

# WWI Snapshot: David Bertram Frink, 1894-1973

By AMY ECKARD  
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GUEST COLUMNISTS

*David Bertram Frink  
Shallotte, Brunswick County, N.C.  
U.S. Army, Private  
Served: May 27, 1918, to July 18, 1919  
Overseas: July 31, 1918, to May 22, 1919*

David Bertram "Bert" Frink was born and raised in Shallotte, N.C. A family tree is located in FamilySearch. Bert's brother, Samuel Joseph Frink, also served in World War I.

Bert's WWI Draft Registration shows he was single, a farmer, and living in Shallotte.

Bert was ordered to report for duty on May 27, 1918, along with 35 other men from Brunswick County as detailed in John Hillary Caison's WWI Profile. They were sent to Camp Jackson, S.C., to train with the 81st Division, but upon arrival in France in August, were transferred to the 42nd Rainbow Division. Pvt. Frink became a replacement for Company K, 166th Infantry.

The profiles of Wagoners Jackson Berry Potter and Dorman Lowell Mercer describe the formation and training of the 42nd Rainbow Division, along with the months in France up to Aug. 17, 1918, when the Rainbow Division, victorious in many battles, was finally given a chance to rest and resupply. Replacements such as Pvts. Brown, Caison, Frink, Inman and Williams arrived to serve with the battle-hardened troops. Those drafted at a late date such as these men were typically not trained and never even held a rifle before boarding ships to France. They were given uniforms and sent overseas quickly, which earned them the gruesome nickname, "Cannon Fodder."

At this point in WWI, the 42nd Division was a shock division, now considered elite troops, and full of pride over their accomplishments. The WWI Profiles of Pvts. Caison and Inman describe the battles that followed. After the Armistice, the division was chosen for the Army of Occupation, remaining until May 1919, when the 42nd Division began leaving for home.



Pvt. Frink returned home with these German and American helmets, which his family has saved for over 100 years.



Frink's daughter Doris Frink Redwine and grandson Edward David Redwine are shown here honoring him at his gravesite.

### His daughter, Doris Frink Redwine, shared the following stories:

When we were growing up, we did not have electricity until 1939. Many nights after supper, we would sit around the table and listen to my father tell us of his experiences during his service in WWI. I wrote many essays in school about some of those and received A's.

One night, after fighting all day against the Germans, they were trudging back to camp. It was first dark. It had been raining and they were wet, hungry, cold and near exhaustion. They were so tired they could hardly put one foot in front of the other when someone started whistling, very wistfully:

*"K-K-K-Katy, beautiful Katy. You're the only g-g-girl that I adore. When the m-m-moon shines over the cow shed, I'll be waiting at the k-k-k-kitchen door. [lyrics to K-K-K-Katy]"*

This little whistle lifted their spirits so much they were back at camp before they knew it. The irony of this is at times, my father stuttered.

One night, he and his buddy stormed the door of a house in the edge of the woods where all the shades were pulled. The lady who answered the door and her children were so frightened she could hardly speak! It was difficult for them to show her that all they wanted were some eggs.

When the war was over and on their way home, their ship was in a tremendous storm that knocked a hole in the bow. So much stuff had to be thrown overboard to lift the bow of the ship as they limped into the Azores Islands for repair. What surprised my father so much were the sailors! They were so scared they could barely function while the veterans from the war were calm as cucumbers!

Later in life, Bert Frink served as a Brunswick County commissioner.



The photo of Pvt. Frink (sitting) clearly shows the insignia of the Third Army, or Army of Occupation. His six-month overseas chevron can be seen on his left sleeve. He is shown here with an unidentified soldier.



David "Bert" Frink



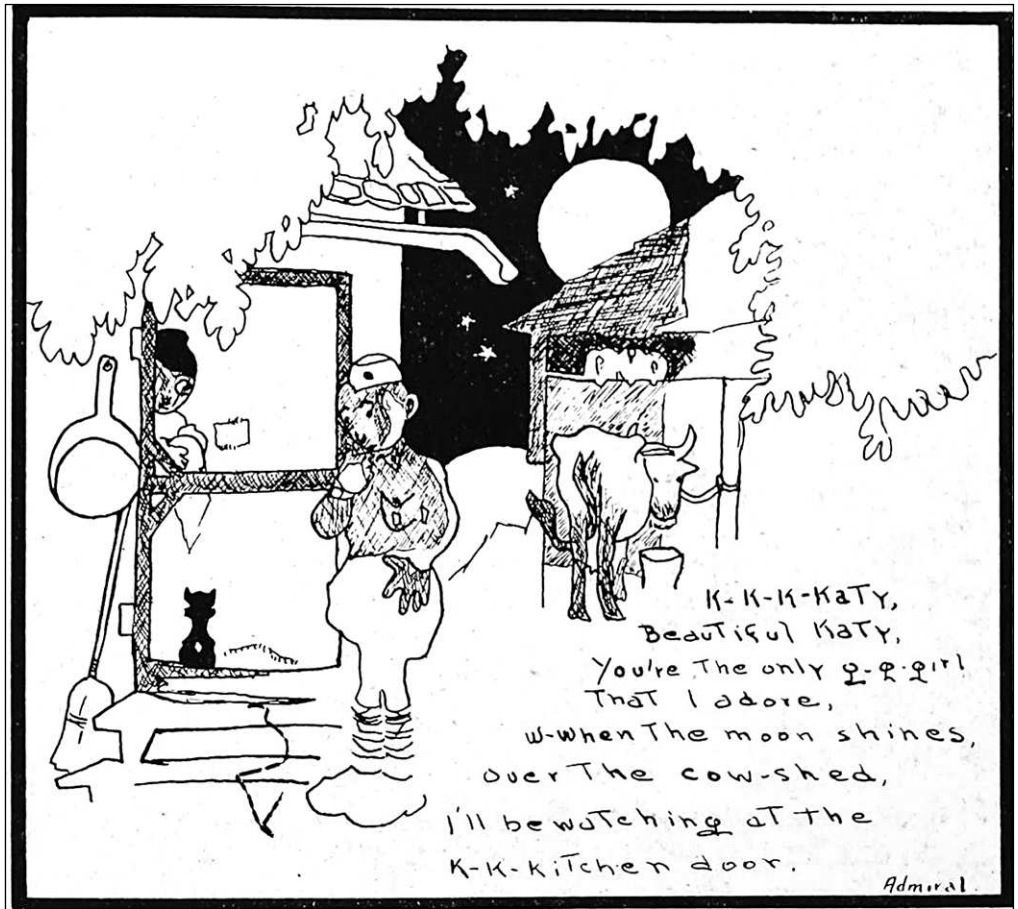
In later years, Bert Frink served as a Brunswick County commissioner.



Bert Frink's medals awarded. WWI Victory Medal with Army Battle Clasp awarded for the battles of St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne, along with the Defensive Sector Battle Clasp. On the right is the Army of Occupation of Germany and service ribbon.

HEADQUARTERS PORT OF EMBARKATION - BREST, FRANCE (Name of Port)						
PASSENGER LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS						
INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILLING OUT THIS FORM						
Separate lists of TWELVE COPIES EACH will be filled out by each company or detachment commander as follows:						
1st Class: Officers arranged according to rank, Army Field Clerks, Field Clerks Q. M. C., Nurses and Civilian Employees. Names to be numbered consecutively, beginning with No. 1.						
2d Class: Non-commissioned Officers down to and including Color Sergeant (see A. B. Par. 9).						
3d Class: All Enlisted men below Color Sergeant (Par. 9, A. B.), arranged according to usual formation of the Company, that is, BY SQUADS.						
To be filled in by Organization	Give full name of organization, including company and regimental designation	Company K 166TH INFANTRY	Item Number	Page		
To be filled in by Embarkation Personnel Adjutant	Name of transport or Commercial Steamer	YALE	Date of Sailing	Port	BREST, FRANCE	
NOTIFY IN CASE OF EMERGENCY (Give name in full, for example: Mrs. Mary A. Smith)						
No.	NAME AND SERIAL NUMBER	Rank & Rate or Staff Corp.	Organization	Relationship	Address (Number, Street, City and State). Do not abbreviate.	
Leave double space between entries. All typewriting must be in CAPITAL LETTERS.						
60	SPEARMAN ERNEST 95031	PVT 1 CL INF.	CO. K, 166TH INF.	MR WILLIAM SPEARMAN	FATHER CONDIT OHIO.	
61	MCKENNEY GEORGE E. 1348515	PVT INF.	CO. K, 166TH INF.	MRS GLEN MCKENNEY	MOTHER ODENVILLE ALABAMA	
62	<del>DAHL</del> BERNARD DAHL 1422386	PVT INF.	CO. K, 166TH INF.	MR MARTIN FERGORSON	UNCLE 3233 LONGFELLOW AVENUE MINNEAPOLIS MINNESOTA,	
63	WEST LUCIAN C. 1348686	PVT INF.	CO. K, 166TH INF.	MR WILLIAM WEST	FATHER NATURAL BRIDGE ALABAMA.	
64	<del>FRINK DAVID B</del> 2994489	PVT INF.	CO. K, 166TH INF.	MR JOHN H FLETCHER	FATHER ROUTE # 1 SHALLOTTE NORTH CAROLINA.	

The U.S. Army Transport passenger list shows Pvt. Frink's name crossed out. He did not return with his division, but remained until May 6, 1919, when he embarked at Brest, France, on Yale, arriving in the New York harbor on May 22. He was not discharged for two more months, indicating he required time for recovery. Details of his illness are unknown.



Sketch taken from 1919 UNC yearbook, Yackety-Yack, SATC Section, p.176.