

Elton Dewitt “E.D.” Winstead
1913 – 2013
Obituary

Elton Dewitt “E. D.” Winstead, 99, formerly of Wilson, died March 25, 2013. Funeral services will be held Saturday April 6, 2:00 P.M., at First United Methodist Church in Wilson conducted by Rev. Bob Bergland and Rev. Harold Morcombe. Burial will follow in Maplewood Cemetery.

The family will receive friends Friday April 5, 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM, at Joyner’s Funeral Home, 4100 Raleigh Road Parkway.

Dr. Winstead was born in 1913 in Wilson, grew up in Wilson, and lived a life of honor and integrity serving his country, community, and family.

A member of “The Greatest Generation,” his loyalty and love for his country was evident throughout his entire life. He enlisted in the Army February 6, 1934 and served almost twenty-four years before retiring from that chapter of his life December 31, 1957 as a Lt. Colonel. He was a combat veteran of World War II fighting in the Battle of Corregidor in the Philippines at the beginning of the war. However, after the fall of Corregidor he spent the remaining three years of the war as a Prisoner of War in the Philippines held by the Japanese. (His wife and baby son had been evacuated back to Wilson from the Philippines just before the war started, and for the first year of his captivity, his wife did not know if he was alive or dead.) As one of the fortunate survivors of those ordeals, he returned to Wilson after the war and was presented the Key to the City of Wilson in a special community ceremony in front of the courthouse. (On March 31, 1995 an “E. D. Winstead Day” commemorating that ceremony with a second key to the city was held as part of Wilson’s special fiftieth anniversary commemoration of the end of World War II.) He was post commander of Fort Davis in the Panama Canal Zone guarding part of the Panama Canal during the Korean War. Some of his Army assignments are indicated by the birthplaces of his four children, Ed “Dee” at Ft. Mills on Corregidor Island in the Philippines, Ray at Ft. Monroe in Virginia, Sue at The Presidio of San Francisco (the historic Army post containing Ft. Scott) in California, and Gene at Ft. Davis in Panama.

After graduating from Charles L. Coon High School in Wilson in 1930 he attended Atlantic Christian College in Wilson for one year. He told his parents there was no need for him to continue as a student at ACC, since he was not going to be either a teacher or a preacher. (Ironically, later in life he became a full-time teacher and a substitute preacher.) After retiring from the Army and moving back to Wilson, he continued where he left off and graduated from ACC thirty years later in 1960. After earning a master’s degree in education from Duke University he became a faculty member at ACC in 1962. In 1966 he completed his doctoral degree from Duke University, became the first chairman of the new ACC Department of Mathematics, and remained a professor in that position until his retirement in 1977.

He married Josephine “Jo” Minshew, a Wilson nurse from Black Creek (Wilson County) in 1938, and they shared their journeys and lives together until her death in 2000. Their last move together was from Wilson to a retirement community in Durham, NC in 1996. Their relationship was one of loving commitment and caring.

He participated in community activities in Wilson, e.g. he was the first chairman of The Wilson County Facilities and Pollution Control Financing Authority, was a member of First United Methodist Church in Wilson, and was a member of the American Legion.

In 2010 he moved to a retirement community in Brevard, NC where his son Ed and his wife Pam live.

After he retired from ACC he enjoyed bowling regularly with friends, and he continued to bowl regularly with new friends in Durham until moving to Brevard. In Durham he occasionally conducted church services, including preparing and giving the sermons, when the regular pastor for the retirement community was absent. In Brevard he attended St. Timothy United Methodist Church and participated in church activities there.

Dr. Winstead is survived by his children and their families, Ed “Dee” Winstead and his wife Pam (Brevard, NC) and Pam’s four sons, Gary, Alan, Brian, and Joseph, and five grandchildren; Ray Winstead and his wife Dawn and their two children, Jacob and Daniel (Indiana, PA); Sue W. Gordon and her husband Tony (Henderson, NV) and their two children Beth (Las Vegas, NV) and Aimee (Monroeville, PA); and Gene Winstead and his wife Kathleen and their daughter Haley (Montclair, NJ).

Dr. Winstead was preceded in death by his parents, Frank J. and Nettie S. Winstead, his wife Josephine “Jo” M. Winstead, his brother Frank Ollin Winstead, and two sisters Geraldine Winstead and Clara W. Williams.

Photos and a partial autobiography are available on the Internet at <http://raywinstead.com/edw/>.

In lieu of flowers, please send a donation in Dr. Winstead’s honor to the Barton College School of Nursing at PO Box 5000, Wilson, NC 27893. Dr. Winstead’s wife Jo was a Registered Nurse alumna of the Wilson Woodard-Herring Hospital School of Nursing, now the Barton College School of Nursing.

Funeral arrangements are being handled by Joyner’s Funeral Home and condolences may be directed to <http://www.joyners.net/>.