



WINTER 2018

# Newsletter

EXCELLENCE IN INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT, WORLD-CLASS FINANCIAL PLANNING, AND COMPASSIONATE ENGAGEMENT

## IN MY GRANDFATHER'S FOOTSTEPS ON THE WESTERN FRONT



By former ACT Advisor  
Sarah Barnhill

In May of 1917, my grandfather interrupted his studies at Wofford College and enlisted in the U.S. Army. After training with the 30th Division, 118th Infantry Regiment, at Camp Sevier, where Wade Hampton Boulevard in Greenville now runs, he was sent to Belgium, to the area around Ypres—or “Wipers” as the doughboys called it—which had seen such heavy fighting in 1915. Then, in late summer of 1918, he was sent to France, to the Somme.

I knew this because as a child I often sat next to him, looking at the maps from World War I that he brought home, maps so detailed they showed German and Allied trench positions, farmhouses



AMERICAN MILITARY CEMETERY AT BONY, FRANCE. MANY MEN FROM THE 118TH INFANTRY REGIMENT ARE BURIED HERE.

and wooded knolls. I listened to his stories of the mud and the bombardments, of his admiration for the “fighting Aussies,” of the sheer hell of the First World War. Several years ago, with the centenary of the war approaching, I committed to tracing his footsteps in the waning days of the war and to be, exactly 100 years later, where he was on November 11, 1918, when the armistice at last was declared.

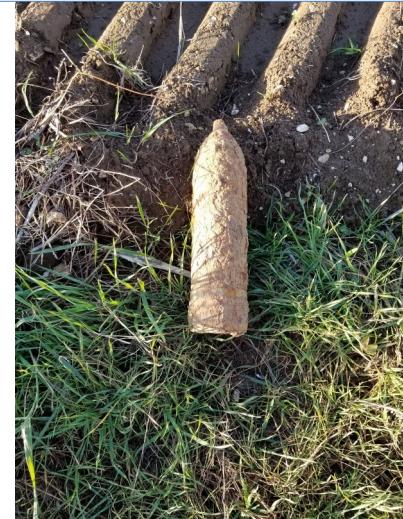
So I headed off to northern France, to the area once known as Picardy. My focus was a small triangle, no more than 30 miles on its longest

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**LEFT:** THE SAN QUENTIN CANAL, JUST TO THE EAST OF THE HINDENBURG LINE, AND A STRATEGIC PRIZE FOR THE ALLIES.  
**MIDDLE:** GERMAN TRENCH LESS THAN 100 FT TO THE WEST OF THE SAN QUENTIN CANAL. THE GERMAN TRENCHES WERE DEEPER AND MORE ELABORATE THAN THOSE OF THE ALLIES.

**RIGHT:** MORTAR FOUND NEAR A BRITISH CEMETERY IN THE AREA OF SERRE, WHICH SAW SOME OF THE HEAVIEST FIGHTING OF THE WAR. IT WAS ON THE EDGE OF A FIELD THAT HAD JUST BEEN PLOWED AND WAS ABOUT 15 INCHES LONG AND WEIGHED ABOUT 12 LBS. A HUNDRED YEARS LATER, BETWEEN 40 AND 50 TONS OF WAR-RELATED MATERIAL ARE STILL FOUND EVERY YEAR IN THE BATTLEFIELDS OF WWI.

side, roughly from Albert to Cambrai to San Quentin. Today, it is stunningly beautiful countryside, rich agricultural land with manicured fields and neat villages. It is hard to reconcile what you see here today with the devastated killing fields of a century ago.

From November 8-11, using maps from records of the 30th Division overlayed with Google Earth, I trekked through fields in the Somme and the Aisne, where I knew my grandfather had been. I found the field where his regiment, the 118th, had thrust forward on Sept. 29, 1918 and breached the Hindenburg Line, the heavily fortified and last line of defense for the Germans. Today, a four-lane highway runs through it, bordered by sugar beet fields. In the village of Bellicourt, I walked where he fought as the 118th took valuable ground in the Battle of the San Quentin Canal. For two weeks and a distance of only 15 miles, his regiment pushed the Germans eastward. The fighting was particularly heavy during this prolonged battle, and six different men from the 118th Infantry Regiment were awarded the Medal of Honor,



A FIELD NEAR WARLOY-BAILLON, FRANCE AND  
PICTURES OF 2ND LT. THOMAS BENJAMIN  
GRENEKER, US ARMY, 1896-1977

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# ACT ADVISORS COMMUNITY AWARD RECIPIENTS

At ACT Advisors we believe in supporting our neighbors to create the kind of community that we're proud to be a part of. That's why we established the ACT Advisors Community Award.

This year, we contributed \$2,500 to the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina's Fund for Education and \$2,500 to the North Charleston Rotary Club.

The Community Foundation is a local nonprofit organization established in 1978 to build a permanent pool of charitable capital for the 18 counties of Western North Carolina. They work with individuals, families and corporations to create and manage charitable funds and make grants to nonprofits or public agencies in our region.



The Fund for Education offers grants to organizations that work to further the educational opportunities and provide services to families and schools in Western North Carolina.

The North Charleston Rotary Club is where a number of our clients and ACT Advisor Wes Johnson, CFP ® are actively involved. Wes is proud to lead the Rotary Club's Roundball Classic, a boys high school basketball tournament held each year in North Charleston. It features 16 teams including local and highly regarded national teams. This event provides a unique opportunity for our local players to compete against some of the top players in the nation and raises money for their Scholarship Fund.

We're proud to support our community in this way and hope that our clients will find similar joy in their philanthropic endeavors.

Read more about our ACT Advisors Community Award recipients:

Community Foundation: [www.cfwnc.org](http://www.cfwnc.org)

North Charleston Rotary Club:  
[northcharlestonrotary.com](http://northcharlestonrotary.com)



STUDENTS FROM PORTER-GAUD AND NORTH CHARLESTON FACE OFF IN THE ROTARY ROUNDBALL CLASSIC

# ACT ADVISORS TRAVELING TOTE WINNER

We are so grateful for all of you who took our ACT Fanny Pack around the world with you last year! Our 2018 winner is Heidi D. with a shot of her gliding over the Swiss Alps in Interlaken, Switzerland.

Our theme for 2019 will be “Loved Ones.” Send us a picture of you with your loved ones – family, friends, pets – just don’t forget to include your ACT Fanny Pack or Tote Bag! Each picture will serve as an entry for our end-of-the-year prize drawing.

Entries can be sent to  
[nicolette.speziale@lpl.com](mailto:nicolette.speziale@lpl.com).



HAND-DRAWN LINE SHOWING  
WESTERN FRONT AS OF AUG. 8, 1918

## IN MY GRANDFATHER'S STEPS ON THE WESTERN FRONT, *continued*

more than any other regiment in WWI.

Then, I drove east to the village of Bazuel, an idyllic spot on a ridge that overlooks rich farm country. A quiet meadow on the southern edge of the village marks the easternmost spot my grandfather reached when, on Oct. 19th, his regiment was pulled back from the front, relieved by fresh troops.

Finally, on Sunday, November 11, at 11:00 a.m., I was in another field, this time on the outskirts of the village of Warloy-Baillon, where the 118th was encamped and where my grandfather was on Nov. 11, 1918, when the armistice was declared and all, at last, was quiet on the western front.

He came home, practiced law, became a state senator and a circuit judge for South Carolina. But in those same fields of Belgium and France are nearly two million men who did not come home, including over 100,000 Americans. My effort was a small price to pay in their honor.



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