

# DUSTY ROADS®

## STORIES OF

## KEWANEE

## PAST & PRESENT

Dean Karau

September 2024

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

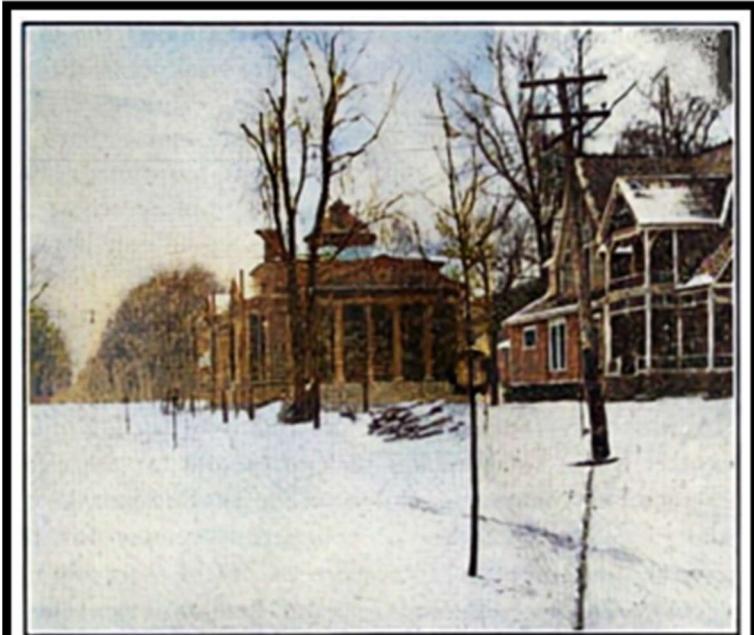
Recently I saw a 1919 photograph of Central Boulevard newly planted with 31 maple trees in memory of those from Kewanee who died in World War I.

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.

HONOR ROLL			
Killed	Somme	George Clashner	France
Benjamin McDaniels	Disease	George A. Johnson	France
Killed	St. Louis	Wounds	France
James Johnson		Charles J. Sobotta	France
Electrocuted	Panama	Killed in Action	France
Carl G. Johnson		Guy Turnbull	France
Disease	Camp Gordon, Ga.	Disease	France
Russell R. Brooks		Louis W. Tech	France
Disease	Liverpool Eng	Wounds	France
John Schram		Karl Sawitsky	France
Disease	Camp Grant, Ill.	Killed in Action	France
Otto Reich		Lloyd D. Elliott	France
Disease	Mineola, L. I.	Wounds	France
Herbert E. Bailey		John Ramont	France
Disease	New York	Killed in Action	France
John Ray Dixon		Leo G. Leggins	France
Wounds	France	Killed in Action	France
Earnest Quart		Azel K. Peterson	France
Disease	Ft. Oglethorpe, Ga.	Disease	France
Marie Girvin (nurse)		August S. Sobotta	France
Disease	Camp Jackson, S. C.	Killed	
Chas Van Wassenhove		William Kuard	France
Disease	Camp Eustis, Va.	Disease	France
Carroll H. Radford		Merwyn Palmer	Norfolk
Disease	England	Disease	
Mike Mikenna		Bert Tann	
Disease	Fl. Sam Houston	Jefferson Harrel	
Lawrence Lyons		William Hempel	Honolulu
Disease	Camp Grant	Disease	

December 1, 1919, KEWANEE DAILY STAR COURIER

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



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.



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

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 Lawier 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

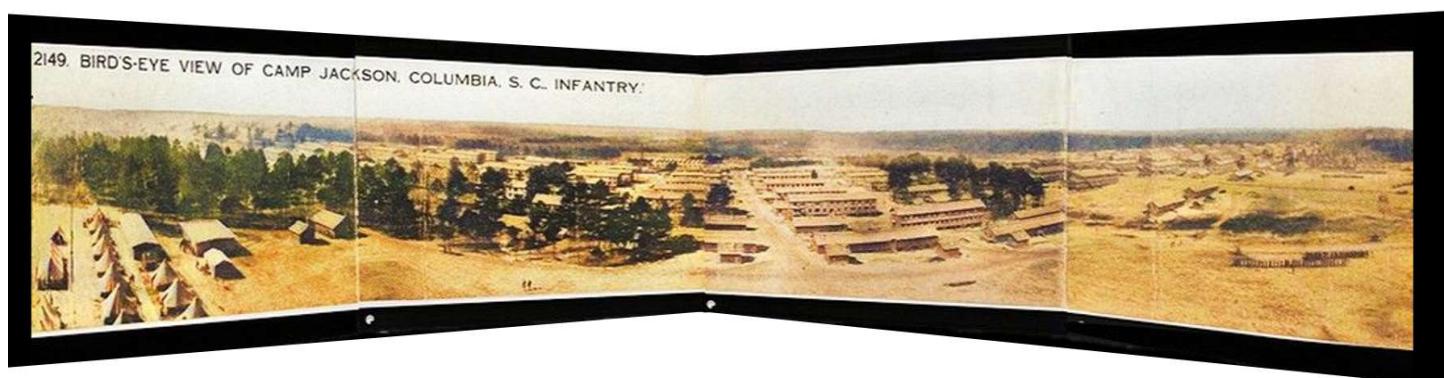
## **Nurses Expect An Early Summons To Active Service**

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 Lawier, Marie Girvin and Mary Lappin.

*August 1, 1918, KEWANEE DAILY STAR COURIER*



U. S. NATIONAL ARMY CANTONMENT, CAMP JACKSON, COLUMBIA, S. C.



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.

