed below in table form for easier reading. Her military service is not detailed after December 1919, although she remained in the service until April 1922. Some details were found in other records.

08/09/1918 – Fort Caswell, NC  
11/15/1918 – Base Hospital #113 (France)  
01/1919 – Base Hospital #88

CITY OR COUNTY OF <b>Fredericksburg</b> COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA				16265			
FULL NAME OF GROOM <b>James A. Herbert</b>				CLERK'S NO. <b>796</b>			
PRESENT NAME OF BRIDE <b>Lois Mills</b>							
AGE		RACE		SINGLE, WIDOWED, OR DIVORCED		NO. TIMES PREV. MARRIED	
<b>45</b>		<b>white</b>		<b>single</b>			
OCCUPATION <b>Clerk</b>				MAIDEN NAME			
BIRTHPLACE <b>St. Mary's Co., Md.</b>				BIRTHPLACE <b>North Carolina</b>			
FATHER'S FULL NAME <b>John F. Herbert</b>				FATHER'S FULL NAME <b>Joseph Mills</b>			
MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME <b>Addie S. Dean</b>				MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME <b>Charlotte Bass</b>			
RESIDENCE P. O. ADDRESS (IF IN CITY ST. AND NO.) <b>2523 14th. St. Washington, D. C.</b>				RESIDENCE P. O. ADDRESS (IF IN CITY ST. AND NO.) <b>2523 14th. St. Washington, D. C.</b>			
Date of Proposed Marriage <b>June 1, 1939</b>				Place of Proposed Marriage <b>Fredericksburg, Va.</b>			
Given under my hand this <b>1</b> day of <b>June</b> , 19 <b>39</b>							
Clerk of <b>Culpeper</b> Court							
CERTIFICATE OF TIME AND PLACE OF MARRIAGE							
I, <b>Lea W. Houston</b> , a Marriage Commissioner, Church, or religious order of that name, do certify that on the <b>1</b> day of <b>June</b> , 19 <b>39</b> at <b>Fredsb'g</b> Virginia, under authority of this license, I joined together in the Holy State of Matrimony the persons named and described therein. I qualified and gave bond according to law authorizing me to celebrate the rites of marriage in the county (or city) of <b>Fredericksburg</b> Commonwealth of Virginia.							
Given under my hand this <b>1</b> day of <b>June</b> , 19 <b>39</b>							
Address of celebrant <b>Fredericksburg</b>							

The 1939 marriage certificate of Lois Mills and James A. Herbert.

**Miss Mills Recuperating.**  
Miss Lois Mills, one of the city's most efficient and popular trained nurses, is recuperating at Southport, following an attack of Spanish influenza. Miss Mills has been accepted as a Red Cross nurse and is awaiting orders to go overseas.

While serving at Fort Caswell, Nurse Mills suffered from influenza. This appeared in the newspaper in Charlotte. Source: “Miss Mills Recuperating.” The Charlotte Observer (Charlotte, NC), 6 Oct. 1918, p. 14.

60	MILLS LOIS	NRS NURSE	ANC	MRS JAMES MC CAUSLAND	FRIEND 406 NORTH POPLAR STREET CHARLOTTE NORTH CAROLINA
61	MITCHELL SURAN BAILEY	NRS NURSE	ANC	WILLIAM MITCHELL	FATHER DODDGEVILLE WISCONSIN
62	MOR CAROLINE A	NRS NURSE	ANC	MR GEORGE MOYR	FATHER 838 WEST 9 STREET

Source: Ancestry.com. U.S., Army Transport Service, Passenger Lists, 1910-1939 [database online]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2016.

(France)  
08/30/1919 – Demobilization Station  
11/15/1918 – 08/30/1919 Overseas  
10/11/1919 – Army Nurse Corps  
1920 Fort Bayard, NM (assumed)  
1921 Fort Bliss, Texas  
04/17/1922 – Discharged

Before Nurse Mills served in the military, she was a private nurse for Mrs. James McCausland in Charlotte and lived in her home. Mrs. McCausland was listed as Nurse Mills’ next of kin when she traveled overseas to France.

A Nurse Lois Mills is listed in the Fort Bayard, NM, 1920 Census and is assumed to be WWI Nurse Lois Mills, but there are no other records to confirm it.

Nurse Mills served at Fort Bliss, Texas, for a short time before she was discharged. [Source: The American

Journal of Nursing, Vol. 21, No. 7 (April, 1921), p. 491, excerpt shown. Also notice that because she was serving after 1920, she received the rank of 2nd Lieutenant.

The WWI VA Index record shown above confirms that she was discharged on April 17, 1922. At that time, her address was Chicago.

One of the methods used to track a person’s life is to search in city directories. The first occurrence of Lois Mills found after 1922 was in 1934, when she was found in Washington, D.C., employed as a nurse. (The search function is not completely effective and many times an actual manual search must be performed.)

The next record of hers was when she married in 1939, as shown in the marriage certificate. Her husband, James A. Herbert, was a clerk for the government in Washington, D.C. Further research shows some interesting information. In 1919, he served as clerk for the Graves Registration Service, presumably to track the WWI dead. He was issued passports for Great Britain, Belgium, France, Luxembourg, and Italy and traveled overseas. The photo shown is included with his passport application.

In 1940, they were living in Washington, D.C. James was continuing his government

work. Her husband James Albert Herbert passed away in May 1969. There are no records of his burial. Perhaps he was buried near his father, who was buried in Mount Olivet Cemetery in Washington, D.C.

Lois passed away two years later in Jessup, Md., in July 1971, at age 77. The cause of death is unknown.

Ancestry’s online database lists the date as July 11, 1971. [Ancestry.com. U.S., Department of Veterans Affairs BIRLS Death File, 1850-2010 [database online]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011]

Like her husband, her final resting place is unknown. If you would like to help us honor Charlotte Lois Mills Herbert or another Brunswick County WWI veteran, email the Friends of Ft. Caswell Rifle Range at fcaswellrifle@gmail.com or go to caswellrifle.com.

Donations continue to be sent supporting the historical preservation of the 1918 World War I Fort Caswell Rifle Range Memorial and the book featuring all the men and women that served their country from Brunswick County. Send donations to Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range, 5 Foxfire Trace, Caswell Beach, NC 28465.