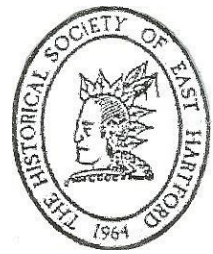


Historical Society of East Hartford

Newsletter, May 2017



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Spring has finally arrived ending what turned out to be a brutally cold and stormy late winter season. The March 15th 2017 regular meeting and program at the Library had to be canceled for the first time in many years due to a heavy wet snow crusted with sleet that fell the day before. The decision to cancel should have been made earlier than it was and I take full responsibility for that. After I had a full day of digging out from the snow and nearly collapsing from exhaustion, we canceled because road conditions were not good and some of you were still snowed in. Our program with Lance Kozikowski as Captain Stephen Buckland will be re-scheduled at a later date.

In the March newsletter, we said the Historical Society will be involved in two state-wide events next month in June. Member participation is encouraged so please note the dates and times:

- As part of the Connecticut Forest & Park Association's 2017 Trails Day weekend, the Historical Society will host a short educational walk on Sunday, June 4th from 2:00 to 4:00 pm. The tour will leave from the Elm Street parking lot near the entrance to Center Cemetery. After a one hour tour of the Cemetery, there will be an optional round trip walk on the Hockanum River Linear Park Trail to the bridge at the back end of Martin Park. Ruth Shapleigh-Brown and I will be co-leaders of this walk.
- We will again participate in Connecticut Open House Day on Saturday, June 10th between 1:00 and 4:00 pm at Martin Park. All three of our Museum buildings will be open that day and if we get nice weather, you can expect the largest turn-out of the season. It is our busiest day because of all the great publicity from the State Department of Tourism. This will be our only opening in the month of June, so some volunteers are really needed.

During the summer, we plan to have the museum buildings open for Tours every Sunday afternoon (except for holiday weekends) during July and August. Some house cleaning first has to be done to remove the dust, dirt and spider cobwebs. A sign-up sheet will be made available at our May 17th meeting for a yet-to-be announced clean-up day, for volunteering as docents on Saturday, June 10th and on Sunday afternoons during the summer from July 9th through August 27th.

Our May 17th meeting at the Library will feature a most memorable program on East Hartford's residents who participated in the Great War of 1914 – 1918 called at that time "the War to end all wars" and is perfectly timed to coincide America's 100th anniversary of entering that world conflict. I'm hoping for better than average attendance. Please check your calendars before arriving so that you can select a date or two on the sign-up sheet. Our Museum buildings need to be comfortably staffed for the days we are open this season.

Craig Johnson, President

EAST HARTFORD IN WWI – THE TOWN, THE EVENTS, THE PEOPLE.....

MAY PROGRAM OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Local Historian and East Hartford resident, Thomas Hogan, has compiled a chronology of the Town's participation in World War I, or as the world came to know this conflict, "The War to End All Wars". His talk is in commemoration of the WWI Centennial in 1917.

Tom will share his research with the membership of the Historical Society of East Hartford and he welcomes all who have personal stories, photos and artifacts of their own, related to WWI and the town, to attend and share in this experience.

Please join us on May 17th at the Raymond Library, downstairs in Meeting Room #1. We open with a short business meeting at 7:00pm, followed by our speaker at 7:30pm. The meeting and presentation is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served.

Bette Daraskevich, Program Chair

In Commemoration of the U.S. World War One Centennial

East Hartford in World War I

The town, the events, the people



Presented by local resident and
historian Tom Hogan

Wednesday, May 17th
7:30 pm – 9:00 pm
Raymond Library
840 Main Street



Historical Society of East Hartford

HONOR LIST FROM ST JOHN'S CHURCH



Shirley Finney from St John's Episcopal Church in East Hartford, now closed, recently donated this Honor List from that church to the Historical Society of East Hartford. The list with its frame (left) is 14.5" x 22.5". It seems to be a circa WWI list of names of service men associated with that church

A Very Brief Background on World War I

In late June 1914 Archduke Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian empire, and his wife were assassinated by a Serbian nationalist in Serbia. This was the event that precipitated WWI. In a month the Austro-Hungarian empire declared war on Serbia. The empire had the support of Germany. The Russian empire supported Serbia. France, Russia's ally, fearing Germany, mobilized. On August 1, 1914 Germany declared war on Russia. WWI had begun. In a few days Germany would enter neutral Belgium on its way to invade France. The British empire would honor its treaty with Belgium and enter the war on the side of Belgium, France, and Russia. Italy would join Britain, France, Russia. The Ottoman empire by treaty would support Germany. By the war's end on November 11, 1918, thirty-two countries had been combatants with perhaps 65,000,000 combatants.¹ The war would be fought largely in Europe on the western front between France and Germany and on the eastern front between Russia and Germany. In the end the Allies – the British empire, France, Russia, Italy, etc – and the United States would defeat the Central Powers – Germany, the Austro-Hungarian empire, the Ottoman empire, etc. The Russian, Austro-Hungarian, German, Ottoman empires would cease to exist. New countries would be formed from their lost territories. Old political ideologies would be replaced by new ones. There were 38 million military and civilian casualties from the combatant and neutral countries, 2% of their populations.² While European economies were in shambles, American industry had supported Europe in the war and prospered. After the war it would be the leading economy in the world.

At the beginning, America remained neutral. But early in 1917 Germany restarted unrestricted submarine warfare against ships nearing British waters, America's long time trading partner, causing the loss of American ships and lives. At the same time a secret, German telegram to Mexico, the Zimmerman telegram, offered Mexico the return of its lost territory - the states of Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico - if Mexico would join with Germany in the war. These events outraged public opinion in America and on April 6, 1917 at President Wilson's request Congress declared war against Germany.

From April 1917 to the war's end more than 2,000,000 Americans served in western Europe; more than 50,000 were killed in action³. East Hartford⁴ sent 576 into the service, 571 men and 5 women. Of these 17 men and 1 woman would not return; 1 serviceman would return but would die before the war ended.

St John's Honor List

At home the servicemen would be remembered in a popular new way. Each active serviceman of a group (work, family, etc) had a star placed on its group's service flag. This flag was of white material bordered in red with a blue star for a person in service, a gold star for someone who died in service, and sometimes a silver star for someone who returned home wounded. In 1917 Travelers was said to have the largest service flag at 32' long x 20' wide

1 "World War I Casualties", http://aenet.esuhsd.org/citizenship_lessons/connie/wwI_q.html

"World War I Statistics", <http://www.statisticbrain.com/world-war-i-statistics/>

2 "World War I Casualties",

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_I_casualties#Casualties_by_1914.E2.80.9318_borders

3 "...Apr 06, America Enters World War I", <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/america-enters-world-war-i>

4 East Hartford's Share in the World War, Bidwell, Daniel, Overdraft Press, East Hartford, CT, 1929, pg. 32

More, see "Seeing History: East Hartford in World War I" by Tom Hogan, www.youtube.com/watch?v=hnNW7dJ_ENU

which it displayed Wednesday morning Oct 24, 1917 over its main entrance⁵. At the Hunt Memorial Building in Hartford their service flag had 13 stars and the names of those so honored were recorded on an honor roll⁶. In a May 20, 1918⁷ article in the Hartford Courant mention is made of the display of a service flag with 34 stars on it at the church service at St John's in East Hartford on Sunday May 19, 1918. Mention is also made of a list of 34 names of those worshipers from St John's who were serving. The Courant's list of thirty-four names basically agrees with thirty-four names on St John's Honor List. There are, however, spelling differences and name modifications, eg Courant writes "Vangasbeck", St John's writes "Van Gasbeck", Courant writes "Harold E. Peterson", St John's writes "Harold Edward Patterson", etc. Also, the Courant did say there were "a few more that will be added soon" which could explain the additional five names on the Honor List: Claude Edward Meade, Raymond Francis Leslie Hansen, Frank George Heinig, Henry Schedts (sp?) Bryant, Clarence Dewey Farnham. When the final five names were added to St John's Honor List is yet to be determined. The full Honor List is as follows:

Honor List

Worshipers at St. John's Church, East Hartford in the service of the United States during the great War.

A.D. Aug. 1, 1914 –

Arthur Grosvener Aldrich	Army	Warren Putnam Newcome	Army
Harold Francis Amerman	Army	Harold Edward Patterson	Navy
Daniel Doane Bidwell	Publicity	Thomas M Phillips	Navy
Joseph Barry Bidwell	Navy	Harry Nelson Smith	Army
Arthur Henry Bryant	Army	Raymond Arthur Sorensen	Army
Enoch Chance	Army	Ernest Edward Stone	Army
Joseph Chance	Navy	Clarence Edward Swan	Army
Robert John Dixon	Navy	Dr Edward Hamilton Truex	Med S
Clinton Edward Driscoll	Navy	John Wesley Van Gasbeck	Navy
Robert Duff	Army	William Henry Van Gasbeck	Navy
William Herman Fattig	Army	Ray Clinton Van Gasbeck	Army
Arthur Clayton Foley	Navy	Richard Lewis Birch	Army
Edgar James Foley	Army	Raymond Francis Leslie Hansen	Army
Le Roy George Gile	Army	Frank George Heinig	Army
Warren Lester Hale	Aviation	Winfield Adolf Linstrom	Army
Henry Gregory Hale	Navy	William Boysen	Navy
Dr John Butler McCook	Med S	Henry Schedts (sp?) Bryant	Army
Philp James McCook	Army	Clarence Dewey Farnham	Navy
Anson Theodore McCook	Army		
Claude Edward Meade	Army		
John Howard Foley	Navy		

Notes on Some Servicemen from St John's Honor List

Before the war these servicemen were farmers, lawyers, doctors, machinists, railroad men, clerks, salesmen. They fought with the British before America entered the war. They saw naval and air service, medical and signal service; at least one was a correspondent. They were stationed in Britain, France, Italy, on the sea, and in America. At least one saw service from another state. No name is on the list of dead on East Hartford's WWI monument.

William Herman Fattig⁸ was born in S Manchester in 1891; he was a machinist, lived with his family in East Hartford before entering service June 1917; served at Sandy Hook Proving Ground, NJ and Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD; corporal May 1918; Honorably discharged Feb 1919.

⁵ "Travelers to Have Large Service Flag; at Hunt Memorial", Hartford Courant, Tues Oct 23, 1917, pg. 8

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ "Service Flag for St. John's", Hartford Courant, Mon May 20, 1918, pg. 4

⁸ William H Fattig, Connecticut Service Roster 1917-1920, Registration Card and Service Roster, fold3.com

Warren Leslie Hale⁹ was the son of the editor of the East Hartford Gazette. In the service he was the only airman from East Hartford. He was called in May 1917, was sent to Paris, then to Italy for training and service in protecting Naples from the frequent night raids there. He was sent back to France for more training and then to the Chateau Thierry front. He attended staff college in Langres and flew over Metz with British airmen. He was promoted to 1st Lieut in March 1918 and was discharged Feb 10, 1919.

Dr John Butler McCook was the son of Rev John J McCook, founder and longtime pastor of St John's Church. Dr John B McCook was a Hartford physician who had served in the Spanish-American War. After America entered WWI he offered to serve in an organization camp but his offer was not accepted, perhaps because he was 50 and had been "deafened in the Spanish War"¹⁰. Being determined to serve, he offered to serve in France in the Red Cross without pay. His family had been there several times and he was fluent in French. By September 1917 the medical section of the Red Cross notified him of his acceptance¹¹. In early 1919 Major E. Terry Smith, M.C.U.S.A., of West Hartford presented a letter from the Hospital Temporaire Anglais, d'Arc-En-Barrois, Haute Marne to the Courant¹² commending Dr McCook on his service since June 1918 caring for French soldiers and in his spare time the "local populations". He is "indefatigable" and a "soldier of the highest type". And a second letter writes he had charge of a "large surgical service which he handled with great skill". His patients loved him because of his "extreme kindness". After the war Dr McCook would return to Hartford and his medical practice. His practice would eventually cover 50 years. He would die in June 1946.

Philip James McCook¹³ was one of two sons of Dr John Butler McCook. He was raised in the Butler-McCook House in Hartford, long the McCook family home. This house still holds many of his personal effects. He served in the Spanish-American War. He had moved to New York to practice law and entered WWI from that state. He served with the rank of major. On November 6, 1918 in the Meuse-Argonne offensive he was severely wounded. While recuperating in Bordeaux he started writing his "Recollections of and Notes on the German War". For his heroism which led to his injury he would be awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. On June 12, 1919 he would be honorably discharged with a 30% physical disability. After the war he became a New York State Supreme Court Judge. In WWII he would serve in the advocate general's office.

John Howard Foley¹⁴ was in the Navy in New York in WWI; seaman 2nd class; on a receiving ship; in the Naval Overseas Transportation Service. He entered service May 1918; was discharged June 1919, NY.

Henry Putnam Newcome^{15,16} (**Newcomb**) was born in Hartford in 1859. On his father's side he was the great-grandson of General Warren, killed at Bunker hill; on his mother's side he was great-great-grandson of Connecticut's Revolutionary War hero General Israel Putnam. In his youth he lived with his mother and step-father, Charles M Bidwell, in East Hartford at the Bidwell farm in Burnside. When he was a student at Hartford high School he and his friends used to walk across the covered bridge crossing the Connecticut River. This was before the days of the trolley car and "even before the horse car service was extended over" the river. He went to West Point and graduated in 1882. For the next 23 years he made the military his career finally retiring in 1911 as a colonel. When WWI started, he applied for active duty and was assigned to duty in Boston as Department Inspector of the Northeastern Department. He remained in Boston after he retired and died there in 1927. He is buried at West Point.

In Conclusion

Some research has been done on this Honor list. More can certainly be done to tell these men's stories.

9 "Lieu Hale Back From Italy", Hartford Courant, Thurs Feb 6, 1919, pg. 8

10 Trinity TriPod "Dr McCook Survived by Six children", Fri Jan 14, 1927, pg 1, col 4.

<http://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3309&context=tripod>

11 "Dry J. B. McCook to do Red Cross Work", Hartford Courant, Tues Sep 4, 1917, pg. 3

12 Dr. E. Terry Smith Back From France", Hartford Courant, Sat Feb 15, 1919, pg. 10

13 Connecticut in World War I, Friday Find – The Butler-McCook House, <http://ctinworldwar1.org/the-butler-mccook-house/>

14 John Howard Foley, Connecticut Service Roster 1917-1920, pg 670, fold3.com

15 Colonel Warren Putnam Newcomb, <https://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=52564728>

16 "Col. W.P. Newcomb Was Hartford Boy", Hartford Courant, Mon Nov 12, 1917, pg3

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF EAST HARTFORD

Submitted by Thomas P. Hogan

Identification of World War 1 items conducted April 18, 2017

- 1) U.S. Army M1917 helmet and leggings
 - a. Helmet is from the HSEH; has symbol of the Army 4th Corps painted on; insignia was added after the Armistice; helmets were allowed to be brought home as souvenirs
 - b. Image of US Army M1917 leggings is from the internet



EHHS Item



*HS of EH items not photographed

Some items are identified as having belonged to:

Private First Class Charles J. Hartz

Co I, 306th Field Signal Battalion, 81st Division

523 Forbes Street
Born May 20, 1892

From World War history of the 306th Field Signal Battalion, 81st Division

HARTZ, CHARLES J.
1,869,740, White
Forbes St.,
East Hartford, Conn.
Ind NA East Hartford, Conn. Jan 29/
18. Br East Hartford, Conn. 26 7/12
yrs. Co I 306 F Sig Bn to disch.
Pvt lcl July 1/18; Corp May 16/19.
AEF July 31/18 to June 22/19. Hon
disch July 1/19.



could find. Don't know as I blame him any.

Hartz, Charles J. - Private 1/Class Enlisted January 30, 1918 - Burnside, Conn.
Private 1/Class - July 1, 1918. Private Charles J. Hartz will long be remembered by all in Company "C", 306th Field Signal Battalion. On his arrival in France he took up the work on pigeons. On being sent to Alsace-Lorraine sector, he was stationed near the town of Raon Le Tape, where he did his work very well. Later when the 1st Battalion of 324th Infantry was in battle on the Verdun Front, and all other modes of communication had failed, Private Hartz sent one of his pigeons, which brought both reinforcements and supplies. Private Hartz has been highly complimented on his good work and bravery in action.

From Connecticut World War One Service Rosters

Historical Society of East Hartford

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Email: hseh@hseh.org, webmaster@hseh.org

Web site: <http://www.hseh.org>

Deadline Sept Newsletter – Aug 25, 2017

May Program

Date: Wed, May 17, 2017

Time: 7:00pm

Program: "East Hartford in World War I" with Tom Hogan

Where: Raymond Library Rm 1

Fee: No cost

Info: 860-568-5188