

World War I- Part 1: Introduction ^[1]

World War I

by R. Jackson Marshall III, 2006

Additional research provided by David A. Norris and Rodney J. Steward.

See also: [Old Hickory Division](#) ^[2]; [Submarine Attacks](#) ^[3]; [Wildcat Division](#) ^[4]; [WWI: Boot camp in Charlotte](#) ^[5]; [WWI: Combat on the Western Front](#) ^[6]; [WWI: Internment camp](#) ^[7]; [WWI: Last days of the War](#) ^[8]; [WWI: Life on the western front](#) ^[9]; [WWI: Medicine on the battlefield](#) ^[10]; [WWI: North Carolina and Influenza](#) ^[11]; [Approach of World War I](#) ^[12]; [Rockwell, Kiffin](#) ^[13]; [WWI: Women volunteers](#) ^[14]; [North Carolina in WWI: An introduction](#) ^[15]; [WWI: Support from the home front](#) ^[16]

[World War I- Part 1: Introduction](#)

[World War I- Part 2: North Carolina's Response to War and North Carolinians in Combat](#) ^[17]

[World War I- Part 3: Contributions to Victory on the Home Front](#) ^[18]



Tents and barracks at Camp Greene near Charlotte. Wade Harris Papers, no. P-317, Southern Historical Collection,

Part 1: IntroductionWilson Library, UNC-Chapel Hill.

[World War I](#) ^[19] ranks as one of the deadliest wars in American military history, and North Carolina shared in the devastating loss of human life. In only five months of fighting on the western front, 50,554 Americans were either killed in action or died from wounds and 198,059 men were injured. Another 69,540 men died from disease or other causes in France or the United States. North Carolina sent a total of 86,457 men to fight in [France](#) ^[20]. Of that number, 629 were killed in combat, 204 later died of wounds, 3,655 were injured but recovered, and 1,542 died of disease. Some North Carolinians were singled out by the U.S. government for special achievements during the war. [Robert L. Blackwell](#) ^[21], of [Person County](#) ^[22], who served in the [Thirtieth "Old Hickory" Division](#) ^[2], was the only North Carolinian to receive the [Medal of Honor](#) ^[23], which was awarded posthumously. Another 200 soldiers from North Carolina received the [Distinguished Service Cross](#) ^[24], and 12 men were awarded the [Distinguished Service Medal](#) ^[25]. All of North Carolina's World War I veterans were offered a service medal by the state.

Keep reading >> [World War I- Part 2: North Carolina's Response to War and North Carolinians in Combat](#) ^[17] ➡

Educator Resources:

[World War I Lesson Plans](#) ^[26], State Archives of North Carolina

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Sarah McCulloh Lemmon, *North Carolina's Role in the First World War*(1975).

George C. Lewis and John Mewha, *History of Prisoner of War Utilization by the United States Army, 1776-1945*(1955).

Jacqueline Burgin Painter, *The German Invasion of Western North Carolina: A Pictorial History*(1992).

Additional Resources:

Robert L. Blackwell, NC Highway Historical Marker G-87, North Carolina Office of Archives & History.

<https://www.ncdcr.gov/about/history/division-historical-resources/nc-highway-historical-marker-program/Markers.aspx?MarkerId=G-87> [27]

International Encyclopedia of the First World War. <http://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/home/> [28] (accessed November 17, 2015).

North Carolina in the Great War (WWI) [29] (website), North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. Includes historical information and links to online exhibits and historical documents and images available online. <https://www.ncdcr.gov/education/topics/world-war-i> [30] (accessed August 29, 2016).

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Steward, Rodney J. [34]

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Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press. [35]

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