

SAMUEL E. WALLACE

931627

By Cole Hepburn



ARMY BACKGROUND

- Samuel E Wallace was born on September 16, 1892, in Durham North Carolina, U.S.A and grew up as a member of the Methodist church
- Before enlisting in the forces, he was a Chauffeur
- He enlisted on November 13 1916 at 24 years of age
- He was a single man and listed his father John W. Wallace as his next of kin. Samuel E Wallace was living in Michigan when he enlisted, his father was living in Charleston, West Virginia
- Did have a mother and 3 siblings who he did not list as kin
- Samuel E Wallace was of African American descent as the whole 2nd Construction Battalion (Labour) was, he was described as physically fit and able to enlist
- Samuel enlisted in Windsor Ontario, Canada (Border next to Detroit) and was given the rank of private. He remained a private until the demobilization of his unit in London Ontario, Canada after fighting in France
- Earned 15 dollars a month

CENSUS HISTORY

- All attempts to locate Samuel Wallace were unsuccessful
- Many Samuels Wallace's were found (28) but none matched the age of this soldier who would have been 19 in 1911, none of his birth years matched the soldiers either, and or none of the other Wallace's had the same hometown as the soldier
- This could be due to the fact he was not born in Canada but was born in Durham N.C, U.S.A
- Samuel Wallace could not be investigated further as it was hard to gain access to the American census without paying for some sort of membership.

DEATH

- Wallace was not found in the death registers or Canadian Virtual War Memorial, his service files state that his was discharged in London Ontario, Canada after the demobilization of his unit on February 21, 1919
- This could be due to the fact that he may have returned home to the U.S.A as address left on the discharge sheet was 498 Sentz St Charleston, West Virginia. This was his father's address who he might have gone to be with after the war as this is who was listed as Wallace's next kin
- There was a casualty form for active service but I could not read the writing on it so I could not get the details it is hard to tell if he was just injured or did die in battle
- No death certificate was found in service forms or another search engines such as Ancestry which lead me to believe he did not die at war

HISTORICAL NEWSPAPERS

- No information on Wallace could be found from the Carleton Library, ProQuest Canadian News Articles, Factiva, or Google News Papers
- All research was unsuccessful, there were many broad results but nothing specific upon Samuel Wallace, one reason this happened could be due to the fact he did not win any awards which would give him media attention
- Could also be due to racism as he worked within a full African American unit as we know Canada was built on racism
- Narrowing the search by refining the dates between 1900-1920 and looking for just newspapers as that was the main form of media back then nothing was found
- Many articles on the 2nd Construction Battalion were found but nothing specify on Samuel Wallace or his family

ANCESTRY FINDINGS

- This gave me the most information on Wallace and his family
- When searching for Wallace on Ancestry.ca after signing up for a free trail it led me to the U.S.A census it was found he was the oldest out of four children, having a younger sister named Mable Wallace who was born in 1994, a younger brother named Eugene born in 1885, and another younger brother named Fredrick Wallace born in 1898
- Census could not give any further information
- Wallace's birth date reminds the same as the one on attestation paper.
- He had his father John Wallace but also had a mother named Mattie Wallace who must have passed away or left their family before he went to war as he said he had no mother on his enlistment forms
- It is important to note he must not have been close with his siblings as they were never listed as his kin on his enlistment forms unless they passed away or with the mother
- Also, important to note no death dates are given for anyone from the Wallace household

ANCESTRY FINDINGS CONT.

- Wallace was born in Durham N.C, U.S.A in 1892, and the family moved to Charleston West Virginia, U.S.A after he was born as the rest of the siblings were born in West Virginia and the father continued to live there.
- There is still little information on Samuel Wallace as the next lead on Ancestry use his war documents which have already been reviewed and accounted for
- They are all American citizens born and raised as the parents were both born in North Carolina John Wallace in 1871 and Mattie Wallace in 1874

Household Members	Age	Relationship
John Wallace	29	Head
Mattie E Wallace	25	Wife
Samuel Wallace	7	Son
Mable Wallace	5	Daughter
Eugene Wallace	4	Son
Frederick Wallace	1	Son

REFLECTIONS

- Research was extremely hard to come by and any hard copy documents were hard to read as they were in old cursive writing
- Again I think the lack in information on him and his battalion may be a form of racism as it was a full African American unit
- Believe he may of went home after the war not to just be with his father but his whole family, this can be implied from what ancestry told us
- Still left with the question of what happened to him and his family in terms of death
- Curious to why he only listed his father as his kin when he had many siblings and a mother

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE OCDSB

- A student must be reminded look at the soldiers story you are researching with an open mind, I found that not all the information told the full story the researcher has to be able to connect the dots and fill in the blanks with the information given to put together a story
- A student should look at Ancestry.ca first as it probably has the most information on the person being researched and gives some background knowledge to the researched when looking at less detailed sources
- Create a OCDSB account so students do not have to sign up
- I would also like to recommend to a student to zoom and rereading the war documents as some words can be hard to decipher as they are in old cursive writing
- Possible classes given to students on how to conduct research over these search engines may be helpful