

## **Raymor R. Brown (1898-1918)**

The conflict which became known as World War I began in Europe in 1914. The United States did not enter the fighting until April 6, 1917 when Congress issued a Declaration of War against Germany. President Woodrow Wilson speaking prior to the declaration being issued naively called it the “war to end all wars”.

Raymor Riley Brown enlisted in the United States Navy on June 11, 1917 and became a member of the Medical Department serving as a Pharmacist Mate. His enlistment date was a mere two months after the United States entered the war.

Killed in combat in France on October 7, 1918, Brown lost his life trying to save a fellow wounded soldier. He was twenty years old. His next of kin was listed as his mother, Lucy W. Brown.

Brown is buried near his parents and sisters, Bertie Brown and Opal Brown Carpenter. Mrs. Carpenter will be remembered by some as a long-time teacher in the Rockmart area.

In 1929 when the American Legion Post 12 was formed in Rockmart, Brown’s service and sacrifice was remembered and honored with the naming of the Post as the Raymor Brown American Legion Post 12.

## **John Preston Wright (1917-1942)**

World War II began on September 1, 1939 when Germany invaded Poland. Other nations were drawn into the conflict which would eventually include all the major powers of the world. The United States was reluctant, as it had been in World War I, to get involved actively although it had provided aid to the Allies. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 changed that and a Declaration of War was passed by Congress the next day. The nation’s youth once again lined up in large numbers to enlist and support the effort.

John Preston Wright was the son of James Banks Wright and Ludie Legrand Wright. Born in 1917 and growing up in Rockmart, he undoubtedly knew the story of Raymor Brown’s sacrifice. He would have been entering his teenage years when the American Legion honored Brown by naming Post 12 after him. What he would not have known, and could not have imagined during those carefree years, is that the same honor would be bestowed on him when another worldwide conflict would claim his life.

2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant John Preston Wright was killed in action during World War II in 1942. A pilot, Wright lost his life in a secret bombing mission over the Pacific Ocean. Declared Missing in Action, his remains were not recovered. The marker here in Rose Hill was placed by his family as a memorial to him and sits on an empty grave. The marker is inscribed “In loving memory of our husband who gave his life for his country”. A chilling reminder that the loss of young lives in war is a profound family sacrifice as well. He was survived by a young wife, his parents and two siblings.

Overcome by unfathomable grief, Wright's parents refused for months to believe that their son was not coming home. The grief was intensified since no remains were returned to provide closure. Decades after their son's disappearance when Mr. Wright died in 1995, the couple had been married for an astonishing seventy-nine years.

After Lieutenant Wright's death the name of the American Legion was again changed to honor a fallen soldier. The Brown-Wright America Legion Post 12 of Rockmart stills bears the name today. The honor bestowed by the American Legion forever links these two brave young men.

We remember and pay homage to Navy **Pharmacist Mate** Raymor Riley Brown, Army **2<sup>nd</sup> Lt.** Preston Wright and the other brave soldiers buried in Rose Hill Cemetery who paid the supreme sacrifice in defense of our country. The other brave men are Army **Private Cecil Abner** (1896-1919), Army **Private Wesley Nichols** (1889-1918), Navy **Quartermaster Ernest N. Morgan** (1922-1944), Navy **Petty Officer 2<sup>nd</sup> Class R.D. Countryman** (1925-1945), Army **Specialist Guy Mears** (1950-1970).

Source: "Polk County, Georgia, The First One Hundred Years", Larry D. Carter, 2012  
Findagrave.com  
Newspaper clippings, John Preston Wright, Newspapers.com, 1942

Compiled by: Rockmart Sesquicentennial 2022  
Rose Hill Cemetery Tour Committee