

NEW ARMY CAMP IS NAMED AS TRIBUTE FOR SURRY NATIVE

Army Camp Near Durham Will Be Named Camp Butner
In Honor Of Late Major General Henry Wolfe Butner,
Born In Southern Surry.

MADE GREAT RECORD

High honor came this week to a native son of Surry county when the United States Army officials announced that the new army camp near Durham will be named Camp Butner, the name being chosen as a tribute to the late Major General Henry Wolfe Butner, who was born and reared in the Stony Ridge section of southern Surry county.

The naming of the new camp for the Surry man is a fine tribute to a Surry man who had a notable career as a soldier, and official notice of the choice was received with pleasure in this section. It confirmed an earlier letter, which had been received by A. L. Butner, of Winston-Salem, a brother of the late general.

General Butner was born in the Stony Ridge community near Shoals, the son of Francis A. and Sarah Wolfe Butner. He received his early military training at the old Davis Military Academy, which stood on the present site of the Methodist Children's Home in Winston-Salem. He graduated there in 1894 and went on to West Point.

He graduated at West Point in 1898 and saw service with an artillery unit at San Francisco during the Spanish American War. Three years later he rose to the rank of captain, and later he saw service on the Mexican Border and in the Phillipines. He had risen to lieutenant-colonel and was in Hawaii at the outbreak of the World War I.

Immediately after the start of World War I he became an artillery instructor at Fort Sill, Okla.,

later going to France to be named brigadier general and given command of the artillery brigade of the First Division, which was then led by Major General Charles Summerell, now president of The Citadel at Charleston, S. C.

Reverting to the rank of colonel after the World War I, he attended the Army War College and finished there in 1920. He successively served as assistant commandant at Fort Sill, Okla., on a post in the Phillipines and then as president of the artillery board at Fort Bragg.

He received his permanent commission as a brigadier general in 1930, a rank he held until his death in Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D. C., on March 13, 1937. He had in the years just prior to his death served as commandant of Fort Sill and as commander of the Panama Canal Department of the army. He is buried in Arlington Cemetery at Washington.

General Butner received many decorations for his fine service, including the Distinguished Service Medal and the Silver Star Medal from the United States and the Croix de Guerre with palms from the French government. His medals are now in the possession of the Wachovia Historical Society in Winston-Salem.

In addition to the brother, A. L. Butner, of Winston-Salem, the Surry soldier is survived by a sister, Mrs. J. S. Atkinson, of Elkin. So far as present information reveals, he was one of only two Surry men ever to graduate at West Point. The second was Major Frank Foy, who finished two years ago and is now on active army duty.

MT. AIRY, NC "TIMES" - FRI - FEB 27, 1942

Local Woman Hits Century Mark

By ANGELA LEONARD
Staff Writer

"I didn't know when you got this old you got into so much," laughed Meadie Butner Wednesday when a newspaper reporter arrived to talk with her about her pending birthday.

Butner was born May 31, 1899. Today, she is celebrating her 100th birthday.

On Wednesday, she'd already received a dozen roses from her nieces, a birthday cake from another relative, and a free hairdo from her beautician, who was pleased to be doing her hair.

She's lived through the Depression and two world wars, raised two children and buried one of them, and been a widow twice.

"I didn't think I'd live to be this old," she said. "I

didn't think I'd live to draw Social Security, I've had such a rough life."

Born and raised in Cana, Va., Butner was one of four children. She married Lester Surratt, and later Ed Butner, and raised two children, Will and Lucy.

Until the Depression she and her husband ran a store on Rockford Street near the hospital. They lost the store then, she said. "Everything was taken away from us during the Depression," she said. "It closed in on everything. There were hard times a-goin' then."

Later, Butner said, she worked at Renfro Hosiery for 21 years, retiring 31 years ago at age 68.

"After I retired, I worked around the house and in the garden and quilted. When I quit doing that I cooked for

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sick people. I fixed many of a meal for sick people."

Butner gave up her home across from Jones Produce a little more than two years ago when she became sick. She moved in with her daughter, Lucy Parries, on Edgewood Drive, so she would be closer to the Mount Airy Dialysis Center, where she must go for regular treatments.

Other than her kidneys, and a bit of hearing loss, she said she's in pretty good health. "I see people a lot worse off," she said. She still enjoys tending flowers, although her daughter worries that she'll fall when gardening.

"You have to talk to them (flowers) some or they won't grow," said Butner.

Although she says there's no secret to long life, Butner credits hers to her faith in God and caring for her fellow man.

"Seek the Lord while you're young," she said. "And help everybody you can who needs help. I've never turned nobody down. Sometimes I had awful little and I always survived."



Angela Leonard/The Mount Airy News
BIRTHDAY ROSES: Meadie Butner of Mount Airy holds a dozen roses which she received Wednesday as an early birthday present. Butner turned 100 years old today.

5-31-99

(MOUNT AIRY TIMES - Fri., December 22, 1938)

Surry Man Kills Himself With Gun

Robert Butner, 35-year-old farm laborer, was found dead at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Kirby Smith, of near Pilot Mountain, Saturday afternoon of last week. Butner's body was found in a back room at the Smith home, with a discharged shot gun lying across his feet.

Dr. Robert Smith, of Mount Airy, Surry county coroner, stated that Butner's death was a clear case of suicide and that no inquest was necessary. The coroner's investigation revealed Butner had been dead for several hours. Smith and his wife had gone to Pilot Mountain for the day and had left Butner at home.

He had been in the Smith home for about two months and had planned to help Smith make a crop next year. He formerly lived at the home of Sam Eaton, near Pilot Mountain. Little was known of Butner's life. It was believed he had relatives at or near Winston-Salem.

No reason could be advanced by the Smith family for Butner taking his life. The body was brought to the Needham Funeral Home of Pilot Mountain, and, when no relatives could be located, was buried Sunday morning.