

Hull Cherishes Uniform

(Editor's Note: The following account was written by Jeanette H. Melton, daughter of John Dawson Hull, the only surviving World War I veteran residing in Bessemer City)

On April 6, 1917, the United States of America entered into World War I. The following December, 1917, John Dawson Hull, at the "ripe old age of 16" presented himself at the recruitment office in Gastonia. The recruitment officer said, "Son go home and grow up," but young Hull was undaunted in his efforts. This was being touted as

Wright Sentenced

Calvin Wright Jr., of 406 Blanton St. in Shelby, was given a partial active sentence Thursday in Cleveland County District Court in the death of a Kings Mountain woman killed in a wreck.

Judge A. Max Harris sentenced Wright to 18 to 24 months suspended for three years. He was ordered to spend 60 days active in the Cleveland County Jail and work release was recommended. Wright was also ordered to pay the costs of court, a fine of \$500, be on probation for three years and not operate a motor vehicle or consume any alcohol during probation.

Wright was convicted Wednesday of death by vehicle, a stop sign violation and no operator's license in connection with a June 5th wreck which claimed the life of Mrs. Rachel Blanton Ledford of Kings Mountain. A charge of driving under the influence of intoxicating liquor was dismissed.

SYMPHONY

First organizational and planning meeting for the Kings Mountain Chapter of the North Carolina Symphony will be held Friday at 3:30 p.m. in the library of KM Senior High School.

"the war to end all wars" and he wanted a piece of the action.

Three months later, dressed in his older brother's long pants and without the knowledge or consent of his parents, he again visited the recruiting office. This time, he was successful and he entered the service March 29, 1918. Before he left the States, a family member wrote and advised that they would probably get him out since he was under age. Back came the reply; "Oh no thanks! I would rather go face the Germans any day than have to come home and face pa."

He received his basic training at Fort Thomas, Kentucky, and from there he went to Camp Crane, Allentown, Pennsylvania. After receiving training in 514 Ambulance Company, he was off to the battlefields of France without ever having a furlough home.

Upon arriving in France, he took part in the Argonne Offensive. A member of the hospital evacuation crew, his tasks were to move the wounded to the hospitals and bury the dead. The hospitals were make-shift and consisted of long tents which contained wooden cots, two rows of 13 cots, 26 cots to each tent.

Several days prior to Armistice Day, he had moved to Varennes-en-Argonne, a communications depot in Meuse, France. Although it had been decided several days earlier that hostilities were to cease on November 18, 1918, the fighting continued until 11 a.m., the time the Armistice was actually signed, and an additional 2,000 casualties occurred on this last day of battle. The thing that he remembers most vividly is the sudden silence that descended at 11 a.m. After months of constant rumblings and roars of the big guns and shells, all was quiet on the western front!

Two weeks later, he left for the Rhineland in Germany. He



Mr. Hull Models His WWI Uniform 1980 Which He Treasures Deeply

was stationed in Coblenz where his company took over a hospital which they used for the treatment of the U.S. and its allies' wounded soldiers. He remembers that everywhere they went, they were surrounded by hungry German children. While they were instructed not to feed the children, a lot of food was "accidentally" dropped, and he carried his mess kit open, and

they constantly snatched food from it.

Although Armistice was signed on November 11, 1918, this was actually only an agreement to cease fire for 30 days until terms could be worked out. After a number of extensions to this time limit, peace was actually signed in June, 1919.

In July, 1919, after seven months in Germany, he was on



John Dawson Hull World War I Uniform

his way home. He received his discharge on August 10, 1919, at Camp Lee, Virginia.

When "Johnny came marching home again," his sister, the late Corrie Hull Tarpley, gave him a "welcome home party." It was here he met Lola Harmon, a girl who had moved next door in his absence, and a year later she became his bride. The couple had six children, four of whom live in Bessemer City: Mrs. Robert Conner, Mrs. R.L. Schied, Mrs. Loyd Melton, and Eddie Hull. Mrs. M.C. Davis lives in Norfolk, Virginia and Johnny Hull in Tampa, Florida. He has 18 grandchildren and 20 great-grandchildren.

Mr. Hull recently celebrated his 79th birthday on August 19, 1980. He lost his wife to cancer four years ago. He retired from his neighborhood grocery store 11 years ago. One by one, his former "World War I buddies" have passed from the scene and now, to his knowledge, he is the last veteran of this war living in Bessemer City.

Always an avid reader, he stays informed of current events via newspaper and TV.

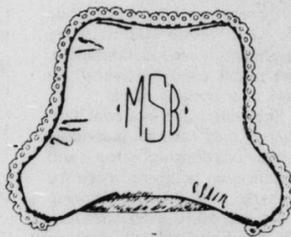
His old, tattered uniform hangs in a closet gathering dust, bearing evidence of the passing years, but his memories of Armistice Day, November 18, 1918, remain bright and clear.

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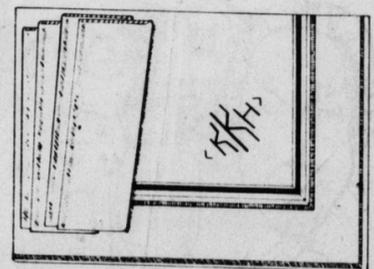
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