

Phillip A. Carlson

Born: 8/27/ 1895
on Gills Rock

Died: Jan 24,1978

Period of Service: WW I and
WW II, career USCG
Sources: Cemetery 002 07,
B10 F2a JG, CS, JE, Am
Legion Scrapbook-box17

He entered service at Plum Island November 12, 1917. Stationed there at that time were William Pratton, officer in charge, George Moe, Matty Jacobsen, Wellington Lockhart, Adolph Thorstenson, Dick Johnson, Herman Erickson, and Ole Swenson.

Was sent to Block Island on the Atlantic Coast in WW I, then back to Plum Island on Feb 23, 1918, then to Two Rivers for a month on 2/29, 1920, and back to Plum Island in the Spring. Sent to Two Rivers as Motor Machinist First Class on October 1, 1926, then a year later back to Plum Island. In 1929 he was sent to Marblehead, Ohio to chase rum runners on Lake Erie. On August 26, 1929 his boat intercepted a runner boat with 300 cases of liquor a half mile off Stoney Point. The two runners jumped off the boat to swim to land but drowned. After giving witness in court, he went back to his boat which had been tampered with, and blew up when the engineer started the motor. Carlson was thrown 30 feet into the air, and suffered permanent but not disabling injuries, including broken legs, ribs, a dislocated hip, and a head wound. He was pulled out of the water after futilely swimming to the other boat. He was put on light duty for a year and then sent back to Plum Island. Was later sent to Milwaukee and Kenosha for eight years, returning again to Plum Island. Sent to three different stations in Michigan before retiring in 1946. In 1937, he spent 18 days on flood duty in Cairo, IL, bringing his lifeboat there on a flat car. He was in charge of five of the 150 boats that had been commandeered from around the Midwest for duty there.

Altogether, he spent 17 years of his career on Plum Island, and rescued mail carrier Pete Anderson and his horse many times from broken ice floes. Carlson said it was the smartest horse he had ever seen, knowing just when to step from one floe to another.

He was Commander of American Legion Post 402 in 1947.

Married Gladys Ella Anderson Boshka. Daughter Eileen and her husband Len Ellerbock both died in a car accident. His parents were Rev John Carlson and Ida Weborg.

He suffered an accident and wound up with a stiff leg. He had been a chief at the lighthouses on Plum Island, Milwaukee and Two Rivers. He built a small boat while on Plum Island. He had three grandchildren, and there were three generations of family in the US Coast Guard, something he was very proud of.