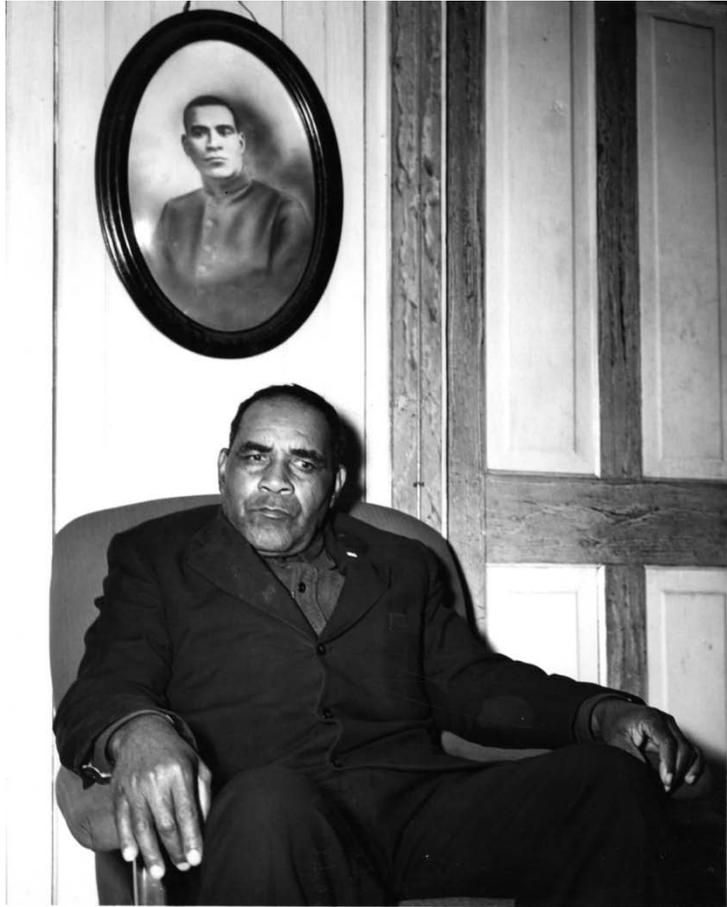


Surfman Joseph Hall Berry, USLSS

Joseph Hall Berry - the “patriarch” of the Berry/Collins family record of continuous service in the U.S. Lifesaving Service and U.S. Coast Guard.

Surfman Joseph Hall Berry, USLSS, was born on January 20, 1873, in Manteo, North Carolina. He enlisted in the U.S. Life Saving Service, the predecessor to the U.S. Coast Guard, on February 2, 1902, at 29 years of age, serving at the historic Pea Island North Carolina station. Growing up in the Outer Banks, he was familiar with the important role the station played in the community. Dorman Pugh, one of the crew members serving under Keeper Richard Etheridge when the heroic 1896 rescue of the schooner *E.S. Newman* occurred, was married to his sister, Angenora Berry. Given the closeness of the coastal community and his family ties to the Pea Island Station Joseph Hall Berry was also familiar with the practice the Life-Saving Service had of hiring locals like



himself who were experienced farmers and fishermen. This photograph showing him sitting in a chair was taken several years after he retired. The framed picture in the photograph is the only known picture showing him in uniform.

Surfman Berry served at the Pea Island Station for 15 years before retiring on December 31, 1917, after sustaining a work-related injury while helping to lift a Beebe-McClellan surfboat onto a carriage after returning from a shipwreck. His enlistment began a longstanding record held by the Berry/Collins family of continuous service in the Coast Guard and its predecessor, the Life-Saving Service. His son, Chief Boatswain's Mate Maxie M. Berry, Sr., was the last Officer-in-Charge of the Pea Island station and served in the Coast Guard for 25 years. His grandson, Lieutenant Herbert M. Collins, spent much of

his early career at the Pea Island station and served there for the duration of World War II. He was the last Surfman assigned to the station before it was decommissioned in 1947. After leaving the Pea Island station he went on to serve in numerous other shore and sea assignments, retiring on August 1, 1973, after spending 34 years in the Coast Guard, the longest period of any Berry/Collins family member. Also, Surfman Berry's son-in-law, Marshall Claude Collins, was known to occasionally serve as a "substitute" at the Pea Island station when temporary persons from the local community were employed there from time-to-time based on need. Another grandson, Maxie Berry, Jr., served in the Coast Guard for 30 years--rising to the rank of Lieutenant Commander on September 1, 1976, while working in the Office of Civil Rights at Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington D.C. where he served as an advocate for minorities in the service. Surfman Berry also paved the way for numerous other sons, grandsons and great grandsons to enlist in the Coast Guard, creating a remarkable record of continuous service by the Berry/Collins family for years to come.

The Berry/Collins family legacy, led by the patriarch Surfman Joseph Hall Berry, is an important part of Coast Guard history.

(This information was provided by Joan Collins, the great granddaughter of Surfman Joseph Hall Berry based on her and review of his U.S. Coast Guard file and personal knowledge of the Berry/Collins family history.)

