



## FLORENCE DANIEL SHEPHERD

**Yeoman Third Class  
United States Navy, World War I**

©By Larry Hume, VFW Post 8904, Center, Texas



In January 1917 the Germans began unrestricted submarine war and sank 540,000 tons of shipping in the first month. Because of their refusal to stop sinking American shipping the United States entered the World War on April 7, 1917 and the call to arms was answered with hundreds of thousands of men volunteering or drafted into service. The Navy increased the number of ships from three hundred to a thousand and then found themselves shorthanded. Women were still prohibited from joining the Navy but the Naval Act of 1916 unintentionally opened the door. It's vague language about the reserve forces did not prohibit women and the last element of the act stated, "all persons who may be capable of performing special useful service for coastal defense". No distinction of gender was made and on March 19, 1917 letters were sent to the commanders of naval districts informing them they could recruit women into the Naval Coast Defense Reserve to be utilized as radio operators, stenographers, nurses, messengers, and chauffeurs to name a few. These women would have the designated rank of Yeomen (F), the F for female and unofficially be known as "Yeomanettes". The Navy enlisted almost 12,000 women as Yeomen (F) and that released the same amount of men for sea duty.



YEOMAN 3RD CLASS

At age 21 Florence Daniel of Hot Springs, Arkansas and now living in Dallas, Texas took the oath of enlistment at the recruiting station there on September 23, 1918 and began a ten-month adventure as a US Navy Yeoman (F). They did not attend boot camp and went straight to an assigned duty station. Yeomanette Daniel was assigned to the Navy Department Personnel in Washington D. C. where she performed a variety of clerical duties with the Statistical Department, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery. She remained in the Navy until honorably discharged in the grade of Yeoman (F) 3 Class on July 17, 1919. She like all World War I Veterans was awarded the World War I Victory Medal and the honorable discharge lapel pin.

Sometimes known as Louisa Florence, she was born in the year 1897 in Hot Springs, Arkansas to Oscar and Permelia Williams Daniel. She is believed to be an only child. Her husband Mark Shepherd was born in Wilks County, Georgia and they met in Dallas after the end of World War I. Married in the early 1920's, Mark was also a World War Veteran and now a Dallas Police Officer. Florence had her own career as a seamstress in a dress shop there. His family had moved to Timpson, Texas in his youth and with son Mark, Jr. they returned to Shelby County in the mid 1930's.

In 1924 Congress voted to give a bonus to World War I Veterans in the amount of \$1.25 for each day served overseas and \$1.00 for each day served in the US but full payment would not be made until 1945. The early 1930's saw the depression and unemployed veterans wanted their bonus money now. Approximately 15,000, mostly unemployed veterans marched on Washington D. C. in May of 1932. Dubbed the "Bonus Army" they remained until the end of July when President Hoover ordered the Army to clear out the veterans. A bloody mess followed with the veteran's camp torched

and nearby hospitals overrun with casualties. A year later a second Bonus Army arrived under more peaceful conditions and while no bonus legislation was passed it did create the Civilian Conservation Corps where many of the veterans were able to find work. Three years later in 1936 Congress finally passed over a presidential veto a bill to disburse about \$2 billion in veterans' benefits. This laid the foundation for the 1944 G.I. Bill of Rights.



Florence was the only woman in Timpson who saw service during the World War and had the distinction of being the first and only one to make application for the soldier's bonus as reported by the Timpson Daily News February 15, 1936 edition. She was applicant # 118 and applied just after her husband Mark. Her bonus would be \$584.00.

Mark Shepherd passed away at the age of 51 at the Smith Clinic in Timpson, Texas of heart failure on March 3, 1948. Florence continued her career as a seamstress with a shop in Timpson for many years. In early 1971 she became ill and was transferred to Presbyterian Hospital in Dallas where she was a patient for eleven months, passing of pneumonia two days before Thanksgiving on November 23, 1971. Their son Mark Jr. born in January 1923 became a Texas Instruments Engineer and Executive passing in 2009 at the age of 86. Florence and Mark are buried in the New Prospect Cemetery, Timpson, Texas.



(Sources: <https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2006/fall/yeoman-f.html>; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American\\_women\\_in\\_World\\_War\\_I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_women_in_World_War_I); <https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/diversity/women-in-the-navy/world-war-i.html>; <https://www.abmc.gov/news-events/news/womens-history-month-navy-yeoman-world-war-1#.WdTUO2iPKCh>; <http://ww1centenary.oucs.ox.ac.uk/unconventionalsoldiers/the-she-soldiers-of-world-war-one/>; <https://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/OnlineLibrary/photos/prs-tpic/females/yeof-a.htm>; <http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/snprelief4.htm>.; <https://www.britannica.com/event/Bonus-Army>; Timpson Daily News, 2/15/1936),