



Photos contributed

Company D, 55th Pioneer Infantry Regiment Camp, Wadsworth, S.C.

Dasher, Mrs. W.J. Southport		Mother	BRUNSWICK COUNTY		Cook	Co. E. 246th Inf.	Suresness	No
Hewetto, Mrs. Alice Supply		Mother	Dasher, David L.		Pvt.	Supply Co. 120th Inf.	Oise-Aiane	No
Milliken, Mrs. Mary Elizabeth R.F.D. #2 - Shallotta		Mother	McCall, Claudie H.		Pvt.	Co.D. 55th Pioneer Inf.	St. Mihiel	No
			MILLIKEN, ELIJAH					No
			BRUNSWICK COUNTY					No
Anderson, Mrs. Betty Ann E. Hilda St. - Ashawville		Widow	Anderson, Bert		Pvt.	Co. E. 229th Labor Bn.		No

U.S. World War I Mothers' Pilgrimage, 1929, Provo, Utah.

WWI Profile: Pvt. Elijah Milliken 1896-1918



Pvt. Elijah Milliken's Headstone in France.

By NORMA ECKARD
GUEST COLUMNIST

According to Elijah Milliken's NC WWI Service Card, he was born in Southport, NC, on Aug. 30, 1896. The 1900 Census and 1910 Census show him living in Shallotte, the oldest son of Robert and Mary Milliken. His father Robert was a farmer.

When the first draft registration was held for WWI on June 5, 1917, it was required for men between the ages of 21 and 31. Elijah was not yet 21.

A city directory from Wilmington, NC, has a listing for Elijah Milliken as a clerk, living at 1810 Castle, along with Bruce, mill hand, and Robert L. This is very likely Elijah and his brother, Robert Bruce, and father Robert.

The building at 1810 Castle St. in Wilmington is a low-brick building built in 1900. It still exists today, although it's no longer residential. You can see it on Google street view. An advertisement from the Oct. 3, 1915, issue of The Wilmington Morning Star lists the residence at 1810 Castle for rent, 5 rooms.

They weren't listed in the 1918 city directory, but as shown below, in 1918 Elijah and his father were in Rocky Mount working at a mill there.

When the second draft registration was held on June 5, 1918, to include males who were 18 years and older, Elijah registered. At that time, Elijah was single and working at the Rocky Mount Mills. He listed his

nearest relative as his father at Rocky Mount Mills.

Elijah was ordered to report for military duty on Aug. 5, 1918 in Nash County, and sent to Camp Wadsworth, S.C. He joined others from Brunswick County assigned to 55th Pioneer Infantry, as described in Kendrick Outlaw's WWI Profile.

The companies the soldiers were assigned seem to have changed often. Below is a photograph for Company D, which is the company referenced as Pvt. Milliken's in the Mother's Pilgrimage document near the end of this profile. He and the other Brunswick County soldiers may or may not be included in the photograph.

Pvt. Milliken and all of the Brunswick County soldiers in the 55th Pioneer Infantry left for France on Sept. 15, 1918.

Pvt. Elijah Milliken passed away from pneumonia on Dec. 11, 1918.

His final three months are difficult to determine. No documents were found describing operations of the 55th Pioneer Infantry, possibly because they were created specifically to assist in combat or engineering work as needed.

Using the NC WWI Service Cards from Brunswick County 55th Pioneer Infantry soldiers shown in Pvt. Kendrick Outlaw's WWI Profile (also located on the World War I Army/Marine Division Roster webpage), many of the soldiers from the 55th Pioneer Infantry were transferred to the 81st Division on Nov. 1, 1918,

whose operations are covered around that time beginning with Willie Hasper Hewett's WWI Profile.

Pvt. Milliken's NC WWI Service Card has no information regarding whether he served in combat or remained ill for several months before succumbing to pneumonia. By the 1920 Census, the family had returned to Shallotte.

Elijah's mother, Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Milliken, was given the opportunity to take a Mother's Pilgrimage in 1929 to visit his gravesite. All three mothers listed from Brunswick County declined.

Pvt. Elijah Milliken was laid to rest in Saint Mihiel American Cemetery and Memorial in Lorraine, France.

If you would like to help us honor Elijah Milliken or another Brunswick County WWI veteran, email the Friends of Ft. Caswell Rifle Range at ftcaswellriferange@gmail.com or go to www.caswellriferange.com.

A future fundraiser is scheduled for Saturday, May 4, at the Caswell Beach Town Public Service Facility Building (fire hall) 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, derby and dance with music by Three to Get Ready & Trilogy. Call 278-7584 for tickets and reservations or purchase tickets from Ricky Evans Gallery on Howe Street in Southport.