

### *Technical Sgt. Charles Edward Ballance*

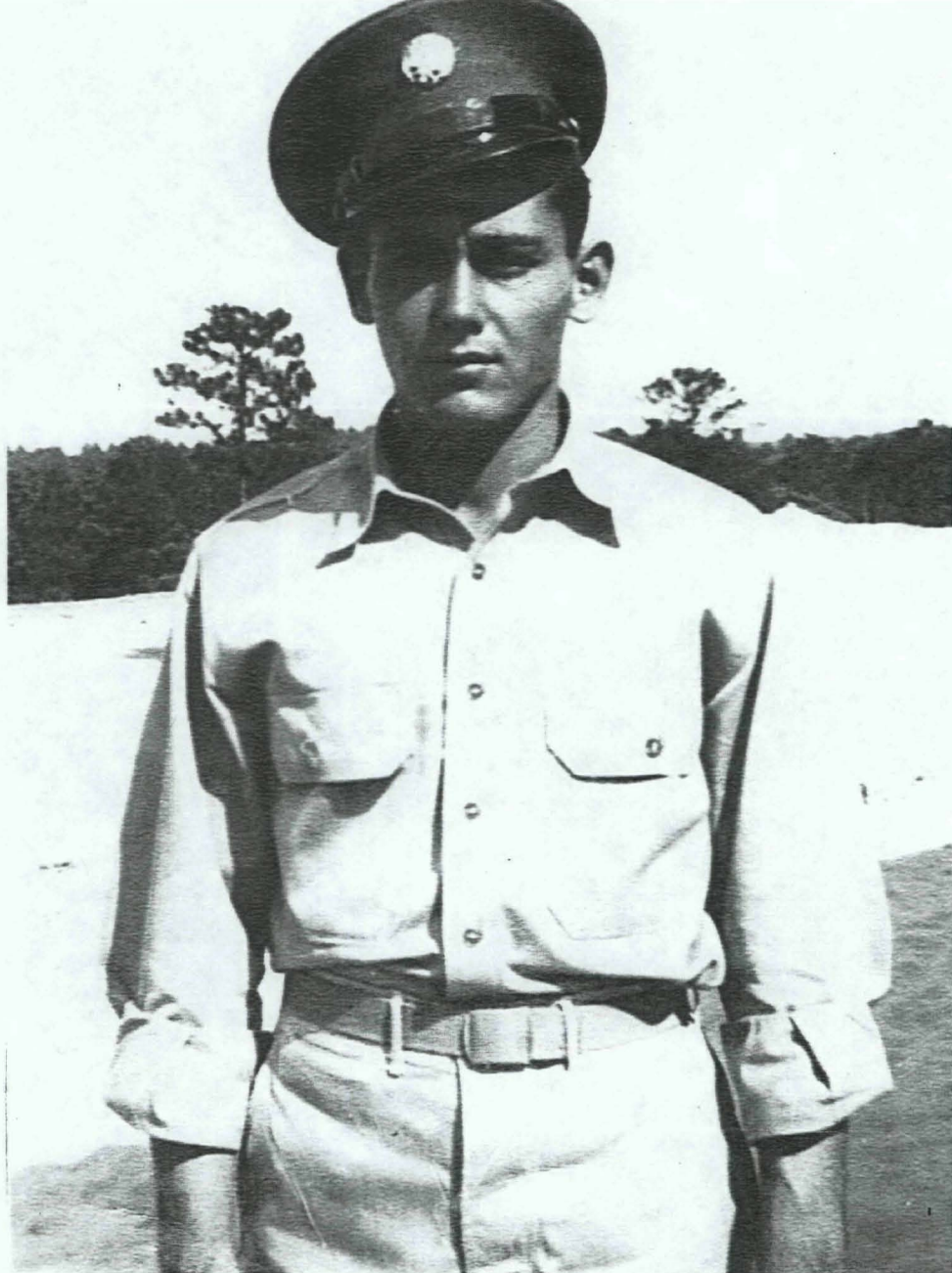
Technical Sgt. Charles E. Ballance gave his life for his country on September 16, 1944, just ten days after his 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday. He had enlisted in the U.S. Army at the age of 18. A younger brother recalled he could still see him, with satchel on his shoulder, walking down the railroad tracks from Black Creek to catch the train to Wilson. As a young strong-willed man, he loved being a soldier and was obviously a born leader as circumstances of World War II pushed him into that role.

Serving with Company L of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion/28<sup>th</sup> Infantry in the Crozon Peninsula of Western France, Sgt. Ballance's unit was greatly under strength from heavy fighting north of Brest. On a drizzling morning of September 15, 1944 the unit, along with another Company K, moved toward an open field east of the small village of Saint-Efflez, south of Brest. There they were met by German machine gun fire. A couple of hours into the morning battle, the company's Lieutenant was severely wounded and hours later the 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant was also wounded. With all the other officers either being killed or wounded, Technical Sgt. Ballance, being the senior NCO left, assumed command, reorganized the men, and got them moving again. Shortly afterwards, he also was shot and killed by a German sniper perched in a tree near an open field at Saint-Efflez.

In a book entitled **1944 Americans in Brittany-The Battle for Brest** written by Jonathan Gawne (son of the company's Lieutenant) from which much of the information in this article was obtained, it was written of Sgt. Ballance, "it was men like him that gave the American Army the ability to win the war." In 2002 the town of Lanveoc, France near Saint-Efflez recognized the heroic acts of Sgt. Ballance in liberating its people by naming a street in a French naval housing development after him.

This soldier left behind not only his parents and siblings but also his fiancé. His remains were brought home after the war ended to be placed in a family cemetery, but not soon enough for his grieving mother to know. The Ballance family is proud of Technical Sgt. Charles E. Ballance's acts of bravery while serving his country during World War II. He truly gave his all.

Submitted by: Janie L. Aycock, niece







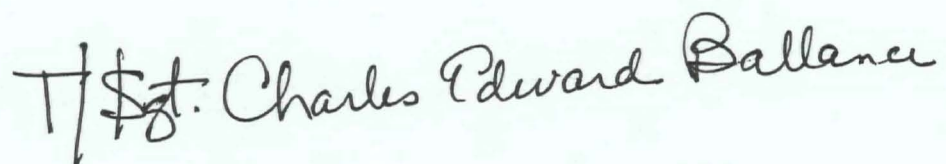
June 28, 2006

Mrs. Betty McCain  
1134 Woodland Drive  
Wilson, NC 27893

Dear Mrs. McCain,

I am enclosing a World War II story about my uncle for the collection of stories you told me about several months ago. I did not know who else to mail it to, besides yourself. Please let me know if any more information is needed. Thanks so much.

Janie Aycock

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janie".A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "T/Staff. Charles Edward Ballance".