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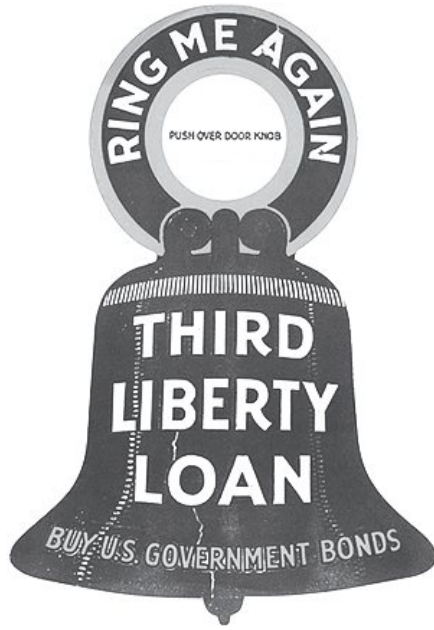
Weston in the Great War: Part I



Hundreds of posters were produced during World War I to recruit soldiers, justify the war, raise money, encourage food conservation, promote patriotism, and foster a sense of common purpose between soldiers abroad and families at home.

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***“Bells of Peace” to ring on November 11
Weston Veteran’s Day Ceremony at 1 p.m.***

On November 11, 1918 —the 11th month, the 11th day, the 11th hour—in France, an armistice was signed to officially end World War I. This Veteran’s Day, Sunday, November 11, Weston will commemorate the 100th anniversary with two events. At 11 a.m. Weston churches will join a nationwide bell-tolling designed to honor Americans who served in the “Great War,” especially the 116,516 who died, including six from Weston. A short ceremony will be held at that time next to the flagpole rock outside Town Hall.

At 1 p.m. Rick Wohlers will be coordinating a special Veterans Day program in the Town Hall auditorium, featuring speeches and choral music. He writes:

Veterans Day is a time to honor all veterans of the armed services. It is also a day to be proud that we are citizens of a nation made great by the sacrifices and courage of all our military personnel, both at home and abroad.

Thank you for your service.

Part I: War Breaks Out in Europe, U.S. Remains Neutral

1914 – April 1917

The Great War Begins: 1914

“At the outbreak of the war in 1914, the people of Massachusetts had no realization that the conflict would prove to be of more than European concern, nor that it would last over four years; still less that the United States would be called upon to assert its strength to secure a decision.”¹

Americans watched with sympathy and interest as Germany invaded Belgium and France in August 1914. President Woodrow Wilson declared that the United States would remain “impartial in thought as well as action.”

The German advance into France was halted before reaching Paris; and by the end of 1914, the Western Front had settled into a battle of attrition marked by a long series of trench lines that changed little until 1917. The sinking of the British ocean liner *Lusitania* on May 7, 1915, aroused the nation, but the Wilson administration urged restraint. In 1916, Wilson campaigned for re-election with the slogan, “He kept us out of war.” The opportunity to prepare for the inevitable conflict was neglected.

Weston residents read about the war in the pages of the *Waltham Daily Free Press Tribune*, which carried weekly columns devoted to Weston, Silver Hill, and Kendal Green.² In 1914, war-related stories began to appear in these columns, scattered amid news of weddings and funerals, poultry shows, church picnics, and automobile accidents. Weston resident A. Lincoln Filene was in Brittany with his brother in 1914 when the French mobilization began. The two were arrested and detained for a short time as possible German spies before proving they were American citizens.³ Alger Pennock’s family was forced to flee their home in Antwerp, Belgium, and later traveled back to the family home in Weston.⁴ In November, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Fiske were reported as donating \$100 to the Belgium Relief Fund, one of the first notices calling attention to financial contributions from prominent Weston residents to war-related causes.⁵

Weston Gets Involved, 1915-16

In January 1915, the Toy Theater in Boston produced a “European peace-war drama” called *Across the Border*. The play was shut down by Mayor James Michael Curley because of the “curses and oaths” in the final climax but allowed to reopen after assurances that the oaths would be removed. At the center of this controversy was Jane Gale (Mrs. Lyman Gale), Weston resident and director of the theater, who is quoted as saying that the play had been performed in New York City without changes and “It must be remembered that these men are dying . . .”⁶ A later report noted that scores of Weston residents had attended the play.⁷

Also in January, Lt. William G. Renwick of the Machine Gun Company of the 8th Infantry, Massachusetts National Guard, began holding “outdoor camps of instruction” for his men at his country estate on Merriam Street. The men came out one squad at a time and received practical instruction in handling the Benet-Mercier gun.⁸

That summer, the newspaper reported that John A. Remick Jr. of Weston (Harvard '06) had enrolled in summer Citizens Training Camp in Plattsburg, N.Y. under the direction of the United States Army. The purpose of the camp was to “give business and professional men the opportunity to qualify themselves for efficient service to the country in case of need” according to the report. The short and intensive course of military training was designed “to aid in filling the great deficiency in commissioned officers that would arise in case a large volunteer army had to be raised.”⁹ The Plattsburg summer camp continued in 1916 and became an Officers Training Camp



Machine Gun Co., 8th Regiment, Massachusetts National Guard, 1917, (partial image of panorama photograph.) Capt. William Joseph Henderson is sitting in the approximate center, with one leg crossed over his knee. Capt. Henderson served 19 months as part of the 26th Division in Europe. (Courtesy Weston Historical Society)

when the U.S. entered the war.¹⁰

In September 1915, Charles H. Fiske Jr., his wife, son, and two daughters came back from Europe on the White Star Line, *S.S. Cretic*. According to newspaper accounts, Fiske, member of a prominent Weston family, had made five trips abroad since the war began, visiting “practically all” the belligerent and neutral nations. Fiske related that, in sailing to Italy, voyagers had been aware of the danger of submarine attacks. The lifeboats were always ready, and all lights were blacked out at night.¹¹

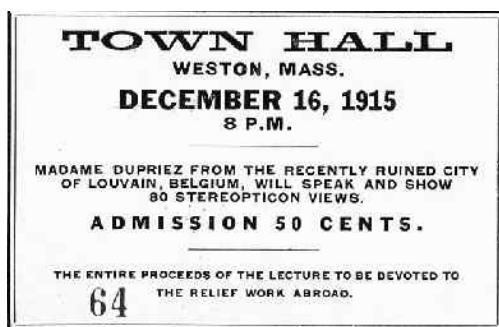
Young men who wanted to help the Allied cause overseas enlisted in the Canadian Forces, Foreign Legion, or hospital and ambulance service. In January 1915, A. Piatt Andrew, a former Harvard professor and future Massachusetts Congressman, arrived in Paris as a volunteer ambulance driver for the American Hospital and began to transform the service into an independent agency renamed the American Ambulance Field Service. Volunteer drivers were expected to pay for their travel to France and meals while there. In September 1916, Philip Winsor, newly graduated from Harvard, sailed to France to drive an ambulance, as did Edgar Upham in November of that year.¹²



Harold Buckley Willis settled in Weston after the war. He was born in Boston and attended Newton High School and Harvard, Class of 1912. Willis enlisted in the American Ambulance Field Service in February 1915 and became an American volunteer fighter pilot in the Lafayette Escadrille. The story of his capture by the Germans and legendary escape will be told in the Spring issue of the WHS Bulletin. (Photo courtesy Artemis Willis)

Women of Weston were invited to Town Hall in April 1916 to hear Mrs. James J. Storrow speak on "Women and Preparedness." The talk was sponsored by the Special Aid Society for American Preparedness, which was planning to form a branch in Weston.¹³

Weston held its first Fourth of July celebration in 1916. The day began with bell ringing and featured a parade, baseball game, band concert, and fireworks. Marching in the parade were 20 young ladies dressed in white carrying an American flag measuring 15 X 25 feet. Hillcrest Farm won first place in the "Artistic" category with its "Peace and Agriculture" float. During the concert intermission, a representative from the Milton Academy of the League to Enforce Peace gave an address.¹⁴



Relief Work in Weston, 1915-16

The Weston Historical Society collection includes a ticket for a December 16, 1915, program at Weston Town Hall, featuring "Madame Dupriez from the recently ruined city of Louvain, Belgium" showing 80 stereopticon views. The proceeds from the 50-cent admission ticket were to be devoted to relief work abroad.

Also in December 1915, the "Chocotilicum Camp-Fire" at Weston High School announced that they had purchased a case of chocolate bars and would donate the \$20 sale profit to the relief of Belgian babies:

It means a great deal of work for the girls . . . to sell the 960 cakes of chocolate . . . but as everyone knows that money and much more is greatly needed and this camp-fire feels that it should do its share for war-torn Europe. . . . Will you not help those poor little defenseless babies of Belgium who are starving?¹⁵

One of the first mentions of aid to the French wounded appears in the Weston columns in October 1915 under "Baptist Church Notes:"

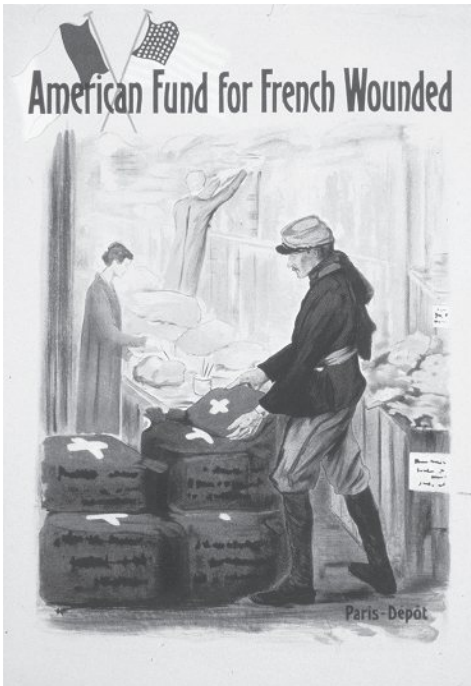
*At the community meeting Sunday evening an offering was taken up for the benefit of the local branch of the French Wounded Emergency Fund. . . . The week before the offering was for the Armenian Refugees. On each Sunday evening during the series a collection will be taken for some noble cause.*¹⁶

A month later, the church notes included this announcement:

*For several weeks a large group of Weston ladies have met to work for the French wounded. The community could not contribute to a more needed relief than this. Mrs. S. W. Mead is treasurer.*¹⁷

The American Fund for French Wounded (A.F.F.W.), founded in 1915 by American women living abroad, was a women's relief agency to aid wounded soldiers in France. Its American offices were in New York City, and the Weston Branch was one of some 60 across the U.S. The organization collected dressings, blankets, pillows, clothing, food, and amusements for French soldiers in French hospitals.¹⁸ (see also page 37)

In January 1916, estate owner Mrs. Austin White held a Winter Carnival at "The Cedars," her home on Lexington Street, for the benefit for the A.F.F.W. A reported 400 to 500 people paid \$1.50 a ticket and enjoyed skating, tobogganing, dancing, and card playing, with proceeds of \$400. The event was organized by a committee of 22 including many prominent Weston residents.¹⁹



The American Fund for the French Wounded, a women's relief agency, was founded in 1915 and became one of the most important war relief organizations.



Oscar Briggs, a member of the Massachusetts National Guard, was sent to the Mexican border in July 1916. He later served in World War I, when this photograph was taken. (Courtesy Weston Historical Society)

The Mexican Expedition, 1916

In 1916, the Massachusetts National Guard was mobilized and sent to the U.S. – Mexico border, where Mexican revolutionary Pancho Villa had attacked an American border town. In response, the United States Army launched an expedition into northern Mexico to find and capture Villa.

Three Weston men, William Vittum, Harold Stevens, and Oscar Briggs, served in Mexico with the Machine Gun Company, 8th Regiment of the Massachusetts National Guard. The three left Weston in July and returned by November. Their parents gave a welcome home reception at the Methodist Church for neighbors in Kendal Green, Silver Hill, and Hastings.²⁰ All three were soon serving in World War I.

The Mexican Expedition brought attention to the weakness of the nation's decentralized military system. Adj. Gen. Charles H. Cole sharply criticized the military response at a June meeting at Weston Town Hall, sponsored by the Weston Branch of the Special Aid Society for American Preparedness:

It is the policy of the people of this country to think that the American soldier can whip any other Nation, but in reality, under the present conditions, we could not whip a second-class nation. . . .As an example of the poor working of the present system, I have only to cite the arrival at Framingham of the sweaters and underwear intended for the soldiers many hours after they had departed for El Paso.²¹

The mobilization led to a wave of enthusiasm for national preparedness.^{21A}

The Massachusetts Committee on Public Safety

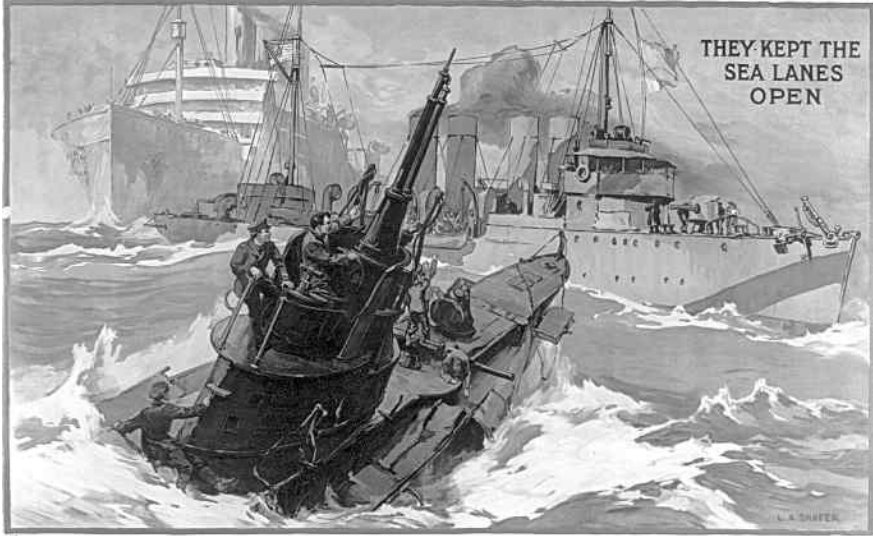
Although the United States officially entered the war on April 6, 1917, this decision seemed inevitable months earlier, in February, when the German ambassador was dismissed and the U.S. ambassador recalled. The Commonwealth prepared for war by forming the Massachusetts Committee on Public Safety (M.C.P.S.), the first state body of its kind in the U. S. established in expectation of war.²² It was made up of 100 citizens, almost all men, from every part of the Commonwealth, appointed by Governor Samuel McCall in February 1917.

Robert Winsor, Weston's second largest estate owner, was one of the hundred members of this high-powered committee. Winsor had risen from clerk to partner in the investment banking firm of Kidder Peabody & Co. and was widely recognized for his business acumen and ability to get things done.

The M.C.P.S. had dozens of subcommittees and special committees on every possible war-related issue. Winsor was a member of the Committee on Landlord and Tenant–War Profiteering and the Committee on the Solicitation of Funds for Patriotic Purposes, which was concerned with duplication, inefficiency, and dishonesty in charity work. He was on the Board of Food Administration for Massachusetts and also served as treasurer of the Massachusetts Halifax Relief Committee (see page 45). His sister, Mary Winsor, Director of the Winsor School, was on the Committee on Education.²³



Robert Winsor was a member of the 100-member Massachusetts Committee on Public Safety. His sons Robert Jr. and Philip, served in the war; Philip was one of the six Weston men who died in the conflict. This photograph was taken in happier times, at Weston's 200th Anniversary parade in 1913. (Courtesy Weston Historical Society)



INVEST IN THE VICTORY LIBERTY LOAN

Part II: United States Enters the War

In early 1917, Germany, determined to win its war of attrition against the Allies, announced the resumption of unrestricted warfare in war-zone waters. The United States broke off diplomatic relations with Germany, and shortly thereafter, the American liner *Housatonic* was sunk by a German U-boat. On February 22, Congress passed a \$250 million arms appropriations bill intended to make the United States ready for war. In late March, Germany sank four more U.S. merchant ships.

At Weston Town Meeting on March 26, 1917, Charles H. Fiske Jr. introduced the following resolution, which was adopted by the town:

Resolved. That We, the Citizens of Weston, Massachusetts, assembled in Annual Town Meeting, at this time of grave national crisis, declare our allegiance to our Country, and our unhesitating support of the President of the United States, and all other constitutional authorities, in any for-

*ward step to protect American Lives, American Rights, and American Honor.*²⁴

As noted earlier, Fiske had made numerous trips to Europe in the previous two years to view conditions first-hand. He and his family would work diligently over the next two years in support of war and relief efforts (see pages 42-43).

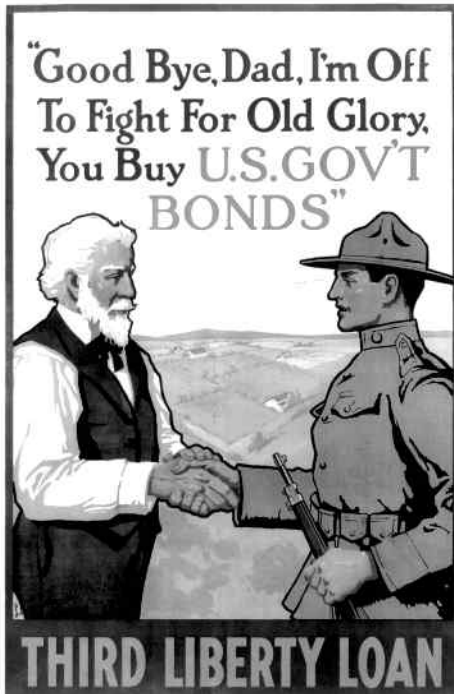
On April 6, 1917, the United States entered the war. President Wilson framed the objective on an intangible ideal: “The world must be made safe for democracy.” Two overriding issues immediately faced the country: how to pay for the war and how to raise the army needed to relieve struggling Allied forces.

In Weston, patriotic feelings ran strong. The town turned out in force for Memorial Day exercises in 1917. On July 27, townspeople, relatives, and friends gathered in Weston square to bid farewell to the Machine Gun Company of the 8th Massachusetts Infantry, which was on its way to France. Many Weston soldiers belonged to this unit (see page 5). Led by its regimental band, the company marched to town hall, where they were presented a gift of \$1000 by the Weston Committee on Public Safety. After the formal exercises, they broke ranks and spent an hour in individual leavetakings while the band gave a concert.²⁵

The dedication of the new Weston Town Hall in late November 1917 became a celebration of democracy and freedom. B. Loring Young spoke eloquently of the Minutemen of Weston and fallen soldiers of the Civil War, adding, “We rejoice that men of Weston are again on the battle-line of democracy in the most righteous war yet seen on earth.”²⁶ The banquet was omitted to conserve food.

For Christmas in 1917, every Weston man in military or naval service was sent a silver medal bearing the town seal on one side and his name on the other, “as a testimonial of the Town’s honor for its men in arms.”²⁷ The medals were paid for by cash subscriptions.





Liberty Loans:

Local Pride Joined to Patriotism

When the United States entered World War I, its economy was operating at full capacity, meaning that production had to shift from meeting consumer demands to fulfilling military needs. The war-time population would have to sacrifice. William Gibbs McAdoo, Wilson's Secretary of the Treasury, put it this way:

We must be willing to give up something of personal convenience, something of personal comfort, something of our treasure—all, if necessary, and our lives in the bargain, to support our noble sons who go out to die for us. ²⁸

Under McAdoo's leadership, the U.S. Treasury devised a financing method combining taxation and sale of war bonds. Taxes were either imposed or raised on income, luxury items, estates, corporate profits, and more. But two thirds of the enormous war cost—an estimated \$32 billion dollars—was raised by issuing "Liberty Bonds." By war's end, after four drives, 20 million individuals had bought bonds, in a country with only 24 million households at the time.²⁹

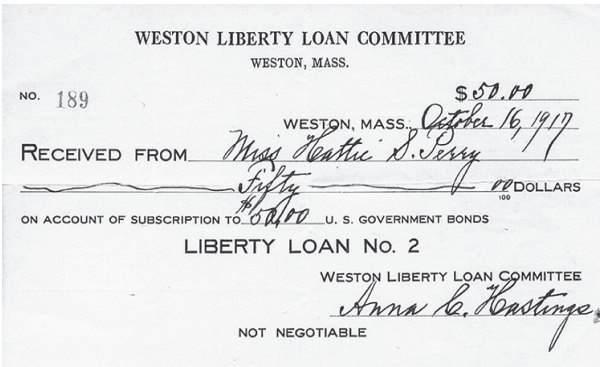
The Liberty Loan plan had three elements: the public would be educated about bonds; the government would appeal to patriotism and ask everyone—from school-children to millionaires—to do their part; and the entire effort would rely on volunteer labor, eliminating brokerage commissions. The lowest denomination of Liberty Bonds was \$50, but War Savings Certificates and 25-cent Thrift Stamps made it possible for even the poorest to participate.

A proportionate share of the bond issue was allotted to each community. Each city



or town knew the amount of its share, and local pride joined with patriotism to make sure that each did its part in carrying on the war.

“Over the Top” in Weston



In June 1917, the Weston Liberty Loan Committee met and assigned a list of distinguished residents to solicit Liberty Bond purchases in 34 sections of the town.³⁰ The Henry F. Upham Lodge A.O.U.W. “showed its patriotism” at its regular meeting . . . and set an example for similar lodges by a unanimous vote to buy a \$500 Liberty

Bond.³¹ Within weeks, more than three-quarters of the families in Weston had subscribed to the first Liberty Bond Loan, making a total subscription of over \$800,000.³²

In October, at a Special Town Meeting, Selectman B. Loring Young made a plea for citizens to purchase the second series of Liberty Bonds. According to the newspaper report: “The statement was made by Mr. Young that it is a recognized fact at Washington that per capita more Liberty Bonds have been purchased in Weston than in any other town in the United States.” Out of a population of 2,342, more than 750 individuals subscribed. The minimum allotment for Weston was \$350,000, but the town raised more than \$900,000.³³

For the Third Liberty Loan in April 1918, Weston’s quota was \$201,300; Wayland’s \$62,600; Sudbury’s \$22,200; and Lincoln’s \$125,600.³⁴ Weston was one of the first towns to “go over the top” in this third Liberty Loan drive, greatly exceeding the amount assigned as her share, according to newspaper accounts.³⁵ Within 24 hours of the opening of subscriptions, the town of Weston had subscribed to \$440,000 of the new Liberty Loan bonds. The town received the “first

flag given out in this district for having exceeded its quota.”³⁶

“Liberty Day” on May 3, 1918, was observed with great enthusiasm in Weston, according to newspaper accounts. “A very large portion of the population” assembled in the town center to listen to a patriotic address by Senator Weeks and to welcome soldiers and the 303rd Infantry Band, which marched to a ball field and paraded. The newspaper reported: “Weston has exceeded its quota so greatly that it has two stars affixed to its honor flag.”³⁷ After the war ended and the four Liberty Loan campaigns were tallied, Weston had secured a place of honor:

*Weston is one of the eight places in New England that sold the largest amount of Liberty Bonds per capita in their respective classes. It has been honored by being granted the privilege of having one of the ships of the emergency fleet named after it.*³⁸

War Savings Stamps ***“Idle Dollars are as Useless as Idle Men”***

In contrast to Liberty Bonds, which were purchased primarily by financial institutions and wealthy individuals, War Savings Stamps were aimed at the average citizen. They were used as a vehicle to teach the importance of savings and thrift.

The stamps, worth \$5 at maturity on July 1, 1923, were affixed to a folder called the War Savings Certificate, which carried the name of the purchaser. The initial price of \$4.12 increased by one cent per month, yielding a return on investment of four percent. War Savings Stamps were promoted as a good investment that would also serve the country, as exemplified by this entry in the Weston column of the *Waltham Daily Free Press Tribune*:

War Savings Stamps should sell themselves. They are a war time advantage because they are a government investment independent of the stock market, they can never go below par, they increase in value at a rate which nets 4 percent interest compounded quarterly, they can be liquidated as easily as cashing a check and can be made safe from loss by registration.

*Idle dollars are as useless as idle men. No need for either. Why not meet the Government on an excellent business proposition before the Government meets you on a less favorable taxation basis?*³⁹

In June 1918, the *Free Press Tribune* reported that “women captains” had been appointed for 24 districts around Boston, and volunteer canvassers would be visit-

ing “every factory, office, store and home” to secure pledges. Among the captains were Weston residents Mrs. Charles H. Fiske, Jr. and Miss Mary Winsor.⁴¹ High school students did the canvassing.


A few weeks later it was reported that “Weston was first over the top and farthest over the top in the Middlesex County War Savings Stamp drive,” with 772 pledges (quota was 550) or 40% over subscription. In total \$30,910 was raised in Weston for this drive.⁴¹

**UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
THRIFT CARD**

Take good care of your *Thrift Card*. If your *Thrift Card* is lost the money paid for stamps can not be recovered.

Thrift Stamps are on sale at post offices, banks, trust companies, and other authorized agencies.

Affix only 25-cent U. S. Government *Thrift Stamps* in spaces below. Do not use Postage Stamps.

	5 The first principle of money-making is money saving.	9 Many a little makes a mickle.	13 Save and have.
2 Your second stamp here.	6 Don't put off 'till to-morrow.	10 Saving creates independence.	14 Great oaks from little acorns grow.
3 If you want to succeed, save.	7 A penny saved is a penny gained.	11 Thrift begins with little savings.	15 Waste not; want not.
4 Thrift is the power to save.	8 All fortunes have their foundations laid in thrift.	12 Money placed at interest works day and night -- in wet and dry weather.	16 Learn economy and you start on the road to success.

Important.—When you have affixed the sixteen 25-cent U. S. Government *Thrift Stamps* representing \$4, take this card to a post office, bank, or other authorized agent, pay the number of cents indicated below the month in which the exchange is made, and you will receive a *War Savings Certificate Stamp* for which you will be paid \$5 on January 1, 1923. Such payment and exchange must be made during the year 1918.

MONTH:	JAN.	FEB.	MAR.	APR.	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG.	SEPT.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.
Cents	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23

© U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 2-3201

Twenty-five cent thrift stamps could be affixed to this card, which, when full, could be exchanged for a War Savings Certificate Stamp. Promotional slogans included: Let your quarters help win the war; Take your change in Thrift Stamps; and We licked them at the front, you lick them at the back. (Courtesy Weston Historical Society)

Thrift Stamps

“Thrift Begins with Little Savings”

Along with the War Savings Certificate stamps, the Treasury also issued 25-cent Thrift Stamps, which allowed individuals who could not afford a War Savings Certificate Stamp to gradually accumulate enough Thrift Stamps to purchase one. Thrift Cards had 16 spaces, each with a different aphorism, for example, “Great oaks from little acorns grow,” and “The first principle of money-making is money saving.”

The Thrift Stamps did not earn interest, but when all the spaces were filled, the card was worth four dollars and, with a few additional pennies, could be exchanged for a War Savings Certificate Stamp.

Weston children were recruited to the war savings effort primarily at school, where “they are being urged to make their savings as large as possible” according to the 1917 School Committee report.⁴² While Thrift Stamps sold extremely well in Weston schools, sales to the public were reported to be unsatisfactory: “This should not be so in a town which made such an excellent showing in the purchase of Liberty Bonds.”⁴³

Selling the War

Eight days after declaring war, President Wilson established the Committee on Public Information (C.P.I.) to motivate citizens in support of the war. America’s leading creative personalities were brought in to create advertisements promoting volunteerism, sales of Liberty Bonds, and an overall sense of nationalism. It is estimated that the C.P.I. produced 700 poster designs in addition to hundreds of illustrations and cartoons.⁴⁴

One of those who contributed artistic talent to the cause was Gertrude Horsford Fiske, member of the prominent Weston family. In April 1918, newspapers reported that she had contributed a poster illustrating “Unlimited Airplanes” to a Boston art exhibit in support of the war. The exhibit was described as follows:

One of the most remarkable art exhibitions in recent years in Boston is open in the old Bacon store on Washington street. The exhibitors. . . have been drawn together by a interest in the war and by desire to do all they can to support the country in its fight for liberty. . . each contributing a



Weston artist Gertrude Fiske made at least two war posters. “Unlimited Aeroplanes” (left) was used by the Liberty Loan Committee in New England to promote sale of Liberty Bonds. See also page 43. (Private Collection)

canvas to the Liberty loan. Each picture is an original oil, and will remain in the Bacon store during the entire loan campaign. [Editor’s note: the above poster was made from an original oil now in a private collection]

The object of these paintings is to drive home the fact that this war affects every person in the United States from the humblest babe to the President; and that unless the military power of Prussia is defeated what has been done in Europe will be done here. If we wish to prevent it we must provide money to push the war.⁴⁵

The influence of the war advertising campaign can even be seen in Weston classrooms. The School Committee report in the 1918 *Town Report* includes this observation from the drawing teacher:

The poster is a most excellent school problem. . . The routine work has been stopped many times the past year in answer to the calls for posters from the regular teachers, the Bureau of Food Facts, and the prize-poster contest with the War Savings Stamps.⁴⁶

The Committee on Public Information also organized the “Four Minute Men,” a group of volunteers who gave short speeches on war-related topics. One hundred and fifty theaters throughout Massachusetts agreed to allow the four-minute speeches before vaudeville and moving picture performances.⁴⁷ According to a newspaper report, Charles H. Fiske Jr. was one of those who “volunteered to make four-minute addresses at moving picture shows in the interest of food conservation.”⁴⁸

Selective Service

On May 18, 1917, six weeks after Wilson's Declaration of War, Congress passed the Selective Service Act, giving the president the power to draft soldiers. The Allies desperately needed fresh troops, but at the time of the war's declaration, the U.S had only a small army of volunteers, some 100,000 men. They were not trained or equipped for the kind of fighting taking place in Europe.

The Selective Service Act required all men between the ages of 21 and 30 to register for military service. Within a few months, some 10 million men across the country had registered. The Weston column in the *Waltham Daily Free Press Tribune* offers this account of "Registration Day" in Weston on June 5, 1917:

Tuesday being Registration Day, effort was made to mark it with the dignity it deserved and to this end a special request was sent out to every household in town to have the American flag displayed. The Baptist bell was rung at seven o'clock and promptly at this time five automobiles trimmed with bunting and flags and filled with Boy Scouts, each car full accompanied by a bugler, made a tour of the town. The number of registrations exceeded that which was expected.⁴⁹



Rather than setting up a national draft apparatus, a decision was made to use existing government organizations in the various states. The beneficial effect of this policy has been explained as follows:

Instead of any idea that they were being dragged reluctantly into service, the American citizens inducted under this Act took pride in their feeling that they were . . . representing their communities. They saw the absolute fairness of the working out of the law, all in public and under the supervision of their own authorities. Consequently, there was a zealous spirit among those inducted, and their morale was very high. With this unusual basis for our American conscription, there was no trouble in the operation of Selective

*Service. Instead of resistance to this law, there was universal acceptance.*⁵⁰

In Massachusetts, the Committee on Public Safety was very active in recruiting both National Guard and regular army soldiers. Up until August 1, 1917, the date of the first call under the draft, the Commonwealth obtained 8,335 recruits for the regular army, about four times as many as the other New England states combined. Massachusetts was one of 17 states to enlist its regular army quota before the Selective Service draft went into effect. Only four states, all with considerably larger populations, secured a larger number of regular army volunteer recruits.⁵¹

Honoring the Troops

Weston residents demonstrated their pride in those who were serving in the military. In October 1917, First Parish Church and First Baptist Church placed a “roll of honor” on their church walls honoring members in the national forces.⁵² The Methodist Church sent a Christmas box to the young men of the congregation serving overseas.⁵³

On Sunday, November 11, 1917, a large group assembled in front of the Weston Library to witness the unveiling of a tablet in honor of the men of Weston “serving in the war for Democracy and Freedom.” The idea for the tablet had been suggested by Lt. William J. Henderson, who by that time was fighting overseas. The boys at Marion Case’s Hillcrest Farm took up the idea and canvassed the town for contributions. The design was the work of local architect Samuel Mead, whose son Charles had enlisted in the navy just a few weeks after the U.S. entered the war. The tablet was made of wood with painted and gilded decorations, with overall dimensions about seven feet wide and six feet high.⁵⁴

One of the older Hillcrest Boys, Edward Stanley Hobbs Jr. was instrumental in the project and made the presentation in their name. Alfred L. Cutting, chairman of the Selectmen, presided and commented, “It has been customary to erect monuments in honor of the dead, but this is the first time at least in Weston that a tablet has been erected in honor of the living.”⁵⁵ Miss Barbara Henderson, young daughter of Lt. William J. Henderson, did the unveiling. The tablet was enlarged and more names added in late August, by which time there were 103 names, three with a gold star.⁵⁶



Marian Case's "Hillcrest Boys" collected the money for this tablet honoring Weston men in service. It was erected in front of the library in November 1917 and eventually had many more names. (Courtesy Weston Historical Society)

Homeguard and Civil Defense

Dr. Fresenius Van Nuys, Weston's "country doctor," served as chairman of the Weston Committee on Public Safety. The committee coordinated the town's war-related activities, such as securing farm labor, meeting war-time emergencies, home guarding, and promoting Liberty Bonds.

A month after the U.S. entered the war, Supt. Henry Warren of the Edison Electric Illuminating Co., chairman of the subcommittee on Emergency and Equipment, was reported taking steps to secure a census of trucks, teams, men, and tools that would be available in case of an emergency. He was also interested in organizing a home guard in Weston.⁵⁷

By August 1917, the Home Guard was meeting every Wednesday evening at 8 o'clock at the High School grounds for instruction and drill. Anyone above the age of 35 was eligible. By that time 40 men were enrolled and "it is earnestly desired that this number be largely increased."⁵⁸

Men were urged to participate even if they did not support sending troops over-

seas, indicating that the war was not universally accepted in the town:

Whatever difference of opinion there may be with respect to foreign invasion, there can be but one relative to the wisdom and the duty of making the best possible preparation for defense in case of possible invasion.⁵⁹

Young men of draft age were urged to prepare for service by joining Home Guard drills: “A number of young men from Weston will soon be called to service. The instruction will be of great help to them.”⁶⁰

Municipal Changes: Saving Money and Fuel

The 1917 report of the Weston Board of Fire Engineers noted:

The Department has lost a great many members, as they have left town to go to war, especially so in the two companies in Kendal Green. In order to conserve coal, we have not kept the furnace going in the Kendal Green Fire Station this winter.⁶¹

The station, which had been constructed just nine years earlier, never reopened.

District School #5 on South Avenue and Ware Streets closed after the 1917-18 school year. The school committee estimated that the town would save \$950 by transferring the children to the Central School, and “In these war-days, when economy is a virtue, it is not wise to keep this small school open any longer. . . .”⁶²

The 1908 Kendal Green Fire Station on North Avenue was closed in 1917 to save fuel. It never reopened. (Courtesy Weston Historical Society)





Part III: On the Homefront: Food Conservation

Starvation in Europe

Fighting in Europe destroyed farms and left the civilian population starving. Prior to 1917, Herbert Hoover served as chairman of the American Relief Commission, assisting Americans in Europe, and then as chairman of the Commission for the Relief of Belgium.

After the U.S. entered the war, President Wilson established the United States Food Administration on August 10, 1917, and appointed Hoover as Food Administrator. He presided over what has been called “one of the most efficient and successful governmental initiatives in American history,” delivering to Europe during the war and reconstruction period almost 34 million pounds of food, worth more than five billion dollars.⁶³ Hoover’s policies for the organization of wartime food production, distribution, and consumption relied on volunteerism. Rejecting the idea of food rationing, his Food Administration exhorted Americans to observe wheatless and meatless days in the spirit of patriotism and self-sacrifice.

“The Gospel of the Clean Plate”

The Weston Historical Society collection includes a 6” by 9” cardboard “Home Card” from the U.S. Food Administration with a hole punched at the top and a request to “Hang this in your kitchen.” One side explained what households could do and the other side why they should do it.

The card explained that the Allies were depending on America for food and “had a right” to ask for it because “today they are our companions in the great war for democracy and liberty. They are doing the fighting, the suffering, and dying—in our war.” This and other communications from the Food Administration stressed that Americans were not being asked to starve themselves. They should “Eat plenty, but wisely, and without waste” and “Preach and practice the ‘gospel of the clean plate.’”

The card explained why the Food Administration focused on certain foods:



Our problem is to feed our Allies this winter by sending them as much food as we can of the most concentrated nutritive value in the least shipping space. These foods are wheat, beef, pork, dairy products, and sugar.

Meat exports to the Allies had to be greatly increased to satisfy the needs of soldiers and make up for the fact that production of food animals had decreased for lack of feed. Saving one ounce of meat per person per day would allow for sufficient export. Decreasing herds and lack of fodder also meant a lack of dairy products, particularly butter and milk. The Allies also needed 1,500,000 tons of sugar because of disruptions in production and supply.



Herbert Hoover administered the U. S. Food Administration, which was extremely successful in getting Americans to change their lifestyles.

Americans were asked to decrease their consumption of these foods by substituting others or simply going without: "Our solution is to eat less of these and more of other foods of which we have an abundance." Specific suggestions listed on the Home Card were as follows:

Breads and cereals. One wheatless meal a day. Substitute products made from corn, oat, rye, barley for white bread. Use stale bread for toast and cooking,

Meat. Use more poultry, rabbits, and especially fish and seafood in place of beef, mutton, and pork. Use soups more freely. Use beans; "they have nearly the same food value as meat."

Milk. Use all of the milk, waste no part of it. "The children must have whole milk; therefore use less cream. There is a great waste of food by not using all skim and sour milk. Sour milk can be used in cooking and to make cottage cheese."

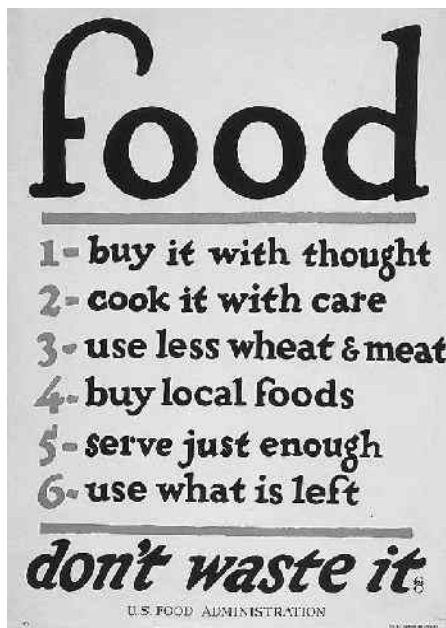
Fats (butter, lard, etc). Use as little dairy butter as possible in cooking. Reduce use of fried foods. Use vegetable oils, as olive and cottonseed oil. Waste no soap; it contains fat and the glycerin necessary for explosives.

Sugar. Use less candy and sweet drinks. Use less sugar in tea and cof-

fee. Use honey, maple syrup, and dark syrups for hot cakes and waffles without butter or sugar. Do not frost or ice cakes. Do not stint the use of sugar for putting up fruits and jams.

Vegetables and Fruits. "We have a superabundance of vegetables." Double the use of vegetables. They take the place of wheat and meat, and, at the same time, are healthful. Use potatoes abundantly. Store potatoes and roots properly and they will keep. Use fruits generously.

Fuel. Coal comes from a distance, and our railway facilities are needed for war purposes. Burn fewer fires. If you can get wood, use it.



The U.S. Food Administration's reliance on America's voluntary spirit was successful in preventing the need for food rationing, which Hoover opposed because it would require "a hundred thousand bureaucratic snoopers."

Weston Food Conservation Committee

Canning fruits and vegetables was one of the most popular ways for women to support the war effort. In the 1917 *Town Report*, Weston's Food Conservation Committee chairman, Mrs. John Paine, describes how the committee opened the canning season in June 1917 with four free demonstration lectures in the high school kitchen, with an average attendance of 65 women. The Community Canning Kitchen operated at the high school from Monday to Friday from 9 to 5 between late June and September, for a total of 57 days. It was staffed by one paid canning expert, a paid assistant during August and September, a part-time janitor, and an average of nine volunteers per day. More than five thousand jars of food were conserved in this way, as well as 278 pints of dried corn and beans.⁶⁵

The committee also acted as an information center and provided trained canners on request for home instruction. Individuals could bring their own vegetables to the Canning Kitchen and can them, for 25 cents per lesson, under the supervision of an expert. The committee took donations from private gardens that owners couldn't use, "even as small amount as a quart of beans." They would can or make soup from any donation, and would even send Camp Fire Girls to pick up the produce. The request for donations came with this message: "HELP THE COUNTRY to save waste and store all the food raised by sending your big or little surplus to the kitchen."⁶⁶

Later in 1917, the committee held a sale for volunteers, who were allowed to purchase six quarts for each day they had worked, at an average of 20 cents a jar. A reported 1,650 glass jars of beans, beets, summer squash, carrots, strawberries, blackberries, cherries, plums, jellies, etc. were sold in quart and pint jars.⁶⁷ A free "war lunch" was served, attended by 90 women.

In December 1917, a census of Weston households found that 24,000 jars had been canned at home, with an additional 60 families who had "canned but not counted." Fifty families had canned *none*.⁶⁸ [Author's note: the word "none" was italicized for emphasis, indicating disapproval] The committee's report noted that Weston had 256 members of the Weston Food Conservation League and 365 members of the United States Food Administration (Hoover Pledge Card). Signing the "Hoover Pledge Card" was used as a way to "make people feel a moral obligation to stay true to the ideals of the Food Administration and conserve food," according to studies of Hoover's methods.⁶⁹



At Hillcrest Farm, Marion Case and her Hillcrest Boys were heavily involved in both food production and food conservation through canning. (See pages 3-33) The Canning Kitchen and Hillcrest canning efforts continued through 1918.

Food Conservation in 1918

In the spring of 1918, the Weston column in the *Waltham Daily Free Press Tribune* included a long article on "Food Conservation Work in Weston: How Weston is Trying to Co-operate with the Food Administration."⁷⁰ The article reported on efforts of the Weston Unit of the Women's Committee for the Council of National Defense. In March, cards and leaflets had been distributed by a house-to-house canvas, and 14 new members had been added to the Food Administration, making a total of 380 for Weston. Eighteen women had signed a pledge to buy no more wheat until the next crop came in, and more were being solicited. A mass meeting had been held in the Town Hall under the auspices of the Public Safety Committee, with three speakers on the seriousness of the food problem.

The article reported that a "Food Facts Bureau" had opened in a small room in the Old Town Hall in March 1918, in the charge of a five-person committee with Mrs. F. Van Nuys as chairman. There were small exhibits, information, and recipes; and since the opening there had been three principal exhibits, on milk, waste, and wheat substitutes. Women were encouraged to bring samples of good war recipes, which were served during the lunch hour. An average of 75 workers a day came to the hall on the days the Red Cross and French Wounded Branches met there for war work.⁷¹



POTATO-AND-BARLEY DOUGHNUTS

1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cupfuls barley flour	1 egg and 1 yolk
1 cupful wheat flour	$\frac{1}{2}$ cupful sugar
$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoonful salt	$\frac{1}{2}$ cupful mashed potatoes
$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoonful mace	1 teaspoonful melted Crisco
$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoonful soda	$\frac{1}{4}$ cupful sour milk or buttermilk
2 level teaspoonfuls baking powder	

Pass all the dry ingredients through the sieve together. Beat the egg and yolk, beat in the sugar, potato, Crisco, and buttermilk and stir into the dry ingredients. Knead a little of the dough at a time, pat and roll into a sheet, cut in rings and fry in deep Crisco. This makes about two dozen doughnuts.

Until the World War I years, Americans were not used to eating corn, which was raised primarily for animal feed. But cornmeal could take the place of wheat in baking and corn syrup could be used to make candy and other sweets. Corn starch could be used for pie fillings and sauces and corn oil for general cooking.

On March 30, residents were urged to attend a demonstration lecture at Weston High School on the use of corn meal:



At this time when all housewives are called upon to make use of receipts [sic] which call for wheat substitutes, it is an unusual advantage to have the opportunity of actually seeing these receipts [sic] made. On Saturday afternoon . . . "Aunt Portia Smiley" an experienced Southern cook . . . will give a talk and demonstration on Corn Meal. She will make and cook various dishes and allow anyone in the audience who so desires to taste the finished product.⁷²

Tickets were 50 cents each and a leaflet would be available with "many valuable receipts."

Church organizations were urged to be sure that church suppers and refreshments served on other social occasions be in conformity with conservation principles. A list of what

would be sold by the Ladies Aid Society of the First Baptist Church at one of their fundraisers included "war sweets," presumably made with little or no wheat flour, butter, or sugar.⁷³

On April 26, 1918, a newspaper article headlined, "Helping the Soldiers and the Farmers," submitted by the Weston Committee on Food Conservation, urged residents to use potatoes instead of wheat:

The French army bread ration has just been cut down because of necessity. Wheat and rye are necessary to our armies and those of our allies, because without them a raised bread cannot be made . . . An army cannot have muffins and potatoes for their meals in the trenches.

We can use potatoes instead of bread. One medium sized potato equals two slices of bread. . . .

Do not have toast for breakfast — HAVE CREAMED POTATOES. Do not have bread for dinner — HAVE BAKED POTATOES. Do not have bread for supper — HAVE SCALLOPED POTATOES. Try them in forty different ways. Corn and potato muffins are delicious.

The most important of all shipments to make abroad today is WHEAT.⁷⁴



On the Homefront: Agriculture

Increasing Cultivated Land

By the early 20th century, Massachusetts was largely an industrial rather than an agricultural state. Farmers had migrated to urban manufacturing centers paying higher wages, and dairymen were being hit by high prices for grain. Normally, according to the Massachusetts Committee

on Public Safety (M.C.P.S), Massachusetts produced less than one-fifth of the food it required; and only about five percent of the population of 3,800,000 was engaged in agricultural pursuits. The state had five million fewer acres under tillage than fifty years before.⁷⁵

In the early spring of 1917, the M.C.P.C. conducted a campaign to increase the amount of cultivated acreage. School and home gardens, factory gardens, and community gardens were encouraged.⁷⁶ The town of Weston did its part by turning over the newly created Town Common land to the local Committee on Public Safety to be used for cultivation.⁷⁷ But it was clear that the chief contribution in effective production would have to come from farms, and the problem for farmers was the high price of farm labor.

Alleviating Farm Labor Shortages

To deal with the labor shortage, the M.C.P.C. developed a plan to mobilize high school boys too young for military service and move them where farm labor was needed, "making them understand that enlistment for farm service was in all ways as patriotic as any other service they could render in the Nation's defense."⁷⁸

Camps were set up in 13 Massachusetts towns, one per town except for Weston, which had three.⁷⁹ The Town of Weston provided financial aid to equip one of these camps, on the Louis W. Dean farm near the Lincoln town line. The other two were located on the estates of Charles H. Jones and Charles W. Hubbard. In all, about 50 boys from out of town worked on Weston farms in the summer of 1917.⁸⁰ Newspaper accounts indicate that the school boys came from Newton.⁸¹ In the 1917 *Town Report*, the Committee on Public Safety reported that plowing and harrowing had been done practically at cost for nearly one hundred families. In addition, fertilizer was delivered and seed potatoes were sold as nearly at cost as possible.

According to the M.C.P.S. final report, 1600 boys were placed on Massachusetts farms in the summer of 1917 and 2500 in 1918. Nine hundred of these boys lived in the camps, while the others worked from home. The report estimated that the 2500 boys added nearly two million dollars to the supply of farm products in Massachusetts during the year 1918.⁸²

In the spring of 1918, a conference was called to plan for the work of women in agriculture. While less extensive than the school-boy program, many women were placed on farms and gentleman's farms

Marian Case and Hillcrest Farm

One Weston estate owner in a unique position to help with both food production and conservation was Marian Case. In 1909, she had started Hillcrest Farm, a unique combination of a model farm “for experiments in scientific agriculture” and a summer work/study program in horticulture for local boys. Her land, now known as the Case Estates, was adjacent to her parents’ country home, now known as Case House. Every summer up to 20 boys between ages 12 and 18 worked at Hillcrest.



Miss Marian Case

Marian Case compiled and printed annual reports, known as the “Green Books,” describing what was accomplished each summer at Hillcrest Farm. The 1917 book includes an essay by E. Stanley Hobbs Jr, one of the older boys, entitled “The Nation’s Call, and



In her 1917 Green Book, Marian Case wrote: "Hillcrest Farm from the oldest to the youngest boy has been inspired with patriotism and devotion to the work that must be done for the country." (c. 1938 photo courtesy Weston Historical Society.)

How We Answered It." That year Miss Case purchased an additional five acres between Wellesley and Ash Street from the Hastings brothers, who were unable to cultivate the land and sold it to help with the national need. In addition, Miss Case asked George Milton, who had life tenancy on the adjacent property at 137 Wellesley Street, if she could use his land to plant more beans.. She writes: "New men had to be engaged that the farm might be run to its limit."⁸³

The five Hastings acres were planted with potatoes, cabbages, and squash. In total, the farm cultivated approximately 25 acres in 1917, twice as many as in 1915. Intensive farming was introduced; for example, bush beans and melons were planted in alternate rows of the same land. After the beans were harvested, the vines were removed and the melons were harvested.

Miss Case was equally passionate about food conservation. In May 1917, she purchased a railroad carload of fruit jars. In the annual Green Book she wrote:

It took some time to haul them from the station. They filled up the lower floor of an empty house on the farm. But the people's need for them has been shown by the way . . . they have come for them. Hardly a day has passed but someone has called or telephoned, even into October. For we have been able to sell the quart jars at 70 cents a dozen, when they were

PROVIDE for SHORTAGE of FOOD

Vegetables, Berries and Fruit for Preserving
Can be Bought Through the Summer
AT LOW MARKET PRICES

AT

Hillcrest Farm

Wellesley Street, Weston

Telephone, Waltham 208

The Ball Ideal Jars sold at the following prices:

Quart Size - 70 cents a dozen

Pint Size - 65 cents a dozen

Jelly Tumblers, 35 cents a dozen

selling in the city for a dollar and a half.⁸⁴

Hillcrest had its own canning operation. In 1917, 900 jars of vegetables and fruits were preserved “by expert canners, sometimes assisted by the boys.” The boys did their canning on rainy days at The Sentinels, her name for the house at 101 Wellesley Street that was used for staff housing.

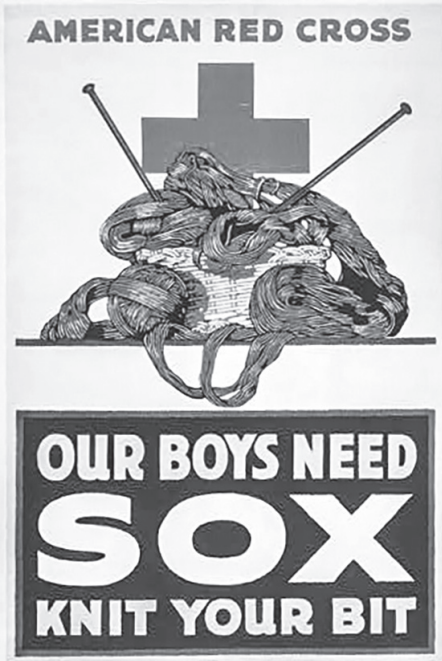
On May 5 and 12, 1917, Miss Case opened her clubhouse at 133 Wellesley Street for a Red Cross sale. Hardy perennials, a variety of other flowers, and “other useful and fancy articles for the garden” netted a profit of \$454.63. Miss Case wrote “our friends were most kind in trimming hats, contributing photographs, making aprons, and sending in plants from their gardens.”⁸⁵ For her annual summer lecture series open to the boys and the community, Miss Case scheduled three speakers on the subject of food production.

Stanley Hobbs concluded his 1917 Green Book essay as follows:

The patriotic work done by Miss Case in financing and governing the farm another year with the enthusiastic spirit of the boys have [sic] accomplished much this summer. The boys have worked willingly, of their own initiative, requiring but few reprimands. Hillcrest Farm from the oldest to the youngest boy has been inspired with patriotism and devotion to the work which must be done for the country.⁸⁶

In the 1918 Green Book, Miss Case described the scene on November 11, 1917, when a large group assembled in front of the Weston library to witness the unveiling of the tablet in honor of the men of Weston serving in the war for Democracy and Freedom. The Hillcrest Boys had raised the money for the tablet (see page 20-21) Two former Hillcrest boys, Edward Tulis and Wilbur Hallett, were in the service. Miss Case also quoted a letter written by Harold Weaver, a black former Hillcrest boy who was the son of Miss Cases’s cook:

You do me honor, Miss Case, when you tell me that I am the first Hillcrest Boy to come to France. My Hillcrest pin is ever with me on the lapel of my blouse. . . . I hope to bring it safely from No Man’s Land to Weston again so that you yourself may see the pin that has travelled 4,000 miles.⁸⁷



On the Homefront: Relief Work

American Red Cross

Civilian activities in World War I spanned multiple agencies, some already existing and well-known, such as the Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., Knights of Columbus, and Salvation Army, along with many formed to aid specific groups from Belgian school children to the French Wounded (see page 8).

The largest of the relief agencies was the American Red Cross. From the beginning of the conflict, the Red Cross provided relief to war-torn European countries, first with doctors, nurses, and medical supplies and later with hospital garments, surgical bandages, and refugee clothing sent to Red Cross societies in Europe. A Production Corps started in 1916 as a result of these early efforts.

With the U.S. entry into the war, the Production Corps expanded to encompass the active U. S. military. Other services that developed during the war effort included hospital service, camp, canteen, motor corps, and home service. But the Production Corps was ultimately the most popular. It didn't require any special training, and tasks were accomplished quickly.

The Army and Navy regularly requested thousands of surgical dressings and what were referred to as "comfort" items for the men, including hand-knit socks and sweaters, soap, and razors. Between 1917 and 1919, over eight million chapter

women, along with many Junior Red Cross members, produced over 370 million relief articles for the Allied armed forces and civilians in Europe.⁸⁸

Red Cross Fundraising in Weston

The American Red Cross raised funds through social events, membership drives, and regional campaigns like those used to sell Liberty Bonds. Less than a month after the U.S. declared war on Germany, Weston elites were attending a patriotic ball at the Copley-Plaza Hotel to benefit the Red Cross. “Inspiring music,” and a “brilliant procession of officers of the regular army and navy,” marked the opening. Among the 1200 guests were Mrs. Benjamin L. Young, “attired in green tulle and green velvet” and her daughter, Mrs. William B. Emmons (Charlotte Young), “in tan brocaded velvet.”⁸⁹

In December 1917, the Red Cross held a meeting at Weston Town Hall featuring remarks by town leaders followed by moving pictures illustrating their work. A newspaper item noted: “The Red Cross is making an earnest effort to enroll new members and with much success.”⁹⁰ A report on the 1917 Christmas Red Cross Drive in Weston showed that 1,198 members had paid the lowest amount, \$1, and six had paid the highest, \$100, for a total of 1267 new members and \$2,018. Added to memberships already received, the total was 1574 Red Cross members out of a Weston population of 2,342 in 1915.⁹¹

In the spring of 1918, the Red Cross launched a campaign for a second War Fund of \$100 million, with division captains, quotas, and appeals to town pride. Robert Winsor served as chairman of Team 7 of the 12 sections of Boston. In an interim report on May 24, Weston had raised 251 percent of its quota, and the only town leading Weston was Milton, which had raised 314 percent. In contrast, Wayland’s quota of \$2,258 was only a third of Weston’s but only \$725 or 32 per cent had been raised. Weston was accounted the “honor” town for exceeding its allotment greatly in a very short time.⁹² Such comparisons between towns were a commonplace strategy. To boast giving, “Give a Day’s Pay” was the slogan of the Industrial Committee charged with soliciting subscriptions from employees of business and industries. The Hook & Hastings Organ Company was one of the “100 per cent” contributors to the Red Cross Fund, its thirty-three employees all subscribing.⁹³

In all, Robert Winsor raised \$202,101 for his overall division. Weston raised \$26,002, or 419 per cent of its quota of \$6,208, standing third in the state.⁹⁴ Some weeks later, the newspaper listed the following subscriptions to the Red Cross Fund: Grant Walker, \$1,000; C. J. Paine Jr, \$1,000; and B. Loring Young, \$1,000;

First Parish Church, \$3,000; the firm of Wm. Filene & Sons' Co., \$5,000; and Kidder, Peabody & Co., of which Robert Winsor was a partner, \$100,000.^{94A} On Saturday, May 18, Weston was represented in a Red Cross parade in Boston by Miss Mary P. Winsor's delegation.

Junior Red Cross

One of several ways Weston schools got involved in the war effort was that every pupil from grade 5 to 12, with all their teachers, were members of the Junior Red Cross and participated in their war efforts.⁹⁵

At Weston High School, the girls meet every Thursday afternoon for work on refugee garments, comfort pads, and other items. The boys meet every Wednesday afternoon to make knitting needles, trench candles, gun-wipes, etc. The Camp Fire Girls presented a knitting machine to the Boys Branch of the Junior Red Cross. A reported twelve dozen trench candles, one dozen refugee garments, and four dozen gun-wipes were sent off by the Junior Red Cross in February 1918.⁹⁶ In March, the freshman class raised money by presenting a series of Mother Goose-themed tableaux in the school hall one Friday afternoon.⁹⁷



After the opening of the new Weston Town Hall in November 1917, the Old Town Hall (above) was devoted to relief work and other war-related activities. (Courtesy Weston Historical Society)

Sewing for a Worthy Cause

As soon as the call went out, thousands of Americans began knitting socks, sweaters, mufflers, helmets and wristlets based on detailed instruction booklets and patterns approved by the armed forces.

When U. S. soldiers began arriving in Europe in the summer of 1917, the American Red Cross Commission was set up to provide services to the soldiers. Because the American Fund for the French Wounded (A.F.F.W.) was doing similar work, the two organizations agreed to cooperate. A newspaper issue put out by the French Wounded, dated September-October 1917, explained that the identity of the A.F.F.W. would continue as an independent women's organization and that cooperation with the Red Cross would provide a greater facility for extending relief in hospital and emergency work:

*Our committees at home can work on the assurance that the glorious wounded of France are still their charge and there is not a hospital but that counts on the generosity of the American Fund for the French Wounded.*⁹⁸

The chairman of the Weston Branch of the A.F.F.W. was Miss Anna Hall (1877 – 1978), niece of Anna Coburn Hastings. In 1913 she had traveled from her home in California to live with her aunt, the wife of organ factory owner Francis Henry Hastings. Hall quickly assumed an important leadership role in the women's war work.

For more than two years, from December 1916 to March 1919, the Weston Branch of the A.F.F.W. met regularly, spending many hours cutting and sewing refugee garments and preparing surgical dressings. In the spring of 1917, these meetings were held on Tuesdays from 9 to 5 in the chapel of the First Parish Church.⁹⁹

After the new Town Hall opened in late 1917, war work shifted to the Old Town Hall. In January 1918, the newspaper reported that extensive improvements were being made to the 1848 Greek Revival structure, which would be occupied by the Red Cross Society for the duration of the war. Also headquartered here was the A.F.F.W. and the Red Cross chapter in charge of Christmas parcels for soldiers overseas.¹⁰⁰ A small room in the building was also used for promoting food conservation (see page 28).



Anna Hall was the neice of Anna Coburn Hastings, wife of organ factory owner Francis Henry Hastings. Hall was Chair of the Weston branch of the American Fund for French Wounded. She never married and lived in the Hastings house at 190 North Avenue until her death in 1978 at age 101.

In February 1918, the newspaper reported that an electric cutting machine, installed in the “Red Cross workroom” was “proving of great value.”¹⁰¹ At a meeting of the society on January 29, 3,000 surgical dressings had been made, “which shows what a valuable help to the work is the recently installed electric cutter.”¹⁰² The Weston Branch of the Special Aid Society joined in, urging their members to devote Mondays to the making of the “millions of surgical dressings” needed every day.¹⁰³

“Remember the War” meetings for war work were held Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 am to 5 pm and Wednesday evening from 7:30 to 10. Announcements urged participation: “The country needs your help. Will you lag or help pull?”¹⁰⁴ The Wednesday night meetings, scheduled so that men could help make surgical dressings, were open to women if they wanted to come out at night.¹⁰⁵ Occasionally, a speaker would come in to promote something, for example War Stamps, while workers knitted or sewed.¹⁰⁶

“Can Anyone Do Better than This?”

Human interest stories promoted the enthusiasm and dedication of Red Cross and A.F.F.W. volunteers. One member was said to have traveled five miles to attend a meeting, walking two of the five. A newspaper item described a women who was

knitting articles using yarn raised and spun in the town some twenty years before from sheep owned by Mr. Herbert Merriam of Cherry Brook Farm.¹⁰⁷ Newspaper articles singled out those whose production was most impressive, as in this example:

*It seems worthy of record that one Weston family Mrs. Orpha Moore and her daughter, Miss Mary, have up to the close of this month made for the French wounded society the following articles: 100 pairs socks, 19 sweaters, and 27 caps, as well as 12 articles for the Grenfell Mission, 2 pairs mittens and 3 hoods.*¹⁰⁸

Newspaper items encouraged competition, reporting, for example, that one of the younger members of the Red Cross had received wool for a sleeveless sweater on a Sunday afternoon and completed the garment by Wednesday night, having only the evening and spare moments at her disposal. “Can anyone do better than this?”¹⁰⁹

A newspaper report in May 1918 praised 83-year-old Adaline Sanderson:

Weston should be proud of one of her old ladies, Adaline Sanderson of South Weston, widow of the late George Sanderson of Elm streeta. Mrs. Sanderson . . . wears no glasses on account of partial paralysis of the optic nerve and sews by the sense of feeling. She received the following letter from the Boston Metropolitan Chapter, Red Cross:

My dear Mrs. Sanderson,

*You have no idea how much pleasure it gave us to receive your 15 pillows and 22 wash mittens. The work was beautifully done and one appreciates so much your patriotic interest in our work. . . .*¹¹⁰

In January 1919, the Weston A.F.F.W. and Red Cross printed a “Summary of War Relief Work in Weston” compiled by Anna Hall, French Relief chairman, and Mrs. Chandler Robbins, Red Cross Committee chairman. The statistics were impressive. In one year, the French Relief produced 12,856 surgical dressings, 1,078 knitted articles (sweaters, socks, French caps, etc), 4,288 items categorized as hospital supplies (pillows, pillow slips, bandages), warm garments including 720 day shirts and 498 sleeveless vests, and miscellaneous items such as 23 Belgian Relief layettes and 175 Christmas bags — not to mention 480 bars of chocolate. The Red Cross production list was similarly admirable.¹¹¹

With the summary came a request for contributions on a regular monthly basis to meet the need for \$600 a month to buy supplies:

Every inhabitant of Weston, young and old, should undertake some share

*of responsibility for this Relief Work, so necessary to our own soldiers as well as to those of our Allies. The immediate need is appalling! We can find the workers! Will you help by pledging a monthly sum of money, no matter how small, to be used for the purchase of the necessary supplies?*¹¹²

A Thank You Letter from A.F.F.W. to Anna Hall

The following paragraphs are quoted from an eloquent letter sent from Paris on January 21, 1919, written by Anna Murray Vail, treasurer of the American Fund for French Wounded, to Anna Hall, thanking her for a contribution of \$600 from the Weston Branch and describing the situation in France after the Armistice:

The homing instinct of the French race is stronger perhaps than anywhere else, and notwithstanding the efforts of the authorities to prevent a too early return to their devastated homes, the people somehow or other manage to inveigle the authorities into giving them passes to the North and East. Added to which the inevitable relaxation of a military control over the devastated country has helped many to slip through.

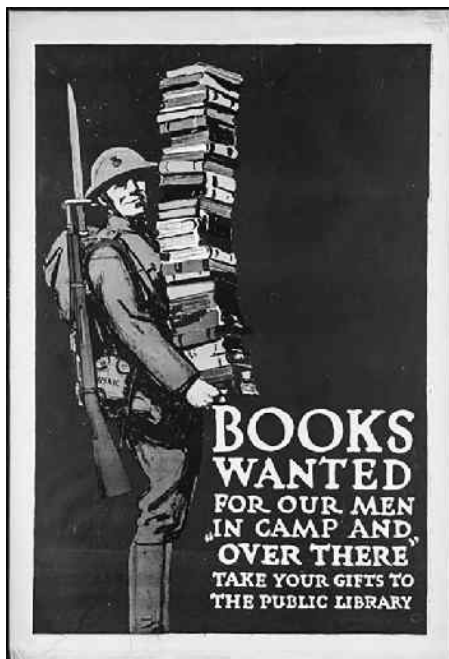
The result...has been that there are thousands in an absolutely destitute condition in the larger centers and a lesser number in the smaller centers. . . .The despair of the home-comers when they find their villages a heap of white stone, and the misery of the larger towns, has been great indeed. In the centers that escaped entire destruction by Germans, they before leaving carefully destroyed all plumbing as well as the wells and store houses, so that the sanitary conditions in the towns are absolutely unspeakable. And it seems almost as if it would be impossible ever to clean them up.

*. . .the drafts [funds] from the New England Committee will help us more than I can tell you. The garments that you have sent us are distributed without delay and nothing is wasted. Today some Boston cases have been unpacked, and you would have thought we had discovered a gold mine, for everything was perfectly beautiful, and it warmed our hearts to think of the joy the recipients would feel when they put on these warm clothes.*¹¹³

Books for Soldiers

In addition to money and practical items needed for soldiers, a plea went out in July 1917 for books, which were collected by libraries in Weston and other towns and distributed by the Red Cross, Y.M.C.A. and other organizations to huts, hospitals, and canteens:

*It is desirable that the thousands of young men assembled in the various camps should find available for free hours a supply of good reading matter. The Free Public Library Commission and the Library have provided books for guardsmen but many more books are needed. . . . The Library invites the citizens of our town to contribute whatever books they can spare. . . . The books should be readable. For old and uninteresting books there will be little use, but among the soldiers will be found men of varying tastes, and almost any current book of general interest will be likely to find readers. Good novels and stories of adventure will be in demand, and books of history, biography, travels, essays, science and especially books about the war—in short almost any book that appeals to the average reader will be acceptable. Elementary text-books for learning the French language and easy French readers will also be welcome . . .*¹¹⁴



Collecting Peach Stones for Gas Masks

The 1918 *Town Report* gives the following summary of war-related involvement of children and their teachers in the public schools:

Various forms of War Service have been continued. Pupils have worked for the Red Cross, have industriously collected nuts and peach-stones for gas-mask uses, have subscribed liberally to the Work and Earn department of the United Drive movement, and have steadily continued the purchase of Thrift Stamps.

The report continues as follows:

In addition to this, they have distributed posters and notices of various war activities and have done good work in obtaining Red Cross subscriptions during the summer vacation

Above all, credit is due to children who have themselves earned, and cheerfully paid in, money for the soldiers in the United Drive movement. This money reached a total of \$219—a large sum for the children themselves to earn.¹¹⁵

Weston Baptists not only helped through the Ladies Aid Society but also gave Minister Perry a three-month leave of absence to work with the soldiers.

Weston boys were urged to take notice of how the Girl Scouts were earning money “for a kind purpose.”:

The Girl Scouts of American under the leadership of Miss Edith Perry and Miss Helen Roberts have been doing a stunt that will make Weston boys take notice. Desiring to raise a sum of money for a kind purpose they are cutting and splitting cord wood for a fair wage. The days when the only tool which a girl could use successfully was a needle have gone by.¹¹⁶

Working for the Cause: The Fiske Family

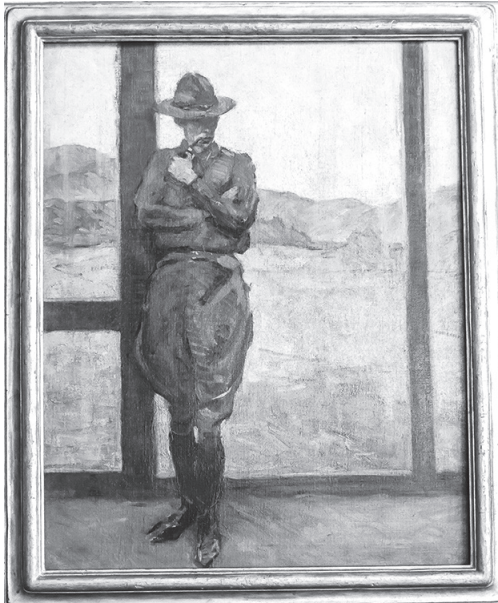
Wealthy Weston residents concentrated on favored causes or spread their money, work, and social prestige among many. Their society appearances and financial contributions were regularly reported in the *Waltham Daily Free Press Tribune*. In one amusing example, Weston selectman B. Loring Young signed up his three-day-old son for a subscription to the Knights of Columbus Fund. The newspaper noted: “It is presumed that he signed with his mark rather than his name in full.”¹¹⁷

Several prominent Weston families stand out in their devotion to war-related causes, including Robert Winsor, (see pages 10 and 45), the Fiske family, and Theresa Filene (Mrs. A. Lincoln Filene).

Charles H. Fiske Jr., the great-grandson of lawyer Isaac Fiske, lived in Boston but had close ties to Weston, the location of the family country estate, “Stadleigh” on Concord Road (since demolished). With his wife Mary and their children, he traveled abroad in 1914, living for a time in England. One of their children, Charles III, died in France in August 1918 of wounds received in battle. (See upcoming Spring 2019 issue for more on Charles III and his memorial at

the corner of Concord and Boston Post Roads)

Charles Jr. and his wife Mary are mentioned often in newspaper articles, as members of committees and patronesses of events aiding the American Fund



for the French Wounded, the American Ambulance Field Service and other war-related organizations. Mary Fiske was so well known for her war work that her portrait appeared in the rotogravure section of the Sunday *Boston Herald* in the spring of 1918 as one of the noted war workers.¹¹⁸ She was Secretary and Treasurer of the United Canteen Committee of Boston, made up of organizations and individuals working for the recreation and comfort of men in the service.¹¹⁹ In 1919, under the auspices of the Special Aid Society, she opened her home at 39 Bay State Road in Boston for the use of officers and their wives passing through the city.¹²⁰



The wife and children of Charles Jr.'s uncle Andrew were also involved. Mrs. Andrew Fiske (Gertrude Horsford) was a patroness at charity entertainments, as was her daughter Cornelia. Daughter Gertrude, the noted artist, designed posters for the recruiting branch of the Public Safety Committee. Another daughter, Hannah, was not content to work at home and traveled to France to work with refugees. (see Spring 2019 issue for more about Hannah Fiske). Their son Gardiner enlisted in May 1917 and served as a fighter pilot until the end of the war, when he was discharged with the rank of First Lieutenant.

Above: Artist Gertrude Fiske made this oil painting of an unknown World War I soldier, perhaps based on her brother Gardiner, who was also tall and lean and smoked a pipe. The painting was donated to the Weston Historical Society in 2013 by Artemis Willis. Below: Draft of a naval recruiting poster by Gertrude Fiske (Private Collection)

Therese Filene



Another active volunteer was Theresa Filene, who with her husband, A. Lincoln Filene, and two daughters, summered in Weston on Coburn Road.

Mrs. Filene was one of the prominent members of a committee to promote the war work of the Y.W.C.A., particularly in raising money to establish “hostess houses” at army camps in the U.S. and Europe, to house young women involved in war work.¹²¹

She was also very active in hospitality and the entertainment of soldiers. One newspaper article called her a “pioneer organizer of community dances in Boston, having started them on her own initiative in 1917.”^{121A} The dances were initially held in several cooperating Boston hotels, including the Vendome and Copley Plaza, with initial expenses borne by Mrs. Filene and various girls’ organizations interested in providing recreation and hospitality for service men. When the work merged with the Boston War Camp Community Service, Mrs. Filene became Chair of the Central Bureau of Entertainments.¹²² In addition to dances, she planned musical entertainments for convalescent soldiers and sailors in the local hospitals. Mrs. Filene was also one of 50 people appointed by the governor to arrange a fitting welcome for returning soldiers.¹²³

During the post-war period, when Theresa Filene was still involved with hospitality events in Boston and New York City, she took on the job of Chair of the Recreation Committee of the newly formed Women’s Community League and was in charge of Saturday evening dances in Weston.

The Halifax Explosion

On the morning of December 6, 1917, the Norwegian vessel *S.S. Imo* collided with the *S.S. Mont-Blanc*, a French cargo ship laden with high explosives intended for the war effort. The collision occurred in the Narrows, a straight connecting the upper Halifax Harbor to Bedford Basin in the Canadian Province of Nova Scotia. A fire on board the French ship ignited her cargo, causing a huge explosion that devastated a whole district of Halifax. Approximately 2,000 people were killed and an estimated 9,000 injured by the blast or resulting fires and collapsed buildings.



The Halifax blast was the largest man-made explosion before the development of nuclear weapons, releasing the equivalent energy of roughly 2.9 Kilotons of TNT.

Massachusetts Governor McCall organized the Halifax Relief Committee, with Robert Winsor as treasurer. Boston sent 30 leading physicians and surgeons, 70 nurses, and a completely equipped 500-bed base hospital unit. Total relief contributions from the Commonwealth totaled more than \$750,000. One year later Nova Scotia sent a gift to the city of Boston— a Christmas tree. In 1971 this became an annual tradition, a symbol of Nova Scotia's gratitude.

To be Continued, Spring 2019

The Spring 2019 issue will be devoted to the men and women who served, including the six men from Weston who died in the war. It will discuss the influenza epidemic, return of the soldiers and sailors, welcoming celebrations, memorials, and two institutions that grew out of the war: the Women's Community League and Weston Post No. 214, American Legion, Inc.

I would like to thank Andrew Tabak for his help with these two Bulletins, including identifying photographs and World War I objects in the society's collections. Tabak is a volunteer at the Fort Devens Museum at 94 Jackson Road, Devens, MA. The museum is open from 10 am to 3 pm Tuesday and Friday and the third Saturday of each month. For more information see their website, <http://fortdevensmuseum.org>.

I would also like to thank Madeleine Mullin, Local History Librarian at Weston Public Library, for helping to research the lives of the men and women in service for the Spring 2019 issue.

Pamela W. Fox, author

Endnotes

WDFPT – *Waltham Daily Free Press Tribune*

TR – Town of Weston annual reports

(1) Putnam, 33; (2) The Weston, Silver Hill, and Kendal Green columns in the *Waltham Daily Free Press* from 1900 to 1920 were carefully cut out, dated, and pasted into four scrapbooks now in the Local History Room at Weston Public Library. I would like to thank the unknown person or persons who did this work for 20 years and made this World War I history possible; (3) *WDFPT*, 9-11-14; (4) *WDFPT*, 8-21-14; (5) *WDFPT*, 11-27-14; (6) *WDFPT*, 1-8-15; (7) *WDFPT*, 1-15-15; (8) *WDFPT*, 1-29-15; (9) *WDFPT*, 7-16-15; (10) Putnam, 41; (11) *WDFPT*, 9-3-15; (12) *WDFPT*, 11-17-16 and Harvard University Archives; (13) *WDFPT*, 4-21-16; (14) *WDFPT*, 6-30-16, 7-7-16, and 7-9-16; (15) *WDFPT*, 12-7-15; (16) *WDFPT*, 10-29-15; (17) *WDFPT*, 11-26-15; (18) A.F.F.W. Records; (19) *WDFPT*, 1-8-16 and 1-14-16; (20) *WDFPT*, 10-27-16 and 11-10-16; (21) *WDFPT*, 6-30-16; (21A) Putnam, 40; (22) Putnam, 42; (23) Lyman, 4, 143, 190, 222, 290, 307, 434; (24) *1917 TR*, 260; (25) *WDFPT*, 7-27-17; (26) *1917 TR*, 111; (27) *1917 TR*, 38; (28) Sutch; (29) Sutch; (30) *WDFPT*, 6-8-17 and 6-15-17; (31) *WDFPT*, 6-15-17; (32) *WDFPT*, 6-15-17; (33) *WDFPT*, 11-2-17; (34) *WDFPT*, 4-5-18; (35) *WDFPT*, 4-12-18 (36) *WDFPT*, 4-12-18 (37) *WDFPT*, 5-3-18; (38) *WDFPT*, 3-3-19; (39) *WDFPT*, 1-15-18; (40) *WDFPT*, 6-21-18; (41) *WDFPT*, 7-5-18; (42) *1917 TR*, 64; (43) *WDFPT*, 12-7-17; (44) “Adverting and WWI;” (45) *WDFPT*, 4-12-18; (46) *1918 TR*, 66; (47) Lyman, 91; (48) *WDFPT*, 7-6-17; (49) *WDFPT*, 6-8-17; (50) Putnam, 24-25; (51) Lyman, 61; (52) *WDFPT*, 10-13-17, 10-19-17; (53) *WDFPT*, 11-16-17; (54) “Men of Weston; see also sketch of tablet in WHS World War I file; (55) “Men of Weston;” (56) *WDFPT*, 8-30-18; (57) *WDFPT*, 5-11-17; (58) *WDFPT*, 8-24-17; (59) *WDFPT*, 8-24-1; (60) *WDFPT*, 8-31-17; (61) *1917 TR*, 85; (62) *1917 TR*, 65; (63) Allen; (64) omitted; (65) *1917 TR*, 42-44; (66) *WDFPT*, 8-17-17; (67) *WDFPT*, 1-15-18; (68) *1917 TR*, 44; (69) Allen; (70) *WDFPT*, 4-20-18; (71) *WDFPT*, 4-20-18; (72) *WDFPT*, 3-22-18; (73) *WDFPT*, 12-7-17; (74) *WDFPT*, 12-7-17; (75) Lyman, 167; (76) Lyman, 166; (77) *1917 TR*, 74-75; (78) Lyman, 168; (79) Lyman, 173; (80) *1917 TR*, 38; (81) *WDFPT*, 4-5-18; (82) Lyman, 180; (83) Case 1917, 11; (84) Case 1917, 12; (85) Case 1917, 11; (86) Case 1917, 11 (87) Case 1917, 9; (88) Watson; (89) *WDFPT*, 5-4-17; (90) *WDFPT*, 12-21-17; (91) Typed report in WHS World War I file; (92) *WDFPT*, 5-17-18, 5-24-18, 5-31-18; (93) *WDFPT*, 5-31-18; (94) *WDFPT*, 5-31-18; (94A) *WDFPT*, 6-27-17; (95) *1917 TR*, 63; (96) *WDFPT*, 3-1-18; (97) *WDFPT*, 3-29-18; (98) “American Fund for French Wounded: Cooperating with the Red Cross” in A.F.F.W. archives; (99) *WDFPT*, 4-6-17; (100) *WDFPT*, 11-8-18; (101) *WDFPT*, 2-1-18; (102) *WDFPT*, 2-8-18; (103) *WDFPT*, 11-2-17; (104) *WDFPT*, 4-12-18; (105) *WDFPT*, 9-27-18; (106) *WDFPT*, 6-14-18; (107) *WDFPT*, 3-1-18; (108) *WDFPT*, 12-28-17; (109) *WDFPT*, 2/23/18; (110) *WDFPT*, 5-10-18; (111) WHS World War I files; (112) WHS World War I file; (113) WHS World War I file; (114) *WDFPT*, 7-20-17; (115) *TR 1918*, 58; (116) *WDFPT*, 10-18-18; (117) *WDFPT*, 2-8-18; (118) *WDFPT*, 4-5-18; (119) *WDFPT*, 7-5-18; (120) *WDFPT*, 1-31-19; (121) *WDFPT*, 12-7-17; (121A) *WDFPT*, 7-11-19; (122) *WDFPT*, 7-11-19; (123) *WDFPT*, 12-6-18.

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This iconic image of Uncle Sam was created in 1916. It is probably the most enduring of the estimated 700 posters produced during World War I, the first war in which mass media and propaganda played a significant role. More than four million copies of this image were printed between 1917 and 1918.

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