

# DUSTY ROADS®

## STORIES OF

## KEWANEE

## PAST & PRESENT



Dean Karau

September 2024

### *In Honor of Marie Girvin, Who Died in Service to Her Country.*

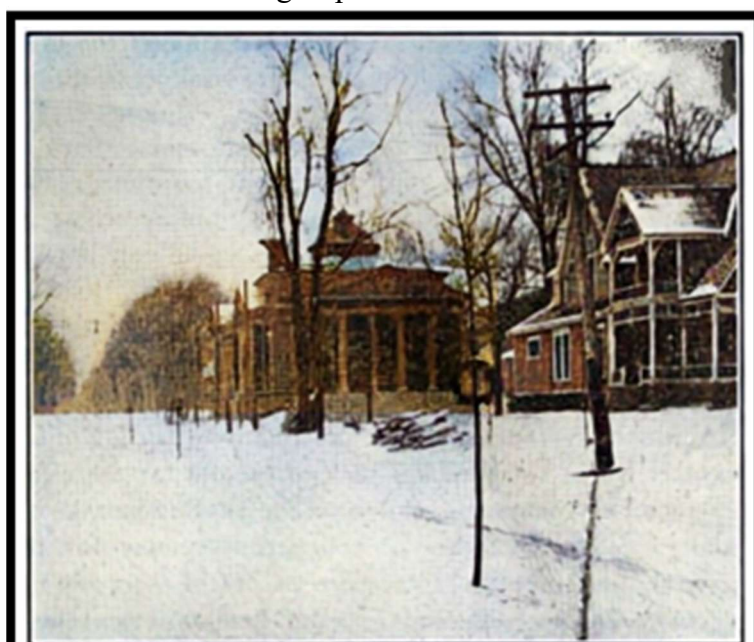
Recently I saw a 1919 photograph of Central Boulevard newly planted with 31 maple trees in memory of those from Kewanee who died in World War I.

Curious, I researched the online Kewanee newspaper archives at the Kewanee Public Library and found a list of those who gave their lives in service to their country.

A name immediately jumped out at me – the only woman in the group. I decided I needed to find out

HONOR ROLL			
Killed	Hugh McGinnis	Somme	George Clahner
	Benjamin McDaniels	Disease	George A. Johnson
Killed	James Johnson	St. Louis	Charles J. Sobotta
Electrocuted	Carl G. Johnson	Panama	Guy Turnbull
Disease	Russell R. Brooks	Camp Gordon, Ga.	Louis W. Tesch
Disease	John Schram	Liverpool Eng	Karl Sawlsky
Disease	Otto Reich	Camp Grant, Ill	Lloyd D. Elliott
Disease	Herbert E. Bailey	Mineola, L. I	John Ramont
Disease	John Ray Dixon	New York	Leo G. Leggins
Wounds	Earnest Quatt	France	Azel K. Peterson
Disease	Marie-Girvin (nurse)	France	August S. Sobotta
Disease	Chas. VanWassenhove	Camp Jackson, S. C	William Kuard
Disease	Carroll H. Radford	Camp Eustis, Va	Mervyn Palmer
Disease	Mike Mikenas	England	Hert Tann
Disease	Lawrence Lyons	Fl. Sam Houston	Jefferson Harshus
Disease		Camp Grant	William Hempel
			Honolulu

December 1, 1919, KEWANEE DAILY STAR COURIER



STREET PLANTING OF MEMORIAL TREES

On Central Boulevard at Kewanee, Illinois, 31 memorial trees have been planted by the Women's Relief Corps, Mrs. Ada M. Taylor reports to the American Forestry Association. These trees have been named for the 31 heroes who gave their lives to their country, and the names have been entered on the Association's Honor Roll. The American Legion, G. A. R., and the Spanish War Veterans all had part in the ceremony. The trees were marked with a wreath, and later will be permanently marked.

*Reported by Ada M. Taylor in the article, The Living Memorials, appearing in the June 1920 edition of THE MODERN CITY.*



more about here.

Miss Hester Marie Girvin was born to Thomas and Hessie Camey Girvin in 1896. The family lived on a farm southeast of Neponset on the Kentville Road, and Marie lived there most of her life.

Young Marie attended Neponset's Douglas School through eighth grade. She then attended St. Xavier Academy in Ottawa, run by the Sisters of Mercy as primarily a college preparatory school for girls.

Marie moved to Kewanee in 1915 to attend the St. Francis Training School for Nurses. She graduated in May 1917.

Marie continued to work at St. Francis after graduation. But as World War I progressed and United States troops prepared to embark for Europe, she and four fellow nurses, Bessie Heaton, Kathleen Lyons, Bess Lawler and Mary Lappin, joined the American Red Cross in July 1918 and prepared for immediate assignment.

That assignment came in August. Marie was sent to Camp Jackson in Columbia, South Carolina.

She began working at Camp Jackson's



## Nurses Expect An Early Summons To Active Service

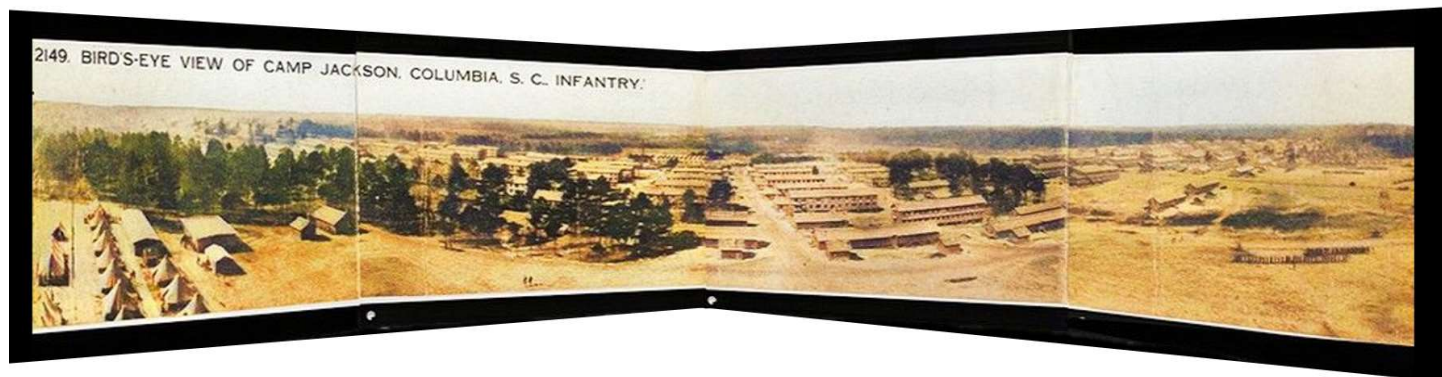
Word was received this morning from the American Red Cross National headquarters by Unit 627 that their paper had been submitted to the Surgeon General's office July 30 Also to make preparations to respond immediately upon receipt of transportation orders

The Hospital Alumni and Doctors' club will give an entertainment at the hospital tomorrow evening in honor of these nurses who are in the unit

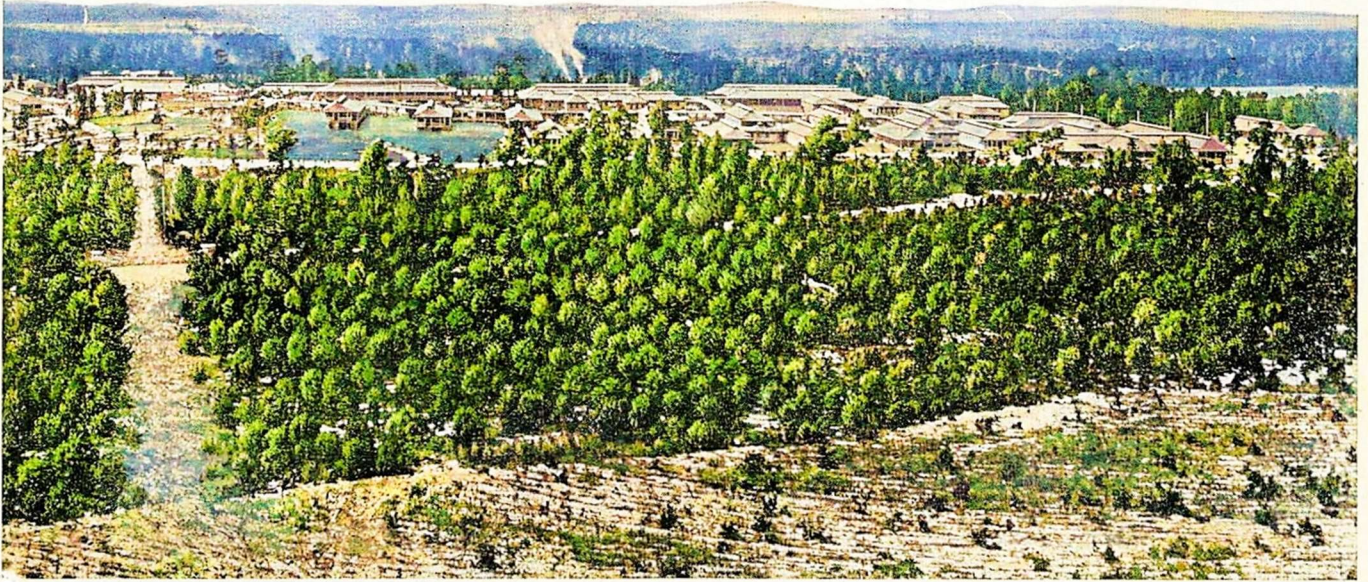
Those who have enrolled and who will be subject to the country's call at a twenty-four hour notice are the Misses Bessie Heaton, Kathleen Lyons, Bessie Lawler, Marie Girvin and Mary Lappin

*St. Francis Hospital, located at Elliott and Prospect Streets.*

*August 1, 1918, KEWANEE DAILY STAR COURIER*







GENERAL VIEW OF BASE HOSPITAL.

base hospital.

But only two months later, Marie came down with a case of the Spanish influenza, which had begun reaching epidemic proportions around the world. However, after a few days, she thought she had recovered, so she returned to her work. But then a few

days later she was taken ill again, this time with pneumonia, followed by spinal meningitis.

Marie Girvin died on October 8, 1918, at the base hospital where she worked.

When the first Neponset American Legion Post



*Some of the nurses at the base hospital – Camp Jackson, S. C., 1918*





was formed after the war, the organization named their post in honor of Marie, the MARIE GIRVIN POST NO. 297.

Miss Hester Marie Girvin died in the service of

her country. Thank you, Marie. You deserve to be remembered, along with all others who have served our country without reserve.

