



Photos contributed

Partial view of after the battle to secure Hindenburg Line

## The World War I profile of Army Cpl. Lindsey Pigott

By NORMA ECKARD  
SPECIAL TO THE BEACON

Lindsey Pigott was born and raised in Brunswick County. A partial family tree is located in FamilySearch.

On May 5, 1917, at age 21, Lindsey enlisted in the North Carolina National Guard by way of the Boys' Brigade.

In October, the 30th Division was created from North Carolina National Guard units. Pfc Lindsey Pigott was assigned to Company B, 119th Infantry, 30th "Old Hickory" Division. In December, he was promoted to corporal.

Previous posts detail the 119th Infantry's operations up to the assault on the Hindenburg Line on Sept. 29, 1918. The assault itself is also covered in posts about the 105th Engineers, also part of the 30th Division, in the North Carolina State Archives:

Very early in the morning of Sept. 29 the 60th brigade [119th Infantry, 120th Infantry, and 115th Machine Gun Battalion], with some units of the 117th regiment, assaulted this terrible line on a front of 3,000 yards, captured the whole Hindenburg system, then advanced still further and took the tunnel system with all the German troops hidden in it and next captured the towns of Bellicourt, Nouroy, Riqueval, Carriere, Etricourt, the Guillaime Ferme (farm) and Ferme de Riqueval; in this part of the assault advancing 4,200 yards and defeating two German divisions of average quality and taking from these (the 75th and 185th) 47 officers and 1,434 men.

Cpl. James E. Gregory, Company M, 119th Infantry, shared these memories of being "sent to the Somme front in France to help the Australians break the famous Hindenburg Line at Bellicourt":

At 5:50 a.m., September 29th, our Division attacked the Hindenburg Line on a front of three thousand yards. For four long hours the barrage continued without one minute of let up from both sides. It looked to me as if the destruction of the world had begun. I couldn't hear myself think, shells were falling everywhere, and shrapnels filling the air with their horrible whistles, and men were moaning and groaning at every side, pleading for someone to help them. German prisoners were coming over with hands up yelling "Kamerad," enemy aeroplanes whizzing low to the earth and sending showers of bullets down on us, friends everywhere falling dead and wounded. I was in a continuous struggle for life and almost unconscious of what was really happening, when the hardest of the battle was over and we had reached our objective, the tunnel of St. Quentin and the entire Hindenburg Line at Bellicourt. We spent the night in a German dugout seventy feet under ground, where the night before Hindenburg's men never dreamed of having to give up.

On the morning of the 30th we began to gather up the remainder of the dead and wounded. Horrible sights were to be seen. I saw men piled beside the shell-torn road in piles of from two to a dozen, and Australians hauling men to bury in wagons like we haul wood—a dozen or fifteen to a load. At the burying ground some of the men could not be identified for only half a man could be found, sometimes his body being blown to pieces and the identification tag lost.

Cpl. Lindsey Pigott was among the severely wounded. He would not return to fight again.

On Jan. 10, 1919, Pigott was taken from Camp Hospital 40, Liverpool, England, to



Headstone of Lindsey Pigott, Wilmington National Cemetery

Lapland for home (Source: ancestry.com). On March 6, 1919, he was discharged from the Army with a 50 percent disability. He lost his left hand and wrist in the battle and suffered serious injuries to his left side.

More tragedy awaited Pigott after returning to the United States. A shotgun fell from a counter and discharged, resulting in the loss of both of his legs.

But Pigott didn't lose his fighting spirit. An article on the front page of The State Port Pilot's Dec. 25, 1946, edition announced Pigott as the new manager of the Gulf Station and lunch room at U.S. 74 and U.S. 17 near the Brunswick River bridge:

Folks who know Mr. Piggott regard him as a very striking illustration of independence despite adversity. [Un]daunted by the loss of both legs and a hand and wrist, Mr. Pigott, who is married and has two young children, has worked for several years operating concessions with the R & S Amusement company. Tired of having to be constantly on the road, he decided to engage in a business of his own.

On Feb. 22, 1960, Lindsey Pigott was laid to rest in Wilmington National Cemetery. His headstone with military honors is shown above. The notation "PH" indicates a purple heart was awarded.

If you would like to help us honor Pigott or another Brunswick County World War I veteran, go to [caswellriflerange.com](http://caswellriflerange.com) or email [ftcaswellriflerange@gmail.com](mailto:ftcaswellriflerange@gmail.com).

A monument will be 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 725 names, as well as a historical overview of the 1918 World War I Rifle Range Target Pit Storage Room.

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