

WWI Snapshot: Vane Lester Davis, 1889-1946

By NORMA ECKARD AND AMY ECKARD
GUEST COLUMNISTS

Vane Lester Davis was born in Southport on April 5, 1889. He registered for the WWI draft on June 5, 1917. At the time, he was a stationary engineer employed by Columbia University, living in Queens.

The NY WWI Service Card shows he was appointed lieutenant, junior grade, in the U.S. Navy on Nov. 21, 1917. His residence was listed as Southport. He was never mobilized. The NC WWI Service Card shows he enlisted in the Coast Guard on Dec. 4, 1917. He served at Coast Guard Station 193 (Cape Fear) until his honorable discharge on Dec. 3, 1918.

On Jan. 11, 1919, Lester Davis requested a Seaman's Certificate. His photo was included. Vane Lester Davis passed away at age 57 on May 16, 1946. The following obituary was published on the front page of The State Port Pilot on May 22, 1946:

Lester Davis is buried Monday

Native of Southport, but death occurred last week in Brooklyn, N.Y., where he was making his home. Funeral services for Lester Davis were

held Monday afternoon at 3 o'clock at St. Phillip's Episcopal Church in Southport. The Rev. Alexander Miller, rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Wilmington, officiated and burial followed in the family cemetery.

Born in Southport, he was the son of Mrs. Fannie G. Davis and the late Captain Dunbar [Dunbar] Davis of this city. Surviving in addition to his mother are a daughter, Mrs. R. R. Shellhammer [Shellhamer], Louisville, Ky., and her son, Robert Wesley; two sisters, Mrs. Mattie E. Aspinwall, Brooklyn, N.Y., and Mrs. S.L. Brinkman, Southport; and two brothers, J.M. Davis 404 South 17th St., Wilmington; and W.D. Davis, Southport.

Members of the American Legion, Brunswick County Post 195, were the active pallbearers.

Honorary pallbearers were E.R. Weeks, Price Furples, J.L. Davis, J.P. Cranmer, P.I. Martz, W.G. Wells, C.A. Fox, J.T. Moore, B.J. Holden, F.G. Doshier, Harry Weeks, Clarence Onpon, C.E. Gause, A.C. Sell.

Vane Lester Davis was laid to rest in Old Morse Cemetery in Brunswick County, NC. A military flat marker was requested by his mother

on Oct. 7, 1946, but is not shown in findagrave.

The WWI book, "Brunswick County in The Great War," arrives Oct. 22. Send a check for \$56 that includes shipping cost to the following address: Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range, Inc., Foxfire Trace, Caswell Beach, NC 28465. Hard copies are available for \$70, plus shipping, upon request.

According to the Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range, the publication has 584 pages and measures 8-1/2 inches by 12 inches and follows Brunswick County veterans through the war describing divisions, major battles, medals awarded and men who were killed in action, wounded, died of wounds or died of disease.



Photos contributed
Vane Lester Davis, Seaman Certificate photo, 1919.

N16-1B

Name Davis, Lester
Birth (date) 5 Apr. 1889
(place) Southport, N.C.
Enrolled at
Appointed from New York
Permanent Address (Wife)
Southport, N.C.

Present Rank Lt.(jg)(E)
Rank or Rating on Enrollment Lt.(jg)(E)

Record of Service

Appointments
(date) 11-21-17 (Rank-confirmed or provisional) Lt.(jg)(E) prov.

Inactive Duty Never Mobilized
Resignation
Disenrollment
Discharge (date) (place)

NY WWI Service Card for Vane Lester Davis.

Name DAVIS- LESTER Service Number U.S.COAST GUARD
Enlisted at RECRUITING STATION- SOUTHPORT N.C. Date 12-4-17 U.S.N. XXXXXX
Age at Entrance 29 YRS 7 MOS Rate SURFMAN Town SOUTHPORT
Home Address County Brunswick State N.C.

H	Served at	From	To	Served as	No. Days
	COAST GUARD STATION - 193	11 MOS	7 DAYS	SURFMAN	11 MOS 7 DAYS

Remarks:

Date Discharge 12-3-18
Place Inactive SOUTHPORT- N.C. Rating at Discharge SURFMAN

NC WWI Service Card for Vane Lester Davis.

No. 6635

APPLICATION FOR SEAMAN'S CERTIFICATE OF AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP (R. S. 4588)

York, N. Y., JAN 11 1919

Southport N.C.

Name Lester Davis
Place of birth Southport N.C. Date of birth 4/5/89
Birth (or citizenship) confirmed by Lic 47495 My A. Eng 7/5/25/17
Place of father's birth Wd Mother's Wd
naturalized by court of
at certificate number dated
Age 29 1/15 1915 Height 5 5 Complexion Red
Hair Br Eyes Bro Physical marks None

Last vessel Jas McJee Flag Wd Arrived Oct 1917
Next vessel Lumber Rating 2 A Eng
Vessel and rating confirmed by Lic
Identified by Sig m

I do solemnly swear that the above facts are all true and that I will support and defend the constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same and that I take this obligation freely without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion

Signature Lester Davis
Sworn to before me 1919
Act. Deputy Collector.

Photo Left Thumb Print.

Vane Lester Davis, Seaman certificate.