

County Boy Submits Account of the 83rd Infantry Engineers

Highlights of Long Trip from Indiana to Junction with Russians on the Elbe

A member of Co. B, 308th Engineers, 83rd Division, Sgt. Ernie Lee Modlin, son of Mr. Joe Gray Modlin, RFD 1, Jamesville, submits an interesting story of his outfit from the time it was reactivated at Camp Atterbury, Indiana, until it met the Russians across the Elbe in Germany.

The second installment of the story follows:

LOIRE VALLEY

Following the successful conclusion of the St. Malo-Dinard campaign, the 83rd moved to the Loire Valley to protect the entire right flank of the Third Army in its dash across France. The mission began on August 22nd and concluded September 20th. The zone of responsibility assigned to the Division extended along the Loire through Nantes, Angers, Tours and Orleans to Auxerre. This is a distance of more than 200 miles—the longest line of responsibility given any division in this war. An 83rd Reconnaissance Troop patrol went south to Bordeaux without mishap. Another went south from Orleans and near Geneva contacted elements of General Patch's Seventh Army moving north from the Mediterranean. During the month on the Loire approximately 20,000 Germans, including Brigadier General Botho Elster, were captured. This surrender included all vehicles, arms and other equipment of the March Group which Elster commanded. Formal surrender ceremonies were held at Beaugency Bridge on September 17th. General Elster turned his pistol over to General Macdon and then his 20,000 men marched to a prisoner of war enclosure. This was the largest mass surrender of the war. The 83rd transferred from the Third to the new Ninth Army during this operation.

LUXEMBOURG

On September 24th, the Division moved across France, into Luxembourg to take up positions along the Moselle and Sauer Rivers and relieve elements of the 5th Armored and 28th Infantry Divisions. Enemy pockets on the Luxembourg side of the Moselle and Sauer were eliminated and patrols sent across into Germany. From positions on the Luxembourg side of the rivers, 83rd artillery units smashed at enemy rail movements and knocked out several enemy troop and supply trains. While in Luxembourg, the Division was in the Third, Ninth and First

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Firemen Get Two Calls This Week

Local volunteer firemen were called out twice this week when fire was discovered in the laundry and when a small fisherman's shack burned on Roanoke River.

Called to the laundry last Sunday morning shortly after five o'clock the firemen found a rack of clothes burning. No material damage was done to the building and no accurate estimate on the clothes loss could be had, but the damage will run well into several hundred dollars. It is believed that some one broke into the building, stole two overcoats and other clothing and then started the fire to cover the theft.

Believed to have been of incendiary origin, fire destroyed the small shack near the river yesterday morning at 4:15 o'clock. The property was owned by W. R. Cherry and houses a few fish nets. The loss was negligible.

Soldier Seriously Hurt In Accident

Pfc. Carol T. Noble, a member of the guard personnel at the local prisoner of war camp, was seriously hurt and Pvt. William O. Blaine was painfully but not badly hurt when an Army truck driven by Pvt. Blaine went out of control and wrecked on U. S. Highway 64 in Rocky Mount last Saturday.

Removed to a hospital, Pfc. Noble whose home is in Texas was said to have suffered a skull fracture and other injuries. His condition is improving, last reports from the institution stated. Pvt. Blaine, a Pennsylvania young man, was discharged this week from the institution and is getting along very well.

Wm. F. Whitaker Passes At Parents' Home Sunday

William Franklin Whitaker, seven-months-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Whitaker, RFD 2, Washington, died at the home of his parents last Sunday.

His parents he is survived by two sisters, Erna Marie and Joan.

Funeral services were conducted at the home Monday afternoon at 4 o'clock by Rev. C. F. Heath of Washington. Interment was in the family cemetery in this county.

Lee Goss Denied Bond In Local Murder Case

DIES OF WOUNDS



Pfc. David Wilson Hardison, promising county youth, died of wounds on Okinawa May 26, his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lee Hardison, RFD 1, Williamston, were advised a few days ago.

Town Authorities In Regular Meet Last Monday Night

Expecting Delivery of New Fire Truck Possibly Latter Part of Next Week

Meeting in regular session last Monday night, local town commissioners discussed a varied business calendar, but final action was limited to a few isolated cases.

Representing the Williams Chapel A. M. E. Zion Church, Sam Faulk discussed the possibility of providing sewer connections for the church and parsonage on Rhodes Street. It was pointed out that plans for sewer and water line extensions were pending, and that the request would be handled as a post war project. The spokesman also asked for a sewer line on Washington Street and pointed out a bad sidewalk situation existing after each big rain on Elm Street near the Carolina warehouse.

Treasurer N. C. Green explained that work on the new fiscal year budget was being delayed pending the completion of the annual audit which is to be handled shortly.

The board was advised that the new Mack fire truck ordered some months ago was about ready for shipment and that delivery could be expected possibly next week.

Advised that the new acreage recently added to the local cemetery had just about been sold the commissioners ordered the purchase of the old colored school site from Mrs. L. B. Harrison. It was the opinion of the commissioners that the addition could be had for about \$165.

The board agreed to include a \$600 appropriation in the new budget for the local public library.

Appearing before the board, Mr. Jeff Ray maintained that he had not been receiving fair treatment a citizen.

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Pump In Hamilton Street Torn Down

After withstanding batterings and knocks over a long period of years, Hamilton's street water pump was just about cleared from the intersection site there about 2 o'clock last Saturday morning. The water system was so badly wrecked that the town fathers are having it replaced by a small electric pumping system which will be located just off the street.

According to reports reaching here Mark Bunting, accompanied by another young man and two young girls, was traveling down the street in a pick-up truck and tore into the town pump, wrecking the shelter, fence and leaving part of a cement trough.

No one was hurt and very little damage was done to the truck.

QUIET OBSERVANCE

July 4 was observed very quietly in this county, fairly complete reports indicating that the day passed without accident or untoward incidents. Not a single fire cracker was heard, and activities were limited to work schedules at one or two mills. The main business district was as quiet as it usually is on any Sunday.

Only one arrest was made, and the charge was an old one. Traffic was unusually light on the highways in this section, patrolmen stated, and bus travel was possibly below week-day loads.

Probable Cause Of Guilt Uncovered at Hearing Last Night

Perlie Coffield, Young Colored Woman, Fatally Struck Late Last Sunday

Probable cause of guilt having been found at a preliminary hearing held in the county courthouse here last evening, Justice John L. Hassell denied Lee Goss, young colored man, bond in the case charging him with the cold-blooded murder of Perlie Coffield, young colored woman, just off Hill Street here late last Sunday night. H. S. Ward, one of the two defense attorneys, maintained that the state's evidence was not sufficient to support a charge of murder in first degree. H. G. Horton, private prosecutor, declared that it had every appearance of first degree murder. Justice Hassell agreed and ordered the defendant held without the privilege of bond for trial in the superior court during the term beginning next September 17.

Only two witnesses were called by the state, and possibly much important evidence was not offered. A fairly large crowd gathered for the hearing, and the case is expected to attract much public attention, especially from the colored population.

Chas. R. Moore, local officer and the first witness called, stated that Goss surrendered to him at the police station about 11:30 o'clock last Sunday night. "Goss told me to put him in jail, explaining that he had just cut a colored woman," the officer said. "I took Goss to Dr. Early's office and saw she was dead," he added. The officer went on to say that the victim was cut or stabbed in about seven places, that possibly an inch and a half or two-inch cut in her back resulted in death.

Eleanor Everett with whom the Coffield girl lived stated that Goss and Perlie Coffield came to her house late Sunday night, that they were talking about some clothing missing from the Coffield girl's room since the night of the Florida Blossom show here. Goss told the Coffield girl, his sweetheart who was just 21 years old that day, that he had her clothes, that he would give them to her if she would accompany him to get them. The witness then said that the Coffield girl was afraid to go with Goss for the clothes and asked her to go along. They started out for the clothes and along the way Goss reached in his pocket, got a match and lit a cigarette. "It's no

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Veterans Committee Meets Here Friday

A Veterans Service Committee meeting was held in the courthouse in Williamston Friday evening at eight o'clock. This meeting was sponsored by the local Selective Service office and the U. S. Employment Service. The purpose of this meeting was to organize the Martin County Veterans Service Committee and to have the provisions of the G. I. Bill of Rights explained. Ray H. Goodman, chairman of the Martin County Selective Service Board, presided. The meeting was open to the public but representatives from the various government agencies, civic organizations, and leading citizens in the town and county were asked to be present. Approximately fifty persons attended. Mr. Goodman asked each person present to introduce himself, tell the kind of business he is engaged in, and any committee or organization of which he is a member.

Hugh G. Horton, local attorney and chairman of the Martin County Veterans Re-employment Committee, was introduced and made a short talk on the duties of the re-employment committee and our responsibility to the veterans. Mr. Horton compared the provisions of the G. I. Bill to those provided for the returning servicemen at the close of World War I. Mr. Goodman introduced Mrs. Alvis Jordan, manager of the local office, who in turn introduced the area director. The area director presented Mr. R. C. Godwin, the main speaker. Mr. Godwin very ably explained the provisions of the G. I. Bill of Rights and the agency responsible for administering each title. He concluded his talk by stating that the best form of readjustment is to allow the veterans to approach their own problems in their own way without directly directing them. Mr. Godwin stated that the prospect of jobs in the state for veterans will be a real job for all organizations working together. At the conclusion of Mr. Godwin's talk, the area director commented on the work of the local office which is rated one of the best in the State. The meeting was thrown open for questions. Due to the intense heat, the people were more interested in getting out than in asking questions and as a result very few questions were asked.

DIES IN HOSPITAL



John R. Peel, highly respected and well-known local man, died in a Raleigh hospital last Monday afternoon following an illness of a few weeks.

John Roberson Peel Passes In Hospital at Raleigh On Monday

Funeral Tuesday in Baptist Church for Prominent Local Citizen

John Roberson Peel, widely-known and highly respected local citizen, died in Rex Hospital, Raleigh, last Monday afternoon at 12:35 o'clock following several months of declining health. Although he had not been feeling well his condition was not regarded serious until he entered the hospital four weeks ago today. He did not respond to treatment, and pneumonia, developing about the middle of last week, was given as the immediate cause of his death.

The son of Mr. Pleny Peel and the late Ida Corey Peel, he was born in Griffins Township forty-six years ago last October 8th. He attended the local community schools as a youth and spent his early life on the farm, coming to Williamston as a young man to work on the tobacco market and later to supervise extensive farming interests for J. G. Staton for a number of years. More recently he had devoted his attention to individual farming interests with the exception of that time spent in the employ of local tobacco warehousemen and on southern markets. Mr. Peel was secretary of the Roanoke Tobacco Warehouse Company for many years, and held other positions.

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Mrs. Frank S. Daw Dies In Washington

Mrs. Eva Holliday Daw, native of Jamesville Township, died at the home of her sister, Mrs. John E. Sexton, in Washington last Monday evening at 6 o'clock following a long period of declining health. She was getting along very well earlier that day, but was taken critically ill in the afternoon and died a short time later.

The daughter of the late Jefferson Holliday and wife, she was born near Jamesville 64 years ago. She was first married to Dolly Hardison and following his death she married Frank S. Daw who died about ten or twelve years ago. With the exception of a few years spent in Gold Point and other areas, she spent all her life in the Jamesville community and had been visiting her sister in Washington about two weeks when she was taken fatally ill.

Funeral services were conducted at the home of her sister in Washington last Tuesday afternoon by Dr. R. H. Crossfield and interment was in the Holliday family cemetery near the old home in Jamesville Township.

Besides her sister with whom she was visiting she is survived by a brother, Mr. Wilmer J. Holliday, of Jamesville; two sisters, Mrs. L. W. Mizelle of Jamesville, and Mrs. Roxie Smithwick of Washington, and a half-sister, Miss Grace Holliday of Jamesville.

POSTPONE TRIALS

In an effort to help relieve the labor shortage on farms during the tobacco harvesting season, Judge J. C. Smith this week directed an appeal to all justices of the peace, mayors and other lower court officials to schedule no cases for trial in the county recorder's court before August 13 if the cases would take many witnesses or others away from the tobacco harvest.

Harvest plans for several farmers have been upset recently when numbers of witnesses were called from the task to appear in court.

Judge Smith pointed out that only those cases involving farm labor should be continued until after August 13.

County Invests \$391,915.75 In "E" Bonds To Exceed Original Quota By More Than \$20,000.

Board Members Impressed by New Highway Commissioner

Appearing before the Martin County Commissioners at their regular monthly meeting last Monday, Murriel Evans, Aoshkie man who was recently appointed highway commissioner for this district, made a very favorable impression on the group when he said that he wanted to work with them, that while he could not guarantee to meet every request, he would do all in his power to work with the local authorities. Mr. Evans, well known to many people in this county, intimated that a closer cooperation between local authorities and highway officials was to be expected, that the county's needs and requests would receive every consideration possible.

Commissioner R. A. Haislip was unable to attend the meeting on account of illness, and the other four commissioners handled the day's work and adjourned before lunch.

Very little business was considered by the officials during the brief

session. The board denied claims for tax exemptions on property listed by members of the armed forces other than poll taxes. Claims were presented for tax exemptions in the sum of \$128.66, the commissioners reasoning that it was hardly fair to allow the exemption claims where other members of the family continue to use and handle the property. It is apparent that the commissioners will continue to exempt members of the armed forces from the payment of poll taxes, but they are of the opinion they have no legal right to exempt property.

The board recommended that the road running from Manning and Gurkin's store in Griffins Township via Maple Grove Church and others and back to Highway 171 be widened. It was pointed out that the road serves 14 families and a church of 300 members.

A contract calling for repairs to the courthouse walls was let to F. B. Birmingham.

Only Two Districts Have Failed So Far To Meet Their Goal

Bonds Purchased Up Until Noon Tomorrow To Count In Current Drive

Investing an additional \$60,000 or more since Tuesday of last week, Martin County citizens pushed the sale of "E" bonds well over the top with more than \$20,000 to spare. Up until yesterday afternoon, the people of this county, including the young men in the armed services, had invested \$391,915.75 in "E" bonds or \$20,915.75 in excess of the assigned quota for the Seventh War Loan Drive. Today, nine of the eleven districts in the county are over the top with some to spare. Two districts, Williamston and Griffins, are short of their assigned quotas, Williamston by \$1,463.75 and Griffins by \$587.50. The drive has been extended a second time to include bond purchases made up until noon tomorrow, and it is believed that the two townships will pull up to and pass their assigned quotas to make the drive unanimously successful.

The lagging townships last Friday really settled down and went to work this week, according to the latest figures released by County Drive Chairman D. V. Clayton. Five townships, Jamesville, Bear Grass, Cross Roads, Poplar Point and Hamilton, were over the top the early part of last week and they rested while sales continued to climb in the other districts. Robersonville and Goose Nest were over the top, but they added to their totals, Robersonville jumping from \$116,118.75 to \$122,098.25, an amount \$10,798.25 in excess of its original quota.

Williamston after holding a low and almost hopeless position for weeks, pulled almost up to its goal during the past few days when over \$39,000 was invested in "E" bonds. Williams added \$1,443.25 to its total to go over the top. Griffins accounted for \$7,000 in sales to pull within a few hundred dollars of its goal. Hassell, one of the smallest districts in the county, turned out after a liberal fashion, boosting its sales by \$7,008.75 and carrying its drive over the top with nearly \$2,000 to spare.

In addition to the \$391,915.75 invested in "E" bonds, Martin County citizens have invested \$1,217,686.50 in negotiable securities, making a total of \$1,537,247.75, an amount \$792,247.75 in excess of the over-all quota.

Chairman D. V. Clayton plans to make a complete report on the "E" and negotiable bond sales next week, and if Williamston and Griffins come across and meet their "E" bond quotas the report will be perfect, it is believed.

A review of the "E" bond sales up until yesterday afternoon:

| | Quota | Sales |
|---------------|-----------|--------------|
| Jamesville | \$ 11,250 | \$ 16,200.00 |
| Williams | 7,300 | 7,537.50 |
| Griffins | 18,500 | 17,915.50 |
| Bear Grass | 13,000 | 13,725.00 |
| Williamston | 157,500 | 156,036.25 |
| Cross Roads | 11,700 | 12,337.50 |
| Robersonville | 111,300 | 122,098.25 |
| Poplar Point | 7,300 | 8,212.50 |
| Hamilton | 14,750 | 15,056.25 |
| Hassell | 7,500 | 9,431.25 |
| Goose Nest | 11,300 | 13,368.75 |
| | \$371,000 | \$391,915.75 |

WOUNDED



Pfc. William Vernon Roebuck was wounded in his leg on Okinawa last June 12, his father, Mr. W. R. Roebuck, RFD 2, Williamston, was advised a few days ago.

Williamston Native Dies in Norfolk Last Saturday Afternoon

Funeral Service Held Sunday For Durward Gurganus In Virginia City

Durward E. Gurganus, native of Williamston, died in a Norfolk hospital last Saturday afternoon at 12:15 o'clock following a long period of declining health. His condition was considered critical only a few days before the end.

The son of the late Eli and Sarah Mobley Gurganus, he was born in this county 54 years ago. He was associated with his father in the peanut business here for a number of years and engaged in the ice manufacturing business for several years before locating in Norfolk about fifteen years or more ago.

He was first married to Miss Sally Brown of Williamston and one daughter, Miss Shirley Gurganus, of Norfolk, survives the union. He was later married to Mrs. Eva Gainer Tucker who survives. He also leaves a step-son, Bruce F. Tucker, and a step-daughter, Mrs. S. J. Alexander, Jr., both of Norfolk; a brother, Mr. Leroy H. Gurganus, of Williamston, and a sister, Mrs. M. G. James, of Norfolk.

After a stay of several years in Moyock he moved to Norfolk where he was in the employ of a construction company for a long time. He suffered a stroke of paralysis several years ago, but was able to return to his work and continued there until a few weeks ago when heart trouble developed and he entered the hospital. He suffered a second stroke on Thursday of last week.

Mr. Gurganus was a veteran of World War I, serving from August 24, 1918, until 1919 when he was honorably discharged while holding

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Religious Groups Welcome Minister

Dr. F. D. S. Knight, entering upon his new duties as pastor of the Williamston Memorial Baptist Church, was extended a welcome by the various religious groups assembled in a union service at the Baptist Church last Sunday evening.

Following a custom established by the local Ministerial Association in welcoming any pastor, the president of the association, Rev. John L. Geff, presided and conducted the devotional part of the service and expressed "the hope that Dr. and Mrs. Knight might have a most fruitful and happy ministry in our fine little city." Then Dr. Knight was presented and delivered the evening message taking his scripture from 2 Kings 2:1-15. The minister using the desire of Elisha for a double portion of the spirit of Elijah, and being promised that he would receive it if he saw him (Elijah) when he was taken up. Dr. Knight continued, "Saying that Elisha did not get sidetracked nor did he look at the fiery chariot, but concentrated on seeing Elijah. He saw him and called to him, and therefore received the blessing. Many people miss the main thing by allowing smaller things to come in and absorb their attention. It is needful for the Christian to keep his eye on Jesus Christ and not let the chariots of fire of whatever kind distract."

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RED CROSS WORKER

Relieving Mrs. Eva M. Grimes as Red Cross Home Service worker in this chapter for the next few months, Mrs. Mary Benson Carstarphen opened an office on the third floor of the town hall this week. Red Cross chapter officials stated that Mrs. Grimes was expected to resume her duties as home service worker on or about the time the schools are opened for the fall term.

Shoots Relative In Foot With Shotgun

Frank Moore, colored, was painfully but not seriously hurt when his brother-in-law, Willie James Whitley, fired a load of gunshot into his foot last week-end to climax a family quarrel.

Reports reaching here stated that Whitley and his wife quarreled, that the wife returned to her home and her brother, Frank Moore, took his pistol and went after Whitley on the R. T. Chance farm not far from Hassell. Whitley was prepared for the visit and opened fire on Moore who was said to have been shot in the head over in Edgecombe County about a year ago.

Given a hearing before Justice J. B. Whitfield early this week Whitley was bound over to the superior court in bond of \$750.

Purchases Culpepper Store Building In Main Street

Mr. Samuel Zemon recently purchased the store building and lot owned by Luther Culpepper on Main Street here, next to the Virginia Electric and Power Company building. The purchase price was not announced, but it was reported that between \$7,500 and \$10,000 was involved. The new owner plans to develop the property in the post war period, it was learned.