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# NORTHERN DUTCHESS NEWS & Creative Living

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## 17th annual Autism Walk and Expo set at Fairgrounds

by Stacey van den Thoon

The Hudson Valley Autism Society will hold its 17th annual Autism Walk and Expo on Sunday, April 29, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Dutchess County Fairgrounds in Rhinebeck. The event, sponsored in part by Anderson Center for Autism, was created to raise awareness and help raise funds for local programs; it's also an opportunity for families affected by autism to learn more about the many available local services and programs. The event will feature children's games, music, food and a community information tent.

Autism affects 1 in every 68 children in the United States and is referred to as a spectrum disorder, as individuals with autism can have a broad range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech and nonverbal communication in varying degrees of severity and symptoms. Autism affects people of all races, religions and economic levels. Those diagnosed with autism face a lifetime of developmental disabilities that can cause significant social, communication and behavioral difficulties. However, with behavioral intervention programs and therapy, individuals can experience significant improvements.

The Hudson Valley Autism Society is dedicated to helping people on the autism spectrum and their families by providing resources and connections with supportive and caring communities throughout Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Orange, Putnam, Sullivan and Ulster counties. Its mission is "to promote lifelong access and opportunities for people on the autism spectrum and

*continued on page 2*

## Historic FDR photo emerges in massive traveling exhibit



A portion of a 10-panel exhibit by the Dutchess County Historical Society is pictured above. Entitled, "Over Here: The Yet-to-be-told Stories of Dutchess County's Men, Women and Children During the World War 1917-1919," the massive exhibit will begin its run at the Wallace Center at the FDR site on May 1. *Photo courtesy of Bill Jeffway*

by Curtis Schmidt

An immense exhibit, which even includes a never-before-published photo of Franklin D. Roosevelt, is being prepared for a momentous unveiling by the members of the Dutchess County Historical Society (DCHS).

Entitled "Over Here: The Yet-to-be-told Stories of Dutchess County's Men, Women and Children During the World War 1917-1919," the 10-panel exhibit, taken largely from more than 330 glass plate negatives, will be on display beginning on May 1 at the Wallace Center at the FDR site in Hyde Park.

The opening event is set for 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 1, at the Wallace Center, following an annual DCHS meeting and special presentation. To attend, RSVP at (845) 293-7711 or bill.jeffway@dchsn.org.

It is also a traveling exhibit. Once it leaves the Wallace Center in early June, it will be available for display at town halls, libraries, schools and community centers throughout the county. It will also be displayed at the Dutchess County Fair, Aug. 21-26.

It's all part of the DCHS' salute entitled "Year of the Veteran" in this, the 100th anniversary year of the end of fighting in

World War I.

Program chairperson Melody Moore said historians from all over Dutchess County have contributed to the effort.

"The glass plate negatives form the backbone of the exhibit; however, we have also included images from period newspapers, posters of the time, draft cards and a wide range of graphics and illustrated scenes," she said.

One of the most important artifacts to emerge in the search is the never-before published photograph of then Assistant Secretary of the Navy Franklin Delano

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## Local Caddy restorer puts a shine on the American Dream

by Don Rosendale

In the middle of a scrum of news reporters and photographers and even a cable news cameraman surrounding the car, Frank Nicodemus was putting a sticker on the oil intake and Chris Semke doing a last check for loose bolts on a Cadillac that looked like one which just rolled off the assembly line last week. Only the tail fins gave away that it was a 1963 Fleetwood that had been lovingly restored by Frank and Chris down to the last upholstery stitch.

Therein lies a tale.

Fifty years ago, Sherlock Cascella fled a revolution in his native Argentina to come to Los Angeles. He was then 37 with \$20 in his pocket and a work ethic. He found employment as an iron worker and watched his pennies. In 1963, when he felt he'd "arrived," Sherlock purchased what he saw as the symbol of success in this country: a Cadillac. He paid \$9,000 for it, which is about \$70,000 in today's dollars.

Sherlock had a son, Americo, born in California. But Sherlock never gave up the Fleetwood; it was a daily driver



Frank Nicodemus and Chris Semke of Castle Cadillac, left, join owner Americo Cascella with his restored 1963 Cadillac Fleetwood. *Photo by*

*continued on page 5* Curtis Schmidt



Roosevelt. He is leading and marching in the September 1919 "Welcome Home" Parade on Main Street in Poughkeepsie.

Moore said the photo is quite ironic as Roosevelt is "marching briskly with purpose and pride two years before he was stricken with polio." She said it is further ironic in that he was also "unknowingly marching into an uncertain future. World War I was hailed as the 'War to end all wars' and Roosevelt had no way of knowing that 20 years later, he would be leading the U.S. in World War II."

Each panel revolves around a different subject of World War I and conveys how preparations for the war and the war itself affected the lives of all Americans in a variety of ways.

The exhibit, consisting of six-foot-high panels, begins with an introduction with a quote from President Woodrow Wilson: "The Supreme Test of the nation has come. We must all speak, act and serve together."

The following is a short synopsis of each panel.

(2) War is declared on April 6, 1917: The U.S. went from no mobilization to training and shipping soldiers overseas. More than 200 men from Dutchess County joined the effort.

(3) Women Respond: Women are called into non-traditional roles, such as mechanics, ambulance drivers and working in factories and farms.

(4) Persons of Color: The men enlisted separately. The country was still segregated. They served in units that were highly decorated, but they were not treated equally. They served with confidence and hoped to return on equal footing, but that did not happen.

(5) Boys and Girls find roles: Children helped in farm cadet programs, shaping public opinion and raising funds.

(6) Home Front Mobilization: There was no war budget. Money was raised with liberty bond drives. Food and other items were rationed and there were coal shortages – all to provide more for our soldiers.

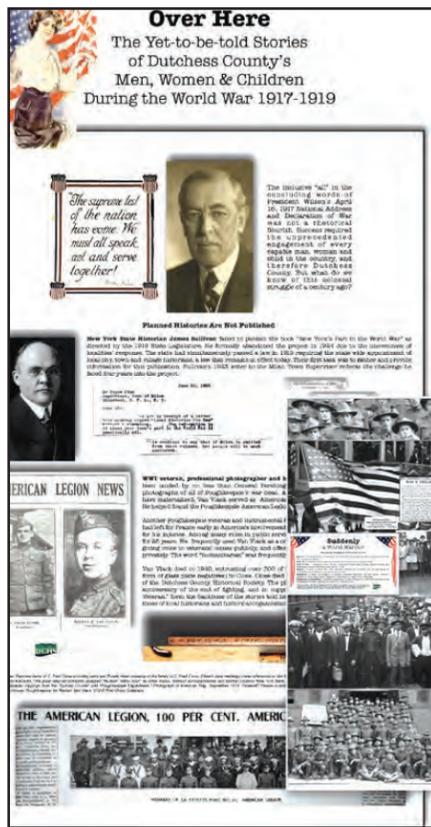
(7) American Identity: It was about being 100 percent American. There was backlash against Eastern Europeans. Examples included not teaching German in schools and music by Bach and Beethoven was not allowed.

(8) Welcome Home: Troops returned from fighting in France and Belgium to a country in transition. America did not sign the Treaty of Versailles and did not join the League of Nations. Americans fought to save democracy, but ironically turned to isolationism.

(9) Supreme Sacrifice: We take a look at soldiers who lost their lives and were buried in France.

(10) A Brief Shining Moment: This panel features the historic photo of Roosevelt. This was the "Great War" and no one anticipated World War II.

Moore and Justin Kemp will start off the program on May 1 at 6 p.m. with a presentation entitled, "Getting to Know My Great-great-grandfather Fred: His Coming of Age on a Pine Plains Farm via Honolulu." It is the story of a young man from Pine Plains who heads off to fight in the Spanish-American War. The talk is drawn from Fred Knickerbocker's letters home, his journals and the photographs he took while stationed in Hawaii. County Historian William P. Tatum will put Knickerbocker's personal experience in a larger historical context.



Above are two panels from the Dutchess County Historical Society's exhibit on World War I with contributions by historians from all across Dutchess County. Photos courtesy of Bill Jeffway

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## Salisbury Bank announces Time to Shine Scholarship

Salisbury Bank announces its 2018 Annual Time to Shine Scholarship Program. The Bank created its Scholarship Program in 2009 to assist students who have a proven financial need and who are already making a difference in their communities. Multiple scholarships may be awarded in the amount of \$2,500.00 each to assist eligible students seeking a college degree in a variety of programs. Ideal candidates will be students of academic achievement, who possess a variety of interests and leadership experience, show consistent community involvement, and the desire to make their world a better place.

Eligible students must be residents of Litchfield, Berkshire, Columbia, Dutchess, Orange or Ulster counties, and must be currently enrolled in a public high school, vocational, technical, or private school; be a homeschool student affiliated with such a

school; or be a graduate or GED recipient entering their first year of college.

Applicants must be planning to enter an accredited college or university as a first year undergraduate student for the 2018/2019 academic year. Applicants will be evaluated according to a 100-point system that takes into account financial need; academic achievement; community service; volunteerism; and leadership. The top scorers will also be interviewed by the Bank's Scholarship Committee.

The Scholarship Committee must receive completed applications and transcripts by 5 p.m. on May 8. For application packets and detailed information about the scholarship program, visit the Bank's website at [salisburybank.com/scholarship](http://salisburybank.com/scholarship) visit one of the Bank's fourteen branch locations.

## Roadwork closures on Route 376 announced

Motorists are advised that construction activities are expected to occur on the portion of Route 376 (Raymond Avenue) between College Avenue and Main Campus Drive (the main entrance to Vassar College) beginning Wednesday, April 25, and continue through Wednesday, May 9, weather permitting.

Trucks will not be permitted to drive on this portion of Route 376 beginning Monday, April 30, through Wednesday, May 9. A signed detour utilizing Grand Avenue will be in place for all trucks.

A full detour for all vehicles is currently expected for Thursday, May 3, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Motorists should anticipate some delays, and plan accordingly.

Drivers are asked to use caution when traveling through the work zone area and pay attention to all traffic control devices, including signs and flaggers.

Motorists are reminded that fines are doubled for speeding in a work zone. In accordance with the Work Zone Safety Act of 2005, convictions of two or more speeding violations in a work zone could result in the suspension of an individual's driver license.

For up-to-date travel information, call 511 or visit [www.511NY.org](http://www.511NY.org).

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# Year of the Veteran

1917-1919

## The long, hazy road to recognizing WWI Veterans from Town of Milan

*Editor's note: This is the first in a year-long series of articles by town, village and city historians about the World War 1 era as Dutchess County recognizes "The Year of The Veteran" with the Dutchess County Historical Society. The articles will appear every other week. If you have information relating to the time around WWI in Dutchess County, call (845) 471-1630 or visit [dchsn.org](http://dchsn.org).*

by Bill Jeffway

The search to identify and recognize veterans of Milan who served in World War I exposes challenges that are typical to the general task, and a few that are particular to the Town of Milan.

The 1919 to 1924 state-wide effort by New York State Historian James Sullivan to document and publish "New York's Part in the World War" failed due to an uneven response, at best. Particular to Milan, we find people then tended to have a stronger identity tie to their hamlet than the town of Milan. And hamlets like Rock City, Jackson Corners and Lafayetteville spread across adjacent towns, causing confusion. Furthermore, many draft-age men were itinerant farm workers, moving from town to town. The haziness is part of the story.

The official Milan response of June 22, 1923 to NYS Historian Sullivan was revealing. An un-named "local historian pro-tem" replied to Sullivan's request saying, "Rowland Sharp[e] and Clarence Swartz are the only two I know of who went ... Our boys who went from Milan don't seem to know much about it, and I can't find anyone who can give us much if

any information."

While the war was at its peak on May 18, 1918, the Poughkeepsie Eagle-News published two full pages (in small type) of all the men serving from Dutchess County. Two were shown to be from Milan: John A. Cole and Gilbert Gubler - a different two than noted by the Milan "historian pro-tem."

A week later, the same paper ran a kind of "correction." Someone local to Milan, remaining anonymous, estimated that there were "ten boys" from Milan. In addition to Sharpe, Swartz, Cole and Gubler just mentioned, an additional six individuals were mentioned: Philip Althiser, Dr. Lawrence E. Cotter, Webster Bathrick, William Ostrander, Robert H Holsapple, and a person of color "whose name we do not know." That person was David A. Clark. His enlistment papers and newspapers at the time tie him to Milan where he was working on the 80-acre Taylor farm on what is North Road in Lafayetteville. He was killed in service and is buried in France.

So what is our best understanding today? In addition to the list of "ten boys" published in the 1918 newspaper, we can add six more: C. Edwin Battenfeld, William Briggs, Harold Case, Robert Lincoln Coons, Ralph Lydecker Fulton and Thomas Remsberger. This totals 16. Fulton is found filed under Red Hook in NYS Archives, in a file with a photo labeled "unidentified photo." It was not until the extended Fulton family provided the photo to accompany this article that the connection and clarification was made.

Beyond that, there are at least six addi-



Ralph L. Fulton (left) was born in the Fulton Farmhouse, Turkey Hill, Milan. Dr. Lawrence E. Cotter was born in Milan on the Cotter Farm along what is today Route 199. Norton family photo and photo of the Dutchess County Historical Society



tional "World War" veterans who were born outside of Milan, did not reside here at war-time, but had prominent lives in Milan after the war. All are buried locally (birthplace and burial shown in parenthesis). Brings the total to 22.

They are James Bromiley (New York City/Milan Union Cemetery). Conrad Dittman, poultry farmer on Milan Hill Road (Poland/Rock City); Eugene Ohlson, elected Milan Town Assessor (Texas/Rhinebeck); Chelsey Thompson, served in British Navy (Canada/Milan Union); Jimmy Ward, popular dance hall owner in Lafayetteville (Nevada/Yeoman's); Angelo Rossi, lived at Case's Corners (Italy/Rhinecliff). In the case of

Rossi we are in good conversation with his extended family on clarifying particulars.

Profiles of these veterans are evolving (emphasize evolving!) at the Dutchess County Historical Website's online World War I "local" pages at [www.dchsn.org/WWI-Milan](http://www.dchsn.org/WWI-Milan) (not case-sensitive).

A former Milan Town Historian, Bill Jeffway is currently Milan Town Board member liaison to the Milan Bicentennial Committee and Executive Director of the Dutchess County Historical Society.



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## The Moviehouse needs a lift

Go Fund Me campaign established to install elevator in historic building

Robert and Carol Sadlon have operated The Moviehouse for almost four decades in a two-story 1903 historic Grange Hall that has been showing movies in the Village of Millerton since 1915. The place has morphed from a boarded-up, single-screen porno house in 1977 with a "For Sale due to the Lack of Customers" sign on the front door, into a state-of-the-art, four-screen digital theater which has become a regional destination point for entertainment, culture and learning experiences.

Technology has always been the driving force in the growth and innovation of The Moviehouse but, though their film equipment is state-of-the-art, for many years the Sadlons have been accommodating their

guests by moving films and events downstairs on different days and show times for those who find negotiating the stairs to the second floor too difficult.

With the installation of a new LULA commercial elevator they will be able to offer all films and events, to all people, at all times. An elevator to the second floor will also allow the creation of an accessible restroom for those with disabilities, serving the entire theater.

Installing an elevator in an historic listed building is no mean feat and not without expense, so the Sadlons have turned to the public for help to raise the \$140,850 needed to complete the project. With the community's help the elevator construction could start as early as this spring.

In gratitude, The Moviehouse is offering gifts, depending on the level of commitment, to project donors.

Visit [themoviehouselift.com](http://themoviehouselift.com) for more information and to make a donation. ❖

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# Year of the Veteran

1917-1919

## Rhinebeck residents had vital roles in 'The Great War'

*Editor's note: This is the second in a year-long series of articles by town, village and city historians about the World War 1 era as Dutchess County recognizes "The Year of The Veteran" with the Dutchess County Historical Society. The articles will appear every other week. If you have information relating to the time around WWI in Dutchess County, call (845) 471-1630 or visit dchsny.org. View the following installment online at dchsny.org/wwi-rhinebeck .*

by David Miller

One hundred years ago the world was entering the last year of "The Great War," the war to end all wars. Many events are happening this year commemorating the 100th anniversary of our county's part in the war. This article is about what life was like in Rhinebeck during the War.

The Doughboy statue in the village lists 200 Rhinebeck veterans. Eight men died in the war: Edward J. Bell, Roy T. Crusius, Edward A. Fitzpatrick, Arthur Haen, Alfred W. Lane, George N. Miller Jr., Guy Pindar and Henry M. Suckley. Henry left for France in January 1915, served for more than two years as a French ambulance driver and was killed by a bomb from a German

airship in March 1917.

In April 1917, a Dutchess County home defense committee was formed, headed by the editor of the Rhinebeck Gazette, Jacob Strong. The committee located land that could be put into service growing food for the war effort. The members asked that the growing of food be added to the curriculum of each school and that the newspaper create a weekly column to teach the public "agricultural preparedness."

In May 1917, a three-man committee was formed — A. Lee Stickle, Rhinebeck High School Principle E. C. Pullen and Rev. Francis Little — to build Rhinebeck's corps. The charge was "to find men between the ages of 16 and 64 who were of good moral character and were physically fit." This group could be called upon for a "breach of the peace, tumult, riot or resistance of process of the state or eminent danger thereof." They were to serve as an auxiliary to the National Guard. By the end of the month, 71 men had signed up for the defense corps and held their first meeting at the Starr Institute.

### Paying for the war

The U.S. Government had to figure out a way to pay for the war and in June began selling the first liberty loan bonds. Bonds were sold at banks and at the Gazette office. The bonds paid 3.5 percent and were exempt from taxes.

There were five Liberty Bond drives during the war and Rhinebeck exceeded its quota in all of them. You could buy a \$50 bond by making five \$10 payments. The third drive consisted of volunteers rolling a liberty ball from Buffalo to New York City, 422 miles.

At the end of the year, the government came up with another idea to raise \$2 billion in 1918. They decided that Liberty Bonds might be too expensive for some people coming in denominations of \$10 and \$50, so they came up with a budget plan: War Savings Stamps, costing just 25 cents. Individuals were given "thrift cards" with slots for 16 stamps. The completed card would be worth \$5.

As the holidays approached, the Red Cross started a Christmas Seal campaign for 1918. By January 1918,

Rhinebeck residents had joined the Red Cross and Mrs. Vincent Astor was made chair of the newly created Rhinebeck chapter.

### Building an army

Plans for the regular army continued. By mid-July, all eligible men in Rhinebeck were assigned draft numbers and the rules for exemption from the Army were announced.

Dutchess County was divided into two districts totaling 396 men. Rhinebeck was part of District 2, from which 215 men were required. Notices were sent out to 430 men to appear before the exemption board. The men were to appear in Millbrook and the town worked out transportation for the men.

They had to have a second call of men to be examined because too many filed for exemptions. Because so many men were getting exemptions, the government revoked all exemptions in November. In March 1918, the Draft Board moved to Rhinebeck. Tracy Dows and Benson Frost were members of the board.

### Food preparation

Herbert Hoover, head of the U.S. Food Administration, was placed in charge of increasing food production and preservation to support the war. Since women could not serve as soldiers in the Army or Home Defense corps, they helped with food preservation for the public and our troops abroad.

The important foods for the troops were wheat and meat. So, the public was encouraged to eat vegetables, fruit and fish. The Beekman Arms was recruited to be the Food Administration headquarters and conducted classes to teach women cooking and food preservation.

Backyards, school grounds and ball fields were used to grow food. As the winter began, the country experienced coal shortages and the public was asked to help. The country began mining more coal and people were encouraged to use wood to heat their houses and save the coal for the war effort.

### Dying of disease

In 1918, letters from the front and obituaries were printed in the Gazette. Millions died during the war from disease. You have to remember that this was 1918. Most of the soldiers were from small towns and farms,



who were now put into close contact with thousands of men under terrible conditions. They were exposed to diseases and they died.

If you got a scratch, let alone a bullet wound, there were no antibiotics and you died. More men died from diseases than being shot. Roy Crusius died from measles in a camp in the United States. Edward J. Bell and Guy Pindar died of pneumonia. Edward Fitzpatrick was actually killed in action.

On Oct. 4, Germany asked for an armistice; the Kaiser resigned and left for the Netherlands, where he spent the rest of his life. Everyone knew that the armistice would be signed at 11 a.m. on 11/11, so Rhinebeck had a victory parade.

This was not the end of the war. It took eight more months for the allies to draft the Treaty of Versailles, which was signed on June 28, 1919. Some historians believe that the crippling terms of the treaty are what lead to the rise of Hitler and next war. So, the next week, on July 4, 1919, Rhinebeck had a second victory party with a parade through the village welcoming home the troops from Europe.

A retired IT manager, David Miller is the chairman of the Rhinebeck Historical Society and chairman of the Village of Rhinebeck Planning Board.



Above: The Rhinebeck Defense Corps in 1917. Right: A Liberty Bond Drive in 1917 involved rolling a Liberty Ball from Buffalo to New York City. It was rolled through Rhinebeck on the way. Courtesy photos





# Year of the Veteran

1917-1919

## Amenia went above and beyond to rally behind cause

by Betsy Strauss

*Editor's note: This is part of a year-long series of articles by town, village and city historians about the World War 1 era as Dutchess County recognizes "The Year of the Veteran" with the Dutchess County Historical Society. The articles will appear every other week. If you have information relating to the time around WWI in Dutchess County, call (845) 471-1630 or visit [dchsny.org](http://dchsny.org).*

When America entered the Great War in April 1917, Amenia responded wholeheartedly to the call to arms.

On April 18, 1917, the Amenia Home Guard was organized at a meeting called with less than a 24-hour notice. William B. Smith of Wassaic and Joel E. Spingarn of Amenia initiated the meeting. Fifty-six men responded, enrolling as charter members of the Home Guard.

Mr. Spingarn was at that time already a member of the Home Defense Committee of Dutchess County, which had been holding daily meetings in Poughkeepsie. He explained to the Amenia men the plans of the Home Defense Committee, which involved the taking of the census, the increase and conservation of food supply, and the defense of life and property.

Joel Spingarn was Amenia's "mover and shaker" on many issues and was in the forefront of the preparedness movement. As a former professor at Columbia University and as the owner of the Harlem Valley Times, Mr. Spingarn had contact with county and national leaders, including men such as Teddy Roosevelt and Secretary of the Navy Franklin D. Roosevelt. He was well informed on the crisis of the hour.

Parenthetically, it is also important to note that Joel Spingarn was a man of ideas and ideals. His "Amenia Idea" was the Amenia Field Day, "an experiment in rural recreation," which he sponsored during the summer of 1910. At that time, he and his family were new residents at the historic



Troutbeck estate. Spingarn organized, with the help of others in the community, the field day each year for five years, through the summer of 1914, when the War broke out in Europe.

As for being a man of ideals, Mr. Spingarn has been credited as one of the founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). He and his brother Arthur Spingarn organized the first NAACP Conference at Troutbeck in 1916.

Of equal importance is the fact that Mrs. Amy Spingarn was a strong supporter of the Women's Suffrage Movement, a movement which was at its peak during the same decade as the War. She, too, was active as a speaker, a writer and a motivator.

It is not surprising that Joel Spingarn, though already 42 years old, would sign on for the first class of the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), at Madison Barracks, NY. By August 1917, Mr. Spingarn had received a commission as Major of Infantry and was ready for assignment.

Until he was sent overseas, and even after the Armistice, Maj. Joel Spingarn continued to give himself 100 percent toward The Cause, by rallying for the Liberty Loans, by encouraging Amenia residents to practice patriotism and thrift, by boasting of the accomplishments of the Red Cross and of the efforts made by school children, as well as by giving praise to our young men in uniform.

Another Amenia man who entered an early ROTC program, this one at Plattsburg, NY, was Roland S. Palmer, age 40. Mr. Palmer was a farmer and lawyer. He practiced law in both Amenia and New York City. In March 1917, Mr. Palmer auctioned off his cows and his farm equipment before heading north to Plattsburg. Upon the completion of his training, First Lt. Palmer was commissioned to the Ordnance Department and stationed in France.

In July 1917, 147 young men of Amenia were called by the federal draft board for examination for military service. By November

Above: Welcome Home is a close-up of one portion of a panoramic photo taken on Memorial Day 1919 in Amenia. Right: A photo of Joel E. Spingarn taken at the 1914 Amenia Field Day. Below: An American Red Cross poster encouraging those back home to help soldiers. *Courtesy of the Amenia Historical Society*

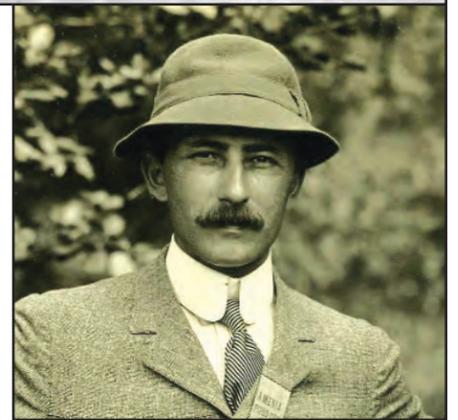
of that year, 23 men were listed in the "Roll of Honor." By the end of the War, a year later, 25 men were recorded as having served among the U.S. troops.

On the home front, Red Cross chapters were established during July 1917 in Amenia and in South Amenia (and later in Smithfield). The busy fingers of scores of women began knitting hundreds of socks and caps and began making yards and yards of bandaging material, among other items, for the boys "over there." These women surely did Knit their Bit!

Amenia was "over the top" in its contributions to the five Liberty Loan campaigns, collecting above and beyond the quota. The Yankee Trophy Train came through Amenia for the Fourth Liberty Loan campaign, exhibiting guns and other items captured from the Germans. A veteran Whippet tank was on display in Amenia for the Victory Liberty Loan campaign in May 1919, once more inspiring citizens to give. In total, for the War effort, Amenia subscribed to \$475,000 worth of bonds. Additional funds were contributed through the Red Cross, the YMCA and other community organizations.

The sad statistics at war's end, however, included seven fallen warriors.

Three were killed in action, Charles A.



Fowler, Russel G. Fulton, Walter Reynolds.

Four died of illness, Leon Fink, Arthur Merritt, Frederick Reynolds, Thomas Sheehy.

On Memorial Day 1919, a grand parade of children, dressed in white and carrying flowers and flags, processed with the townspeople to the cemeteries to honor the fallen. Afterward, all the citizens, including Red Cross nurses, Civil War veterans, returning soldiers and special speakers, gathered at Fountain Square to hear the words "Welcome Home!" as well as words of praise for those who served in the war, and for those who supported the war effort here at home. A panoramic photo was taken to commemorate the event. A close-up of one portion of the photo is shown here.



*Betsy Strauss is a member of the Amenia Historical Society*



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# Year of the Veteran

1917-1919

## Red Hook and the 'War to End All Wars'

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by Christopher Klose,  
Historic Red Hook  
Contribution by jim donick

"From the beginning of the United States ... the citizens of Red Hook have ever been loyal and patriotic, and always ready to respond ... in times of national peril. Hence, the entry of the country into the World War, April 6, 1917, found our citizens responsive to the nation's needs," reported Frances E. Crouse in her meticulous "Red Hook, New York in the World War."

Indeed, Red Hook was proud to make a difference "over there." Answering Uncle Sam's call to arms, 161 townsmen eventually served in the Armed Forces. Eight of them paid the ultimate price: either killed in action or succumbed to disease. Gone but not forgotten, each Memorial Day we honor their sacrifice: Victor Chapman, Charles Brizzie, Richard M. Coons, Fred Harris,

Bertram E. Lown, Harry A. Rhynders, William M. Sistare Jr. and John K. Smith.

Chapman, of Barrytown, was the first-ever American aviator to be killed in war. At the war's outbreak in August 1914, he joined the French Foreign Legion, spent a year in the trenches, then transferred to the French Aviation Service in late-1915. Earning his "wings," he helped found the famed Lafayette Escadrille (The Lafayette Flying Corps) of American volunteers, and was shot down in a dog fight near Verdun on July 23, 1916, while flying to a rear area on a mission of mercy. Chapman was carrying oranges to a hospital-bound comrade who had been badly shot up a few days previously.

Rhynders was one of the last Americans to die in action. A private in Company A, 327th Infantry, 82nd Division, he was killed on Oct. 10, 1918, in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. On the 10th of October Rhynders' division, having just relieved the 1st Division, was in action along the river Aire, just north of Fléville. Private First Class Harry Rhynders likely fell there. The war was over a month and a day later.

Both Chapman and Rhynders are buried in France.

On the home front, Red Hook turned in a mighty effort, as well. For example, Crouse recorded that the 291 members of the Red Hook circle of the Red Cross made "14,264 surgical dressings, 5 comfort kits, 199 pairs of socks, 99 sweaters and 28 scarfs [sic]." And that the 'Victor Chapman' Red Cross Circle had responded overwhelmingly to the Tivoli Times-Journal appeal to "You housewives who can put up those tempting delicious jellies ... send a few jars to France ... daily the wounded beg for jams, for chocolate, for jelly, for plain sugar ... it is a fact that wounds will not heal unless there is a certain amount of sugar in their systems." The Circle had produced at least "90 knitted garments, 225 [other] garments, 7 hot water bottles" and hundreds of surgical dressings "for the cause."

Astonishingly, our small farming town of some 3,800 people contributed a total of \$444,740 – just more than \$8 million in today's dollars – to the nation's five "Liberty Bond" drives between 1917 and 1919 to finance our participation in the war. Like the rest of the country, Red Hookers were responding to the government's

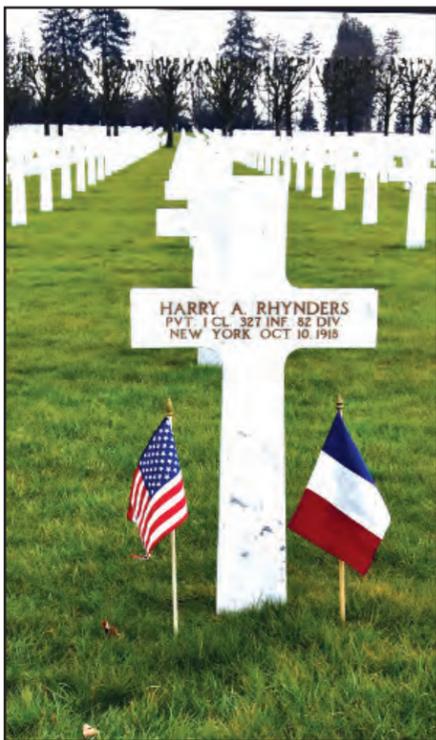


Red Hook's own Victor Chapman was the first American aviator to be killed in the war. Fellow townsman Harry A. Rhynders (see cross, below) was one of the last Americans to die in action in World War I. Bottom: The local Red Cross chapter was busy on the home front making sure the soldiers received necessary supplies, as well as sweet treats. *Courtesy photos and photo by jim donick*

patriotic call, but also to the promise of substantial returns when the bonds matured. Altogether, Americans raised a staggering \$20 billion, practically \$360 billion now, to equip our "doughboys" with the tanks, guns, planes, mules and horses, uniforms, boots, bayonets and helmets they needed for victory in Europe.

On June 1, 1919, Red Hook demonstrated its finest in a grand "welcome home!" celebration for our boys. The festivities began with a 1 p.m. ballgame between the "DePeyster team, of Madalin, and the Subway Giants, of New York, in Chanler park..." followed by a "3:30 parade headed by the Griffing Band ... 60 of the returned service men in uniform ... and a long line of flag and bunting trimmed automobiles containing veterans of the Civil War..." and, for the guests of honor, a "clam bake ... moving picture show at the Lyceum ... and dance with which the joyful activities of the

day ended." *A retired reporter and magazine editor, Chris Klose is a member of the board of Historic Red Hook.*



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# Year of the Veteran

1917-1919

## Bathrick's story underscores changing times ushered in by World War I

*Editor's note: This is part of a year-long series of articles by town, village and city historians about the World War I era as Dutchess County recognizes "The Year of the Veteran" with the Dutchess County Historical Society. If you have information relating to the time around WWI in Dutchess County, call (845) 471-1630 or visit [dchsny.org](http://dchsny.org).*

I came upon the story of Henry Bathrick quite accidentally, while pouring over old local newspapers on the [Fultonhistory.com](http://Fultonhistory.com) website looking for information on Pine Plains during World War I for the Dutchess County Year of the Veteran project. In The Pine Plains Register of Thursday, Aug. 14, 1919, there was a nice article about a homecoming celebration for the Pine Plains veterans being planned for September of that year.

But then a headline about a fatal car crash caught my eye, and like most people, my morbid curiosity drew me to it. As I read on, I realized that the victim had been one of our returned veterans. Henry Bathrick, age 24 and back from the war for only a few months, had been killed in an automobile accident in New York City. Like that of a fallen soldier, his was a life of unfulfilled promise, his sudden death just as heartbreaking and senseless. I was incredibly moved after reading about him and set out to learn more.

The Bathricks were ordinary farmers who had moved to the Mount Ross hamlet in the Town of Pine Plains from the Town of Stanford sometime after Henry Melvin Bathrick was born in 1895. However, as it turns out, Henry Bathrick was no ordinary farm boy, because at around the age of 20, before entering the military, he got a job in New York City as a fire patrolman. Patrolmen were different from firemen in that they didn't work for the fire department, they worked in partnership with it. Patrolmen were civilians underwritten by the insurance industry (in New York City this was the New York Board of Fire Underwriters), working alongside firemen and taking orders from the commanding officer of the fire department. While firemen put out fires, a patrolman's job was to prevent loss of life and property, especially in commercial structures, but it could be just as dangerous.

The New York City Fire Patrol was organized in 1839, predating the paid New York City Fire Department. Henry worked

for New York City Fire Patrol No. 5 at 307 West 121st Street in upper Manhattan. The newspaper says that he drove the fire truck for the patrol. Henry had moved in with New York City Deputy Fire Chief John F. King. Perhaps because of his youth and being so far from home, Chief King took him under his wing. One can almost imagine the chief promising Henry's mother not to worry, they would take good care of her boy. King's son Hugh visited the Bathrick home in Mount Ross on at least once occasion, as well.

As required by law, Henry registered for the draft on June 5, 1917. He was 22. On his registration card he claimed an exemption to help run the family farm. According to the local paper he had already enlisted in New York's Naval Militia in May. On July 16, 1917 he enlisted in the NNV (National Navy Volunteers), which allowed him to be mobilized into the federal Naval Reserves.

Henry did his training at Kingsland Point in North Tarrytown, Westchester County. During the spring target practice of the Atlantic fleet, Henry scored the record for gun pointer of the entire fleet, an accomplishment that his family must have been very proud of since "expert gunner" was engraved on his gravestone. After his training was completed, he was assigned to a transport convoy, the U.S.S. Seattle, Armored Cruiser No. 11.

The Seattle started out in June 1917 as an escort for the first American convoy to Europe and the flagship of Rear Admiral Albert Cleaves. On June 22 she encountered enemy submarines, but her helm jammed. She sounded a warning whistle for the other ships in the formation, which was followed by several tense moments, but the U-boats did not attack. It was later thought that the Seattle's warning whistle had scared them off. The remainder of her service in the war was uneventful.

Henry Bathrick was relieved from active duty in February 1919 and was probably anxious to get back to civilian life and his job with the fire patrol. In early August he visited home and informed his folks he had been transferred downtown, but we don't know if this was something he was happy about or not. On Aug. 12, right after returning to the city, he was involved in a fatal head-on collision while touring around Manhattan with his fiancé and her friend in his new Overland car. According to the Aug. 13 article in The New York Herald,



Pine Plains veteran Henry Bathrick is buried in Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery. Right: The detail of his headstone shows him in his Navy uniform. During World War I, Bathrick served on the cruiser Seattle, pictured below in a news clipping following its return from France. *Courtesy photos*



Henry's car flipped twice, the second time pinning him beneath it and killing him instantly. He was in his fire patrolman's uniform at the time of the crash. His two passengers and the other driver survived.

Henry was given full military honors at his funeral, with members of the 3rd Division Naval Militia in attendance dressed in their regulation blue uniforms and white hats. He was buried in Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery.

It is said that World War I ushered in the modern era, not just in terms of how wars are fought but also with significant developments in the fields of technology and science. Society and culture were transformed, and new systems of government emerged while others perished. Like the young soldiers who died from any of several advances in deadly weaponry, including the first large-scale use of poison gas in wartime, Henry's death in an automobile accident, before the benefit of traffic laws and safety regulations we now take for granted, can perhaps be seen as an equally

adverse consequence of this new world order. One hundred years later, we are still trying to come to terms with it.

*Dyan Wapnick has lived most of her life in Dutchess County, growing up in Hyde Park and making Pine Plains her home for the last 30-plus years. She has a BA in history from Clarion University and in 2009 she retired after a 30-year career with IBM. She is a former president of the Little Nine Partners Historical Society in Pine Plains and has authored several publications on local history for the society.*



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# Year of the Veteran

1917-1919

## Camp Whitman in Beekman was training ground for WWI troops

by Thom Usher

*Editor's note: This is part of a year-long series of articles by town, village and city historians about the World War 1 era as Dutchess County recognizes "The Year of the Veteran" with the Dutchess County Historical Society. If you have information relating to the time around WWI in Dutchess County, call (845) 471-1630 or visit [dchsny.org](http://dchsny.org).*

In early 1916 The United States government needed places to train large numbers of troops, following President Wilson's call for 17,000 National Guard troops to safeguard the border with Mexico, where frequent border raids were taking place during the Mexican Revolution. Camp Whitman in Beekman, a short trip from New York City, was established on the State Industrial Farm (prison farm) on Route 216, for the mobilization training of New York State Troops. The camp also was in use during the First World War. More than 500,000 troops were trained at the camp, which was closed by 1920.

The 825-acre site was named for then-Gov. Charles Seymour Whitman. New York State appropriated \$500,000 for the camp water and sewer systems, buildings, latrines, baths and more.

The first troops arrived only six weeks

after construction of the camp had begun. Most of the men who were sent to Camp Whitman came from New England and the Eastern states. Troops from New York accounted for the largest number. The camp was a melting pot of nationalities, and most of the first troops were recent Irish immigrants. Few people had expected any black troops to be sent to camp, but came they did from New York City to be known as the "Harlem Hell Fighters."

Troops living in tents on wooden platforms had difficulties staying dry in the spring rains, cool in the hot summer and warm in the crispy fall.

British and French personnel came to the United States to help train the doughboys in gas and trench warfare, but it was mostly marching, target practice and small unit movement.

It was a remarkable achievement to build the camp; even as soldiers were reporting for training, equipment became a logjam. The first troops showed up and trained with wooden rifles. There were delays in receiving uniforms and boots. The camp needed roads, sewage, barracks, mess halls, headquarters buildings, hospitals and a post office—all the things needed to function—and they needed to build them all at once.

There were, oddly, few disciplinary

problems, considering the thousands of men who passed through Camp Whitman. Records indicate less than 1,000 charges for minor offenses and very few court-martials. The most serious problem the camp faced was the influenza epidemic of 1918 and 1919.

As we researched Camp Whitman, we came across information jotted down in bibles, letters and postcards from camp to loved ones, giving us an inside view of life at the camp. Some are funny or heartbreaking and others terrifying, but all are informative.

The day started at 5:30 a.m., when the bugler blew reveille, and ended at 11 p.m. with "Taps." Weekends provided time for strolling about town and recreation including baseball, football, boxing and volleyball.

During World War I, the government established a commission to aid dealings between Army camps and nearby towns and cities, to develop a recreational morale program for the American military and to act as a system of attack on the evils customarily associated with camps. Local businesses were checked to avoid price-gouging and the transaction of liquor carefully

organized.

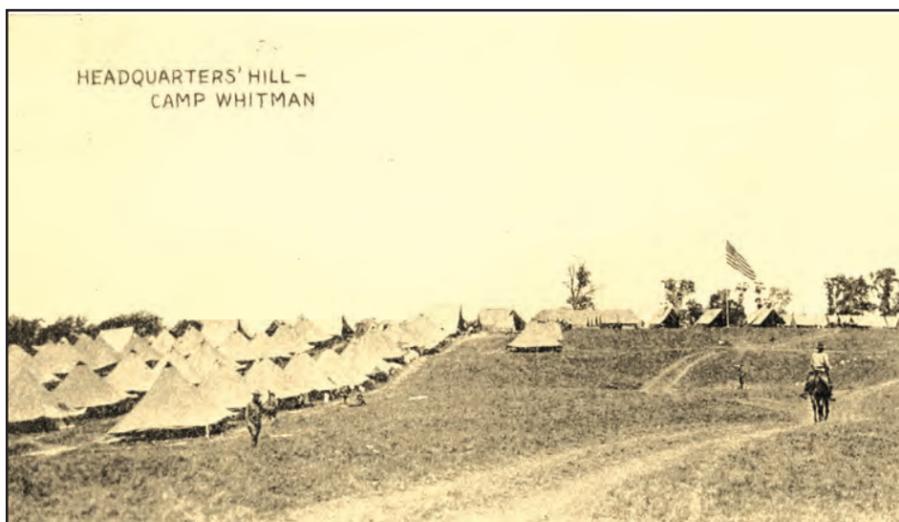
The folks from town provided picnics, socials and band concerts; and local church organizations joined together to make everyone feel at home. On Sundays, as many as 500 soldiers went to local church services and were invited to individual households for dinner after.

Of course, not everyone followed the rules.

Investigating the different experiences of the Beekman boys at camp on the home front during the war, I've had more than my fair share of "wow" moments of encounter. From tears to deeply moving, these World War I notes are full of amazing and forgotten tales just waiting to be told. "The Button War" is one of my favorite stories I've discovered so far:

In a letter from Peter Mulligan to his brother Patrick (Paddy) we learned of the "Button War." In February 1918 they began forming the 42nd Infantry "Rainbow" from National Guardsmen of 26 states. New York's contribution was the 165th Infantry, previously known as the Fighting 69th Irish Regiment, totally made up of Irish immigrants, and what vacancies they had were

*continued on page 21*



Above: This photo shows Headquarters Hill at Camp Whitman in Beekman, where large numbers of troops were trained during World War I. Right: Private Harry Mallen and Private Paddy Mulligan of the all-Irish 69th Infantry were part of a rebellion known as The Button War, prompted by having to wear British uniforms in the early days of the mobilization. Below: Troops gargle salt water to avoid influenza, one of the biggest problems the camp faced in 1918-1919. *Courtesy photos*



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## Pleasant Valley's Role in the first World War 1917 to 1919

By Melodye Moore and Bill Jeffway, Dutchess County Historical Society. Based on their presentation recently hosted by the Pleasant Valley Historical Society.

The United States entered The Great War unprepared. A massive mobilization of the entire population and the economy was required to support the war effort. Everyone was called upon to do their part and each and every town and village in Dutchess County stepped up and "went over the top."

On July 2, 1922, in response to a request from NY State Historian James Sullivan for information regarding the war effort in each city, town and village in the state, Miss Anna Landis, the local historian for Pleasant Valley wrote: "I am mailing, under separate cover, the records of the ex-service men from the township of Pleasant Valley, Dutchess Co. Some of course, were unobtainable, and in case of nearly all the responses, there was a lack of personal items, and an apparent unwillingness to go into detail even when especially requested. I really regret not having made a better showing."

While Miss Landis was disappointed in the amount of material she was able to gather, her report illustrates clearly the variety of ways that the towns of Dutchess County responded to the call to muster support for the troops.

The need for funds was enormous and one of the ways money was raised was through the sale of Liberty Bonds and a Victory Bond. The purchase of these bonds by banks, financial groups and individuals was seen not only as a way to raise money, but as a way to fulfill patriotic duty. The town of Pleasant Valley was divided into two districts, Pleasant Valley and Salt Point. While the records of loan sales for Pleasant Valley were not recorded those of Salt Point reveal that \$82,000 was raised during the first four loan drives in 1917 and 1917. An additional \$3,000 was raised in 1919 during the Victory Loan Drive that occurred after the armistice.

Citizens also contributed in other, more hands-on ways. At Salt Point the Red Cross unit was organized on July 15, 1917 with Mrs. Arthur Stanley as chairman and a membership of about 175. They met twice a week for sewing and gauze work. In Pleasant Valley, Mrs. Norman J. Doty served as chairman. The members met in the Library for similar work and knitting of all kinds was done at home. A Home Defense Company was organized in May, 1917, within a month of the declaration of war and members drilled regularly at the Fireman's Hall.

Homefront mobilization and the need to sacrifice for the war effort became very personal to Pleasant Valley when on August 20, 1918, Rev. Frank Malven, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church in the village, was appointed Hut Secretary of the Y.M.C.A to work with the American Expeditionary Forces in France. The church granted him a leave of absence and on October 1, 1918 Pastor Malven left for New York City to receive training under the orders of the National War Council of the Y.M.C.A. of the United States. During the World War the Y.M.C.A. raised more than \$235 million dollars in support of the cause and became the primary conduit of good will directed towards service men. 90% of all "welfare" work with the AEF in Europe was performed by the Y.M.C.A. As part of this work 400 "huts" and tents were established to provide recreational and religious service. Located in cities and behind the front these

“huts” provided a comfortable sanctuary and meeting place for soldiers. Malven’s service was shortened by the November 11, 1918 armistice and he was Honorably Discharged on December 5, 1918 and returned to Pleasant Valley. His willingness to serve is made even more poignant by the fact that his son, Donald Malven was serving in France where he would ultimately engage in the Somme and Champagne-Marne Defensive, and the Aisne-Marne, St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne Offensive campaigns.

In addition to the home mobilization statistics, Miss Landis also provided a list of 34 Pleasant Valley men who served and a summary sheet detailing the service record of many of the men. Most often our thoughts of men in service relate directly to armed conflict on the front with little thought given to the “behind-the-scenes” efforts required to keep the military operational. The service records of the men of Pleasant Valley give a clear idea of the many roles required during wartime: cooks, hospital workers, guards, buglers, librarians, suppliers to rail heads, runners and stretcher bearers, wagoners, and drill masters. Two specific examples show the diversity of responsibilities. Harry Cady was stationed at Metz and repaired fighting planes. During his time there, his record reports that he saw many planes and pilots leave that never returned. William L. Lester almost never made it to France. His ship, the S.S. Tuscania, was torpedoed and sunk off the coast of Scotland. Picked up by a small ship and taken to England he was sent on to France. Trained in forestry at home he spent his first weeks in France learning the elements of Army construction and ultimately was sent to build roads and erect trench linings at the front.

When the Town of Pleasant Valley came together on Armistice Day, November 11, 1919, there was an air of celebration given the recent return of their “boys.” Residents were dressed in what was described as “gala attire.” A roast chicken supper was available for the returning soldiers and sailors. There was a buffet luncheon for parents, guests and relatives of those just home. A dance in Fireman’s Hall with full orchestra rounded things out.

There was a quieter moment to reflect upon the four men who did not return. Testimony and thanks were given in their honor by local NYS Supreme Court Justice Joseph Morschauer. No one there would have been surprised by what was revealed. The scale and deadliness of the so-called Spanish Influenza was tightly woven in to the deadliest of military wars. More soldiers died from “flu” than died in combat action in war, despite the war’s unprecedented massive military scale.

The government’s estimate of the flu’s impact at its peak, September through November 1918, is that it sickened 26% of the Army—more than one million men—and killed almost 30,000 before they left for France. During this same period, in France, the US army was engaging in its largest battle in military history at the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. The flu, and that battle, are central to the three Pleasant Valley men who all died in October 1918. The fourth died six months later.

Arthur Martin died October 16, 1918. Martin was inducted less than five months earlier on May 25, 1918. He arrived in France in July 1918. By October he was dead from the flu. We are unsure as to where he is buried. It was announced, correctly, that he was the first in Pleasant Valley man to die in active duty in the war. A gold star was added to the flag of the Presbyterian Church.

But only two days later a second name would be added to the list.

George Henry Adams died October 18, 1918. He was inducted in September of 1917 and was part of the large "Farewell Parade" in Poughkeepsie (see photo). Arriving in France in April 1918, he was killed in action during the massive Meuse-Argonne offensive six months later. Considered the largest military battle involving the US up to that time, it involved 1.2 million US soldiers. In the ten days between October 10 and 19, there were 4,000 Americans who were either killed or wounded. During that period, in the 326<sup>th</sup> Infantry, where Adams served, 962 were wounded. And Adams was among the 172 who were killed. He is buried at the American Meuse-Argonne Cemetery in France.

Benjamin Braddock Died October 28, 1918. The American Armed Forces were not integrated until 1948, so Benjamin Braddock would have responded to the draft call specifically for a certain number of persons of color. Braddock was one of seven such individuals who left via the Poughkeepsie train station in August 1918. He was initially part of a "Depot" unit which helped with the leaving and arriving of soldiers, at Camp Upton on Long Island which was the nations' jumping off point for France. His assignment was changed on September 11, 1918. He served overseas from September 20<sup>th</sup>. This was the precise moment the flu was arriving at Camp Upton. Its transmission can be traced with surgical precision. Arriving in the US in Boston in August in 1918, officers at Camp Upton reported, it arrived there on September 13, 1918, with 38 hospital admissions. Within 40 days Camp Upton had sent 6,131 men to the hospital for influenza. Braddock died on October 28, 1918 in France. Two years later, his body was returned to the US and he is buried in Millbrook.

The fourth man to die was Everett Tompkins.

Everett Tomkins died April 24, 1919, having arrived back from France two days earlier and having participated in the massive Welcome Home parade in New York City. Tomkins was inducted almost exactly 12 months earlier, April 21, 1918. He survived a tour of duty in France that had started in June 1918. He died of spinal meningitis in a Poughkeepsie hospital. In an unfortunate but common twist, a younger brother and a younger sister had both died at home in Pleasant Valley of the flu six months earlier during the October 1918 peak.