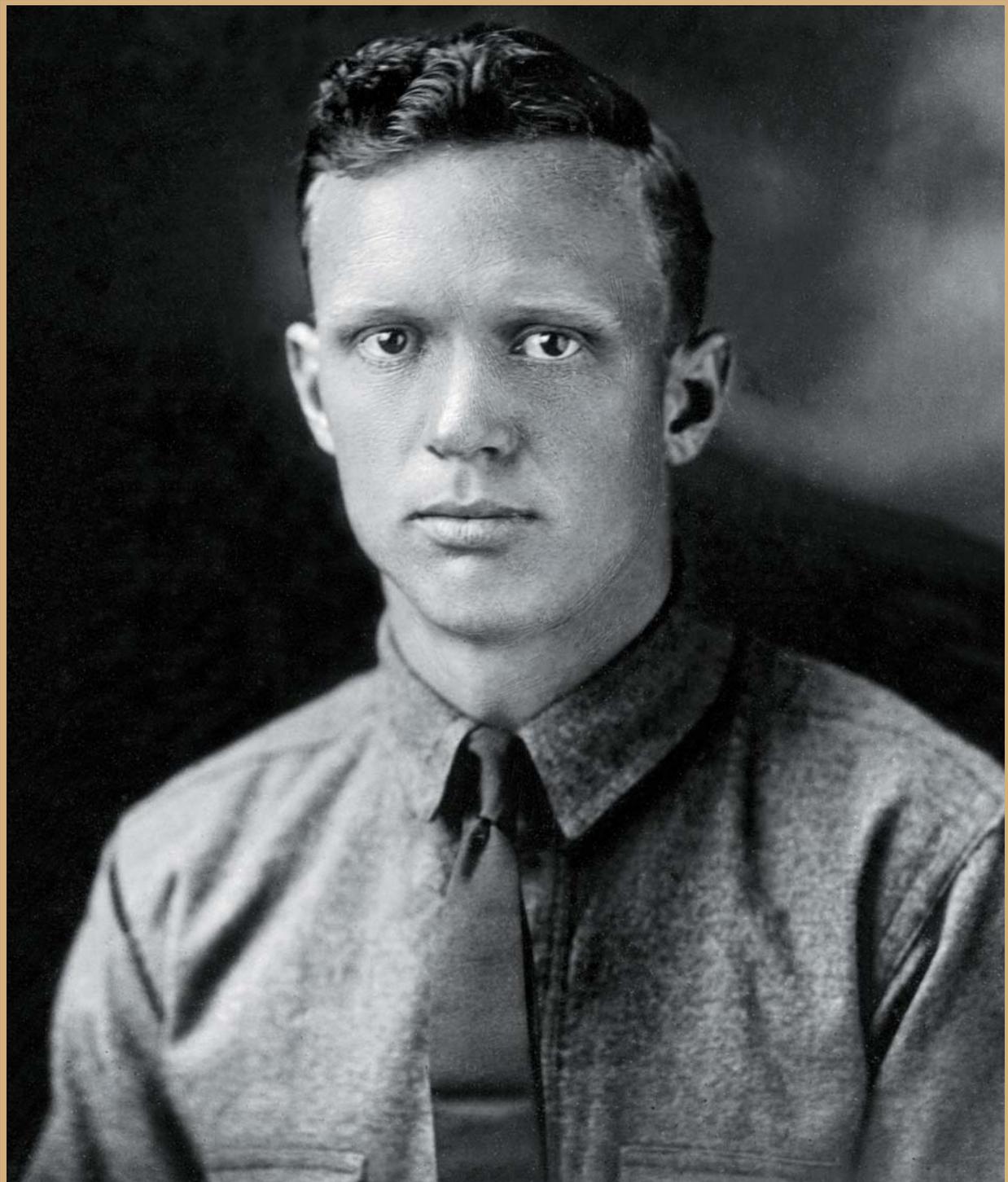


# ALABAMA HERITAGE





Cover: As World War One drew to a close, Sergeant Leon Ragsdale McGavock was anxious to see his family once again, but fate had other plans. See article, page 14. (Courtesy Alabama Department of Archives and History.)

# ALABAMA HERITAGE

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS



## THE LESS THINGS CHANGE: CHARLES BROOKS AND THE ART OF ALABAMA POLITICS

8

By James L. Baggett

*Like any good political cartoonist, Charles Brooks of the Birmingham News played the part of both prophet and court jester.*



## ALABAMA AND WORLD WAR ONE: THE GOLD STAR COLLECTION

14

By Sam Duwall

*To memorialize Alabama soldiers who gave their lives in World War One, families sent volumes of information and photos to the state archives. The collection bears the name of a readily recognizable symbol of heroic sacrifice—the gold star.*



## WILLIAM BARTRAM: FIRST SCIENTIST OF ALABAMA

24

By John C. Hall

*William Bartram left the comforts of home to venture into what was then the mythic wilderness of the Alabama region where he would illuminate in words and drawings the uncharted enchantment of the South.*



## LILLIAN GOODNER: QUEEN OF THE SEPIAS

34

By Marc Bankert

*Lillian Goodner's photographs are not only a collection of faces from music's history, but also a reflection of American history itself.*

## DEPARTMENTS

Southern Architecture and Preservation: <i>The Old Rock House</i>	6
Alabama Treasures: "Alabama": <i>Story of a Song</i>	46
Nature Journal: <i>Opossums</i>	49
Contributors, Sources, and Suggested Readings	51
Alabama Album: <i>Behind the Smile</i>	52

# THE GOLD STAR COLLECTION

*Well mother dear, I have been through a living hell and came out without a scratch. . . . I took my first bath yesterday in four weeks and I know I'll get a cold getting all that dirt off me. By the way, tomorrow I am 25 yrs. old and my next birthday I will spend at home and we will have one grand time too!*

SERGEANT LEON RAGSDALE McGAVOCK penned these lines on October 6, 1918, in a letter to his mother in Birmingham as he served on the Western Front in France during the First World War. As part of the Machine Gun Battalion of Company B, 312th Infantry Regiment, 42nd ("Rainbow") Division, Leon had seen heavy fighting as the German army tried to overwhelm British and French forces before Americans could enter the war in substantial numbers.

As Leon's mother prepared to send his letter to the Alabama Department of Archives and History soon after the war, she penciled the words "His last letter" in the



TO MEMORIALIZE ALABAMA SOLDIERS WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN WORLD WAR ONE, FAMILIES SENT VOLUMES OF INFORMATION AND PHOTOS TO THE STATE ARCHIVES. THE COLLECTION BEARS THE NAME OF A READILY RECOGNIZABLE SYMBOL OF HEROIC SACRIFICE—THE GOLD STAR.

By SAM DUVALL

margin. Ironically, after facing the best the German army could throw at him, Leon died of pneumonia, possibly related to the flu pandemic that swept the world in the winter of 1918–19. He was one of the last Alabamians to die in a war that claimed millions of lives, including twenty-five hundred Alabamians, from a total of eighty-four thousand who served during the war.

AS THE GREAT WAR ground to a halt, the state began seeking information about Alabamians who had made the supreme sacrifice. Dr. Thomas Owen, director of Alabama's Department

of Archives and History, started the tedious task of collecting information on Alabama soldiers lost in WWI. He intended to publish a book of photos and biographical sketches, as other states were doing. In the months and years after the war's end, Leon McGavock's letter and scores of others found their way to the state ar-

chives. Owen called the project “Gold Star,” in tribute to the poignant wartime tradition of families displaying banners in the windows of their homes with a blue star for each family member serving in the war. If a loved one was killed, the family replaced the banner with one bearing a gold star. The gold star was, therefore, a readily recognizable symbol of heroic sacrifice.

In March 1920, soon after starting the Gold Star project, Dr. Owen died. His wife, Marie Bankhead Owen, was appointed to take his place, becoming the first woman in Alabama to serve as the head of a state department. As eager as she was to bring the book to fruition, competing priorities frustrated the plan. First, she had to finish a four-volume history of Alabama started by her husband. After completing this work, Mrs. Owen became involved in the development of the World War Memorial Building to house the expanding collections of the archives. Soon after the new building was completed, the United States entered the Second World War, once again drawing attention away from the Gold Star project. Ultimately, the book was never completed, but the volumes of information and photos submitted by families of WWI soldiers remain in the archives as a stunning testament to the sacrifice of Alabamians in the Great War. This state treasure is now called the “Gold Star Collection.”

As families across the state completed profiles and attached photos, they offered more than accounts of the military service of their loved ones. They told of occupations, hobbies, affiliations, contributions, religion, and heritage, providing an extraordinary glimpse into the lives of these soldiers.

Some attributes split characteristically along racial lines. Most young white soldiers chronicled in the col-

lection had ancestors who fought in the Confederate army during the Civil War. Some also had ancestors who fought in the American Revolution and other wars. Juxtaposed with these accounts are stories of black soldiers whose parents or grandparents had been slaves during the Civil War. Almost all the white soldiers were listed as Democrats, while black families who noted political affiliation were almost exclusively Republican—a reflection of post-Reconstruction politics.

Despite lingering attitudes about race, tens of thousands of blacks volunteered to serve in the army, and hundreds of the young men of both races never saw their Alabama homes again. Segregation being the order of the day, most blacks were posted with supply or support units and many of the black men in the Gold Star Collection died in state-side camps from accidents or disease. However, several all-black infantry units did see combat. While most black units were led by white officers, the 366th Regiment, 92nd Division, from Alabama had the distinction of being the first all-black regiment led by black officers.

Whatever their ethnicity, the soldiers who fill the Gold Star Collection share the distinction of having died in the service of their country. A central thread runs through the otherwise diverse collection: the pride the families had for these men who sacrificed all in what was hoped to be “the war to end all wars.” Wishing to memorialize these lost

heroes, they sent letters, photographs, and stories. Now, eighty years later, the following vignettes seek to honor that dream, if only for a handful of those families. These stories—some simple, others dramatic, all heroic—represent a small cross-section of Alabama’s contribution to the Great War.



*Thomas and Marie Bankhead Owen pose with their son, First Lieutenant Thomas Owen Jr. and his wife Mabel. (All photos courtesy Alabama Department of Archives and History, unless otherwise noted.)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
**CORPORAL W. SCOTT HUGHES**  
 SPROTT, AGE 21.

CORPORAL W. SCOTT HUGHES OF SPROTT, ALABAMA, was born on January 20, 1897, to Erasmus Downen Hughes, a farmer, and Lena Tallulah Coker. Between them, the couple claimed Scottish, Irish, English, and French ancestry. In a letter to the archives, his mother noted that Scott's grandfather had been wounded twice during the Civil War: "One bullet went in near the right ear and lodged in his throat. He coughed it up and lived to be about 87-years-old." Scott's maternal grandfather had suffered minor wounds while serving in a Louisiana Regiment. He, too, survived to re-enter civilian life.

Scott would not be so fortunate, but his Gold Star file bears witness to his valor. At age 21, he earned a citation for using his machine gun to break up a determined German assault against American lines. On July 15, 1918, Scott crouched in the trenches at Chalons, on the Champagne front, stabilizing his gun on a wall. Then he "bared himself to the enemy"—an advancing German combat group—and mowed them down with enfilade fire. His mother recalled:

*I saw a letter written by another boy in the 42nd Division who said a boy of the Machine Gun Company fired 14,000 rounds of ammunition, entirely burning his gun up. I wrote to him to know if he was referring to my son, he said that he was and that I should feel awfully proud of him as such boys as he made Alabama famous in the World War. On the 18th of July he wrote his last letter home and asked me to always remember the 15th of July and that if we wasn't taking a Birmingham daily we ought to so we could see what we Alabama boys are doing!*

But then Scott's luck ran out. On July 26, at Croix Rouge Farm, Scott took a severe wound but "stood by his gun" as his squad fell wounded and dead around him. His commanding officer wrote that, despite his wounds, Scott "refused to be separated from his gun and ordered it carried back with him, as the ammunition was all gone." His mother noted that her son "received another wound while he was being carried from the battlefield in his blanket" and died at the aid station.



*Corporal W. Scott Hughes*

His bravery on the field that day earned him citations from both France and America. The French gave him the Croix de Guerre with Palm for silencing a machine gun nest while severely wounded. His own division gave him a commendation, although his captain and colonel had recommended the Distinguished Service Cross—the country's second highest honor for valor. He would later be awarded the Silver Star medal for bravery. Although initially buried in France, he was later reinterred at Marion, Alabama, on August 8, 1921.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
**COLONEL BERTRAM T. CLAYTON**  
 CLAYTON, AGE 55.

COLONEL BERTRAM T. CLAYTON WAS A MEMBER OF ONE OF Alabama's most prominent families. He was born October 19, 1862, on the old Clayton Plantation, near the town that bears his family name. Bertram's father,

Henry D. Clayton, had served as a major general in the Confederate army in General Stephen D. Lee's corps.

Bertram, himself, would spend much of his adult life at war. After graduating from the University of Alabama and later from the United States Military Academy at West Point, he served in the Indian wars. He then moved from Alabama to New York to practice civil engineering. There, as trouble ignited in Cuba, Bertram organized Troop C of the New York (Brooklyn) Cavalry and led it in battle during the Spanish-American War. He then served as New York's representative to the U.S. Congress before re-entering military service. In 1901, President Theodore Roosevelt appointed Bertram as a captain in the regular army. Posted with the Quartermaster Corps, he held a number of positions, including the quartermaster at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. When war broke out, Bertram sought a transfer to an infantry unit and assignment to France. The army

granted his request to go to France, but, needing experienced quartermasters (who provide the logistical support an army must have to sustain itself in combat), the army would not reassign him to the infantry.

Although he served in a rear-echelon unit, Bertram had the distinction of being the first American colonel killed in WWI. He died at Noyer, Department of Oise, France, on May 30, 1918. He was also one of the first officers killed by a bomb dropped from an airplane. On June 5, 1918, the *Montgomery Advertiser* described the fifty-five-year-old Alabamian as "every inch a soldier, tall, erect, and muscular, he was of distinguished appearance. Doubtless he could have stayed with the transport service at New York, but he was anxious to see active service and begged to be sent to France." After his body was returned from France, the army buried Bertram with full military honors in the National Cemetery at Arlington, Virginia, in 1921. Pallbearers included two major generals, several full colonels, and General John J. Pershing—Bertram's classmate at West Point, who had gone on to command all American forces during WWI. Bertram's wife, Mary Elizabeth D'Aubert Clayton, was later buried beside him at Arlington.



*Colonel Bertram T. Clayton*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
**CAPTAIN MORTIMER H. JORDAN**  
 BIRMINGHAM. AGE 36.

MORTIMER H. JORDAN WAS A HEALER. HE ATTENDED THE University of Alabama from 1898 to 1902 and then graduated from Tulane University School of Medicine in New Orleans. After school, he set up a medical practice in Birmingham and served in the Alabama National Guard.

Mortimer was sent to France in 1918 as Captain of Company K, 167th Regiment, 42nd Rainbow Division. After attending staff school in France, the army assigned him to headquarters as an Intelligence and Operations officer. He received the Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary heroism on July 16, 1918, near Souain, France. His Gold Star file tells the story: "Seeing a private of his company wounded, Captain Jordan left his shelter and rushed to the aid of the wounded [man]. After administering first aid, he carried him through the terrific bombardment a distance of one hundred and fifty yards to a place of safety."



*Captain Mortimer H. Jordan*

On July 28, 1918, Mortimer fell, mortally wounded by shellfire at the Ourcq River. He died on Wednesday, July 31, 1918, at “evacuation hospital No. 7” and was buried in France. His son, Mortimer H. Jordan Jr., recalled: “He was patriotic and brave at all times, always cheerful and unselfish; idolized by his men and respected by all.” After being removed from France, Captain Jordan was reinterred at the National Cemetery at Arlington, Virginia.



**PRIVATE ROBERT PRITCHETT**

CAMPBELL, AGE 27.

ROBERT PRITCHETT WAS BORN ON FEBRUARY 27, 1891, and grew up near the town of Campbell in Clarke County. According to his wife, he received a public school education but quit school at the fourth-grade

level so that he could work. As a young adult, he was a member of a local Baptist church and of the Knights of Pytheas—a black Masonic organization. He joined the U.S. Army shortly after his marriage in 1917.

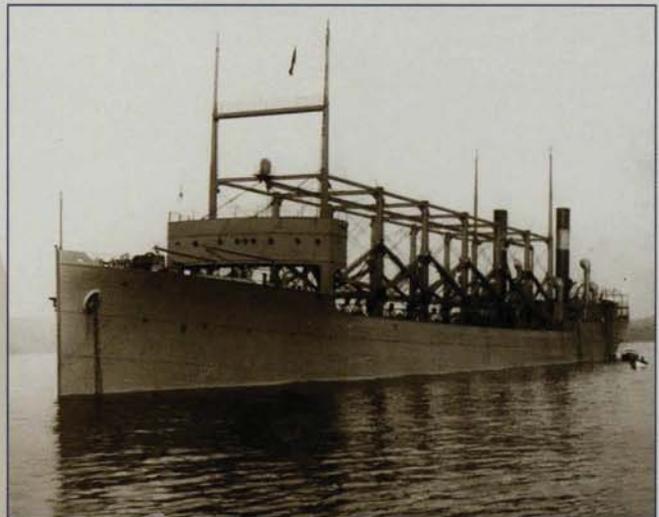
Robert served in Company F of the 366th Infantry Regiment. He was killed in action with the American Expeditionary Forces on November 11, 1918, the day the Armistice was signed, ending the long and bloody First World War. Having first been buried in France, Robert’s remains were returned home, where he was reinterred with full military honors on July 26, 1921, at Arlington National Cemetery.



*Private Robert Pritchett*



*Electrician 2nd Class Hamilton Thompson Beggs*



*Beggs served on the Navy collier USS Cyclops.  
(Courtesy Naval Historical Foundation.)*

*Cyclops*, which provided fuel to other ships of the American fleet.

On March 4, 1918, *Cyclops* set sail from the West Indies to Baltimore and steamed into what has come to be called the Bermuda Triangle, where the ship and all hands (some three hundred crew and passengers) simply disappeared. Her last message on leaving port read: "Weather fair. All Well." Not a single survivor, nor a scrap of debris belonging to the ship, has ever been found. Despite a ten-year search and investigation by the U.S. Navy, no light has ever been shed on the big ship's disappearance. President Woodrow Wilson expressed the prevailing sentiment of American authorities at the time when he said: "Only God and the Sea know where the great ship has gone."



ELECTRICIAN 2ND CLASS  
HAMILTON THOMPSON BEGGS  
BIRMINGHAM, AGE 23.

ACCORDING TO FAMILY LORE, HAMILTON THOMPSON Beggs's paternal grandmother was a second cousin of Henry Clay, and his paternal grandfather, also named Hamilton Thompson Beggs, was a descendant of the Duke of Hamilton. Hamilton's grandfather settled in Birmingham in the 1870s and was active in the iron industry.

Hamilton joined the U.S. Navy in 1912 at the age of seventeen and served four years on the USS *Michigan*, becoming an electrician. Afterward, he joined the U.S. Naval Reserve and got married. He was called to active service at the beginning of WWI as an Electrician 2nd Class and assigned to the 522-foot Navy collier USS



CORPORAL HOMER T. CLEMENTS  
ENTERPRISE, AGE 19.

TYPICAL OF THE RANK-AND-FILE SOLDIERS WHO SERVED in WWI, Homer T. Clements left school in Enterprise at age twelve to work in his father's grocery store. After a few years, he left to work as a clerk in a drug store. According to his father, R. A. Clements, Homer "joined the Missionary Baptist Church at 9 years old and was always a consistent member. He joined the choir when he was 15. He was a member of the



*Corporal Homer T. Clements*

B.Y.P.U. and also its secretary, often leading in prayers and conducting services.”

Homer went to war as a private with Company A, 167th Infantry, 42nd Division, where he was “true and faithful to his calling,” his father wrote. Homer received a promotion to corporal just days before he was hit by shrapnel in battle at the Ourcq River on July 30, 1918. Four of his comrades were hit and instantly killed by the same shell, but Homer lived about twenty minutes longer. “When discovered by some [fellow soldiers] they stopped and asked him if they could be of assistance to him. He replied, ‘No boys, don’t bother with me, I’m alright, go ahead.’” Homer reportedly kept firing until he grew too weak to hold his gun and died shortly afterward.

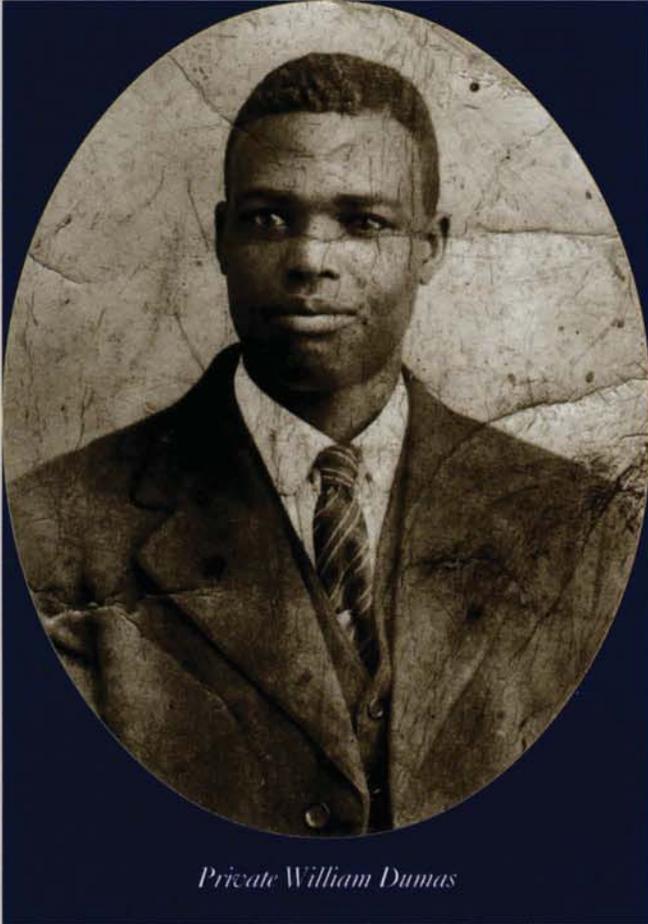
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
**PRIVATE FIRST CLASS DEWITT FORE**  
 MONROEVILLE. AGE 20.

DEWITT FORE WAS BORN ON SEPTEMBER 9, 1897, in Monroeville to Mary Kate and Nelson Irvin Fore. His grandfather and two great-grandfathers served in the Civil War, one of them a fatality of that war. Dewitt and his family were members of the Missionary Baptist Church. In his report to the archives, Dewitt’s father recalled that Dewitt finished the seventh grade, and he took special care to mention his son’s teachers by name. At the time he went to war, Dewitt was a farmer, like his father, and had not yet married.

Dewitt first entered military service with Company K, 1st Regiment, then was transferred to Company I, 167th Infantry in the Rainbow Division. His father re-



*Private First Class DeWitt Fore (left).*



*Private William Dumas*

William, a farmer by occupation, had been educated at Camden Academy. He attended the Missionary Baptist Church, was a member of the Grand Odd Fellows of America, and “was well thought of by the best of people.” He married Susie Dent in 1911, and they had a daughter named Abbie.

Unfortunately, his cause of death is not given in the information Whatley sent to the archives. It simply states that William was “deceased at Camp McClellan, [Alabama], October 25, 1918,” and his body was returned to Camden.



LIEUTENANT ORVILLE COSTON

BIRMINGHAM, AGE 25.

ORVILLE COSTON WAS IN HIS SENIOR YEAR AT THE University of Alabama and also taking his first year of classes at the university’s law school when he answered the call for volunteers for the U.S. Army during WWI.

His father, Dr. H. R. Coston, wrote with great pride of his son’s accomplishments. At the age of seventeen, Orville had actively supported Prohibition, even speaking to groups, in favor of its enforcement. As Orville began his higher education, he “contributed liberally to the School and College papers where he attended. He was a Mason and was president of Lambda Chi Alpha when he left the Alabama University for training camp.”

After enlisting in the army, Orville was assigned to Company A, 328th Infantry, and shipped overseas with the 82nd Division. Like most of the newly arrived Americans, Orville and his comrades were given front-line training and firing range work before facing the grim realities of combat. But all too soon Orville found himself in action. Orville fought in the Battle of St. Mihiel before being removed to the Argonne Front, under fire, October 6–9, 1918. His father wrote: “Morning of October 9, was leading command up very



*Lieutenant Orville Coston*

ported that his son was under General Pershing, was good with his rifle, and won several medals. Dewitt Fore, along with scores of other Americans, was killed by enemy shellfire during the battle of Chateau-Thierry in France on the morning of July 15, 1918.



LIEUTENANT JOHN ALEXANDER  
DEAVER

CLEVELAND, AGE 33.

JOHN ALEXANDER DEAVER, A PRESBYTERIAN MINISTER, had deep southern roots. His father, Finis Ewing Deaver, descended from a family that had come to Alabama from Virginia in the early nineteenth century. His mother, Sarah Elizabeth (Huie) Deaver, had Irish roots. Her ancestor, John Barnwell, came to America by way of Scotland and fought in the American Revolution.



Lieutenant John Alexander Deaver

John's grandfather fought in the Indian wars, and five of John's uncles served in the Civil War, three of whom died in action. "There wasn't a slacker in the whole family on either side," wrote John's mother.

John graduated from the 9th District Agricultural School at Blountsville in 1907. He attended Southern University for a year and Birmingham College for a year, serving as a pastor during this time. He graduated from Howard College in 1912 with an A.M. Degree—a Master of Arts by today's terminology. Beginning in 1910, he spent three years in ministry at East Lake at Alabama's Cumberland Presbyterian Church. He then spent about three years as a pastor in Jackson, Tennessee.

His mother noted that, after crossing the ocean to France, her son stayed in the thick of the fighting along the Argonne Forest battlefront with the 61st Infantry, 3rd Battalion, 5th Division. "He was at the battle front all the time. (I have never heard of anyone of the 61st Infantry who returned. It is my notion they all sleep in France). Major McClure said, 'Chaplain Deaver was one of the most courageous, lovable men I have ever met and very popular with the men. He always accompanied the battalion at the front and by his magnetism and personal bravery set a wonderful example to the men.'" His mother also wrote, "He was killed about 5 o'clock on the morning of October 18, 1918, while accompanying his men through an open place in the woods near Madelene Farm."



PRIVATE WILLIAM DUMAS

CAMDEN, AGE 32.

WILLIAM DUMAS JR. OF CAMDEN, ALABAMA, WAS BORN on November 7, 1886, to Savannah Campbell and William Dumas Sr., both former slaves. Colonel Sam Whatley of Camden filled out the information form about William's service and sent it to the archives. In his cover letter, Whatley wrote:

*Herewith I am enclosing with Wm. Dumas, deceased World War soldier, a photo of his family of 6 generations. Only one has deceased since he has, his great grandmother Nancy Wright at 100 years of age. I have complied with all the information in filling the blanks for Wm. Thomas, father of Wm. Thomas, Jr., to the best of my judgment, which I hope will be satisfactory."*

steep hill when he received three bullets in left leg. Was dragging broken leg and leaning on left hand and right leg and with right hand, waving his men forward when shot through the head and killed.” Dr. Coston recounted the praise of his son’s commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel M. Boyle, who said that Orville “was absolutely without the sense of fear. That he led a clean life and never once complained of or tried to shirk any hardship.”



WYATT RUSHTON  
MONTGOMERY, AGE 22.

WYATT RUSHTON WAS BORN ON AUGUST 8, 1896, IN Montgomery. On his mother’s side, Wyatt could claim “royal” lineage back to fifteenth-century England, according to information his family sent to the archives. The Rushtons were also among the earliest settlers in colonial Virginia. Wyatt received a top-notch education in an era when most individuals counted themselves lucky to complete grade school. A graduate of Marion Military Institute, the University of Alabama, the University of Virginia, and the University of Wisconsin—taking honors from each—Wyatt Rushton was selected as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University in England before he was twenty years old.

He was frail by nature, but that did not stop Wyatt from volunteering to join the U.S. Army after America declared war on Germany in 1917. Although rejected several times due to physical limitations, Rushton turned to the Red Cross and was accepted and commissioned as a lieutenant in that service, being sent first to France, then to Italy. After one last application, the U.S. Army finally accepted Rushton as an interpreter in the intelligence department of Headquarters Company, 44th Division. His proficiency in French and Italian caused the authorities to overlook his physical limitations.

When WWI ended in November of 1918, Wyatt Rushton was in a hurry to get home. He had not seen his family since September of 1916 and wanted desperately to be with them. His commanding officer took the unusual step of transferring Wyatt to another unit that was then shipping out, so he could go home. However, after boarding the USS *Kansas* in early 1919, the young man



*Wyatt Rushton*

became sick at sea and died on February 6, 1919. He was buried next to his mother, Mary Josephine (Wyatt) Rushton, at Oakwood Cemetery in Montgomery.

Birmingham attorney Wyatt Haskell, of the firm of Haskell & Slaughter, was Wyatt Rushton’s nephew and namesake. Haskell endowed the “Wyatt Rushton” chair at Oxford University to keep the memory of his uncle alive. Other Alabamians of the WWI generation who attended Oxford included Earl McGowin—a pioneer in the forest products industry, an influential legislator, and a gubernatorial cabinet member—and Clifford Durr, who became a prominent figure in the New Deal administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Durr was also an early member of the Federal Communications Commission and, following his return to Montgomery, a leading defender of civil liberties and civil rights. If the long, fruitful careers of the above two men are any indication, Wyatt Rushton was an irreplaceable loss to Alabama, America, and the world.

*As were they all.*

AH

# CONTRIBUTORS, SOURCES, AND SUGGESTED READING

## THE LESS THINGS CHANGE: CHARLES BROOKS AND THE ART OF ALABAMA POLITICS

By James L. Baggett

JAMES L. BAGGETT is head of the Department of Archives and Manuscripts at the Birmingham Public Library and Archivist for the City of Birmingham.

The author wishes to thank Charles Brooks, Yolanda Valentin, and Regina Ammon for their assistance in the preparation of this article. In 1998 Charles Brooks donated more than 3,800 of his original cartoons to the archives of the Birmingham Public Library. This collection forms the basis for two exhibitions of Brooks's work to be on display at the Birmingham Public Library during March and April 2004. For additional information on these exhibitions contact the author at [jbaggett@bham.lib.al.us](mailto:jbaggett@bham.lib.al.us) or 205-226-3631.

Readers wishing to learn more should consult the book *Best of Brooks* (Birmingham, Ala.: EBSCO Media, 1986), edited by Charles G. Brooks Jr. Among the several good histories of political cartooning, the author recommends *Them Damned Pictures* (North Haven, Conn.: Archon Books, 1996) by Roger A. Fischer, and *Editorial and Political Cartooning* (New York: Stravon Educational Press, 1976) by Syd Hoff.

## ALABAMA AND WORLD WAR ONE: THE GOLD STAR COLLECTION

By Sam Duvall

SAM DUVALL works as Communications Director for the Alabama Forestry Association, where he publishes the quarterly magazine *Alabama Forests*, various forest industry newsletters, and other non-deadline publications. His article on Civil War Colonel Daniel Shipman Troy appeared in *Alabama Heritage* #63. His first article for *Alabama Heritage* on World War II fighter pilot Ray Davis appeared in *Alabama Heritage* #59.

Duvall would like to thank Dr. Ed Bridges, director of the Alabama Department of Archives and History, for introducing him to the Gold Star Collection, for reading the story and making constructive suggestions, and for providing copies from the Gold Star files for the story. Thanks are also due to archives staff members Ken Tilley and Dr. Norwood Kerr for their direct help in securing photographs and copies of information for the Gold Star story and to Dr. Kerr for proofreading the finished article. In April 2004, the archives plans to post the names of all Gold Star soldiers on its web site (<http://www.archives.state.al.us>).

For further reading about "The Great War," the author suggests: Barbara Tuchman's *Guns of August* (New York: McMillan Publishing Company, 1962), John Keegan's *The First World War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Distributed by Random House, 1999), and Winston Groom's *A Storm In Flanders* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2002).

## WILLIAM BARTRAM: FIRST SCIENTIST OF ALABAMA

By John C. Hall

JOHN HALL, retired from the Alabama Museum of Natural History, is still active as a Research Associate. A frequent contributor to *Alabama Heritage*, Hall has written on Hernando De Soto, state geologist Eugene Allen Smith, and Alabama meteorites. Currently he is working on a "lost landscapes" project—what Alabama looked like at the beginning of the historic period—and is gathering material for a piece on the myth of Prince Madoc.

For those interested in pursuing William Bartram, Hall suggests visiting the Bartram Trail Conference web site, [www.bartramtrail.org](http://www.bartramtrail.org), which has links to many Bartram-related sites, including Historic Bartram's Garden in Philadelphia. He recommends the following books: *The Travels of William Bartram* edited and annotated by Francis Harper (University of Georgia Press, 1998), Waselkov and Braund's *William Bartram on the Southeastern Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), and Brad Sanders's *Guide to Bartram's Travels* (Athens, Ga: Fevertree Press, 2002).

## LILLIAN GOODNER: QUEEN OF THE SEPIAS

By Marc Bankert

MARC L. BANKERT, a native of Montgomery, Alabama, worked in entertainment and education. He is now organizing an exhibit of Lillian Goodner's photograph collection of performers of the '20s and '30s. He also plans to write a book about Lillian Goodner's life and times.

Bankert welcomes information from those who have knowledge of Lillian, her family, or the friends in her photographs. He is searching for one of Lillian's nieces—daughter of Joe Paige and sister of jazz singer May Knott—who is believed to live in Minneapolis or St. Paul, Minnesota. He would also like to hear from relatives of other entertainers from the '20s and '30s.

You can contact Bankert at 2133 Meadowlane Drive, Montgomery, AL 36101 or 334-834-1578 or [mlbankert@yahoo.com](mailto:mlbankert@yahoo.com).

For further reading, Bankert suggests: Bernard L. Peterson's *A Century of Musicals in Black and White* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1993), Henry Sampson's *Blacks in Blackface* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1980), and Allen Woll's *Black Musical Theatre* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989).

### Errata

On page 12 of the Fall issue (#70), please note that Bert Bank was in pilot training, but did not receive his pilot's license before his capture in the Philippines. Also, on page 25, a photograph identified as Crossville is actually Collinsville.

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