

The Adventures of Hallie Beavers (Allred) of Siler City, NC

by Milli Hammer*

April 2020

Hallie Beavers (Allred)

17 July 1893 - 01 January 1982

Hallie's 1915 college graduation portrait



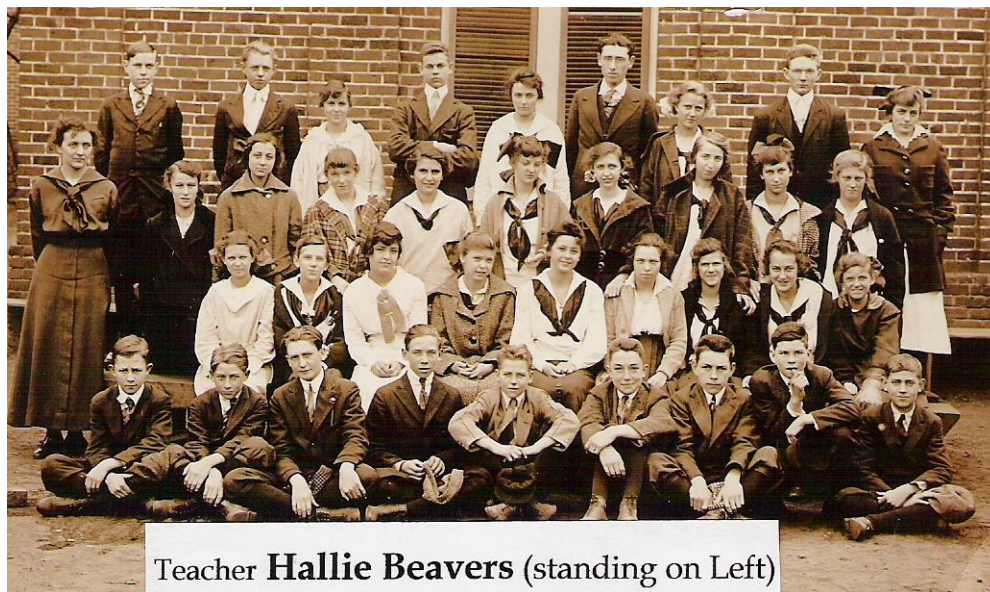
Hallie was born in Chatham County to Mattie Rogers Beavers and George Henry Beavers in 1893, the second of Mattie and George's six children (three daughters and three sons). The family's farm was in Siler City.



The Beavers family (back row left to right, Clyde, Hallie and Julia, Front row, Josie, George, Herbert, Mattie and Slocum. Photo Oct 1904)

To try to understand a bit about this family one should know that Mattie was, according to her two daughters (Hallie and Josie), a bit stern, the undisputed head of the family and main bread winner. George was a farmer so Mattie's employment as a rural postal worker was a welcome, steady paycheck. Who knows what fostered Mattie's determination that her girls be educated. Few girls had an opportunity for higher education in the early 1900's, but Mattie saw her daughter Julia attend what is now UNCG until her death in 1909 when she was 17 years old. Even Julia's death (she contracted an illness at college) didn't dim Mattie's determination that her other two daughters (Hallie and Josie) be well educated.

In 1909 Hallie was enrolled at Buie's Creek Academy in Harnett County, NC. Later in 1910 she followed her sister Julia's example and enrolled at N C State Normal and Industrial College (now UNCG). Hallie was an accomplished pianist and athlete. She played field hockey during her four years of college. She was secretary of her sophomore class and treasurer of the Young Women's Christian Association which may have been the source of the remarks about her in the college year book. About Hallie it was written "*you are destined to become a woman of whom your classmates are envious, you will marry a farmer and continue to handle money.*" True, she was good with money and she did marry a farmer late in life so it seems that forecast was realized. Hallie graduated in May 1915 with a BA and began teaching almost immediately, initially in Salisbury where she taught for two years.



Teacher **Hallie Beavers** (standing on Left)

Hallie's class at Salisbury in 1916 - 1918

Hallie probably got her determination and adventurous genes from her mother Mattie who purchased her first automobile in 1933/34 and drove to Chicago to the World's Fair.

Hallie's adventurous spirit, it seemed, was on hold while waiting for Josie to finish college (also at UNCG). Hallie and Josie were very, very close, so it was not unexpected that they'd team up to seeing "the world." In 1918 Hallie, Josie and a cousin (Mamie Rogers) moved to Washington, DC where Hallie and Josie found jobs in the Canal Zone Finance and Telegraph department of the federal government.



The 1919 Zone Finance, T & T field hockey team. Hallie is seated in the first row, second from the left Josie is standing 9th from the left.

Although Josie's employment continued, in 1920 Hallie was laid off and she returned to Siler City and teaching.



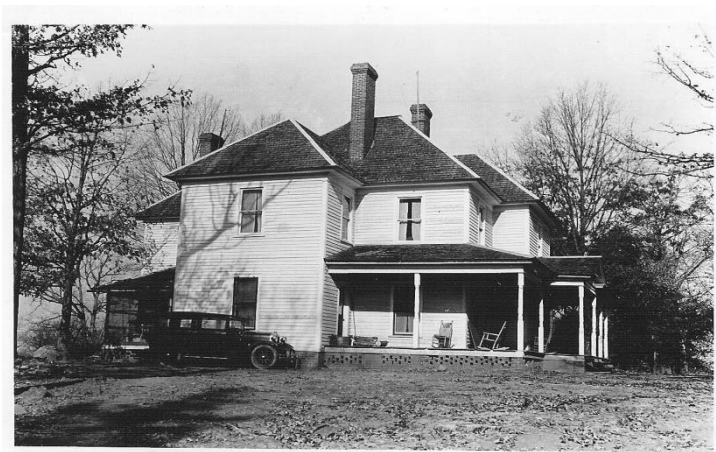
Teaching in Siler City in 1920-21

Little is known about Hallie's life until April 1930 when we know Hallie was living in Durham, teaching at Central Junior High School and studying at Duke.

Perhaps exposure to the Canal Zone during her job in Washington inspired Hallie to seek a life there, because a few short years later in the fall of 1931 Hallie boarded a ship bound for the Zone. Until her departure she had been teaching in Durham, while studying to earn a Master's Degree from Duke University. Always one to plan ahead, Hallie knew that anyone who hoped to teach in the Canal Zone schools had to have a master's degree; it was also a requirement that women teachers be unmarried.

Undeterred by these rules, she applied to and was provisionally accepted (contingent upon completing her master's degree). Her ship landed in Christobal, CZ, on the Atlantic side of the Isthmus of Panama on 23 September, 1931. She knew that without the required master's degree, she was not eligible to teach so she took a position as a cashier in the school system and travelled back to Durham each summer to complete her master's degree. By June 1934 Hallie met both requirements - she had the much desired master's degree and was still unmarried. All that stood in her way to fulfilling her dream of teaching in the Canal Zone was for a teaching position to open up in her field.

In 1933 Mattie and George Beavers divested themselves of all their holdings - mostly property - these were carved up and each of their living children received their portion. Hallie was deeded the family home in Siler City (photo below). Herbert, Clyde and Josie all received properties of approximately equal value.



Mattie and George Beavers' home, built about 1893

In April 1935 Hallie took a leave of absence and hurried to Siler City to join Josie and be with Mattie who was ill with stomach cancer. After Mattie's death in May 1935 Hallie returned the Canal Zone. In 1937 she finally attained her goal of a teaching position in the CZ schools - teaching mathematics and plane geometry at Christobal High School. Each summer she boarded a ship and returned to the States - spending about two weeks with her sister who was married and living in

Maryland and then spending the rest of the summer in Siler City. In 1945 she transferred to the Pacific side of the Canal Zone to teach school at Balboa High School.



Balboa High School



Hallie with students at BHS in 1949

Hallie's visits to Maryland each summer were highly anticipated – first by Josie but by the mid 1940's by Josie's daughters Milli and Dotty. Hallie loved taking the little girls to see her favorite places in Washington - the zoo, amusement park (Glen Echo), museums, the Smithsonian, and even watching money being printed at the Treasury. The girls looked forward to their Aunt Hallie's arrival because she was the bringer of excitement - of seeing new and interesting things. Hallie gave the girls her undivided attention that their mother and father couldn't do working full time. Josie was still employed by the federal government at the War Department (now the Dept. of Defense).

When George Beavers died of a heart attack in July 1943, Hallie was in Maryland visiting Josie. She cut short her stay and dashed to Siler City to make arrangements for George's funeral and burial.



Hallie in 1943

In the summer of 1948 Josie was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. Naturally Hallie was at Josie's side and helped care for the girls while their mother was hospitalized following surgery. It was clear that Josie's cancer was advanced and that she could not survive. Because Hallie and Josie had nursed their mother when she was dying, Josie did not want that for her girls. So, at Josie's insistence Hallie took the two girls with her to the Canal Zone when she returned there in August of 1949. Although very ill, in December 1949 Josie flew to spend Christmas with her daughters and Hallie – they would not see Josie again.

In April, 1950 Hallie received a letter from Josie's husband Claude, that Josie was dying. Typically Hallie dropped everything, made arrangements for the girls care in her absence and rushed to the States. Sadly she arrived on April 2nd at Providence Hospital in Washington, DC minutes after Josie died.

Returning to the Canal Zone Hallie was faced with the problem of what to do about Josie's two daughters. Visitors were welcome but only legal dependents of a CZ employee could live there permanently. Because Hallie knew Josie's wishes – her will asked Hallie to raise her girls - Hallie petitioned the courts to legally adopt Milli and Dotty. Their father did not oppose the adoption so on April 7, 1952 Hallie legally became Mom to Josie's girls.

In June of 1955 Hallie retired and returned to her home in Siler City but her teaching career wasn't over. Because she didn't have enough quarters to qualify for Social Security, Hallie began driving to Yanceyville to teach. She taught for two years there, and then in 1963 taught mathematics and Latin at Jordan Mathews High School in Siler City.



Hallie's home in Balboa – (upper left apartment)

In June 1957 Hallie married for the first time. She and Jesse Allred married in Florence South Carolina and settled into married life in Hallie's Siler City home. Suddenly holidays and special occasions saw Hallie with a house full – a husband his seven living children, their spouses and several grandchildren. Hallie, always one to face life head on, adjusted easily to changed life.



Hallie and Jesse Allred in 1957

Later that year Hallie generously and proudly hosted a wedding for her daughter Milli at First Methodist Church in Siler City when Milli married Charles Hammer on September 14, 1957. Milli had planned for Hallie to give her away but Milli's father Claude Sandrone was able to come and so gave the bride away.



Photo – left to right, Dotty Sandrone, sister of the bride and the maid of honor, Mary Frances Hammer (sister of the groom) Kathleen Hammer (mother of the groom), Hallie (mother of the bride), Milli Sandrone (bride), Charles Hammer (groom), Newby Hammer (father of the groom and best man), Donald Hammer (brother of the groom) and Claude Sandrone (father of the bride).

Hallie enjoyed her retirement. She maintained close contacts with friends from her years in the Canal Zone and several visited her in Siler City. Hallie always said she had itchy feet and so loved to travel. All one had to say to Hallie was “do you want

to go” and without hearing the destination Hallie picked up her handbag and coat and was ready to go. Although Milli lived in Western NC, Hallie often convinced Milli to help her entertain visitors by touring them around North Carolina. And she often travelled with Milli and her two sons – driving to Falls Church, Virginia to visit Josie’s husband, Claude, and on another occasion to meet Dotty and her family who were visiting from Idaho.



Hallie hosting a fish fry at her home

For years Hallie had been interested in preserving her family’s history. She followed in her mother’s footsteps - Mattie had saved very old family photos, letters, and newspaper articles and stored them in a trunk in the attic. Hallie spent hours collecting these photos and assembling information about the Beavers’ ancestors. She correctly believed that there were Revolutionary War patriots among the family and she wanted to find them and join Daughters of the American Revolution to help others preserve the country’s history. Unfortunately she died before the advent of computers and all the information they made readily available. Had she lived a few years longer she would have learned that the Beavers family can claim among its ancestors numerous patriots - Captain Josiah Hill Rogers, John Rogers, Lt. Joseph Hill, Henry Crutchfield, Samuel Baldwin, William Henry Pickard, Thomas Rives, William Rives, William McPherson, Sr., Plyer Barber, Vachel Clark and Philip Gean to name just a few.

She was active in Eastern Star and loved to play bridge and read. Above all was her very great love for her family. She was the giver of advice, lender of money, and like her mother before her, the acknowledged head of the extended family. Throughout her life the one constant was her love of and devotion to her family. No matter how far away, when family needed her she dropped everything and dashed to their side. Hallie died from a stroke on January 1, 1982 following several

years of declining health – she was 88 years old. Her passing left a void in the hearts of her family, but many wonderful memories remain of a devoted, cheerful, intelligent, adventurous woman who lived life with love and courage.



A favorite photo of Hallie circa 1970

Read more about another adventurous spirit, Hallie's mother, [Mattie Rogers Beavers](#), and her job as a rural mail carrier in Chatham County.

** Milli Hammer was born in Maryland, graduated from high school in Balboa, Canal Zone, Republic of Panama, attended UNCG and UNCC. She married a Siler City boy, Charles Hammer in 1957. She and Charles now live in Chattanooga, TN. She is a member of DAR and very interested in genealogy.*