

From: Matt Smith  
Sent: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 8:37 AM  
To: Donna Kelly  
Subject: Spanish Flu Pandemic 1918

Hello Donna,

Here is information about the Spanish Flu Pandemic of 1918 in regards to my grandfather. Gramps, Carl Steven Smith, was born in Avon on December 12, 1895. He died in Avon on December 3, 1984. He was the father of my mom, Carol A. Smith.

Gramps told me the following story. He was in the Army stationed at Camp Sherman in Chillicothe, Ohio during World War One. The Spanish Flu was ravaging the ranks of the soldiers with serious illness and many deaths. Like many of his fellow soldiers he contracted the flu. He said the next thing he knew he was lying under a large sheet with dead soldiers next to him. He had a toe tag attached to him indicating his death. He said he started to move around which caused someone to notice him and to remove him from what he described as a very cold building. His hands were so swollen that his fingers were completely spread apart. He was put in an infirmary. By the time he recovered the War in Europe was coming to an end so he never got shipped overseas. He said he had a sister, Elizabeth, who died of the flu in Avon.

I look at the possibility that Gramps contracting the flu and not getting shipped over to Europe is the reason why I am here today telling his story.

Gramps told me a few other things about his time in the service. He spoke of the time General John "Blackjack" Pershing, Commander of the American Expeditionary Forces on the Western Front in Europe during World War One, came through their camp in a motorcade to which he saluted.

He said the troops were segregated, with the African Americans which he referred to as "Coloreds", into different divisions. His division would practice artillery fire. The African American troops would go out into the fields and dig up the lead from the spent shells to be melted down and made into more ammunition.

Gramps said when he got discharged the Army paid him \$101.00 for his service. The money was in a roll of all one dollar bills. He took a train to Lorain, Ohio. He then walked from Lorain back to Avon.

I am sending in a separate e-mail photos of Gramps in the Army.

Sincerely,

Matthew J. Smith  
Avon, Ohio