

WWI Snapshot: William Lafayette Inman, 1897-1940

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GUEST COLUMNISTS

William Lafayette Inman was born in Freeland in Brunswick County, N.C. His WWI Draft Registration on June 5, 1918, at age 21, listed his occupation as farmer. He was not required to register for the 1917 draft due to his age, which was under 21 at that time.

One of William's brothers, Luther James Inman, also served in WWI and has his own WWI Snapshot.

Will was ordered to report for duty on Aug. 7, 1918. Read the WWI Profile of Kendrick Whiteleaf Outlaw for an overview of the group of men from Brunswick County reporting for duty that day. Will joined 11 other men from Brunswick County who were assigned to the 55th Pioneer Infantry. They traveled overseas on Sept. 15, 1918. Pvt. Outlaw died of disease soon after arriving in France.

As Elijah Milliken's WWI Profile states, many of these men were transferred to the 81st Division on Nov. 1, 1918, as replacements. Pvt. Inman did not join the 81st Division, but was transferred to the 147th Infantry in the 37th Division, which had initially been formed from National Guard troops from Ohio. There he took part in the Ypres-Lys Offensive in Belgium until the Armistice on Nov. 11.

Pvt. Inman debarked in New Jersey on March 19, 1919, completing just over 6 months of overseas service. This qualified him for a service chevron. He was then honorably discharged on April 3, 1919.

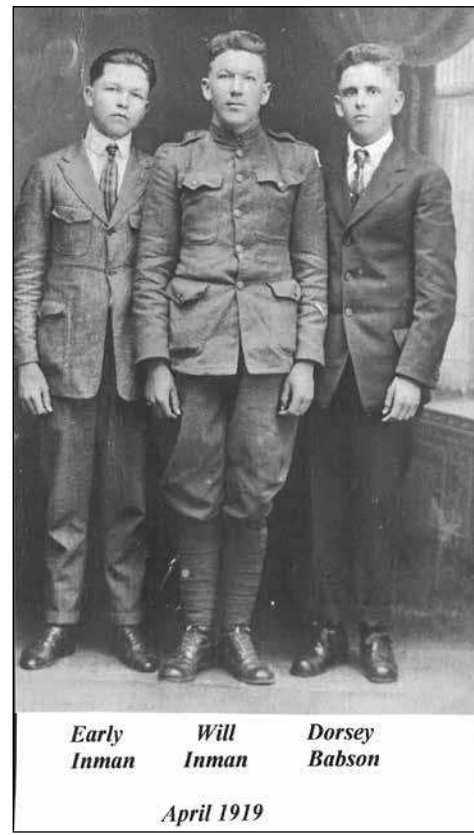
William Lafayette Inman died from a stroke on Dec. 1, 1940, at the age of 42. He was laid to rest in New Britton Church Cemetery in Ash. The following obituary was published in The State Port Pilot on Dec. 4, 1940, page 6:

Freeland Man Called to Reward

Funeral services for W.L. Inman, 42, are being held this afternoon from the home at Freeland.

W.L. Inman, of Freeland, aged 42, died at his home there Sunday morning following a short illness. Funeral services are being held this afternoon at 1 o'clock with Rev. Anson Smith in charge of the service. Burial will follow in the New Britton cemetery.

Surviving are his widow, the former Miss Margaret Babson, of Freeland. The deceased was twice married. Surviving are two children by his first marriage, William Inman Jr. and Miss Lillie Pearl Inman, both of Freeland, and two children by the second marriage: Misses Helen Rose and Willa



Photos contributed

This high-quality photograph of William Lafayette Inman was shared within Ancestry. His six-month overseas chevron can be seen on the lower half of the left sleeve. He has an insignia on his left shoulder. Although the insignia isn't visible, it should be a red circle with a white border, the insignia of the 37th Division. The insignias can be seen at the top of the World War I Army/Marine Division Roster webpage.

Bell Inman; one brother, Dozier Inman, of Freeland, and one sister, Mrs. Isaac Benton, of Longwood.

If you would like to help us honor William Lafayette Inman or another Brunswick County WWI veteran, email the Friends of Ft. Caswell Rifle Range at ftcaswellrifle-range@gmail.com or go to caswellrifle-range.com.

Funds continue to be sent to support the historical preservation of the 1918 World War I Fort Caswell Rifle Range Memorial and the book featuring all the men and women who served in the Great War from Brunswick County. Send donations to Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range, 5 Foxfire Trace, Caswell Beach, NC 28465.

Also, a publisher is working on the book that hopefully will be ready by Veterans Day 2020.