

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA  
**HISTORY**

WINTER 2017-18

SENATOR JOHN HEINZ



HISTORY CENTER

**100 YEARS**  
OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA  
HISTORY MAGAZINE

VOLUME 100

NUMBER 4



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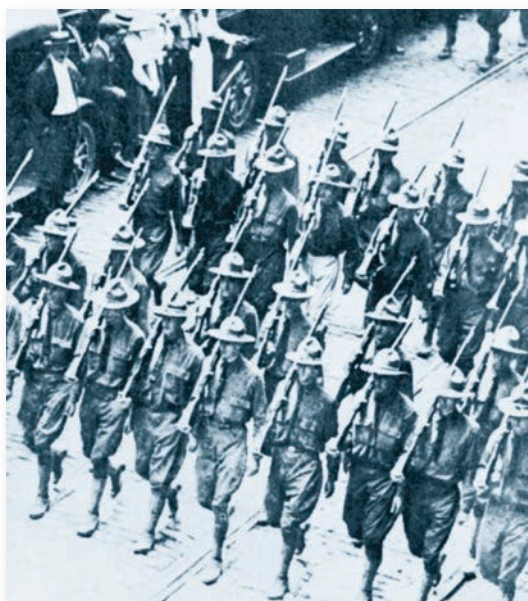
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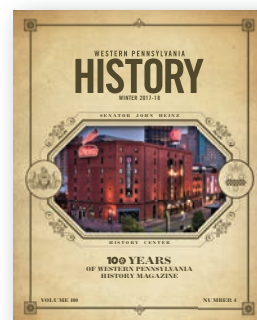
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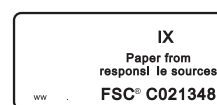
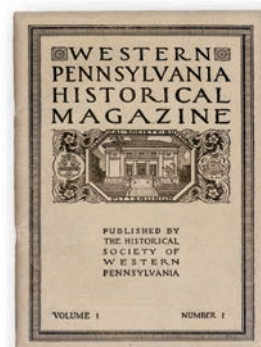
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By Candice L. Buchanan and  
Glenn J.R.T. Toothman, III



This issue's cover is a nod to the appearance of our first issue in 1918, replacing the original Bigelow Boulevard building with our current one in the Strip District.





# A MAGAZINE GROWS UP

By Andrew E. Masich & Brian Butko

This issue of *Western Pennsylvania History* celebrates the magazine's centennial. We believe it is the longest continuously published journal west of the Allegheny Mountains — and since 1918 it has documented regional history. Articles in this issue and throughout the year will focus on 1918 and later events influenced by that tumultuous year.

The History Center's flagship publication was actually founded decades after the

institution itself. City leaders established the first historical society in 1834, just 18 years after Pittsburgh's incorporation. The Historical Society of Pittsburgh, acting more like a chamber of commerce, quickly died out, and another attempt in 1843 lasted only four years, no doubt hampered by the Great Fire of 1845, which destroyed the Society's collection.

In 1858, as Pittsburgh celebrated the centennial of the founding of Fort Pitt and

the naming of the city, the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania was formed. It was the most active yet and even included a Publications Committee, but nothing was published and the organization disbanded two years later.

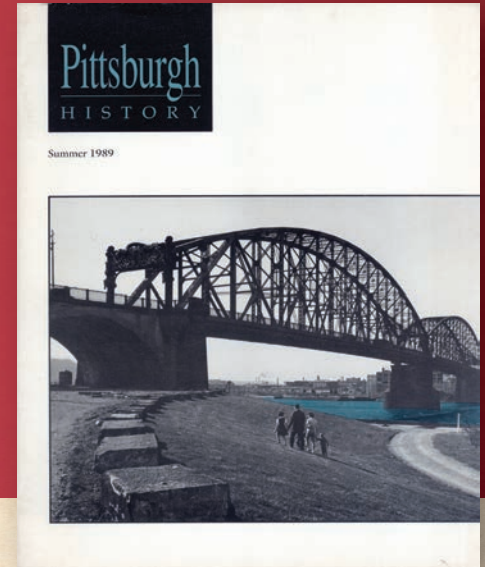
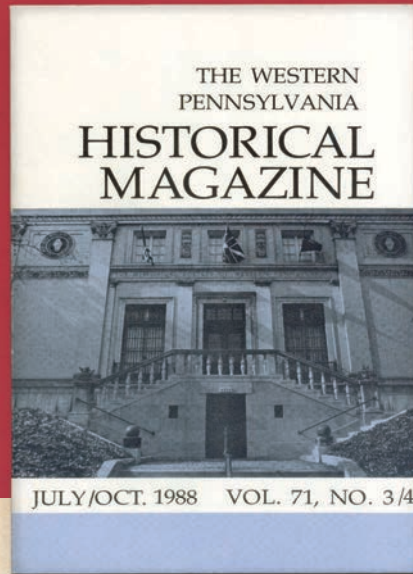
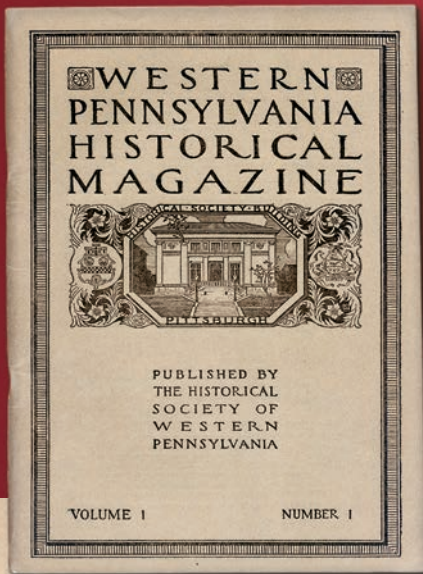
Then in 1879, a new organization picked up the torch that kept the spark of history alive: The Old Residents of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania, with membership open only to men who had lived here more than 50 years. In 1881, the organization changed its name to the Historical Society of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania, and in 1882, a rival group was founded: the Western Pennsylvania Historical Society (they mended fences and merged in 1885).

Though it took until 1891 for the first woman to be accepted as a member, two women had already presented papers. Mrs. Charles Wade, aka Bessie Bramble,



Laying of the cornerstone at the Bigelow Boulevard location, 1912.





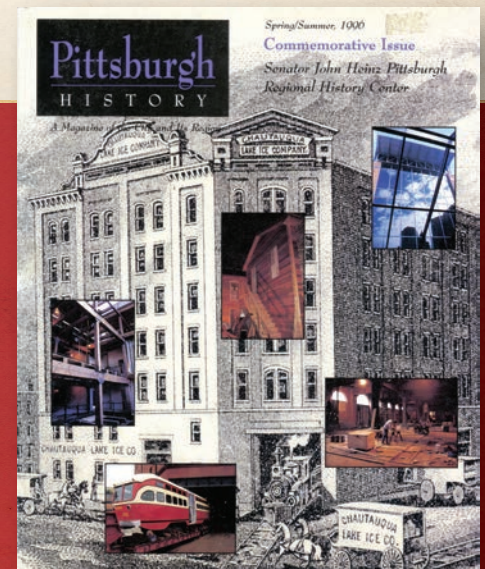
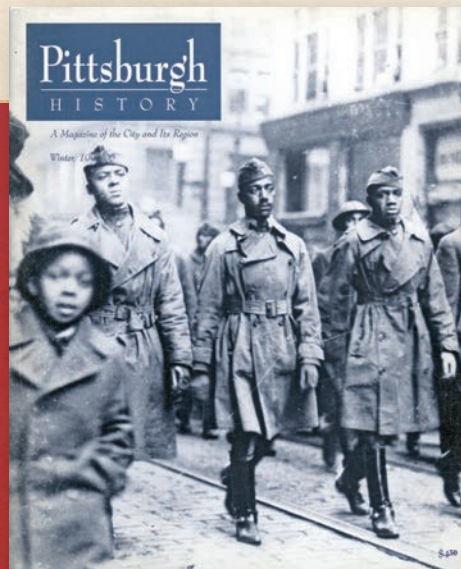
penned “A Reform Needed in History,” in which she chastised writers for ignoring women in historical accounts, observing that “We know Pilgrim Fathers but not Pilgrim Mothers.”

The regular publication of a journal was proposed, to be called either the *Historical Magazine of Western Pennsylvania* or *Fort Pitt Magazine*, but no volunteers stepped up to take on the unfunded effort.

In 1908, the sesquicentennial of Fort Pitt’s founding reinvigorated the society and led to the building of a headquarters on Bigelow Boulevard in Oakland, the quickly growing cultural district east of downtown. The cornerstone was laid on October 30, 1912, by Gov. John Kinley Tener — he had also played baseball for the Pittsburgh Burghers and later served as President of the National League. The doors opened in 1914, spurring the society’s

growth, and in 1918, the organization began to publish historical research and writing in a quarterly journal, *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*.

Little would change with the journal over the next seven decades, though the society had a brief literary flowering in the 1930s when it received a grant from the Buhl Foundation to conduct the Western Pennsylvania Historical Survey. Nine books were published







in collaboration with the newly established University of Pittsburgh Press. The Society continued to publish the quarterly journal while also offering talks and automobile tours to engage the public.

The early society focused on collecting relics and curios, while early journals concentrated on forts and the frontier. Then in the 1930s, as collecting expanded into American decorative arts, the journal began

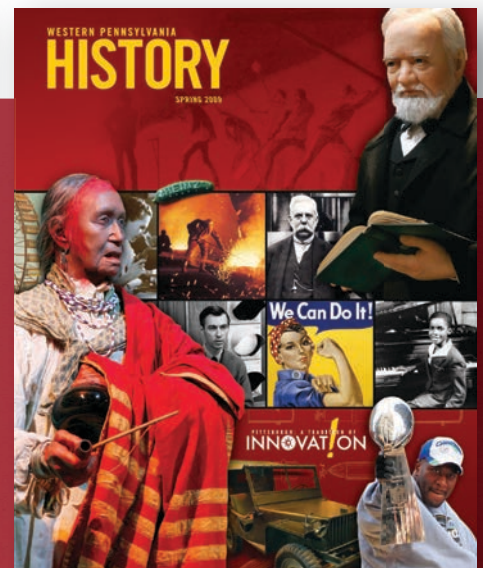
running features on glass and furniture. By the 1980s, the museum began collecting the region's industrial and ethnic heritage, community life, and social history. The magazine followed suit.

With the advent of social history, historical studies and museum exhibits began to emphasize the everyday lives of ordinary people. The Historical Society initiated a Local History Resource Service to assist

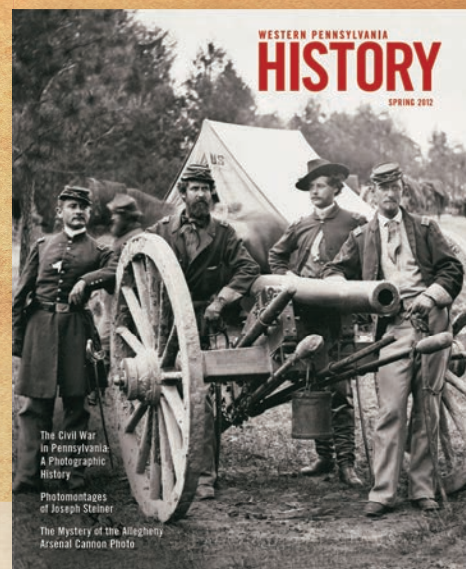
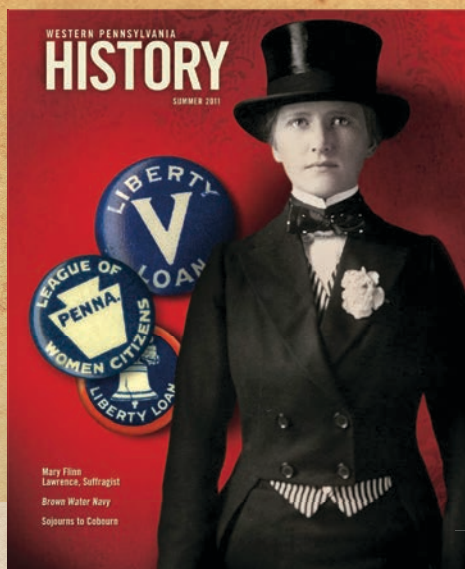
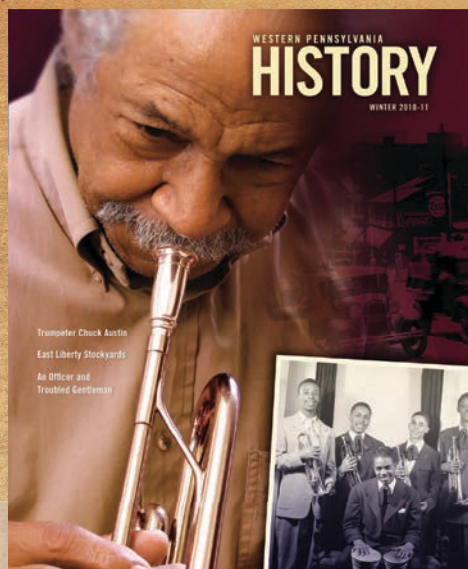
regional historical societies and museums.

The small, plain journal made its first and only major change for 1989 when it grew to magazine format to broaden its appeal. In 1996, after a decade of planning, the Senator John Heinz History Center opened in its current location in the Strip District; the society's journal noted the occasion with a double-length commemorative issue.

With the change to the magazine format,







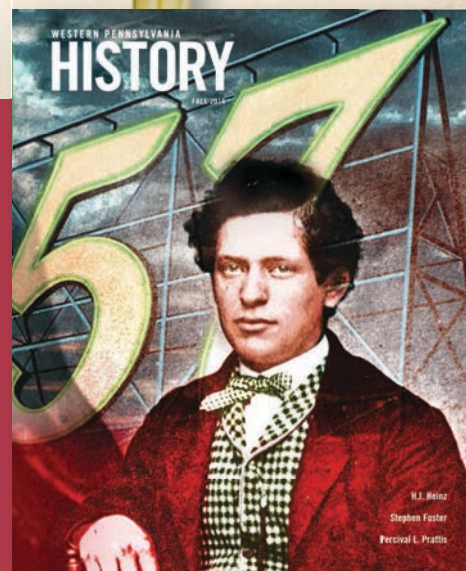
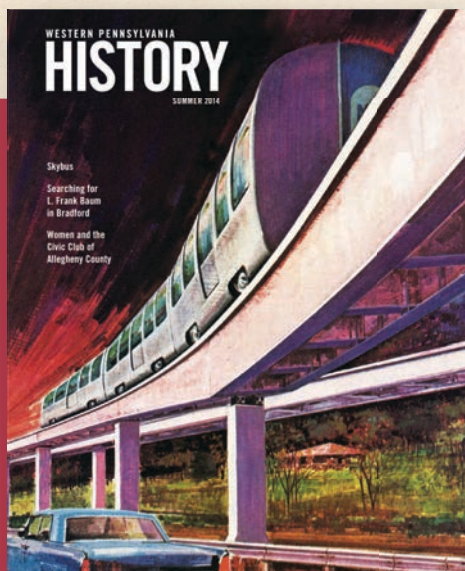
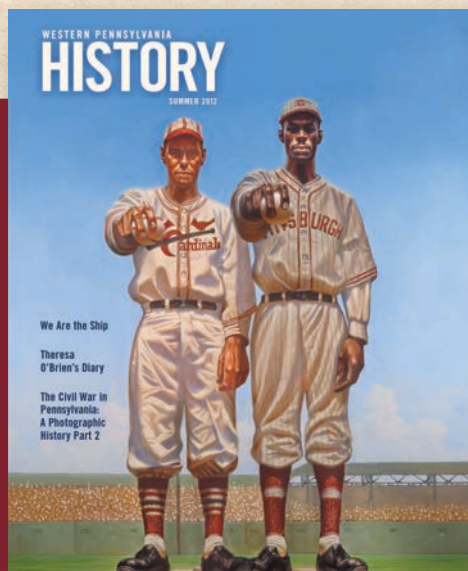
illustrations became more important and subjects broadened, with articles now ranging from archaeology to diners, immigrant foodways to rural life. Most importantly, the magazine focused on the stories of people. At the same time, articles reflected cutting-edge research, usually with extensive endnotes.

Brian Butko, Editor of today's award-winning *Western Pennsylvania History*, started as a volunteer in 1986. When the

historical society got its first computer, a little Macintosh, it was shared by four departments each day, literally by being carried between floors. The printing has evolved from lead linotype to computerized design and publishing. The only thing that has not changed is the corps of skilled researchers, writers, and editors all passionate about history.



The Communicator Award.





# PRESERVING BY PUBLISHING

By Matt Strauss, Chief Archivist

Members of the 1938 Historical Tour approach Blennerhasset Island in West Virginia by boat. The magazine included accounts of tours organized by the Historical Society.

HHC Detre L&A, IA.B004.F15.101.

From Braddock's Campaign to the Pittsburgh origins of the Mr. Yuk sticker, *Western Pennsylvania History* has covered an impressive array of subjects in its 100-year run. Staff at the Detre Library & Archives have long recognized the magazine to be an invaluable resource for researching local topics. In addition to helping us understand our region, *Western Pennsylvania History* also illuminates the Heinz History Center and its predecessor organization, the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania. Long before the advent of online catalogs, digitization, and social media, the Historical Society used the magazine to promote its collections and activities to the public. In doing so, the pages of *Western Pennsylvania History* offer a record of the Heinz History Center's past.

The publication's launch in the beginning of 1918 created a splash with the local media. "Magazine Issued by Historical Society" announced a front-page headline in the January 20th edition of the *Gazette Times*. "It will be the mission of this magazine," according to the article, "to preserve documents and other authentic information relating to Pittsburgh." Initially published as *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*, the journal followed a previous, unsuccessful attempt to start a magazine in 1902.

The goals of the new journal were further outlined in its inaugural issue. "It is hoped that the magazine will be a valuable instrument in the preservation, discussion, and dissemination of matters of local history, biography, and belles lettres. It is intended whenever possible to publish original letters, journals, records, and other memoranda."

The idea that the magazine would be acting to "preserve documents" by publishing them may sound strange to modern ears. Today, the image of preserving archival records might suggest archivists placing papers in acid-free boxes and shelving them in an environmentally controlled room. However, at the time, copying and publishing letters,



diaries, and other documents was thought to be an effective safeguard against fire, theft, and accidents. Even materials held within archival repositories were not necessarily immune to these threats—Pittsburgh's Great Fire of 1845 destroyed the collections of one of the forerunners to the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania. Among the collection items published verbatim was a letter written by Captain William A.F. Stockton from April 15, 1865, in which he reflects on his experience in the Battle of Appomattox Court House and mentions the disturbing rumor circulating around camp concerning the assassination of Abraham Lincoln.

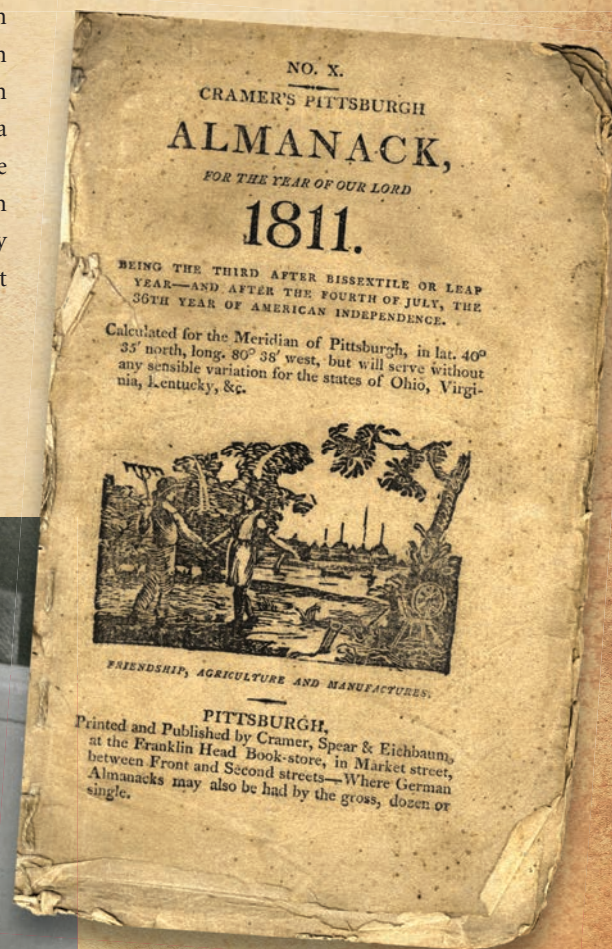
Along with printing archival documents, the Historical Society used the magazine to announce donations of items to its collection. This served a dual purpose: to inform readers about the growing resources of the Historical Society and to publicly acknowledge the donors of these materials, thereby encouraging others to donate their family treasures. (The History Center continues to recognize donors

through its newsletter, catalog records, and exhibit labels.) An unexpected benefit of this feature is that it has provided current History Center archivists, curators, and registrars with valuable information about the provenance of items donated prior to the 1930s, before internal records of donations were regularly kept.

The magazine also provided a vehicle for the Historical Society to share information about its activities and to articulate its collecting goals. In a 1919 article, Burd S. Patterson, the society's secretary, described efforts to obtain state funding to build a much-needed addition to the Historical Society's original building on Bigelow Boulevard in Oakland. Published a few months after the end of World War I, the article also shed light on the ways in which the Historical Society had been affected by the global conflict. The Red Cross had set

up shop in the Historical Society, using the basement and first floor to prepare supplies for soldiers (the organization returned to the premises during World War II). The war also had an impact on collecting priorities, an early example of the Historical Society's recognition of the importance in documenting events unfolding in real time: "The society has been gathering relics and data of the World War and will assist in the compilation of

**Cramer's Pittsburgh Almanack printed and published in Pittsburgh, 1811.** ➤  
HHC Detre L&A, F148.8 C889.



➤ **Franklin Holbrook, Historical Society Director from 1935 until 1955, published the first definitive history of the Historical Society in the March 1938 issue.**  
HHC Detre L&A, IA.B001.P24-102





The Historical Society organized tours along the area's rivers in the 1960s and 1970s, including this 1962 boat tour.

HHC Detre L&A, IA.B001.F09.101.

the history of the conflict particularly the part taken by the soldiers and people of Western Pennsylvania.”

Hired as director in 1931, Solon J. Buck brought changes to the magazine by updating its design, adding book reviews, and introducing a “Notes” column to provide readers with the latest news about the Historical Society. Buck had recently led a reorganization of the Minnesota Historical Society, expanding and modernizing its facilities, integrating the state archives into its collection, and launching a quarterly historical publication. His main concern as director was leading the Western Pennsylvania Survey, a joint initiative between the Historical Society and the University of Pittsburgh, funded by the Buhl Foundation.

In an article in the February 1932 issue of the magazine, Buck outlined the goals of the program, the primary of which was to “increase the existing knowledge of the region, not only by its own research work but also by discovering, collecting, and making available to others the materials from which contributions to historical knowledge may be made.”


To ensure scholars would have access to historical resources truly reflective of society, Buck advocated for expanding the Historical Society’s collecting beyond the traditional areas of politics and war. He considered local business and the city’s growing Eastern European immigrant population two subjects that should be more fully documented. Of Pittsburgh’s newly arriving immigrants, Buck wrote that they:

will inevitably have a large share in the future history of the region, and the society that will ultimately emerge here will have its roots in southern and southeastern Europe as well as in the American colonies and northern Europe. It is essential, therefore, that the history of this immigration and of these immigrant peoples in the region be studied.

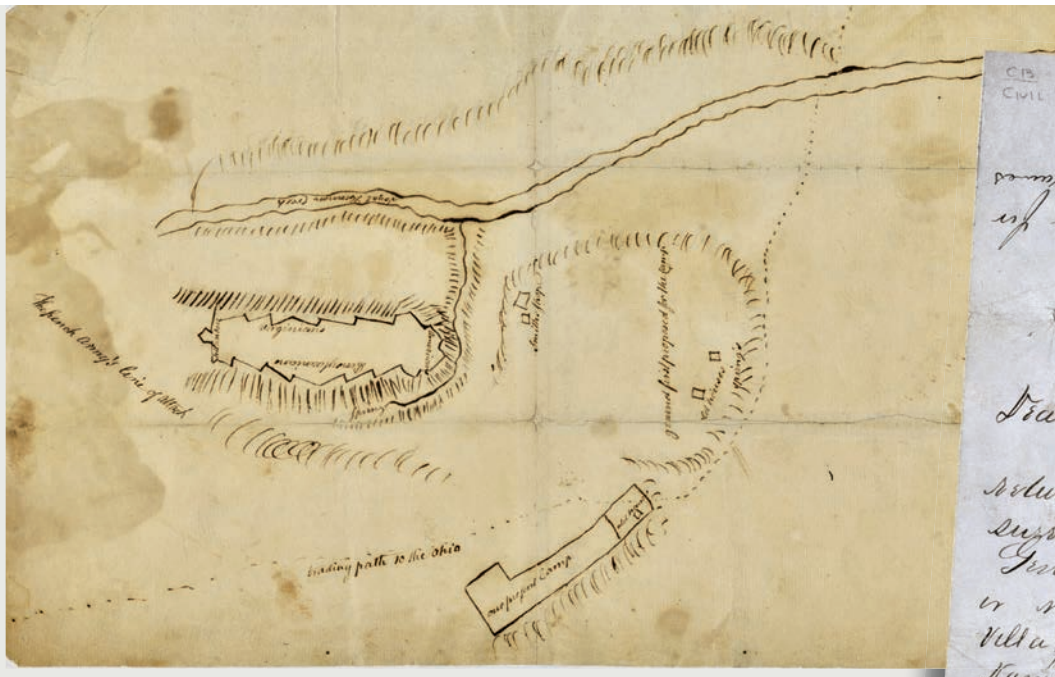
Though committees were established to build collections of Polish, Hungarian, and Czech materials, sustained attention to documenting Western Pennsylvania ethnic groups would not begin until the 1980s. Subsequent issues provided regular updates on the progress of the Survey, which would

result in the publication of a series of popular regional history books and the Historical Society’s acquisition of archival collections from notable Pittsburghers including the Denny, Mellon, and Thaw families.

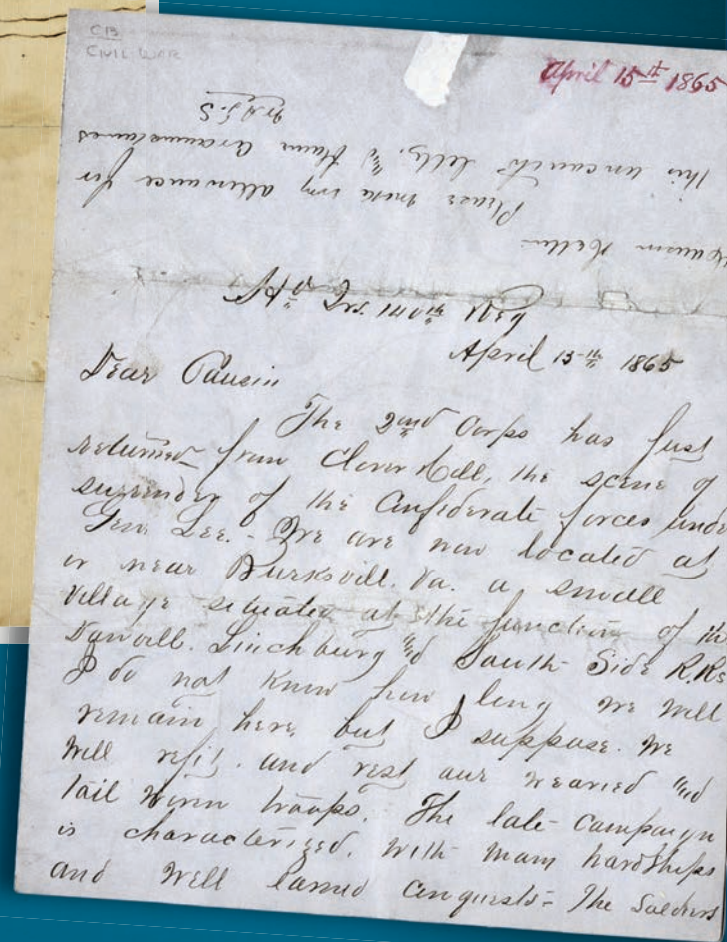
More recently, the 1996 Spring/Summer issue devoted its pages to the launching of the Heinz History Center in the renovated Chautauqua Ice Company building in the Strip District. Articles in this issue chronicled the expansion of the organization’s mission and the democratization of its collecting scope, activities which laid the groundwork for the establishment of the History Center.

*Western Pennsylvania History* continues to be a vital source of information for local history as well as news about the Heinz History Center’s collections, exhibits, and initiatives. Years from now, the magazine will continue to be a valuable tool for those wanting to learn more about the History Center’s past. 

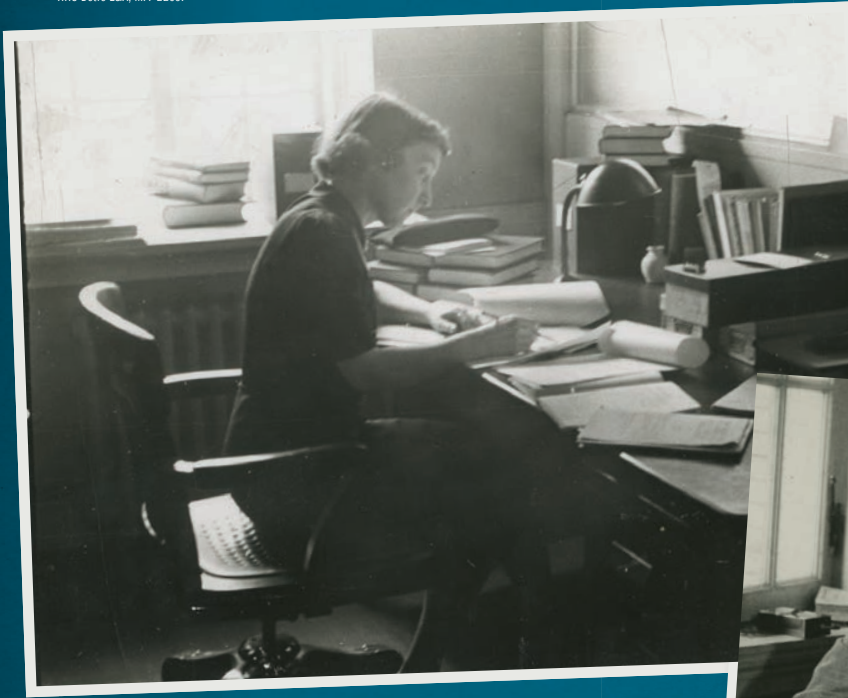




▲ Drawn map depicting the Battle of Fort Ligonier (also known as the Battle of Loyalhanna), October 12, 1758.  
HHC Detre L&A, MFF 2263.



▲ Civil War letter written by Captain William A. F. Stockton, 140th Regiment, on April 15, 1865. This was part of a donation made to the Historical Society by Alice B. Lothrop on April 3, 1917.  
HHC Detre L&A, MFF 2073.



▲ Elizabeth Mellon Sellers, granddaughter of Thomas Mellon, founder of Mellon Bank, worked as an editorial assistant for the Historical Society during the 1930s. In addition to publishing duties, she also spent time inventorying newly acquired archival collections.  
HHC Detre L&A, IA.B004.F10.10.



➤ Solon J. Buck (left) and Harold A. Phelps in the offices of the Western Pennsylvania Survey, 1931.  
HHC Detre L&A, IA.B001.F24.101.



# FROM RELICS TO ARTIFACTS

By Emily Ruby, Curator

The first issue of *Western Pennsylvania History*, published in 1918, began the tradition of listing recent artifact donations to the Historical Society. This initial list of “relics” and archives consisted primarily of military materials and items that documented early and important settlers in the region. Some of the donors have familiar names such as McKee, Lothrop, and Wilkins, all influential local families whose ancestors were involved in early industry and civic development. The listing both acknowledged donor’s generosity and encouraged others to consider offering their treasured items to the collection.

Because of these lists, back issues of the magazine now provide curators, archivists, and registrars with a valuable research tool as we inventory and process our vast collection. Most staff did not have professional museum training until the 1980s, so the registration and cataloging of museum objects in the past often failed to link donors and provenance with the artifact. Professional staff hired in the 1970s

and ’80s began to reconstruct almost a century of collecting, bringing modern management skills to the collection. Back issues of the magazine could be mined for information, allowing curators to link objects to their original owners and better understand and interpret the relevance of those artifacts.

This list also reinforces our understanding about the early history of the Historical Society and how staff built the collection. Newspaper accounts of the establishment of the organization in 1879 show that most donors and supporters belonged to prominent families. In fact, most members favored a requirement that new members had lived in the region for at least 35 to 50 years. They also suggested that the Society be called The Old Residenter’s Association, further signifying the exclusivity of the organization. The personal interests of those members influenced the collection. It came to represent the history and stories that members valued—with strengths



▲ Swin Cash Olympic jersey, 2004. **Curators and archivists have built the sports collection largely in the past 15 years. Photographs of the artifact collection, which is focused on game-used equipment, have encouraged museum visitation by people who read the magazine online. McKeesport native Swin Cash played forward on the Olympic gold medal winning U.S.A. women’s basketball team in 2004.**

HHC Collections, gift of Robert Gallagher, 2012.105.2. Photo by Liz Simpson.




▲ Joseph Tatko tailor shop sign, c. 1950. **Carrying on the tradition of former Director Solon J. Buck, who expanded the vision for the collection in the 1930s, the History Center continues to acquire items that document the different people and ethnic groups, local business, and organizations that shape our region. This business sign hung outside the Overbrook home of Slovak immigrant and tailor, Joseph S. Tatko. Although born in New Brighton, Tatko grew up and learned the tailoring trade in his mother’s native Czechoslovakia, before returning to the region in 1936.**

HHC Collections, gift of Kathryn Tatko Richards in honor of Joseph S. & Xenia G. Tatko, 2006.87.1. Photo by Liz Simpson.



in military history, civic leaders, notable Pittsburghers, and the decorative and fine arts.

Today we continue to acknowledge donors to the collections by listing their contributions in the History Center newsletter. *Western Pennsylvania History* magazine now serves as a way to highlight the collections in more detail by focusing on a specific collection or recent donation in an in-depth article. The artifacts highlighted in the current magazine show the change in emphasis of the collection in the last 100 years of recorded donations. As the building and mission of the Historical Society changed and expanded into the current History Center, we have built new collections, more representative of the full history of the region. Ethnic and industrial collecting initiatives as well as new exhibits and museums, such as Meadowcroft and the Sports Museum, have broadened the base of collecting efforts.

From those early settlers' "relics" to items that document local businesses, social and cultural events, foodways, and ethnic traditions, and so much more, the History Center continues to collect and preserve the stories of Western Pennsylvania life, not just for the "old residenter's" but for all people who call this region home and those beyond. The magazine remains a valuable tool to interpret and share the stories of our collections and to encourage new donors to entrust us with their treasures. 



34-star United States flag, 1864. Curators and collections staff were able to track down information about this flag for the *Stars and Stripes* exhibition using the old magazine donor lists. The flag had a number and the name of James Park written on it, but no other information. Using the magazine, they found that in 1954 Eleanor P. Kelly donated the flag gifted to her grandfather James Park, Jr., in appreciation of his work for the Pittsburgh Sanitary Fair.

HHC Collections, gift of Eleanor P. Kelly, 72.132.



**ABOVE AND LEFT:** Cradle and skates donated by Misses Mary and Louise Dippold, 1750. This cradle is the first donation listed in the original issue of *The Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*. The Dippold sisters, members of the D.A.R., and owners of an estate in Sewickley, were descendants of local river boat captains. The early records date the cradle and skates to the late 1700s, the property of early settlers who lived in Sweetwater (present day Sewickley). [See "D.A.R. Will Visit Old Dippold Mansion," *Pittsburgh Press*, September 7, 1933.]

HHC Collections, gift of Mary and Louise Dippold, 72.65, A9. Photos by Liz Simpson.







"Soldier-Poet" Hervey Allen's khaki  
WWI notebook of poetry, 1918.

University of Pittsburgh, Archives & Special Collections, Hervey  
Allen Papers, SC.1952.01.

## SOLDIER-POET

I know! I know! In this embattled time  
Grief is not understood that weeps with  
Yet these are tears tho' they do fall in  
Unheard like notes of island singing birds  
Where is my lovely friend who went to war  
With his young body and a golden smile?  
Whose charming harp hangs silent at his door  
Save when low winds of melody beguile  
From grieving strings, that with new laurel  
oved ghosts of music to the world of men,  
unds like of melting streams when woodlands  
Aprils that he will not know again,  
the first flowers felt the tipsy bee  
fields forever green to memory.

where earth quakes with hammers all day long  
aven reflects the hellish furnace breath,  
light naught but the rainbow gold of song-  
t- and went down singing to his death,  
flaming gift of winged words  
d proud Beauty of the unyielding feet,  
red woods with nests of rustling birds  
little child was very sweet,  
a night in his stillness  
spells



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# FRANK HOGAN

## *Soldier, Poet*

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By Jennie Benford

**"CORPORAL HOGAN WAS ADVANCING IN THE ARGONNE FOREST ... WITH HIS COMPANY AND WAS UNDER SHELL AND MACHINE GUN FIRE. A MACHINE GUN BULLET HIT HIM, CAUSING A SERIOUS WOUND. HE DIED A FEW MINUTES LATER."**

~ LETTER FROM J.E. BECHTOLD, CAPT.,  
4TH INFANTRY, COMMANDER, CO. M,  
TO MRS. EMMA D. HOGAN,  
DECEMBER 30, 1918.

The original publication of  
the boxed set, *Carnegie Tech  
War Verse* and *The Soldier's  
Progress* at CMU's Archives.

All photos by Heather Mull.





Eight months before Frank Hogan met his fate in the Argonne Forest, his poem, “Fulfilled,” was published in *The New Republic*, sharing a page with an essay by George Orwell. The literary legacy of World War I is extensive and the amount of poetry written by military personnel during active duty has been recognized, anthologized, and studied for decades. Within this larger context, “Fulfilled” was one of many but it was a better-than-most effort. Written in first person, Hogan’s poem is a declaration of acceptance and peace spoken by one who has died young. The poem met with favorable reviews and was even given a public recitation at Princeton by respected English poet Alfred Noyes.

There is nothing in the text of the poem that references the war in which he was fighting but Hogan’s death in battle on October 17, 1918, endowed “Fulfilled” with the gravitas of prophecy. Hogan’s death was the end of his poetic career, though not the end of “Fulfilled” or of Hogan’s influence on other poets. Following the path of this one long-forgotten poem uncovers memorials of many sorts to the young Corporal, revealing stories of friendship and loyalty that kept his name in print and his memory alive.

Francis “Frank” Fowler Hogan was born in Pittsburgh in 1896. His father was a mechanical engineer from Georgia who died after a year-long illness in 1908 when Frank was 13. He was a member of Calvary Protestant Episcopal Church of Pittsburgh, attending Sunday School and singing in the church choir. Upon his graduation from Peabody High School—by which time he was already writing poetry—Hogan enrolled in the newly founded School of Drama at The Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie Mellon University). On April 6, 1917, the United

“Carnegie Institute of Technology in a remarkably short time was transformed into Reserve Officers’ Training camp, a great military school in which men were prepared for battle and for leadership. Barracks were erected on the campus. Trenches were dug by the men on Flagstaff Hill in Schenley Park. The men were drilled briskly and sent on long hikes daily.”

HHC Detre L&A, Pittsburgh and the World War, 1914-1918, D522.P692.

States entered World War I. In July 1917, the summer before his sophomore year at Tech, Frank Hogan enlisted in the Army.

The Carnegie Tech School of Drama, the first degree-granting drama school in the United States, was founded in 1915. That same year, Tech also opened its School of Printing Management, a program for young men to learn how to operate a printing press using the top-notch machinery and technology of the time. For their annual project, the Printing Management class of 1918 printed a limited-edition, two-book set, *The Soldier’s Progress* and *Carnegie Tech War Verse*, both of which were edited by a professor from the Department of English, Haniel Long. The slipcovered set sold for \$1.25.

*The Soldier’s Progress* consisted of excerpts from letters sent home by students in Carnegie Tech’s Division of Arts who were deployed overseas during the war. *Carnegie Tech War Verse* was just that: poems about the war by students from the Division of Arts. Of

its 21 poems, Hogan contributed five. *Poetry* magazine described *Carnegie Tech War Verse* as “an ingratiating little pamphlet by Professor Haniel Long’s doughboy students, led by Francis F. Hogan and Richard Mansfield II, who both died in service.”<sup>1</sup>

Another Pittsburgh writer who recounted his experiences in World War I was Hervey Allen. He would become one of the most successful authors of his day upon the 1933







publication of his blockbuster historical novel, *Anthony Adverse*, but his first publication was a book of poetry, *Wampum and Old Gold*. Comprised largely of verse written during the war in a notebook Allen kept with him at all times (even during a reconnaissance mission that forced him to swim across the Vesle River), *Wampum and Old Gold* was published as part of the Yale Series of Younger Poets competition in 1921 and became an instant

success. Allen dedicated the book "To Francis Fowler Hogan, Soldier Poet, Corporal Fourth United States Infantry, Killed in Action in the Argonne Forest, October Seventeenth, Nineteen Eighteen." Directly under this dedication at the front of his own book, Allen included the full text of "Fulfilled," giving his friend's work a wider audience than it had heretofore enjoyed.

*Wampum and Old Gold* also contains

a sonnet by Allen about Hogan, entitled, "Soldier-Poet," in which Allen describes his friend as being "lured" into war by "romance ... France, and chivalry." The sonnet that appears in *Wampum and Old Gold* is a portion of a longer version of the poem found in Allen's war time notebook, which is now part of the Hervey Allen Collection in the Special Collections of the University of Pittsburgh. The typescript of the poem found within



Allen's notebook is not an unedited version of the published poem but two introductory/companion sonnets that Allen left on the cutting room floor.

Allen's unpublished portion of "Soldier-Poet," sounds old fashioned to modern ears, with its references to laurel wreathed harps, "elfin pipes," and "winged words." Beneath the weight of the poem's phraseology, however, Allen's grief is palpable: "Where is my lovely friend who went to war/With his young body and golden smile?" The single sonnet that appears in *Wampum and Old Gold* as "Soldier Poet" retains the sing-song quality of 19th-century poetry but Allen upends the

poem, using it not to honor his friend but to mourn him. Liberty is personified as a classically beautiful, larger than life Goddess, whose "hot lips ... kiss men cold." Where is Allen's lovely friend, indeed? Dead of Liberty's kiss in the forest of Argonne.

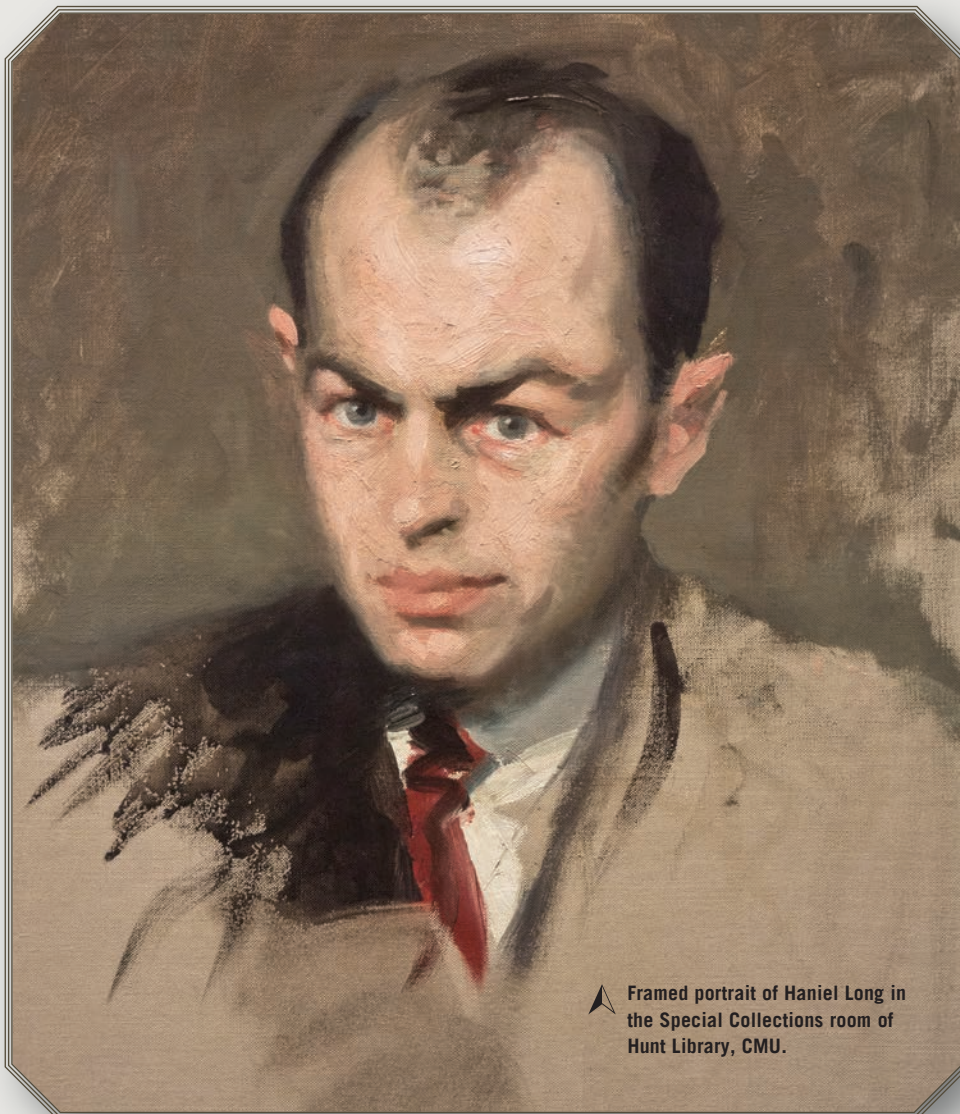
Allen was also a product of the Pittsburgh Public Schools but, being seven years older than Hogan, it is unlikely the two met as classmates. Chances are they became acquainted at Calvary Episcopal Church where both sang in the choir—and where both of their names appear on the impressive Art Deco Celtic Cross War Memorial erected by the church in the 1930s. That the two were

close friends by the time they were in their 20s is evidenced in Allen's 1926 book, *Toward the Flame; A Memoir of World War I*, in which he describes traversing hostile territory to meet Hogan, who he discovers is stationed nearby:

A couple of minutes later a sergeant with another American patrol came up.... He turned out to be from the 4th U.S. Infantry. Francis Hogan, a friend of mine, was in that regiment and I determined to see him that night. It was one of those decisions that comes of itself and leaves no doubt in your mind that it is what you are going to do.<sup>2</sup>

Allen goes on to describe how, under the officially sanctioned guise of taking tactical information to Hogan's regiment, he and a fellow soldier navigate their way through bombed-out villages, across nighttime fields strewn with bodies, downed telephone wires, and wicker baskets meant to conceal German mines. The two soldiers, with one gun and no helmets between them, plunge through fields of wheat, avoiding snipers but stumbling into leftover mustard gas, enough to momentarily choke them. Finally, after reaching Hogan's regiment and delivering their intel, Allen and his comrade, Glen, go looking for Frank:

On the other side of the street was a high, white stone wall over which we could see the second story of a large, ruined house against the sky ... we entered and found ourselves in a garden strewn with wreckage, with the big, blank walls of the house looming above us and the stars shining faintly through the gaping windows and shell-holes. The men were sleeping all over the place, wrapped close in their ghostly slickers. With the pale, glimmering walls and white stones scattered about by the bombardment, it was like a cemetery.... We went around waking the men, apparently an endless task ... It seemed for a while that after coming all that way I was not to find Frank. Then suddenly we came across him sleeping by a great, white stone. He sprang up as men do at the front on being awakened, but he knew me instantly. He was looking thin but straight and wiry and hard. We



Framed portrait of Haniel Long in the Special Collections room of Hunt Library, CMU.



The notebook Allen carried with him throughout his deployment in France at Hillman Library, Special Collections.



peered into each other's faces in the dark and sat down on the stone together and had a close talk. He spoke of letters he had written me that I had never received and gave me the address of a friend, Dabney Frazier, in the Marines, who we had both known in happy times. I did not tell him that I knew this lad had been killed. We seemed too close to it all then.

While we were still talking they began to shell.... It was impossible to talk any longer. We promised to try and see each other at every opportunity.... I remember I had an impulse to take Frank with me but I only shook hands with him. As we said good-bye he thrust a letter into my hands. I never saw him again. He was a brilliant and promising poet. He was killed in the Argonne in October, a few days before the Armistice.<sup>3</sup>

Miraculously, a partial transcript of a letter Hogan wrote to his mother survives describing, much more briefly, his encounter with Allen:

And what do you think? While the big doings were going on I saw Bill Allen. I was sleeping in what had been German territory and then about two o'clock I heard someone calling my name. I sat up and saw a man crawling around shaking men out of their blankets to

ask them if they were Corp. Hogan. Somebody said, "We can't wake up the whole platoon." Somebody answered, "The Hell we can't. Did you ever try me on a regiment?" and I yelled, "BILL!" I saw him for only about ten minutes and the shells started to boom around about the time Bill found me so we didn't have much chance to talk. But I sure did enjoy seeing him."<sup>4</sup>

One final description of this 10-minute meeting appeared, unattributed, in *The Soldier's Progress*, the collection of excerpts from letters sent home by Carnegie Tech students deployed overseas:

One night on the Marne, while the great second battle was on, I met a friend. We had only a few minutes together, but I managed to give him the address of a friend of both of us whom I had just heard from. He was a fine chap, the absent friend, had I had known him when we flew our kites in Highland Park.

I was badly hit when I learned he had been killed. The other day I received a letter from the fellow I had met on the

Marne. He was in hospital. He wrote: "Dab's snuffing out is bad. I knew it the night I talked to you, but couldn't say anything to you when you gave me his address."<sup>5</sup>

That Hogan would have been a great poet was a thought that stayed with Allen. In March 1927, a small article appeared in *The Tartan*, the student newspaper of Carnegie Tech, describing the auction of Major Whithall's private library in New York City. The anonymous author of the article noticed that Lot 14 of the auction was a copy of *Carnegie Tech War Verse*, and that the volume, which was being auctioned alongside first editions of Blake and Coleridge, was holding its own:

There was a reason. In the front of the first volume was a penned note from Hervey Allen to Major Whitehall, the owner of the books: "These little books contain the works of my dear friend Francis Hogan who was a student at Carnegie Tech, at Pittsburgh in 1917. I am quite certain that he was one of the great losses that this country sustained and does not know about. Will you give this book an honored place on



# WAR VERSE

## Fulfilled

Though my hands have not learned to model  
The dreams of a groping mind,  
Though my lips have not spoken their music  
And are leaving no songs behind,  
Think not that my life has been futile,  
Nor grieve for an unsaid word,  
For all that my lips might never sing  
My singing heart has heard.

I have etched the light on a willow  
With neither a plate nor style;  
I have made a song of the crescent moon  
And a poem of only a smile;  
Are they less because lips could not know them,  
These songs that my heart has known,  
Am I wholly mute who have sung with my heart  
And sung with my heart alone?

★ Francis F. Hogan

[ 21 ]

your shelves? Near Shelly and Keats. It belongs there among the young spirits of light cut off too soon.”<sup>6</sup>

Unfortunately, no information has been found on either who purchased the volumes at auction or where they ended up.

Haniel Long, editor of *Carnegie Tech War Verse*, had been promoted to Head of the Department of English at Carnegie Tech in 1920. Health problems led him to relocate with his family to the drier climate of Santa Fe, New Mexico, nine years later. Once established in the Southwest, he became an influential modernist poet and publisher, helping to found Writers’ Editions, a publishing collective that published significant new, regional writers during the Depression. In 1935, Writers’ Editions published Long’s *Pittsburgh Memorandum*. Amid this series of verses about Pittsburgh personalities such as Stephen Foster and George Westinghouse, Long included the poem, “Frank Hogan and Fred Demmler,” a remembrance of two of Long’s students who were killed in The Great War.

Hervy Allen had written his ode to Frank Hogan before his friend’s body had even come stateside; comparatively, 17 years and a trip across the nation seem not to have dimmed Frank’s memory in the heart of his professor. By the time Long published his poem about Hogan, American poetry had put aside the elfin pipes of old. The grief Allen struggled to express is in Long’s poem along with anger. The lack of classic structure and rhyme schemes modernizes a loss that is obviously still fresh in the poet’s mind. In “Frank Hogan and Fred Demmler,” Long describes Hogan as a young writer whose imagination was, “mad with the human abundance of the city about him and the five mill valleys.” The half of the poem dealing with Hogan relies largely on selections from letters Hogan apparently sent to Long during the war, some of which appeared, unattributed, in *The Soldier’s Progress*, the companion volume of *Carnegie Tech War Verse*. Within the poem, Long

▲ “Fulfilled” by Frank Hogan



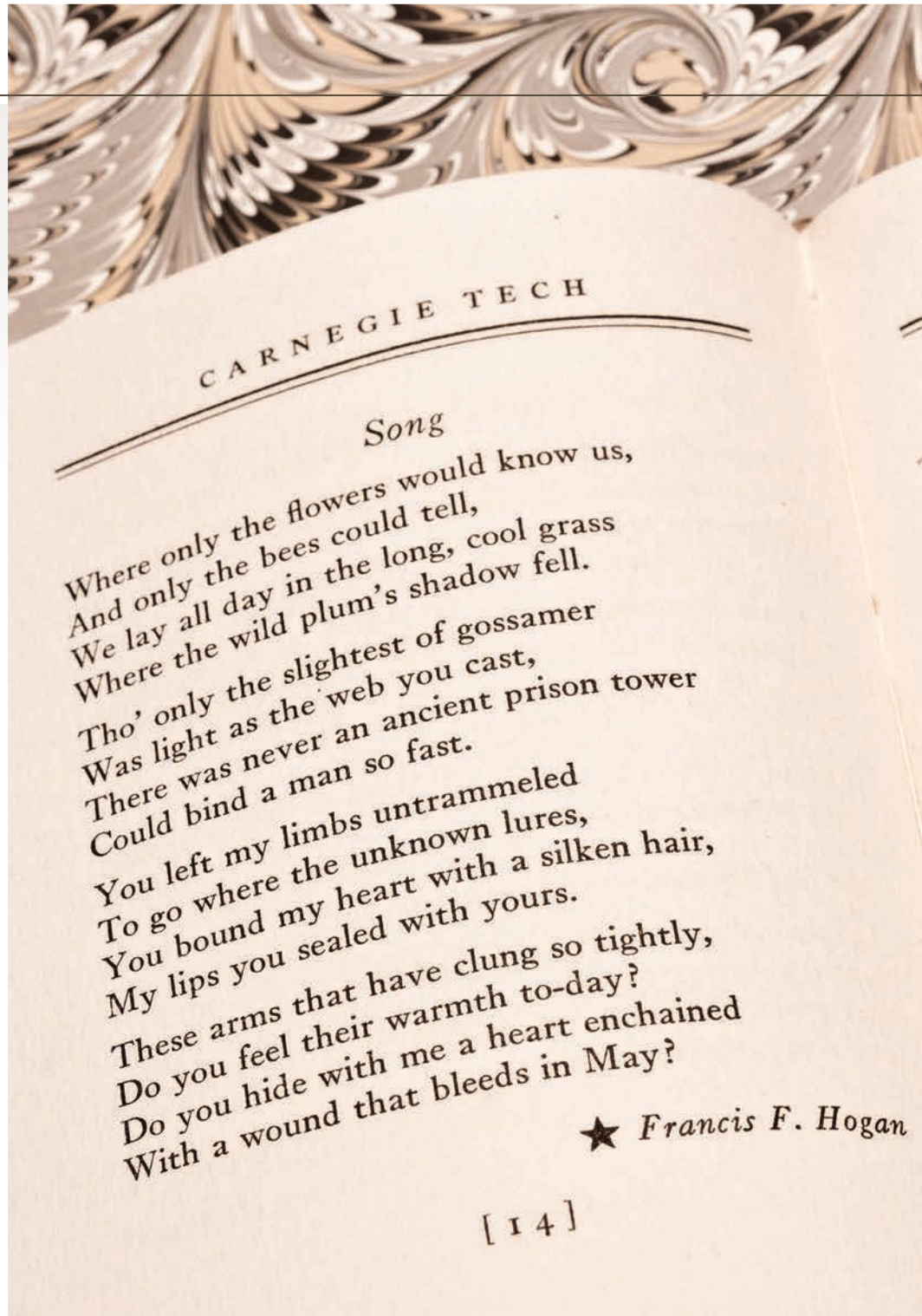
praises Hogan's letters, "these letters, few, and perfect" and, "gathering a few of your letters here/like a writing of apricot blossoms against a sky/over which a black storm came fatally,/I salute you."<sup>7</sup>

Use of Hogan's own words provides the young poet a forum for his voice denied to him by his early death, a forum also provided for him by Hervey Allen in the forward of *Wampum and Old Gold* 14 years earlier. Hogan's voice is prominent in the poem but Long prefaces Hogan's words with a cynicism about the war that must have been hard won by watching his young Carnegie Tech students leave for the front: "naked men and boys being weighed and measured, having their chests thumped, their hearts listened to.... Only the best go to the cannons."<sup>8</sup>

Long bids farewell to his former student in a passage that reads as both wistful and bitter: "Au revoir, Frank. A Pittsburgh boy with your work ahead, caught in a nightmare of strands stronger than steel, woven of our human nature through generations, a web dooming anyone past hope."<sup>9</sup>

Corporal Francis Hogan was originally buried near his place of death in Farme de la Madeline, Montfaucon, France. By January 1920 his remains had been relocated to the newly established Argonne American Cemetery. As the survivor of a soldier killed in battle Hogan's mother, Emma Sargeant Hogan, received a survey from The Graves Administration of the U.S. Army asking her to decide on the final resting place for her son. Previous to receiving the survey, Mrs. Hogan had sent a letter to the Quartermaster General in January 1920 asking for the return of Hogan's body: "I appealed to the Red Cross and they advised me to write to you and said you would attend to it for me. Please advise me to whom I may apply as I must have the body of my dear boy."<sup>10</sup>

This letter and others from Hogan's sister and various family friends are among the papers within Hogan's file at the National

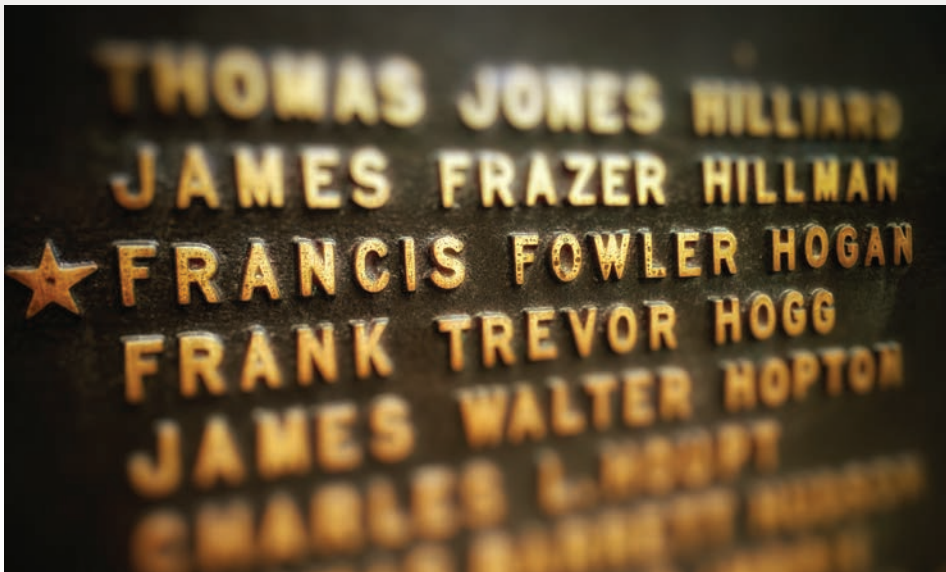


"Song" by Frank Hogan 

[ 14 ]

★ Francis F. Hogan





▲ The plaque on the WWI memorial at Calvary Episcopal Church lists Frank and Hervey's names.

Personnel Records Center. Based on these letters, the decision to disturb her son's remains appears to have been a difficult one for Mrs. Hogan. On August 10, 1920, Mrs. Hogan wrote to The Graves Registration Bureau, explaining, "I did not return [the survey] when it was sent to me as I had not decided whether it was best to have him moved but now I

know I must have him." Other letters in the file request information on Hogan's death and the whereabouts of his personal effects. On January 28, 1919, Hogan's sister Ruth wrote to the Office of the Quartermaster General to inquire about her brother's belongings, specifically, "a notebook," explaining that, "many of his things had a literary value."

Considering that Hervey Allen's wartime notebook evolved into an award-winning collection of poetry, it is sad to say the papers within Hogan's file contain no evidence that any such notebook was ever recovered. That one of the poems within *Wampum and Old Gold* was a directive against repatriation of the soldier dead entitled, "Hands Off" calls into question his feelings about the return of his friend's remains to Pittsburgh.

Almost a year and half after Mrs. Hogan's request for the return of her "dear boy," Hogan's body was repatriated and laid to rest in lot 48, Section 7 in The Homewood Cemetery on August 13, 1921—the same month and year that *Wampum and Old Gold* was published. *Pittsburgh Memorandum* was published in 1935. 🌟

**Jennie Benford** is Director of Programming for The Homewood Cemetery Historical Fund. Her involvement with the cemetery has covered over 20 years, during which time she also worked 10 years as The University Archivist for Carnegie Mellon University. Jennie is an Ohio ex-pat whose introduction to Pittsburgh history came as a member the first Clayton Docent class at The Frick Art and Historical Center. She is a founding member of Ladies United for the Preservation of Endangered Cocktails, a guerrilla women's history action collective that uses vintage cocktails to celebrate women's history.

<sup>1</sup> *Poetry* magazine, vol. 13-14 (1918-19).

<sup>2</sup> Hervey Allen, *Toward the Flame* (1927), p. 69.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75-77.

<sup>4</sup> Letter from Corp. Frank Hogan to his mother, Emma D. Sergeant Hogan, July 31, 1918, as copied into the WWI Personnel Ledgers of The Calvary Episcopal Church, Pittsburgh.

<sup>5</sup> *The Soldier's Progress* (1918), p. 36.

<sup>6</sup> *The Tartan*, vol. 21, no. 24 (March 8, 1927).


<sup>7</sup> Haniel Long, "Frank Hogan and Fred Demmler," (1935).

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Letter from Emma Sargeant to Office of the Quartermaster General, January 20, 1920. Records of Francis Hogan, National Personnel Records Center, National Archives, St. Louis.





The WWI memorial cross  
outside Calvary  
Episcopal Church. ➤

TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND IN HONOR  
OF ALL THOSE FROM CALVARY PARISH  
WHO SERVED IN THE GREAT WAR  
1914 - 1918

"FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH"

1 TIMOTHY 6:12.





# LENA GUILBERT BROWN FORD

A silver lining through  
dark clouds

By Kelly Anderson Gregg

From the oil boom towns of Western Pennsylvania to the sophisticated streets of London, Lena Guilbert Brown Ford's life was marked by poetic extremes. Her legacy is one of triumph and tragedy, from writing one of the most famous songs of the Great War to becoming a victim of its violence. And it all began in Oil Creek Township, Venango County.

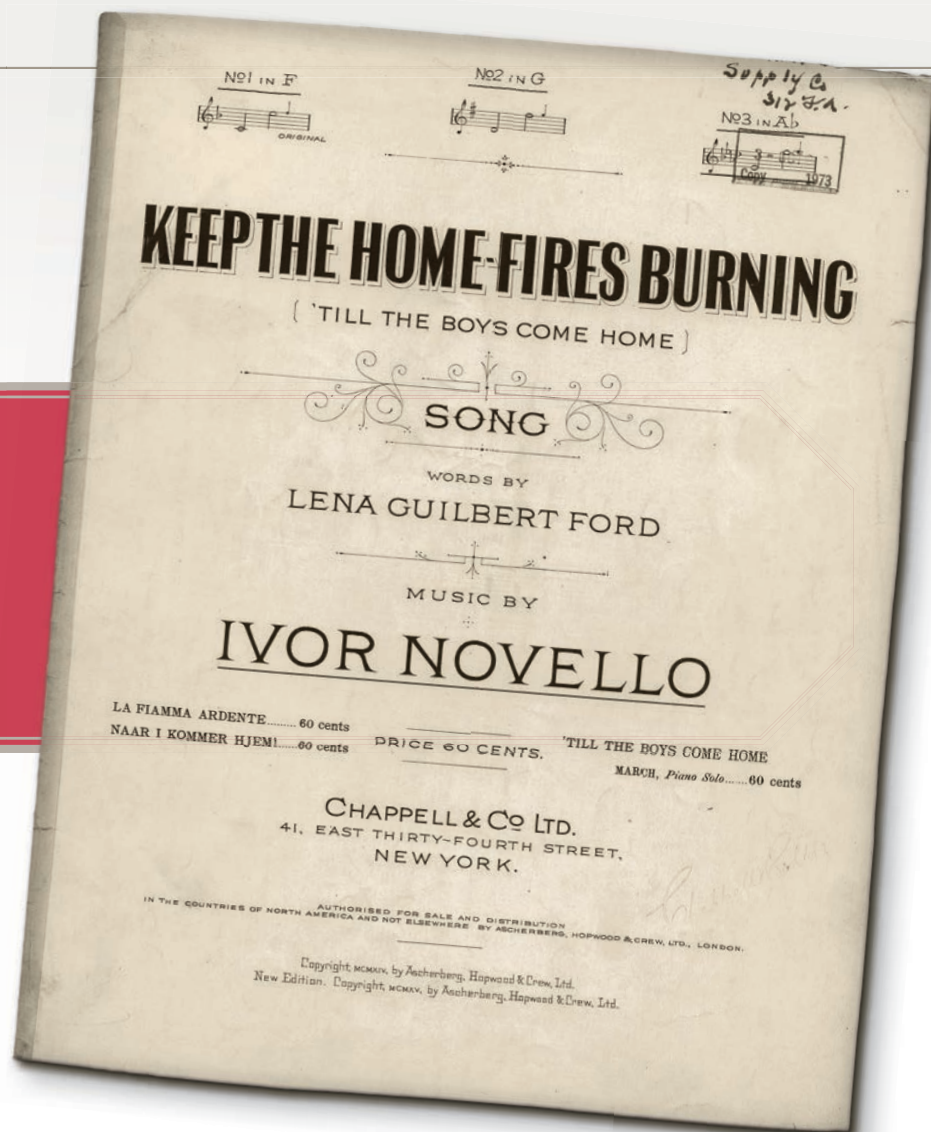
In the late 1860s, Titusville and the surrounding area was a forest of oil derricks and drill sites. The initial fervor created by Edwin Drake's first successful commercial well in 1859 was winding down but there was still money to be made. Perhaps this opportunity is what brought oil merchant James Brown and his wife Antoinette to Oil Creek Township, about five miles outside of Titusville. It was there around 1868 that their only daughter, Lena, was born.<sup>1</sup> Her stay was not long; by 1870, the Browns were back in their home state of New York, living in Elmira.<sup>2</sup> Lena attended Elmira College, where she displayed an aptitude for poetry.<sup>3</sup> After completing her studies, she married local doctor Henry Hale Ford, but the marriage was unhappy and the couple divorced.<sup>4</sup> Lena took their only son to Europe to pursue a new life.

Lena Guilbert Brown Ford, 1888.  
Chemung County Historical Society.





Sheet music cover for  
"Keep the Home Fires  
Burning," 1915.  
LoC 100008252.



Lena, her son Walter, and eventually Lena's mother Antoinette settled in London, where Lena quickly entered the literary scene. When war engulfed Europe in 1914, composer Ivor Novello contacted Lena with a song that needed lyrics. Lena's words for the tune captured the tense excitement and patriotism felt by the British at the beginning of the war. "Keep the Home-Fires Burning ('Till the Boys Come Home)" sold over one million copies, and its hopeful spirit made it into one of the war's most enduring songs.<sup>5</sup>

Though her lyrics were bright, Lena's untimely death was bleak. On the evening of March 12, 1918, the poet was visiting a friend when an air raid warning sounded. Though her friend urged her to stay, Lena hurried home to check on her family.<sup>6</sup> That night, a German bomb struck Lena's house. While their maid was able to pull Antoinette to safety, no one could reach Lena or Walter. Mother and son suffocated under the weight of their own home, the first American casualties to die in a London air raid.<sup>7</sup> Her contemporaries were shocked at her death and eulogized Lena's writings, along with her efforts to

help wounded soldiers coming home from the front.<sup>8</sup> As she wrote in her most popular song, "There's a silver lining, through the dark clouds shining."

**Kelly Anderson Gregg** is a historian, researcher, and former Assistant Editor of *Western Pennsylvania History*.

<sup>1</sup> Venango County Historical Society, *Venango County 2000: The Changing Scene*, vol. 3 (Franklin, Pa.: Seneca Printing, 2013), 55.

<sup>2</sup> 1870 U.S. census, Chemung County, N.Y., population schedule, Elmira, pg. 12, dwelling 101, family 101, J.L. and N.A. Brown; digital image, FindMyPast.com, accessed 16 September 2017, <http://findmypast.com>; 1880 U.S. census, Chemung County, N.Y., population schedule, Elmira, pg. 2,

dwelling 19, family 20, James L. and Antoinette Brown; digital image, FindMyPast.com, accessed 16 September 2017, <http://findmypast.com>.

<sup>3</sup> Rachel Dworkin, "Keep the Home Fires Burning," Chemung County Historical Society, <http://chemung44.rssing.com/browser.php?indx=53078565&item=1>, accessed 10 September 2017.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.


<sup>5</sup> Martin Pegler, *Soldiers' Songs and Slang of the Great War* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2014).

<sup>6</sup> Alice Ziska Snyder and Milton Valentine Snyder, *Paris Days and London Nights* (Boston: E.P. Dutton, 1921), 40-41.

<sup>7</sup> "Maid Heroine in Bomb Tragedy," *Chicago Tribune*, 13 March 1918.

<sup>8</sup> Frederick Lents (president, Elmira College), "Letter to the Editor," *The Stars and Stripes*, 21 March 1919.





➤ Of the more than 7,000 Americans killed at St. Mihiel, 4,153 are buried here at Thiaucourt, while 284 were declared missing.

Photo by Warrick Page/ABM.



# Finding CARL

By Noretta Willig

**In the American Cemetery  
at Thiaucourt, France,  
stands a doughboy,  
larger than life.**



Dressed in his summer tunic, bloused pants, and leggings, his thumbs in his belt, he looks out over the rows of white crosses. Strong, handsome, and resolute, he looks so young. The inscription, in French, above his head translates: HE SLEEPS FAR FROM HIS FAMILY IN THE GENTLE LAND OF FRANCE. On the pedestal, the motto continues in English: BLESSED ARE THEY THAT HAVE THE HOME LONGING FOR THEY SHALL GO HOME. Truly, truly they will.

Returned from their futile search to find Carl in Europe, Henry and Anna placed this marker over what would have been Carl's grave. All they knew of him was that he rested "Somewhere in France."

All photos by the author unless noted.



✓ This picture of Carl Willig, age 18, became his family's final view of him. Then, through three generations, he became an ancestral memory.



**America is  
privileged to  
spill her blood**

**AND HER MIGHT  
FOR THE  
PRINCIPLES  
THAT GAVE  
HER BIRTH AND  
HAPPINESS.**

---

~President Woodrow Wilson



In President Woodrow Wilson's address to Congress on April 2, 1917, he called to arms only about 100,000 existing troops and the nation saying, "America is privileged to spill

As the newly appointed force leader, General John J. Pershing received a clear directive from his Commander-in-Chief: the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) must win a major victory in Europe with a “separate and distinct component of the combined forces.” Such solo U.S. success would establish America as a world power and, perhaps more importantly for the President, secure for him a prominent influence in the peace talks to follow.

The battle chosen by Pershing to accomplish the order was to close the 270-square-mile salient at St. Mihiel. The French and British commands would, not without argument, stand aside, let the AEF



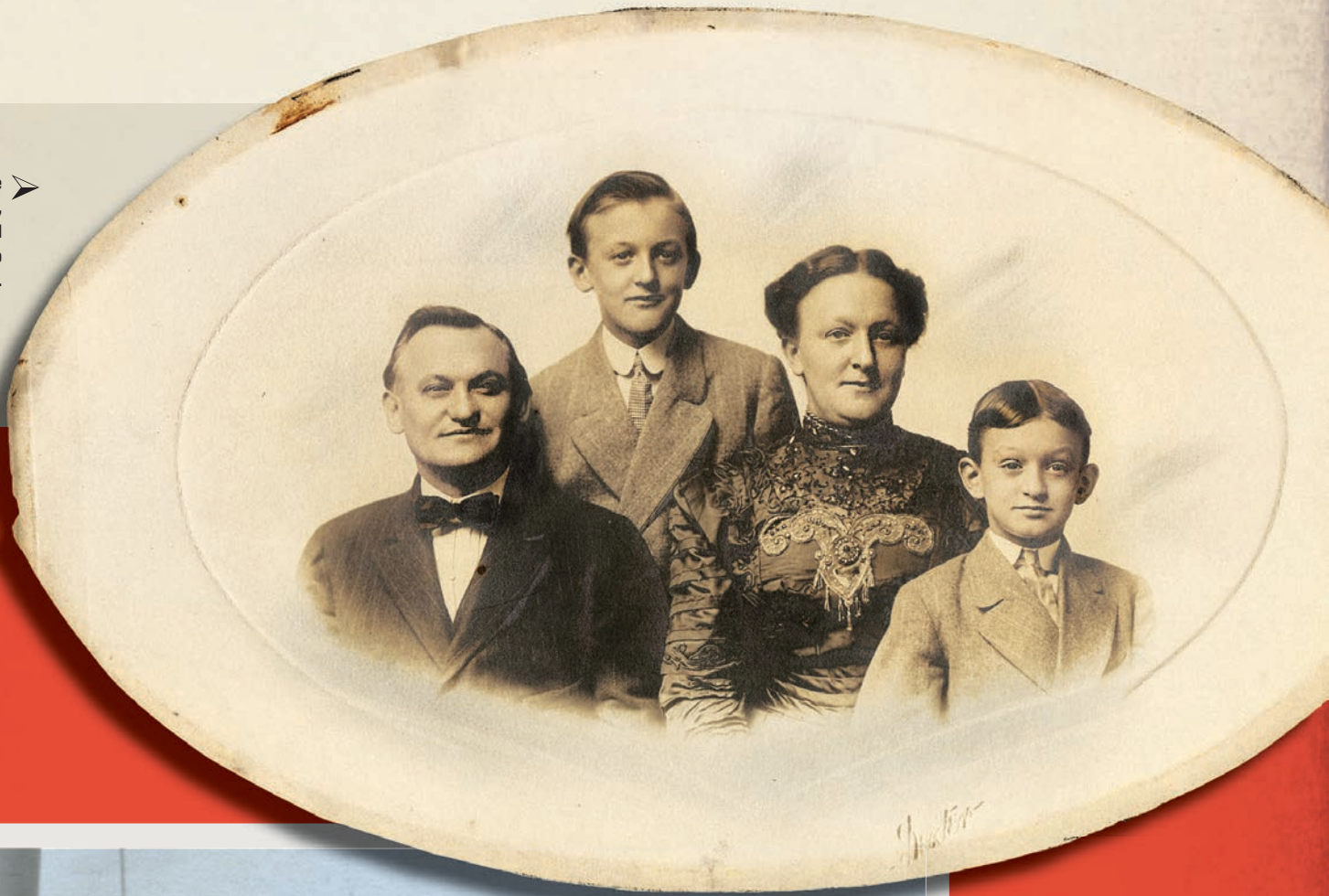
**The battle to close the 270-square-mile St. Mihiel Salient was America's first independent action of the war and its first victorious battle fought on European soil.**

Photo by Warrick Page/ABM.





The Willig family smile together, c. 1911: Henry, Anna, older son Carl, and younger son Walter, who became the author's father.



When four years of diligent effort by the Army failed to recover their son, Henry and Anna traveled to France, determined to find Carl themselves.



troops regroup, and accord to General Pershing full authority. Everything was on the line for Pershing, the AEF, and America.

While Pershing himself established the strategic design of the battle, then-Colonel George C. Marshal planned and organized the attack. No longer the trench warfare tactic to fight, then pause, then fight again, this encounter was set to move, move, move.

The weather was as hostile as the enemy. Four long days and nights of rain continued into the opening day, September 12.

Combat began at 1 a.m. with Colonel William (Billy) Mitchell leading the first air assault in history. Using a force of 1,481 planes, his mission was to observe and report to ground commanders the enemy positions, to bomb enemy artillery installations, and to take the German air force out of the sky. Flying his legendary SPAD xiii, Captain Eddie Rickenbacker earned his "ace" citation in the battle.

At dawn, Lieutenant Colonel George S. Patton, Jr., on foot, led his tank brigades into the field, adapting to circumstances and adjusting his tactics in ways that would make him the most successful tank commander in history. Douglas MacArthur, already a Brigadier General, directed his famous "Rainbow" Division into the fight. Only a few hours into the fray, these two men met, comrades in arms, rivals in rank, artillery striking around them. Each later presented his version of the meeting, but still, no one knows for sure which of them actually did, as accused, duck from danger.

Under the leadership of these future heroes, St. Mihiel, on the evening of September 16, 1918, was declared the first victory of the U.S. Army on European soil. The salient was closed.

The prominent military figures of the twentieth century were all there. So was Carl Willig.

Carl was 19, enlisted, the older son of a German immigrant and a Private, 5th

Carl, shown here at about 14, ➤ would soon start work at the National Tube Works, then at 18, he enlisted and went off to a place called "over there." Everyone's world soon changed.





the map, marking its conclusion on September 16. "You see. Very big. Fast moving."

Then, carefully identifying a spot, he points and says, "Here is the farmhouse. Here is where we found Carl. You will see."

Quickly we are in the car again, mesmerized by the unscarred beauty of the landscape. Suddenly we stop on an empty road surrounded by open fields and distant woods. Elisabeth is quickly out of the car with a map spread on the hood. Again, she shows me the progress of the battle. "You see," she says, "by September 15, the doughboys had advanced to this road." I verify, "You mean this road? The one we are on now?"

"Right! Yes," she continues quickly. "They were on that side, below the road, in the ditch. Then, on the 16th, they cross the road and go over the field—here." We walk across the road and stand on the edge of an open field. "That far line of trees is the old Hindenburg Line."

As she unwinds the events of that early evening in 1918, I am captured in time. The field was then a maze of barbed wire. Several tanks moved ahead of the infantry troops to crush the sinister blades. With a shrug,

she adds that only the Americans made that preliminary move; the French marched through it, cutting their path as they advanced.

"The boys had to watch out for that farmhouse to the left. That's where the enemy could be hiding," she points. "They were under heavy fire from beyond the woods the whole time as they moved into the field."

Clearly, they fought hard for every step of gain. She reminds me of the mud in the field that slowed their progress and of the lethal gas that caused them to speed forward.

Finally, just as they approached the trees, the bombing stopped. She reminds me that the trees marked the Hindenburg Line. The Germans had been ordered to retreat beyond that former frontier and regroup for another day.

The great all-American battle to close the St. Mihiel salient was won. The brilliant reputation of the U.S. fighting force was realized and President Wilson's notable place at the peace table was secure.


Then, stepping slightly forward, she says, "Look this way, Noretta. Just past the wood pile, do you see how the trees turn slightly to the left?" I see the place about 100 yards from

where we stand and nod. "You see, that place just past the woodpile is where Roger stumbled on the bones. Roger came to me. I reported to the Gendarme. The police notified JPAC. We were here during the excavation. That is where Carl was."

So matter of fact. So extraordinary.

I hear the words of John O'Hara's letter. Carl's last words were, "We reached the objective, so we will be relieved tonight."

Then a random high explosive hit. Just past the wood pile, where the trees turn slightly to the left, just over there, Carl died. "He suffered no pain, my dear friends. Death was instantaneous."

But Carl is no longer there, lost in the woods. Carl is found. He is known. He is honored. He is remembered. Carl is "Home at Last." 

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Raised in McKeesport, **Noretta Willig** graduated from Ohio University and the University of Pittsburgh. After working in publications, she taught literature at an area high school. Since retiring, she has traveled in all 50 states and many foreign countries, including to the battlefields of France. Visit [Carlsstory.com](http://Carlsstory.com) for more information.



▲ Carl Willig, lost and almost forgotten, is "Home at Last." He rests on a quiet hill above a vacant steel mill near his father, mother, and brother who mourned him all their lives.





As we travel back a muddy road, with the farmhouse on our left, we approach a wood pile. There, where the tree line turns slightly to the left, is where Carl died, and where 88 years later he was found.

Finishing his shift, Carl dragged himself on his broken leg up the hill to the back door. He knew his father would be waiting for him, ready to enforce the rule to “come straight home from work.” Realizing that he was almost an hour late, Carl went to the kitchen window and tapped softly on the glass. His father was at the kitchen table. He did not move. Carl rapped louder. Henry was motionless. Carl struggled to the door; it was locked. He knocked on the door; no answer. Finally, Carl pounded on the door until Henry opened it.

Carl rushed in, lifted his father off his feet, pushed him across the room, and set him on the kitchen table. “Now, you listen to me, old man,” my dad, snarling, repeated Carl’s words. “Don’t you ever do anything like that to me again.”

Then, my dad would sit back in his chair and with a wistful sigh, he concluded the story, “Carl was tough, wiry and tough.”

Was he really “wiry and tough”?

We will never know. Everyone who knew him is gone. My grandparents, my dad, my great aunts who told me so much about the family. Also, my mother and my brothers. They are all gone. And Carl was almost forgotten.

Then in November 2008, my phone rang. A genealogist from Oregon working for the U.S. Army, through a series of questions, identified me as Carl’s next of kin. “You are the person they are looking for,” she said. But why? “I don’t know any more,” she concluded, “probably they found something. The Army will call.”

The mission of JPAC, the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (in 2015, merged into the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency), was to account for Americans listed as Prisoners of War or Missing in Action. In each case, after arriving at a satisfactory conclusion, they contact the Army. The Army employs genealogists who then track down the next of kin.

My phone call lasted less than a minute, and the Army did not call for almost four months. During that time, I went on the hunt for all I could find about Carl. The primary resource was Aunt Elsie’s trunk. Elsie was my dad’s aunt and shortly after his death, she went in to a nursing home and gave the trunk to my brother, Ken. When my brother died, the trunk, which I don’t think had ever been investigated, was about to be thrown away. I took it and put it in my basement. I, too, never looked at its contents.

Now, with new curiosity, I open the trunk probably for the first time in more than 30 years. Generations of photographs spilled over each other. Everyone from my grandmother’s uncle, the Evangelical Congregational Lutheran minister, who spoke only German, to my grandparents, my dad, my brothers, and me—we are all there. And, of course, Carl, in his uniform, ready to go off to war. On the photo’s ornate frame is an original red paper poppy, probably from the first Armistice Day.



▼ Montsec today overlooks the lush landscape of Lorraine. Dotted with lakes and farms, on these fields and in these forests, more than three million rounds of ammunition were fired, killing thousands.



A family portrait dates to about 1908 or 1909. Everyone—my grandparents, my dad, and Carl—smiles happily. Another picture shows my dad and Carl at a younger age, each holding a large watermelon rind. Clearly these were happy times.

A portrait of young Carl looking dignified in a suit marks some personal achievement for him, perhaps his grade school graduation. He looks to be about 13 or 14. Four or five years later, Carl enlisted to be a soldier and everything changed—for all of us.

After Carl was killed and lost, my grandfather and grandmother began a

relentless letter-writing campaign. I discover a stream of correspondence with the Graves Registration Service, the Adjutant General of the Army, and other officials of the government, everyone they could think of. Henry demanded, “as the Father of the Boy, who was killed, fighting in action for his Country,” that his remains be returned. He reminded the authorities that “the bodies of the men who went down with the *Maine* in Havana Harbour were resurrected.” He insisted that “all of my son’s records are to be assembled in one place and distributed to every concerned party.” He pleaded: “I have

suffered a great loss, and will not and cannot afford to suffer greater.”

My grandmother stated simply that “to think he will never come home sure does make it so hard.” She signed her appeal “From Carl’s heartbroken Mother.”

Together, they met with a member of the 66th Congress, the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

All replies were polite, assuring them that everyone was doing everything possible but cautioning that with the passage of time, the chance of finding their son diminished. Struck by the possibility that Carl would never be



found, they decided to go to Europe to look for him themselves.

In the spring of 1922, they left New York and docked at Cherbourg. Arriving in France less than four years after the end of devastating trench warfare, they travelled the battlefields and walked through the rows of white crosses marking the graves of the fallen. I don't know what they hoped to find—something that someone had overlooked, a clue, anything. Nor can I imagine how arduous the search must have been. During their six months abroad, they, like everyone else, found nothing.

When they returned, perhaps to convince or remind themselves, they bought a marker and had it placed in the family plot at McKeesport-Versailles Cemetery. It conceded that Carl's remains were "resting somewhere in France." Carl was gone. Lost to them forever.

Ten years after Carl's death, Henry died in 1928, a broken man. My grandmother wore the black of mourning until her death in 1944.

As I look at Carl's picture in his doughboy hat, I wonder if his eyes were the soft gray they appear in the photograph. We will never know. Everyone who ever looked in those eyes is gone. They are all gone.

But I am still here, the next of kin.

In March 2009, Army representatives come to my home. A young officer in Marine dress blues and an older woman retired from active service, both representing the U.S. Army Human Resources Command, Past Conflict Reparations Branch in Washington, D.C., present to me what they found.

From a thick black book, they reveal the documentation of the case, noting

how the scholars of JPAC in Hawaii researched the findings for two years. Their presentation is systematic, progressing page by page, document by document—for four hours.

First, they tell me about an organization in France called Thanks, GIs. Twice, in World

those Americans who gave their lives to liberate them.

As they point to a picture of the President of Thanks, GIs, Elisabeth Gozzo, and Roger Schneider, the story begins.

In September 2006, Roger entered woods near an old farm house looking for relics. Suddenly, he happened to trip. It was a bone; an animal bone, he thought. Looking more closely, he realized these were human remains. He put what he uncovered in a plastic bag and reburied it, so no one would disturb the site until he made his report.

Roger happened to be a member of Thanks, GIs, so he informed Elisabeth of his finding. She, following procedure, notified the local police, who, in turn, called the Army. A team of JPAC archeologists happened to be in the area and, though scheduled to return to Hawaii in a few days, they came to excavate the site.

What they found astonished everybody — the remains of possibly three soldiers and many artifacts from World War I. They took their findings with them on the 7,500-mile journey to Hawaii.

At the Forensic Lab in Honolulu, they separated and confirmed there were, in fact, three individuals. They meticulously tested and described each part, down to the last fragment and then the real search began. Who were

these people?

Historians researched every missing soldier who could have been at that precise location, exact day, and specific time. They came to know that there were five distinct possibilities of who they might be. Every option needed to be investigated and accounted for. Their study concluded that one of the five had been found just after the war



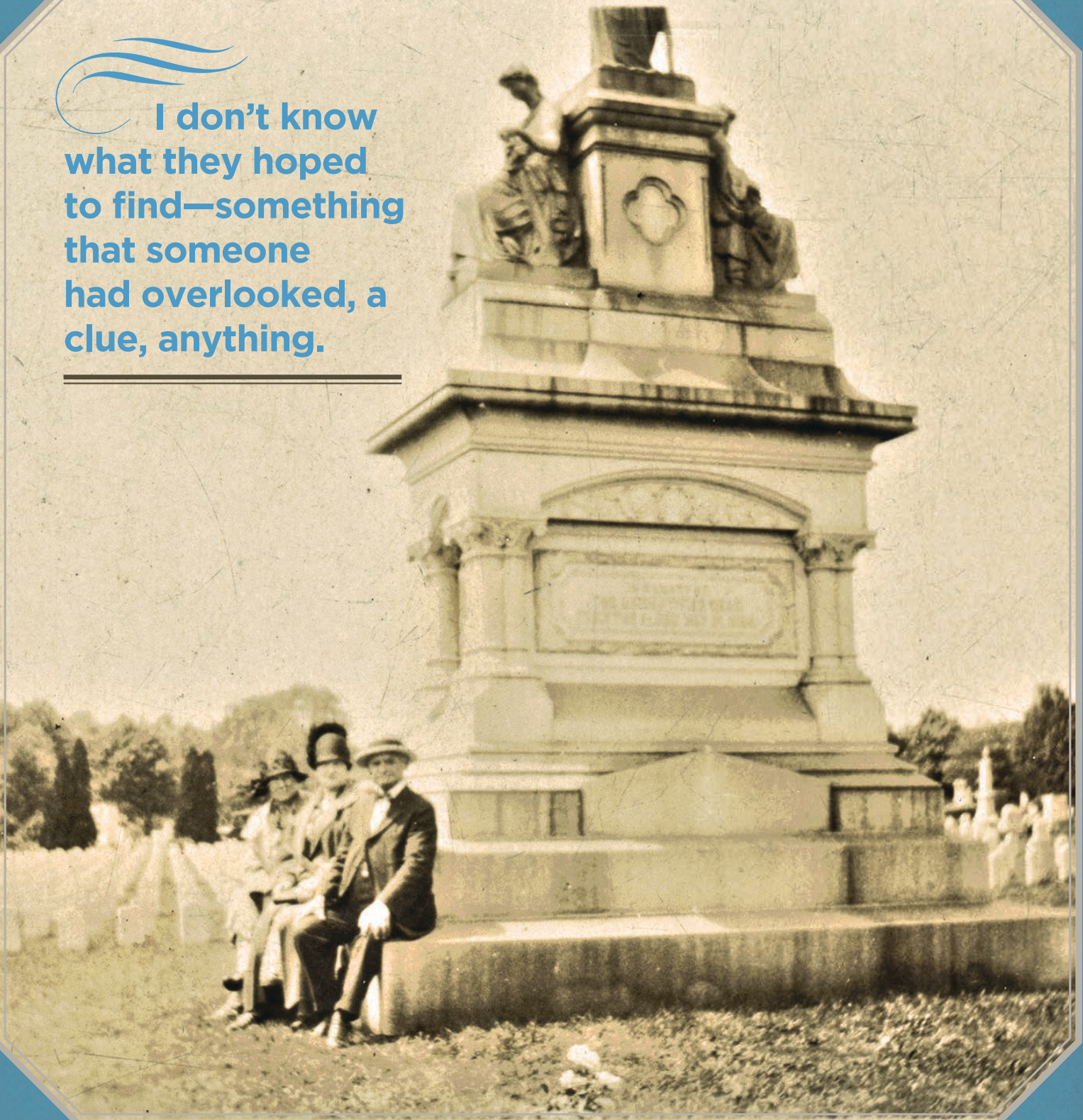
▲ The bronze bas-relief shows the progress of the battle over five hectic days. Near the line that marks the Army's final objective and the American victory, an old farmhouse stands out. Philippe points to a wooded area behind the open fields and says, "Here is where we found Carl."

War I and again in World War II, the same 5th Division of the Army, known as the Red Diamonds, rescued and freed the people of German-occupied Lorraine. Today the members of Thanks, GIs are relic hunters, as well as reenactors, who pay homage to the American military on every holiday, American or French. Their most momentous mission, though, is to recover the lost remains of





I don't know  
what they hoped  
to find—something  
that someone  
had overlooked, a  
clue, anything.



During the summer of 1922, Anna and Henry walked among the thousands of white crosses in the cemeteries of France to find their boy. He was not there.





**Roger Schneider, himself a French underground fighter in World War II and a member of Thanks, GIs, tells the story of how he tripped in the woods, accidentally discovering Carl's remains, almost 90 years after Carl died on the last day of the battle.**

and returned to the U.S. Another of the five belonged to a different company, not at that location. Finally, they know these three are Costello, Weikel, and Willig. But they do not know who is who.

They identify that one of them had a broken leg. But they, unfortunately, never heard my dad's story, so the investigation continues.

They collect and search the personnel files of the three men. One of them enlisted, so only he had a dental exam before his service began. Those dental records match parts of a jaw bone that was discovered. The record shows a gold crown at #31, and, yes, there is the gold crown at #31.

This soldier is Carl Willig. Roger just happened to trip over an exposed bone and he happened to be a member of Thanks, GIs, an organization dedicated to recovery. If an Army anthropology unit had not happened to be nearby, the discovery would have been buried in graves marked "Unknown." One soldier happened to have enlisted and only enlisted men had dental records. That soldier's father

happened to insist that his dental records be included in his file. In the part of the jaw that happened to remain, there happened to be a gold crown.

Through this series of coincidences — or as the result of fate, I — as Carl's next of kin, sign the paper accepting the findings that this is Carl.

By the only indestructible part of him, Carl was found and 90 years after his death he is coming home.

Accompanied by his personal honor guard who boarded the plane with him in Hawaii and remained with him until his burial, Carl is met at Pittsburgh International Airport by members of the 316th Sustainment Command stationed in Pittsburgh. His flag-draped casket is transferred temporarily to a funeral home, his burial at Versailles Cemetery in McKeesport set for the next day.

June 19, 2009, dawned with a torrential rainstorm, but as we prepare to leave the funeral home the rain suddenly stops. The cortege makes its way toward the places Carl once knew. Crossing the Lyle Boulevard

Bridge, we pass below his family's home. To our left, is the now-vacant steel mill that, perhaps, he thought he knew too well. Finally, we enter under the impressive stone arch of the cemetery entrance.

Full military honor for the sacrifice of the fallen is impressive indeed. The air is filled with the whine and wail of the bagpiper playing "Going Home" and "Amazing Grace." "Taps" echoes over the hill. The pastor eloquently praises Carl's family, his short life, and his service. The rifle volley produces the three commemorative shells, representing duty, honor, and country, that are folded into the flag.

The officer in charge gives Carl his final salute. May he now rest in peace with his parents and with my dad, whom Carl, in a letter, called "My Dearest Brother." Finally, together.

The story might have ended there, but it does not. My family, so scarred by their loss, continues to fascinate me as never before. The U.S. Army, spurned and avoided by my dad, impresses me in so many ways — their manner and civility, care and dedication. These men





At the conclusion of the graveside service, Captain Eric Gass gives Carl the final slow-motion salute.

The officer in charge gives Carl his final salute. May he now rest in peace with his parents and with my dad, whom Carl, in a letter, called “My Dearest Brother.” Finally, together.



High on the hill that had been the German stronghold stands the magnificent monument to the Battle of St. Mihiel. Its white granite gleams against the sky.

and women mark every day of their lives with service and honor.

And Thanks, GIs. Like my grandparents before me, I go to France to meet them.

When Elisabeth meets my train, I recognize her immediately, not so much from her photograph but by her intensity and energy. Her friend, Philippe, drives us and gives the initial tour. It is like riding through Lorraine with Maurice Chevalier. Later, I meet Elisabeth’s husband, Alain, who helps me with translation when I am introduced to several other members of the organization.

My most poignant meeting is with Roger, who found Carl. A big man with dancing blue eyes and the hands of a man who worked all his life, Roger tells us the story of his memorable day in the woods. Though he speaks in rapid French, I know exactly what he is saying from his expression and gestures. When I showed him Carl’s picture, Roger touches it gently and softly says, again and again, “Jeune [young]. Si jeune. Si jeune.” Now he knows what he found.

Elisabeth’s itinerary later includes a visit to the Montsec American Monument. Driving through the countryside, with its silver-blue lakes and open stretches of farm lands, some lush green and others already plowed to rich brown, is in itself a travelogue. We drive through the little village of Montsec and twist our way up to the hilltop monument commemorating the Battle of St. Mihiel, its white granite gleaming in the sunlight.

Looking out over the scene below, it is impossible to imagine this tranquil place was once raging with the storm of war, the biplanes swooping overhead, mortars exploding everywhere, and the doughboys clamoring through the barbed wire.

In the center of the rotunda, a bronze relief map shows the site of the five-day battle, every village, lake, and tree. Philippe calls our attention to it saying, “Look here. You can see exactly how it was.” With sweeping gestures, he describes the progress of the battle beginning September 12, advancing through September 13, 14, 15, and, finally at the top of



the map, marking its conclusion on September 16. "You see. Very big. Fast moving."

Then, carefully identifying a spot, he points and says, "Here is the farmhouse. Here is where we found Carl. You will see."

Quickly we are in the car again, mesmerized by the unscarred beauty of the landscape. Suddenly we stop on an empty road surrounded by open fields and distant woods. Elisabeth is quickly out of the car with a map spread on the hood. Again, she shows me the progress of the battle. "You see," she says, "by September 15, the doughboys had advanced to this road." I verify, "You mean this road? The one we are on now?"

"Right! Yes," she continues quickly. "They were on that side, below the road, in the ditch. Then, on the 16th, they cross the road and go over the field—here." We walk across the road and stand on the edge of an open field. "That far line of trees is the old Hindenburg Line."

As she unwinds the events of that early evening in 1918, I am captured in time. The field was then a maze of barbed wire. Several tanks moved ahead of the infantry troops to crush the sinister blades. With a shrug,

she adds that only the Americans made that preliminary move; the French marched through it, cutting their path as they advanced.

"The boys had to watch out for that farmhouse to the left. That's where the enemy could be hiding," she points. "They were under heavy fire from beyond the woods the whole time as they moved into the field."

Clearly, they fought hard for every step of gain. She reminds me of the mud in the field that slowed their progress and of the lethal gas that caused them to speed forward.

Finally, just as they approached the trees, the bombing stopped. She reminds me that the trees marked the Hindenburg Line. The Germans had been ordered to retreat beyond that former frontier and regroup for another day.

The great all-American battle to close the St. Mihiel salient was won. The brilliant reputation of the U.S. fighting force was realized and President Wilson's notable place at the peace table was secure.


Then, stepping slightly forward, she says, "Look this way, Noretta. Just past the wood pile, do you see how the trees turn slightly to the left?" I see the place about 100 yards from

where we stand and nod. "You see, that place just past the woodpile is where Roger stumbled on the bones. Roger came to me. I reported to the Gendarme. The police notified JPAC. We were here during the excavation. That is where Carl was."

So matter of fact. So extraordinary.

I hear the words of John O'Hara's letter. Carl's last words were, "We reached the objective, so we will be relieved tonight."

Then a random high explosive hit. Just past the wood pile, where the trees turn slightly to the left, just over there, Carl died. "He suffered no pain, my dear friends. Death was instantaneous."

But Carl is no longer there, lost in the woods. Carl is found. He is known. He is honored. He is remembered. Carl is "Home at Last." 

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Raised in McKeesport, **Noretta Willig** graduated from Ohio University and the University of Pittsburgh. After working in publications, she taught literature at an area high school. Since retiring, she has traveled in all 50 states and many foreign countries, including to the battlefields of France. Visit [Carlsstory.com](http://Carlsstory.com) for more information.



▲ Carl Willig, lost and almost forgotten, is "Home at Last." He rests on a quiet hill above a vacant steel mill near his father, mother, and brother who mourned him all their lives.



# THE NEGRO MIGRANT IN PITTSBURGH

A Review of the Conditions  
100 Years Ago

By Samuel W. Black, Director of  
African American Programs

In 1918, economist Abraham Epstein conducted and published a study of the experiences and conditions of life among southern African American migrants in Pittsburgh. Epstein was a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh, earning a bachelor of arts in social economy in 1917 and a graduate degree the following year. His graduate work centered on the topic of African American migrants and the sociological study was his thesis. Over the next 100 years, his work became an authority for understanding the conditions faced by African Americans during the Great Migration. Epstein analyzed various aspects of the migrant experience and offered statistical data to drive home certain points that outlined the influx of African Americans, mainly to the east side of the city.

Abraham Epstein was born in Russia and at the age of 18, in 1910, immigrated with his family to the U.S. Many Jews feeling the pinch between the weakened Russian Monarchy and the rising Bolshevik revolution immigrated to the U.S. They were among the two million eastern European Jews to come here between 1880 and 1924. Epstein used his personal knowledge in migration to express his study of African American migrants to Pittsburgh.

The study, as Epstein explained, aimed to “contribute toward the orientation and adjustment of the newcomers in our community.”<sup>1</sup> His goal was to present data as a basis for further study and analysis. It contained statistics, graphs, tables, and quotes detailing aspects of Black life in employment, migratory numbers, health, education, crime, and housing. It is an empirical study with seeming objectivity; however, some curious language reflects cultural or racial bias of the author, using adjectives such as shiftless and ignorant. Despite the derogatory language, Epstein was able to present information that had not yet been quantified, and the study became the first major sociological view of African American migrants in Pittsburgh.

A STUDY IN SOCIAL ECONOMICS

PUBLISHED UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE  
SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS  
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

## The Negro Migrant in Pittsburgh

BY

ABRAHAM EPSTEIN  
B. S. in Economics

PRICE FIFTY CENTS

PITTSBURGH, PA.  
1918



Some numbers seemed reasonable but Epstein realizes the impact of American racism on migrant experience. Epstein's study may have been the first centered on Pittsburgh, but it was not the first aimed at an urban northern African American population.

Nearly 20 years earlier, in 1899, historian and sociologist W.E.B. DuBois conducted the first major study of an urban black population with *The Philadelphia Negro*. DuBois' study was the first sociological work to use statistically based data in social science. DuBois outlined the importance of such data to clearly understand the impact and status of black life in the urban metropolis. Epstein followed DuBois' route closely. Given that Epstein's published study was much shorter and focused on a smaller population than DuBois' work, Epstein's statistically strong work was absent mapping that would have given an audience, a century later, a greater understanding of the demographic landscape. Regardless, his findings came at a time when the African American was progressive and determined. For example, Black Pittsburghers debated whether to participate in World War I. DuBois was at the center of this debate, choosing that African Americans should serve to gain greater democratic rights after the war. Others felt that African Americans had already served in every war in the nation's history and were due those rights already.

Epstein's study focused on the WWI years of 1915–1917 that halted European immigration most. He continued to point out that increases in African American employment—the signature reason for the influx of southern migrants—was the need for unskilled labor in Pittsburgh steel and mining industries during the war in Europe. The war basically halted European immigration. His work illustrated the recruitment of many southern migrants by war industries. Because the war had stopped European immigration,



Henton Herron found a job at the Vandergrift Works of Carnegie Illinois Steel, a U. S. Steel Subsidiary, and at the time the world's largest rolling mill.

Courtesy of Lois and Inez Miles, 12012.3.3.



Pittsburgh's industries in mining, trades, and steel needed the labor that millions of southern blacks could offer. Skilled and unskilled laborers migrated to Pittsburgh heeding the call of the industrial city.

That migration swelled the African American population to 39,000 by 1918. Sixty percent came from the southern states of Alabama, Georgia, Virginia, North Carolina, with most from Alabama. Thirty percent of migrants were between the ages of 18-25 and were single men.<sup>2</sup> Most of the migrants settled in the Hill District, but those that found work in mills settled close to those jobs such as in McKeesport, Braddock, Rankin, and Lawrenceville.

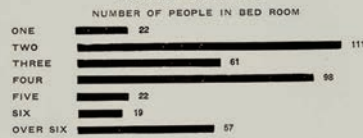
An example from the History Center's collections is Henton Herron, who migrated from Alabama in 1910 and found work in the steel mills of Vandergrift.<sup>3</sup> His experience in the mills of Alabama afforded him an unskilled role at Vandergrift. He would settle in McKeesport and send for his family after establishing his work in the mill.

Many other African Americans who found work in the mills were largely in unskilled and dangerous occupations in the mills. Epstein outlines the number of African



Of the men without families here, only twenty-two out of more than three hundred had individual bed rooms. Twenty-five percent lived four in a room, and twenty-five percent lived in rooms used by more than four people. Again only thirty-seven percent slept in separate beds, fifty percent slept two in a bed, and thirteen percent sleep three or more in a bed.

TABLE NUMBER III



The conditions in these rooming houses often beggar description. Sleeping quarters are provided not only in bedrooms, but also in attics, basements, dining rooms and kitchens. In many instances, houses in which these rooms are located are dilapidated dwellings with the paper torn off, the plaster sagging from the naked lath, the windows broken, the ceiling low and damp, and the whole room dark, stuffy and unsanitary. In one or two instances, these rooms, with more than six people sleeping in them at one time, have practically no openings for either light or air.



A Typical Boarding House on Lower Wyllie Avenue.

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In the more crowded sections, beds are rented on a double shift basis. Men who work at night sleep during the day in the beds vacated by day workers. There is no space in these rooms, except for beds and as many of them are crowded in as can be possibly accommodated.

There is rarely a place in these rooms for even suitcases or trunks. Under such circumstances the rooms can be kept clean with difficulty, and there is apparently no disposition to wrestle with the dirt and litter. Very few of these sleeping rooms have more than two windows each, and many have only one window. Only a few are provided with bath rooms, while a great number have the water and toilets in the yards or other places outside the house. Many of these roomers complain that often they are not given any soap, and are never given more than one towel a week.

TABLE NUMBER IV

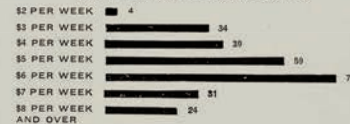
Rents Paid in Rooming Houses by 305 Roomers

Rents Paid	Percentage
168 paid \$1.50 per week	55
103 paid \$1.75 per week	34
13 paid \$2.00 per week	4.25
14 paid \$3.00 per week	4.25
7 paid Over \$3.00	2.5
	100

The rents paid by these roomers are shown in table number IV. They varied from \$1.50 to \$3.00 per week, and in a few instances were as high as \$4.00 per week. In a number of cases, the men also board in the same place in which they room, paying from five to seven or eight dollars per week for food and shelter.

TABLE NUMBER V.

ONE WEEK'S COST OF BOARD PER MAN



The situation in the camps is not better than that in rooming houses. In one railroad camp visited, the men were

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Americans in the major steel producing industries. In 1916, Carnegie Steel, the largest employer of black steel workers, employed 4,000 African Americans, with 95% unskilled labor, making 30¢ per hour, for 8 to 12 hours per day. Jones & Laughlin employed only 1,500 with 100% unskilled, with the same pay, but working 10 hours per day. Westinghouse Electric employed 900, with 90% unskilled, with 28-30¢ per hour for 10 hours of work per day.<sup>4</sup>

Epstein underscored the percentage of unskilled labor, noting that it was not that the workers were unskilled but that the positions blacks were given were in the unskilled, most dangerous work at the mills, regardless of skill or experience. These positions included the cleaning of the crucible pits, and other dirty, unskilled jobs with low pay.

Migrants also faced discrimination in employment, especially in union jobs. Blacks

had been used as strike breakers going back to 1875. During Epstein's study, the same condition locked out black skilled tradesmen from work. In June 1917, P. Bobonis, a Puerto Rican, Oberlin College graduate, and father of future *Pittsburgh Courier* and Mercy Hospital marketing director, Regis Bobonis, migrated from Colorado. He went to the employment bureau looking for work but was denied despite being a member of the Colorado Trade Union. The Pittsburgh union discriminated against Bobonis citing that white carpenters would walk off work if they had to work with a black person. Trade Unions would collect dues from black workers but not give them work. Bobonis eventually found work with the Dravo Contracting Company.<sup>5</sup>

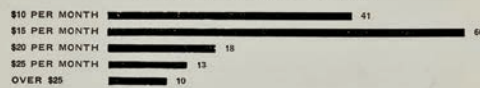
Epstein's narrative also expressed the desperate housing conditions for migrants. The same conditions criticized by *Pittsburgh Courier* editors a few years earlier found

migrants living in basement rooms, shacks, and abandoned tenements. His statistics reveal migrants paying \$1.50-\$3.00 per week for rent.<sup>6</sup> Few of the dwellings were equipped with heat, running water, or clear of rats, infestation, and proper construction. The poor housing conditions impacted the health of migrants: mortality rates stood at 527 in the first seven months of 1917. Most of the deaths were a result of disease such as pneumonia, tuberculosis, and heart disease. Eighty-seven of the deaths were of the ages five and under, while the majority of the 527 deaths were from the ages of 40-60.<sup>7</sup> The young and working age were the most vulnerable.

Epstein's crime report came with a caveat. He noted that reports of rising crime among African Americans was the talk around town. Epstein noted "A colored probation officer, for instance asserted that the juvenile delinquency among her people had at least doubled during



TABLE NUMBER VII  
Rents Paid by 142 Families Investigated



The sections formerly designated as Negro quarters, have been long since congested beyond capacity by the influx of newcomers, and a score of new colonies have sprung up in hollows and ravines, on hill slopes and along river banks, by railroad tracks and in mill-yards. In many instances the dwellings are those which have been abandoned by foreign white people since the beginning of the present war. In some cases they are structures once condemned by the City Bureau of Sanitation, but opened again only to accommodate the influx



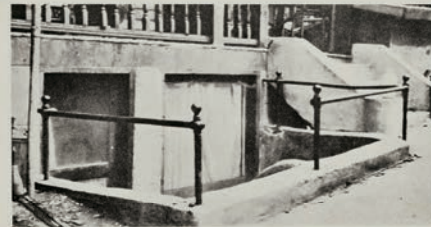
A Row of Houses Unused for Several Years Until the Present Influx from the South.

from the South. Very few of these houses are equipped with gas. Coal and wood are used both for cooking and heating. During the hot days of July, the visitor found in several instances a red hot stove in a room which was being used as kitchen, dining room, parlor and bedroom. This, however, did not seem to bother the newcomers, as many of the women, being unaccustomed to the use of gas, and fearful of it, preferred the more accustomed method of cooking.

A few of these families were found living in so-called "basements", more than three-fourths under ground, a direct violation

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of a municipal ordinance.<sup>3</sup> Some rooms had no other opening than a door. The rents paid for such quarters are often beyond belief. In one of these rooms in the Hill District, where only the upper halves of the windows were level with the sidewalk, lived a man, his wife and their five children, the eldest of whom was sixteen years old. The rental was six dollars per week. Another family paid twenty-five dollars per month for three small rooms on the ground floor. The kitchen was so damp and close that the investigator found it impossible to remain for long, because it was difficult to breathe. The ceilings in many of the houses visited were very low, hardly higher than six or seven feet and the rooms were often piled high with furniture. That the owners of these houses cared little about improving their houses was indicated in several cases by the fact that water faucets and toilets had been out of commission for months, and no effort at repair had been made.



"Basement" Occupied by a Migrant Family. The Only Opening in this Dwelling Appears in the Picture.

Because of these bad conditions many peculiar maladjustments exist. A certain man lived in a rooming house, while his young wife and baby lived in another place. In addition to his own rent and board, he paid ten dollars a week for the keep of his wife and baby. In another case, a family was forced to pay six dollars a month storage on the furniture which they had brought from the South, because their new quarters were too cramped to accommodate it.

<sup>2</sup> Pittsburgh Sanitary Code of 1912, Sections 122, 123 and 124, pages 75, 76 and 77.

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the last year, and she was greatly surprised when an examination of the records disclosed a very considerable decrease in the cases.<sup>28</sup> The crime statistics were taken from the most densely populated, predominantly black part of the city. In 1917, there were 3,092 arrests made with the majority for suspicion, disorderly conduct, and public drunkenness. There were only six murders reported for the year<sup>9</sup> with 1,716 dismissals reported. While Epstein was tabulating his report of crime, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was tabulating a report of lynching in the U.S. The Pittsburgh branch of the NAACP was founded in 1915 and quickly began to impact the socio-political mobility of African Americans. Statistics indicate that 142 African Americans were lynched in the U.S. from 1915 to 1917.

In his conclusion, Epstein offered several approaches to deal with the conditions that

African American migrants faced in Pittsburgh. He promoted a racial cooperation approach that placed the newly formed Urban League of Pittsburgh at the forefront of such movement. The weakness of Epstein's study is that it never mentioned the existing institutions in the African American community that were working to improve the lives of migrants. The black church and independent organizations and agencies had spent decades actively addressing the needs of migrants but were absent in the evaluation by Epstein. Even the efforts of the *Pittsburgh Courier* in recruiting workers and reporting the issues they faced in Pittsburgh was largely absent from the study.

A 21st-century reader may find the study strange in that it presents data that is remarkably different from our own, while the rate of unemployment, housing, health, and crime continue to be some of the major issues facing African Americans in Pittsburgh

today. Contemporary society reveals very low numbers of migrants in Pittsburgh. No longer an industrial base with a plethora of unskilled labor, the technological workforce of today has not proven to be as welcoming as some might think. My wife and I are migrants to Pittsburgh but came here as professionals. The question is, to what degree are the issues of 1918 the same issues in 2018?

<sup>1</sup> Epstein, Abraham, *The Negro Migrant in Pittsburgh* (University of Pittsburgh School of Economics, 1918) p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 18-25.

<sup>3</sup> From Slavery to Freedom exhibition, Senator John Heinz History Center.

<sup>4</sup> Epstein, p. 31.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 42-43.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 22-23.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 56-67.

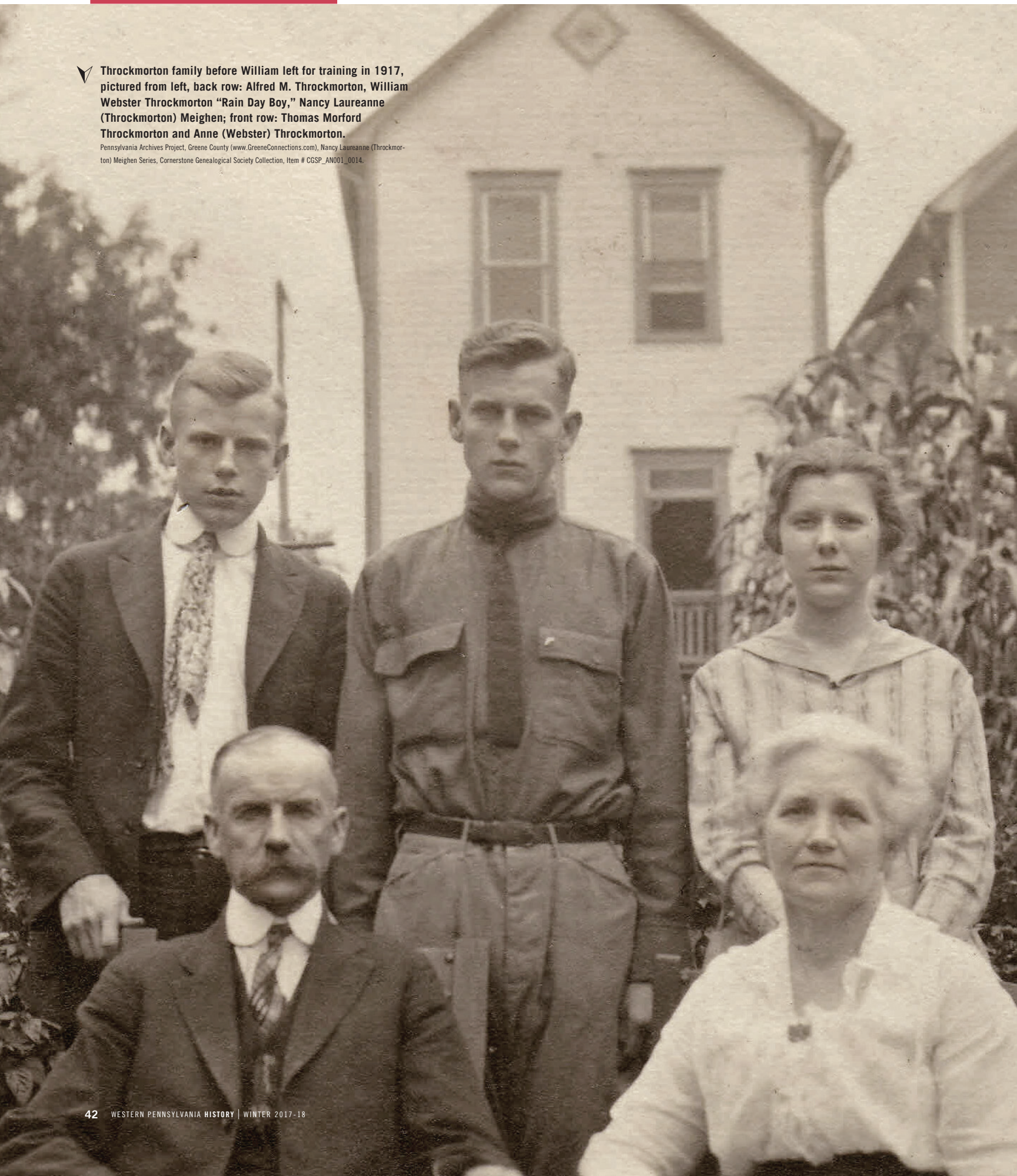
<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 47.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 48.



✓ Throckmorton family before William left for training in 1917, pictured from left, back row: Alfred M. Throckmorton, William Webster Throckmorton "Rain Day Boy," Nancy Laureanne (Throckmorton) Meighen; front row: Thomas Morford Throckmorton and Anne (Webster) Throckmorton.

Pennsylvania Archives Project, Greene County ([www.GreeneConnections.com](http://www.GreeneConnections.com)), Nancy Laureanne (Throckmorton) Meighen Series, Cornerstone Genealogical Society Collection, Item # CGSP\_AN001\_0014.





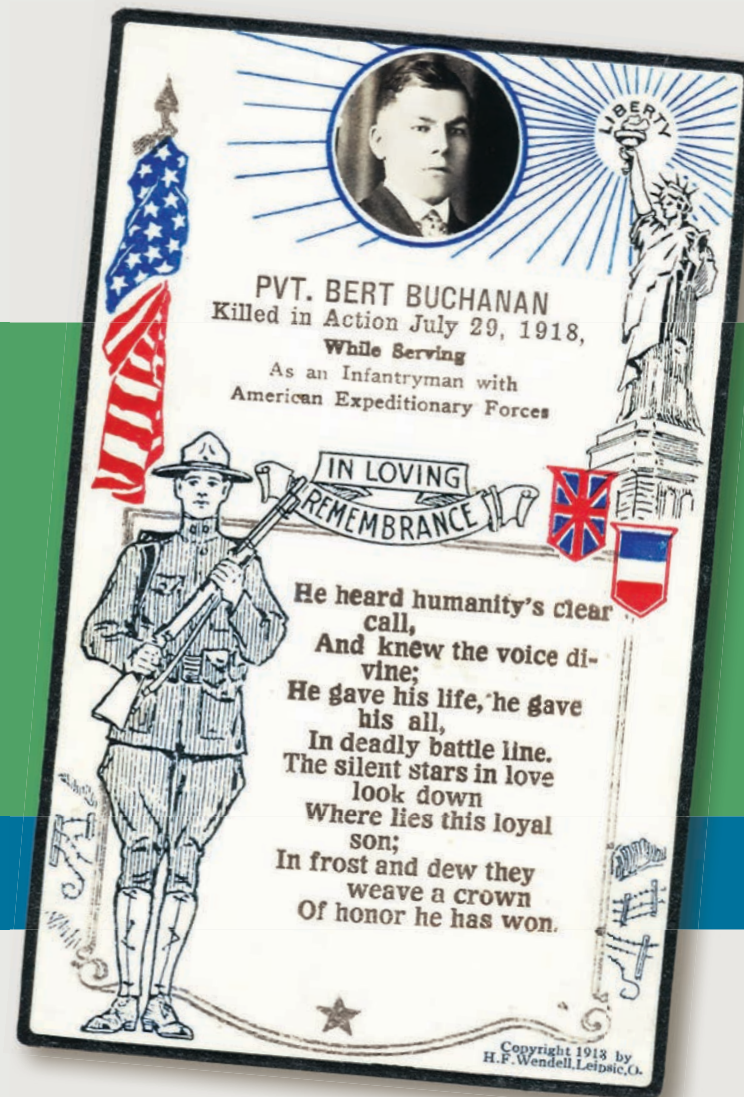
# The Rain Day Boys

## THE GREENE THAT LAY NEAR GRIMPETTES WOODS

By Candice L. Buchanan and Glenn J.R.T. Toothman, III

Funeral card of Albert "Bert" Buchanan, Rain Day Boy killed in action July 29, 1918.

Pennsylvania Archives Project, Greene County ([www.GreeneConnections.com](http://www.GreeneConnections.com)),  
Loretta Rozenie (Ullom) Auten Collection, Item # AUTL\_AN001\_0004.



On July 29, 1918, rain fell in Greene County, Pennsylvania ... just like it had done every year since 1874, when they started keeping records. "Rain Day" would later grow into a local holiday but at first it was a simple observance, started when a farmer mentioned to his pharmacist that it always rained on his birthday. Halfway around the world, Greene County boys crawling up a muddy hill in France also felt rain while German machine gun fire

poured down onto the open slope that the men were trying to climb. In just that one day, a rural Pennsylvania community went from 0 to 18 men lost. No amount of bright blue sky in nearly 100 years could take the rain from this single day.

The men killed in action on Hill 212 were given quick, informal battlefield burials. Greene County native Floyd Patterson had the sad duty of burying the dead; he wrote, "Those

who were killed in battle were wrapped in their blankets and temporarily buried, then after the battle was over their bodies were taken up, each one placed in a box and reburied, the graves being carefully marked."<sup>1</sup>

Families in the United States were anxious to bring loved ones home to rest but while war raged, personnel, time, and transport could not be tied up. After the fighting ended, military families were given a choice: soldiers could



either be returned home for burial, or they could be buried in one of the new American military cemeteries abroad. Between 1921 and 1923, all but two of the “Rain Day Boys” were repatriated home by their families for burial.

Our research into Greene County’s Rain Day Boys began in 2001 as a simple look into the lives of nearly forgotten ancestors. Our goal was merely trying to reassemble and revive their stories. We would pay our respects many times over to the 16 buried in and around Greene County. However, there were a couple obvious voids in that tour, so we waited and planned for the day when we could visit the two soldiers who did not return from France.

## Waynesburg

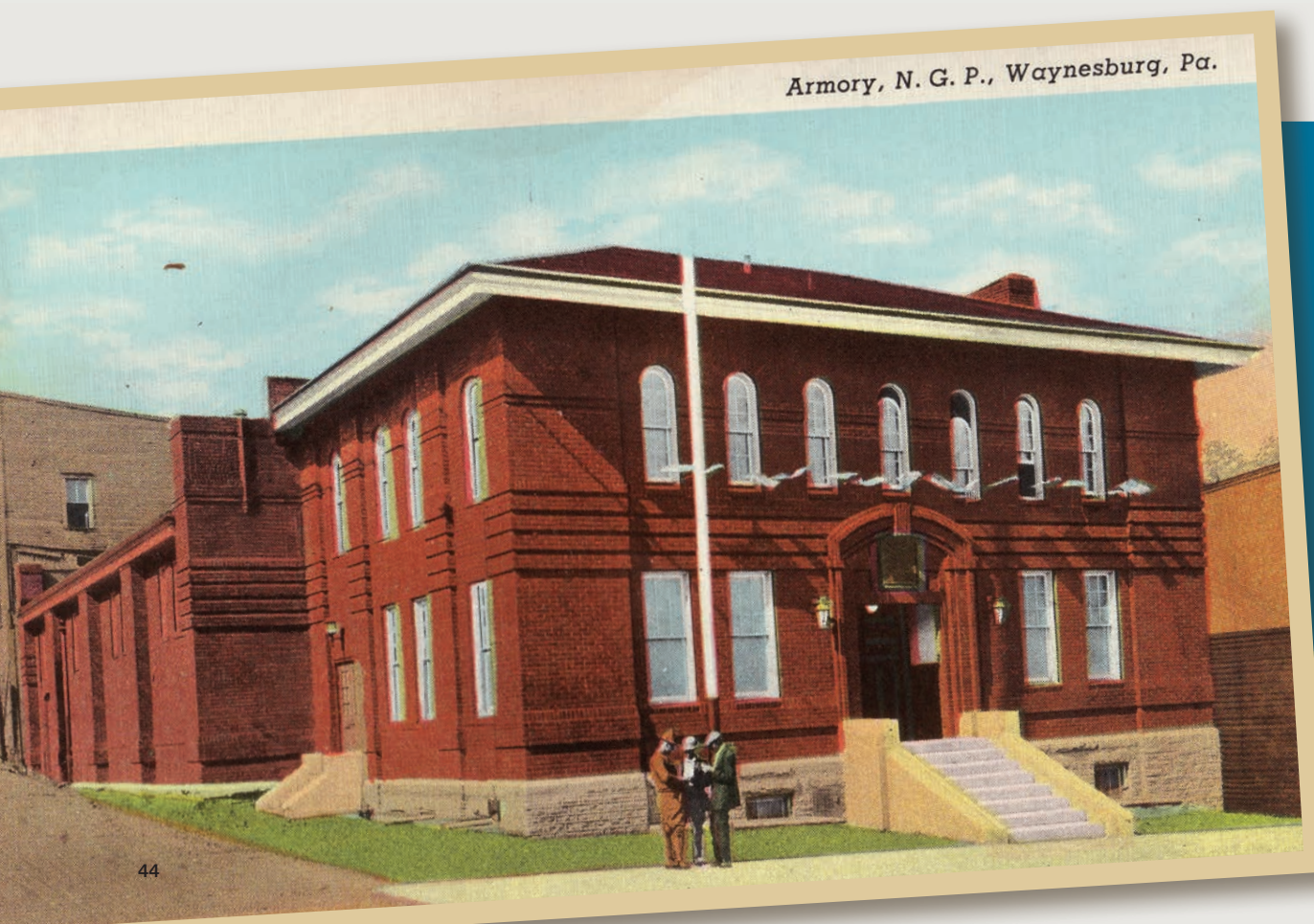
When Rain Day came in 1918, not even a year had passed since the Company K, 110th Infantry (10th PA), 28th Division left the

Armory in Waynesburg and marched south on Washington Street to board the Waynesburg & Washington Railroad. That would be the first leg of their journey to training at Camp Hancock, Georgia. Civil War veterans led the 150 war-bound young men in this parade through town on September 7, 1917, parting once they reached the packed railway station to let the young pass between the old as a reverent sendoff.<sup>2</sup> The unfortunate reality of such a warm and ceremonious farewell was that in too few months, shock and grief shook the community. In mid-August 1918, devastating telegram after telegram arrived from the War Department, breaking the hearts of Greene County.<sup>3</sup> The 18 names memorialized via these first notices would swell to 58 before the war ended, but not ever would such a deluge come at once as in the initial revelation of these first heavy losses.<sup>4</sup>

The uncensored nature of news reporting

during World War I, particularly in small town publications, reveals both the intense mourning of a bereaved community paying tribute to a sudden, huge loss of life, and an unabated need to know exactly what had taken place. As researchers, as members of this community, and as individuals closely related to not just one, but between us, to four of those killed on July 29, we shared these sentiments, anxious to learn more about both the men and the circumstances.

All 18 who perished—one on July 28 and 17 on July 29—were young, unmarried men without descendants who gave their lives in an oft-overlooked war. Even before the last survivors of Company K had passed away, merry Rain Day celebrations—focused on tracking the possibility of rain—had captured local affection for July 29. To the credit of the annual organizers for this local holiday event, a moment’s silence continues to be set aside for



◀ Linen postcard of the Armory on Washington Street in Waynesburg, Greene County, as it looked during WWI.

Pennsylvania Archives Project, Greene County ([www.GreeneConnections.com](http://www.GreeneConnections.com)), Walter “Blackie” Markiewicz Postcard Collection, owned and shared by Brice and Linda Rush, Item # RUSH-AN001-0013-0026.



these soldiers every year during the otherwise lively celebrations in downtown Waynesburg.

We reassembled the 18 lives with every photo, article, map, interview, and detail we could muster. Sixteen years of research later, and a century, almost to the day, that the Armory doors opened for that grand march to ultimate combat, we prepared to follow these brave, young men to a hallowed hill in France. We started our own journey by walking, albeit much less ceremoniously, from the still-standing Armory, down Washington Street, to the site of the old railway station.

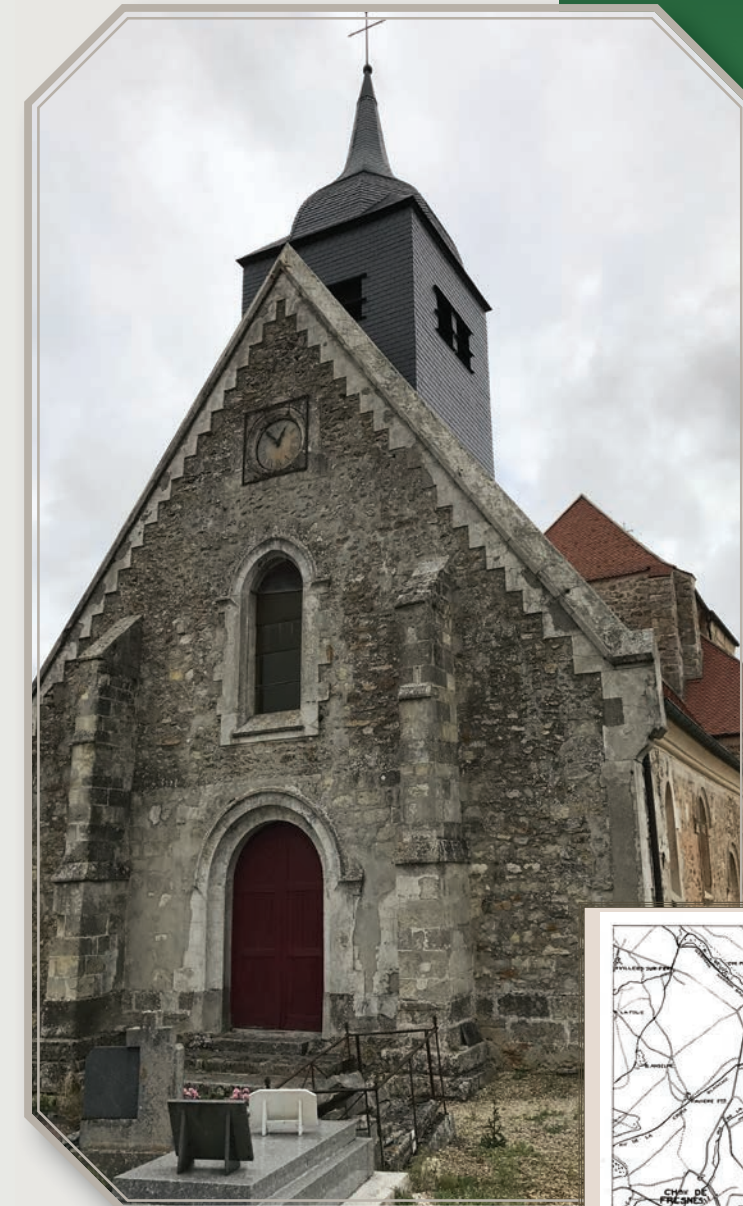
## Fresnes-en-Tardenois and Cierges

Almost any person with Greene County ties will have some connection to at least one of the 18 boys lost between July 28-29, 1918. Many more connect to the number of local soldiers who fought on that hill and survived the day, but were never the same because of it. Armed with our research and our outstanding friend Murielle Le Du to translate for us, we began to seek the rest of our boys' story.

Fresnes-en-Tardenois was where the headquarters of the 28th Division was struck on July 28. In the blast, Greene County lost its first soldier, James Leo Farrell. He and his comrades were buried in temporary graves in the town.<sup>5</sup> The location was also very near, of course, to the erupting battlefields where the allied troops suffered heavy casualties between July 25–August 3.

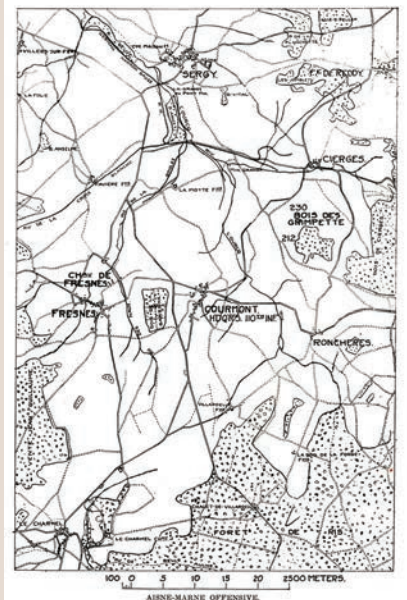
From the little village of Fresnes-en-Tardenois, one fellow we met, Joel Pauws, absolutely made our whole trip. After reviewing a copy of a military map from 1918 that we provided, he volunteered his afternoon to lead us to the actual location of the battle and the related landmarks we had identified.

The small village of Cierges is the French town closest to what our U.S. military



◀ This church is at the heart of the small village of Fresnes-en-Tardenois, where James Leo Farrell was killed when 28th Division Headquarters were shelled here on July 28. He and his comrades were laid to rest in temporary graves in the village until after the war.  
Collection of the authors, 2017.

christened as Hill 212. This was the fateful hill of July 29. Clearly identified in the history of the battle, Cierges is also mentioned in a small plaque on the Greene County Courthouse back home in Waynesburg: "In Memory of the Members of Company K, 110th Infantry Who Fought and Those Who Died in Taking of Ciergues Hill in Grimpettes Woods on July 28, 29, 30, 1918." In visiting this French town, a mystique was lifted and a kinship was felt.



▶ This map was our guide to the physical locations of July 28-30, 1918. It shows Fresnes (Fresnes-en-Tardenois), L'Ourcq (the Ourcq River), and Hill 212 beside the "Bois des Grimpette" (Grimpettes Woods).  
*Association of the 110th Infantry, History of the 110th Infantry (10th Pa.) of the 28th Division, U.S.A., 1917-1919* (Greensburg: Association of the 110th Infantry, 1920), 60.





▲ Honoring James Leo Farrell, first soldier from Greene County, Pennsylvania, to lose his life in WWI.  
Collection of the authors, 2017.



## Hill 212 near Grimpettes Woods

We had no idea if we would reach the exact spot where the Rain Day Boys fought and fell. We knew it was not a preserved park, but land likely to be in use. Anything may have been built, fenced, or blocked. Under Joel's guidance, we were deep into a rural area of active farmland and small country roads winding through tiny villages. Even if the land was accessible, we had only the hope of local help to find such a specific place.

Our volunteer chaperone determined the potential location from our research maps. He had never stopped there, but having driven by this location often, he remembered seeing something in the vicinity that gave him an idea about a possible point of interest. This ended in being the precise location where the Rain Day Boys had fallen on July 29, 1918.

Words are insufficient. The land was active farming country, but open. Though wheat was not waving in the field at the foot of the hill, in nature it was remarkably unchanged from descriptions we had read so many times in accounts of the battle. A modern monument bearing an inscribed message had been placed beside an older artistic tribute—both signified hard-won liberation. The inscription, written only in French, is testament to the expected audience, as well as, the appreciation and long-memory of the local population significantly affected by the soldiers' sacrifices. For us, the monument also confirmed that this was the place we had so hoped to find. Translated, it reads:

Here all the Allied troops rejoined after the crossing of the Ourcq.

Any subsequent progression depended on the catching of Grimpettes Woods.

On July 28, 1918, Roncheres was released by the 3rd Division U.S. and Courmont by the 28th Division U.S. Between 31 July and 1 August 1918, the 32nd Division U.S. and the French Army DeGoutte liberated Caranda and Cierges.

We walked the ridge of Hill 212 to Grimpettes Woods, each of us with a close family member who shared the relationship to one or more of the soldiers who fell here—Glenn with his wife Dianne Closser Toothman, and Candice with her mother Donna Leasure Buchanan—as well as Murielle and Joel.

Accounts of the battle indicate that the Allied forces came across the Ourcq

River, through the open fields, and up Hill 212 toward Grimpettes Woods. Here, the Germans were entrenched. Small artillery and machine guns were dug in and hidden by thick cover. The Allies had a 700-yard charge up the slight slope to the woods. German strategy allowed our boys to advance nearly 500-yards before they commenced a full shower of lead. Machine guns mowed down advancing troops and artillery targeted the back lines of Allied positions, to cut off any effective retreat or reinforcements. Here our boys were caught in a couple hundred yards of hell.

Lieutenant Fred Cleavenger, who survived the battle, but was injured on July



▲ The small village of Cierges is associated with Hill 212 and is mentioned on the WWI memorial that hangs on the front of the Greene County Courthouse in Waynesburg.

Collection of the authors, 2017.

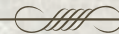




The Ourcq River, a tributary to the Marne, is frequently identified as a landmark in the geography and maps we studied. Even though the 1918 descriptions do indicate its minimal size, when one reads of crossing a river, a certain visual still comes to mind.

Collection of the authors, 2017.

## In five minutes



the earth was heaped with  
dead and dying, and what was  
left of us were lying there  
firing at the hidden machine  
gun nests and awaiting what  
seemed certain death.

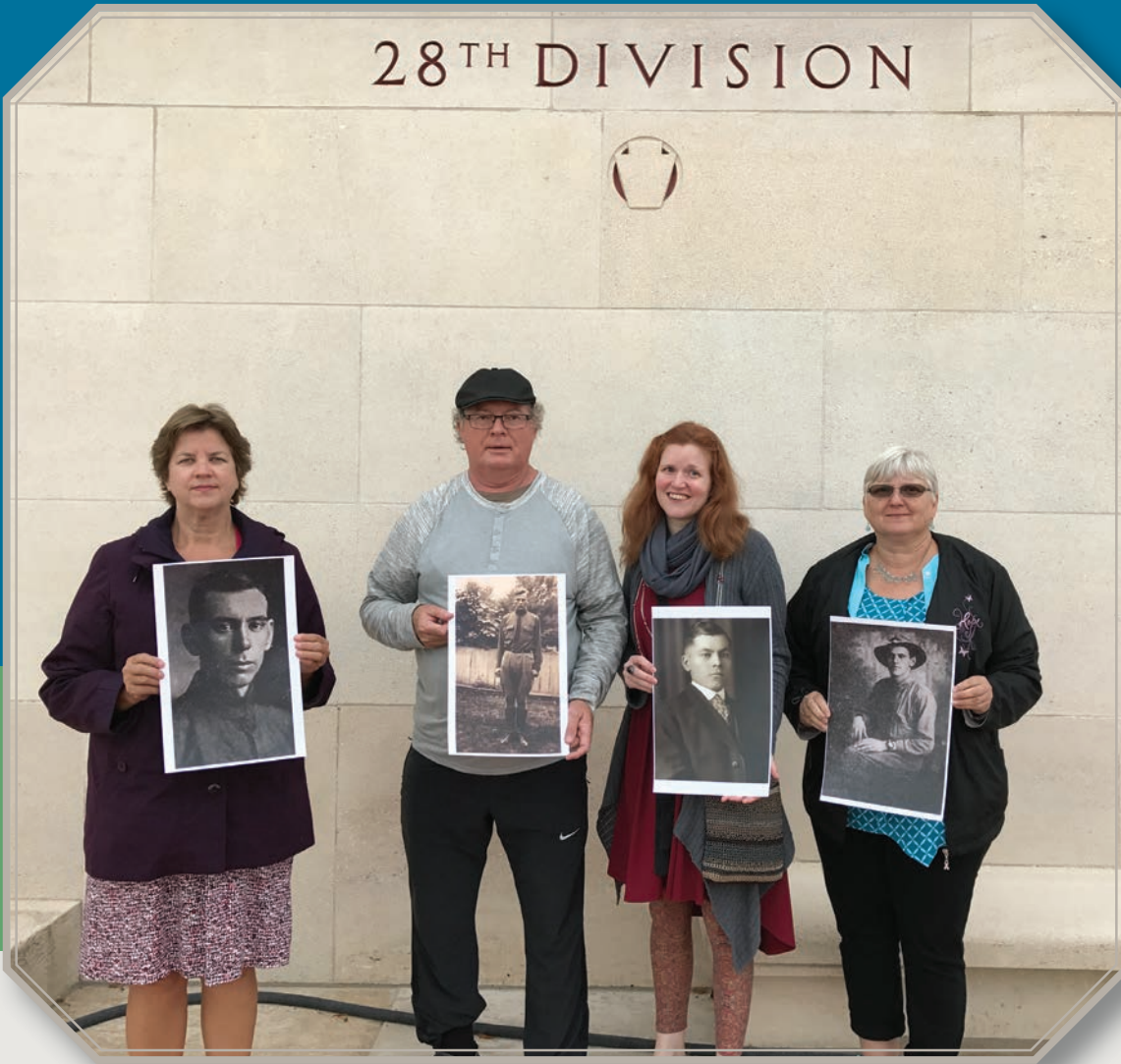


## 28<sup>TH</sup> DIVISION



➤ Honoring the fallen soldiers from Greene County and so many others, at the American Monument in Chateau Thierry, France. We are holding photos of our relatives who are honored here; all four soldiers were Rain Day Boys killed or mortally wounded in battle on July 29, 1918. Pictured, from left: Dianne Closser Toothman with Hallie Closser; Glenn Toothman with William Webster Throckmorton; Candice Buchanan with Bert Buchanan; Donna Darlene Leasure Buchanan with Lawrence Leslie Staggers.

Collection of the authors, 2017.



30 as it continued, inadvertently supplied eager readers back home with a long-sought-after account of the combat when his friend published a letter he had written:

It was July 28th when we first went “over the top” as a united battalion, with Companies I and K in the lead. I went over with a patrol first and we ran into severe machine gun fire and had to “dig in.” Then we were recalled and started a general attack. We pushed forward steadily the 28th and crossed the Ourcq River and our company lost one killed and a few wounded. At early morn on the 29th we started our next attack up

the hill northeast of the Ourcq. The top of this hill is wooded and was full of Boches and machine gun nests, trench mortars, 77s, etc. Our advance was up a gentle slope some quarter of a mile long and absolutely no protection.... Shrapnel, high explosives and all sorts of “pig iron,” gas shells, etc., were flying around us and occasionally found its mark, but we advanced within 200 yards of the wooded crest before anything else opened up on us. Then perdition let loose and the scene is indescribable. In five minutes the earth was heaped with dead and dying, and what was left of us were lying there firing at the hid-

den machine gun nests and awaiting what seemed certain death. I shall never forget my feelings during the next two hours. German snipers in the trees taking pot-shots, machine gun bullets buzzing around me like a swarm of bees, and shells bursting in front, in the rear and on either side of me with a crashing sound that made it seem as though brain and skull would be torn apart. Three men on my left, Zahniser, Closser and Murphy, all Greene countians, were killed as we lay there and several on my right. Once in awhile between shell-bursts, the cries of the wounded could be heard (the most terrible part





▶ Visiting George T. McNeely, Rain Day Boy killed in action, July 29, 1918. His body was never recovered and he is listed on the Tablets of the Missing at Aisne-Marne American Cemetery.

Collection of the authors, 2017.

of the battle) then one almost welcomed the cannon's roar again. At last, after the slaughter had become terrible, we were ordered to fall back, but it seemed impossible to ever do so in the face of that terrible fire. I watched men start to run, but they never made very many steps until a bullet caught them.... When I reached the old position at the Ourcq River I found some 70 men out of our company of 240 who had started up the Sergy Hill.<sup>6</sup>

Artillery support was lacking and delayed orders prevented the infantry advance from moving in unison to form a line.<sup>7</sup> Six separate

attacks over three days, July 28–30, were required to take the hill. Major Edward Martin reported the 110th Infantry suffered more than 1,100 casualties;<sup>8</sup> Cleavenger reported Company K had lost 45 and over 100 wounded.<sup>9</sup>

In Varennes, France, a monument honoring Pennsylvania's WWI soldiers bears the message, "Right is More Precious Than Peace." This seems a simple and accurate motto reinforced by the personal stories of each soldier we have studied. Bravely ready to help and protect others, they hoped to secure freedom from the German Kaiser's oppression.

## Two Cemeteries for Two Men

Walking the hill was haunting but we also wanted to locate, if we could, the final resting place of the two who never came back to America: George T. McNeely and John Milton Paden.

George T. McNeely was lost in the stormy chaos of the battleground on July 29, 1918. Even though his death was witnessed and recorded, his body was never recovered for



✓ Honoring John Milton Paden, Rain Day Boy  
killed in action, July 29, 1918, Buried in  
Oise-Aisne American Cemetery.  
Collection of the authors, 2017.







burial.<sup>10</sup> His parents never had the option of bringing him home. In honor of his memory, George's name was recorded on the Tablets of the Missing at Aisne-Marne American Cemetery in Belleau, France. The visit to this wall was a long-awaited pilgrimage.

We also journeyed to the graveside of John Milton Paden, laid to rest in the company of his comrades at Oise-Aisne American Cemetery, near the Hill 212 battlefield in Fère-en-Tardenois, Picardie, France. We lingered at this spot a while; like so many of the places we had been, it seemed that a visit was long overdue.

## The Rain Day Boys

Profiles of each Rain Day Boy have been created at [www.MemoryMedallion.com](http://www.MemoryMedallion.com) and can be found at [www.RainDayBoys.com](http://www.RainDayBoys.com). A name search at this website allows free viewing of the collected information including biographical details, photographs, grave locations, family tree links, and even rare reel-to-reel footage of Company K before they left Waynesburg in 1917. Memory Medallions have also been placed at each grave location for those buried on U.S. soil. These allow

Francis B. Moore, Rain Day  
Boy killed in action, July  
29, 1918.

Pennsylvania Archives Project, Greene County  
([www.GreeneConnections.com](http://www.GreeneConnections.com)), Elizabeth Taylor  
Collection, Item # TAYL-AN001-0002.



for the access of this information right at the location by reading the Memory Medallion's QR code with a smart phone or tablet. These profiles are regularly updated and improved as research continues.

## July 28, 1918

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- James Leo Farrell


## July 29, 1918

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- Albert "Bert" Buchanan
- Harold T. Carey
- Hallie J. Closser
- Harry Dunn
- John G. Duvall (died 20 August 1918 from wounds)
- Floyd T. Hickman
- Benjamin A. Manning
- Frederick W. Marshall
- George T. McNeely
- Francis B. Moore
- Charles E. Murphy
- John Milton Paden
- Walter Burtrum Riggle
- Lawrence Leslie Staggers
- William Webster Throckmorton (died 18 September 1918 from pneumonia contracted while hospitalized for wounds)
- Russell Kenneth Yoders
- Norman M. Zahniser

It has been, and continues to be, our heartfelt honor getting to know these young men and tell their stories.




 **Charles E. Murphy, Rain Day Boy killed in action, July 29, 1918.**

Pennsylvania Archives Project, Greene County ([www.GreeneConnections.com](http://www.GreeneConnections.com)),  
Charles R. Murphy Collection, Item # MURP\_AN001\_0001.





 **Floyd T. Hickman, Rain Day Boy killed in action, July 29, 1918.**

Pennsylvania Archives Project, Greene County ([www.GreeneConnections.com](http://www.GreeneConnections.com)), Marilyn (Brewer) Eichenlaub Collection, Item # EICH\_AN002\_0002.

## Conclusion

Historians know that there is no substitute for direct interaction with the original records, objects, artifacts, and locations central to the events they study. “Holding what they held” and “walking where they walked”—these are the real sensations that breathe life into pages of research. Add to this, the genuine human element, a knowledge of the very personal profiles of the participants, placing them, first, in their time, their community, their family—and, then, understanding how that individual life fit into the larger scenes of history. An army is made soldier by soldier. Here is where history truly lives. Our goal throughout this endeavor is to serve the memories of our Rain Day Boys who left a little town and became part of The Great War. In the words of a beloved poet of 1918:

They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old:

age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,  
we will remember them.

—Laurence Binyon, “Ode of Remembrance” 

**Candice L. Buchanan** is a board-certified genealogist with a Master’s Degree in Public History from Duquesne University. **Glenn J.R.T. Toothman, III**, is the Founder/CEO of Memory Medallion, Inc. and a former Greene County District Attorney.

<sup>1</sup> “Sergeant Patterson Talks Interestingly of the War,” *Waynesburg Republican*, Waynesburg, Pa., 7 November 1918, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> “Company K, Tenth Regiment, 150 Strong, Leaves for Training Camp at Augusta, GA,” *Washington Observer*, 8 September 1917, p. 3. Includes company roster.

<sup>3</sup> “Greene County Heroes Fall in France” article, *Waynesburg Republican*, 15 August 1918, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> G. Wayne Smith, *History of Greene County, Pennsylvania*, 2 volumes (Waynesburg: Cornerstone Genealogical Society, 1996), 2: 619, 717 (note 5).

<sup>5</sup> Association of the 110th Infantry, *History of the 110th Infantry (10th Pa.) of the 28th Division,*

*U.S.A., 1917-1919* (Association of the 110th Infantry, 1920), 70 - photo of burial with detailed caption, 210 - witness account of death.

<sup>6</sup> “Graphic Description of Battle,” *Waynesburg Republican*, 2 January 1919, p. 1.


<sup>7</sup> Francis Earle Lutz, *The 110th Infantry in the World War* (Haddonfield, N.J.: Francis E. Lutz, 1919), 34-37; digital images, *Google Books* ([https://books.google.com/books/about/The\\_110th\\_Infantry\\_in\\_the\\_World\\_War.html?id=TZTGAAAAMAAJ](https://books.google.com/books/about/The_110th_Infantry_in_the_World_War.html?id=TZTGAAAAMAAJ) : viewed 2017).

<sup>8</sup> Edward Martin, “The 110th Regiment in the Great War,” *Waynesburg Republican Greene County Soldiers’ Edition*, 4 July 1919, p. 1-5. The account of the July 29th battle is recorded on p. 2-3.

<sup>9</sup> “Graphic Description of Battle” article, *Waynesburg Republican*, 2 January 1919, p. 1.

<sup>10</sup> “WWI Veterans Service and Compensation Files, 1917-1919, 1934-1948,” digital images, Ancestry.com (<http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=60884> : accessed 9 October 2017), George T. McNeely file (service record only, no application for compensation submitted); citing World War I Veterans Service and Compensation File, 1934–1948 (RG 19, Series 19.91), PHMC, Harrisburg.





Looking down the slope of Hill 212 from Grimpettes Woods. This is the view the Germans had of the approaching Allied forces. It has barely changed from the descriptions provided in 1918.

Collection of the authors, 2017.

## At last, after the slaughter had become terrible,

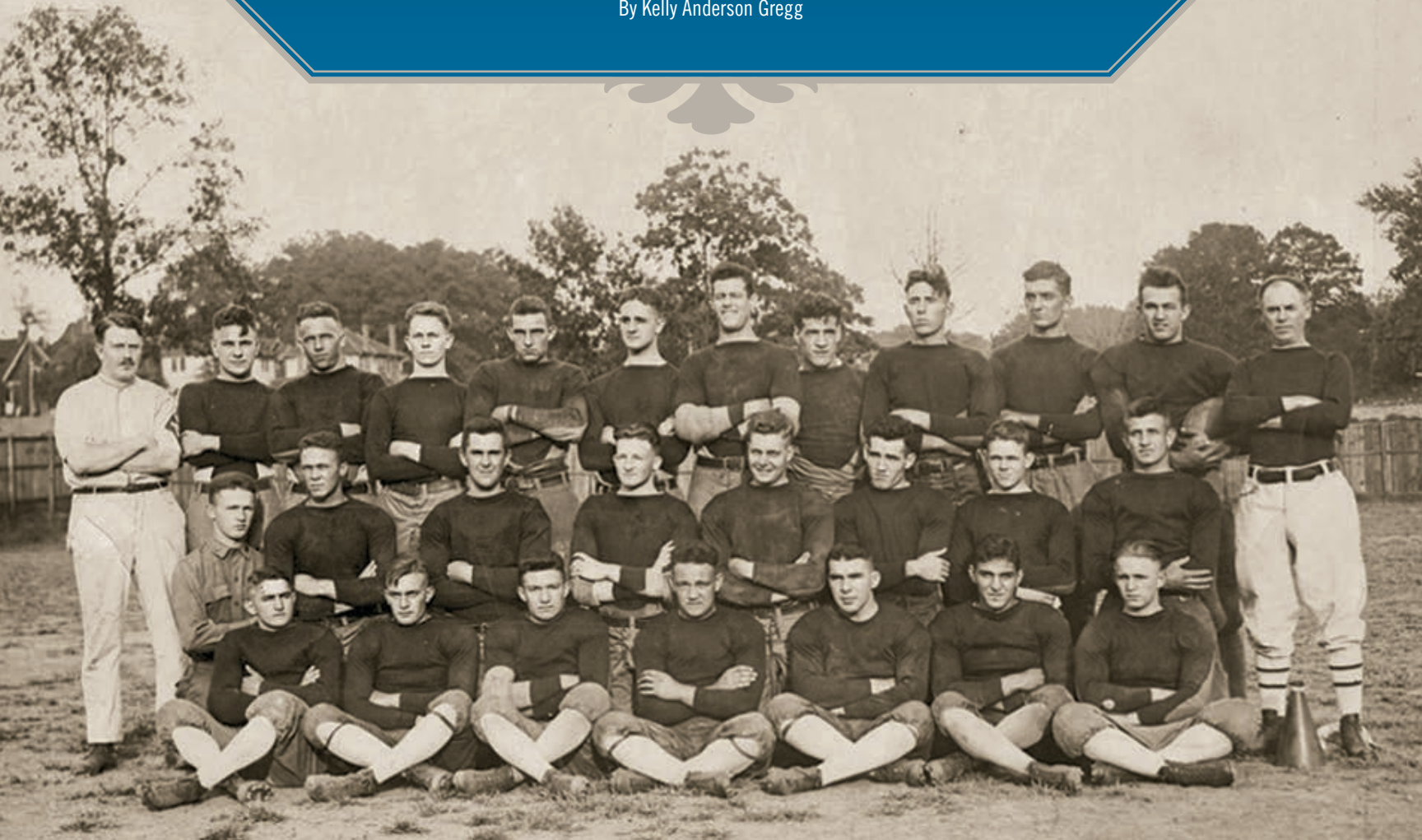
we were ordered to fall back, but it seemed impossible to ever do so in the face of that terrible fire. I watched men start to run, but they never made very many steps until a bullet caught them....



# “GRIDIRON TITANS”

John Heisman versus the Pitt Panthers

By Kelly Anderson Gregg



Football would not be what it is today without the genius of John William Heisman. He is the Father of the Forward Pass, the champion of the center snap, the audible, and the use of the scoreboard. His name lives on in the eponymous trophy annually awarded to the best college football player for the past eight decades. And it's fair to say that John Heisman

would not have become the player and coach that he was without the experience he gained in Western Pennsylvania.

Heisman was born in football enemy territory (i.e., Cleveland) to Michael and Sarah Heisman in 1869. His family relocated to Titusville, Crawford County, in 1874 to take advantage of the thriving oil industry.<sup>1</sup>

 **Coach John Heisman, standing on right, with his Georgia Tech team, 1918.**

Georgia Institute of Technology Library and Information Center, Archives and Records Management Department, VA4641.

After the 1859 drilling of the world's first commercial oil well, Titusville offered opportunities in petroleum and an array of supporting industries, and Michael's barrel-making business prospered.<sup>2</sup> His children attended the local schools, and it



was at Titusville High School in 1884 that young John was first introduced to football. Heisman recalled playing on the team, studiously examining a 10-cent rule book he had purchased to familiarize himself with the relatively new game.<sup>3</sup> Football at the time was rough and tumble, resembling a combination of soccer and rugby. Heisman noted, “With the exception of a couple prohibitions such as running with the ball and murder, we had few rules.”<sup>4</sup>

After graduating from Titusville High School as salutatorian in 1887, Heisman enrolled at Brown University, where he continued his football career. Brown dropped its football club partway through his studies, so he finished at the University of Pennsylvania. Only five feet, eight inches tall, and 158 pounds, Heisman was small but strong, thanks to time spent working in his father’s cooper business.<sup>5</sup> After graduating he took a coaching position at Oberlin, and quickly established a reputation for fielding winning teams. Subsequent work at Akron Buchtel College, Auburn, Penn, and Washington & Jefferson made it clear that Heisman had a vision for how football should be played. Personally, he was one part athlete, one part academic: he played multiple sports, pursued Shakespearean acting during the off-season, and held a law degree. Even in high school, where he gave his class’s commencement speech, Heisman was known as a prolific orator.<sup>6</sup>

Heisman’s greatest coaching stint solidified his legacy, and also brought him back to Western Pennsylvania, though this time as an antagonist. In 1904, he signed on as head football coach at the Georgia Institute of Technology. He immediately turned the team around from its previous losing season, and his win percentage at the school has yet to be eclipsed.<sup>7</sup> By 1917, Georgia Tech was one of the top three teams nationally. Along with Ohio State University and the University of

Pittsburgh, Tech was undefeated and looking to claim national glory.<sup>8</sup>

On November 23, 1918, the *Pittsburg Press* declared, “Gridiron Titans to Battle,” as Georgia Tech faced off with the Panthers at Forbes Field in an effort to decide who was the true champion of collegiate football. Future legendary sportsmen took the field. The coaches, Heisman and Glenn “Pop” Warner, were visionaries in the game and longtime rivals.<sup>10</sup> The game itself wasn’t just for national honors, but also acted as a fundraiser for the war effort.<sup>11</sup> It was a veritable battle royale.

It was fitting, then, that Heisman’s locker room speech captured the heightened spirit of the day. Already known for poetic turns in his game-day speeches, Heisman waxed eloquent about the glories of ancient Greece’s heroes and the soldiers of the Roman Empire.<sup>12</sup> His high view of football, a sport that he believed made young men into scholars, gentlemen, and patriots, could not help but be evident in his words to his team that day.<sup>13</sup> However, unbeknownst to the Tech coach, the walls at Forbes Field were rather thin. While he exhorted his own players, the Panther team sat on the other side of the wall and listened, enthralled by Heisman’s every word.<sup>14</sup> After his speech, Tech took the field, and Coach Warner looked laughingly at his Pittsburgh team, “Okay, boys. There’s the speech. Now go out and knock them off.”<sup>15</sup>

In the end, the Panthers won the day. Though “their resistance was more stubborn than the score would indicate,” Georgia Tech lost to Pitt 32-0 in front of a crowd that filled Forbes Field beyond capacity.<sup>16</sup> One referee remarked that “the game was one of the best played and hardest fought in years.”<sup>17</sup> Warner was thrilled with his team and Tech held its head high in its loss. It was clear from that match-up that football could be played at a high level with precision and strategy, not just brutality, and it was Heisman’s vision that

made such play possible. His beloved football wasn’t merely a sport—it was a way, as he later wrote, to “learn how to govern, to control, to conquer yourself.”<sup>18</sup>



**Kelly Anderson Gregg** is a historian, researcher, and former Assistant Editor of *Western Pennsylvania History*.

<sup>1</sup> David L. Weber, “The John Heisman Story: ‘Father of the Forward Pass,’ Titusville’s Most Noted Sports Figure,” *The Titusville Herald*, 13 June 2015, [http://www.titusvilleherald.com/sports/article\\_fab04f06-1184-11e5-a4e2-ef3c2f62e574.html](http://www.titusvilleherald.com/sports/article_fab04f06-1184-11e5-a4e2-ef3c2f62e574.html) (accessed 18 September 2017).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> John Heisman, “Rules Rush In,” *Collier’s Weekly*, 10 November 1928, 12.

<sup>5</sup> Edward J. Rielly, *Football: An Encyclopedia of Popular Culture* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 163. See also “John W. Heisman,” Heisman, [http://heisman.com/sports/2014/9/10/FB\\_0910145750.aspx?](http://heisman.com/sports/2014/9/10/FB_0910145750.aspx?) (accessed 20 September 2017).

<sup>6</sup> Weber.

<sup>7</sup> Matt Bowers, “John Heisman (1869-1936),” *New Georgia Encyclopedia* at [www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/sports-outdoor-recreation/john-heisman-1869-1936](http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/sports-outdoor-recreation/john-heisman-1869-1936) (accessed 17 September 2017).

<sup>8</sup> John M. Heisman with Mark Schlabach, *Heisman: The Man Behind the Trophy* (New York: Howard Books, 2012), 159-160.

<sup>9</sup> “Gridiron Titans to Battle: Great Throng Will See Pitt Tackle Georgia Tech Today,” *Pittsburgh Press*, 23 November 1918, 7.

<sup>10</sup> John M. Heisman, 83-84.

<sup>11</sup> “Gridiron Titans,” 7.

<sup>12</sup> Francis J. Powers, *The Life Story of Glen[n] S. (Pop) Warner: Gridiron’s Greatest Strategist* (Chicago: Athletic Institute, 1969), 42.

<sup>13</sup> John Heisman, *Principles of Football* (Athens, Ga.: Hill Street Press, 2000, original 1922), “Benefits of Football.”

<sup>14</sup> Powers, 42.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ralph S. Davis, “Panthers Crush Southerners,” *Pittsburg Press*, 24 November 1918, 21.

<sup>17</sup> Robert W. Maxwell, “Maxwell Says Panthers are Real Championship Outfit,” *Pittsburg Press*, 25 November 1918, 28.

<sup>18</sup> John Heisman, 5-6.



# BORN IN 1918

By Bob Batz, Jr.

Doris Bauer Riethmiller came into a tumultuous world in 1918.

She beat the odds while so many then were falling victim to the influenza pandemic, which killed 675,000 Americans and some 50 million others around the world that year alone. That's more than were killed—about 16 million—in all four years of World War I.

Life expectancy for women born in 1918 was about 42 years. As of this December, Mrs. Riethmiller was 99-plus and still going strong. She now lives in Lighthouse Pointe Village at Chapel Harbor, a pretty retirement community in O'Hara on the Allegheny River and close to where she's lived all her full and fun life.



February 1940.

Doris with her mother,  
August 1918.

All photos in possession of Doris  
Riethmiller and used by permission.





"I'm a relic," she said with a mischievous grin, sitting on the couch of her apartment and recounting her summer birthday party. It was organized by her daughter Roberta "Bobby" Egelston, who invited guests, including former students, who knew her over those many years.

"I was so surprised when some of them walked in," Mrs. Riethmiller said. "I had a ball!"

It's a ball to talk with her about her life, which she remembers in vivid detail, down to the numbers of the streetcars she used to ride.

Doris Catherine Bauer was born July 28, 1918, at home on Mintwood Street, which runs between Penn and Liberty Avenues in Lawrenceville. She was recorded as "Female Bauer." Her father and mother lived with her mother's parents. Those grandparents were recent German immigrants, as were her father's parents. As Doris puts it, "I'm German on all eight sides!"

Her father was an airbrake inspector for the Pennsylvania Railroad, and he walked to work on the tracks and yards from 33rd Street along the Allegheny River down to Union Station. Her mother was a "Pullman girl," one of the women who cleaned railroad passenger cars.

Her mother worked, she explained, because she previously had been married at age 18, had a daughter and got divorced. "My dad liked the way she walked — her shoes nice and straight," she said, with another smile. "They were married for 63 years."

Because he was a married man, Doris' dad wasn't supposed to be drafted in WWI, but he was anyway, because someone else "pulled some strings" to get out of going. He was in France serving with a U.S. Army railway unit when his daughter was born. The family still has a copy of the photo of baby Doris with her mother, who mailed it to him, but the ship carrying that letter was sunk, and so he didn't see his daughter until he returned later in 1919.

In a photo taken when she was about three, wearing a dress and button boots, Doris looks sturdy, like a force to be reckoned with, but she knows that she did get the flu. "According to



◀ Doris with her dad, May 1919.



Doris about 1921. ➤





First grade, 1924. ▲



First Holy Communion, 1925. ➤

family history, I almost died.” She credits her beloved Grandpap, her grandfather on her mother’s side, with saving her and being her playmate and otherwise looking out for her as she grew up.

In one of the memories she has written down, she recalled, “I was the apple of my Grandpap Heimann’s eye, and I knew it because he always folded the evening papers and bundled them so he could ‘sell’ them to the rag man. And I felt very wealthy when he gave me the quarter or 30 cents he got.

“Thinking about the rag man reminds me of how exciting it would be when he came down the street in a rickety old wagon drawn by a decrepit-looking sway backed horse and shouting, ‘Any rags, old bottles, or papers today.’ And the ladies would run out and stop him. He would come in and gather up any items they had bundled for him and give them a few pennies in return. There was also a ‘Strawberry Man’ who came around in the spring. He also drove a horse and wagon and Grandma Heimann was one of his regular customers because she made the best strawberry jam I have ever eaten.”

By the time Doris was five, her parents and she moved to live with her Grandpap Bauer in the country. (Her step-sister, who was 13, stayed in Lawrenceville so she wouldn’t have to change schools.) The Bauers ran Darlington Dairy, which they’d started on Herron Hill. When part of the city built up, they moved to a farm on Kittanning Pike in O’Hara Township. While herding the cows over the Allegheny River on the wooden 62nd Street Bridge, Doris’ grandfather had fallen through a rotted plank and broken his hip. That’s why he walked with a limp.

His wife met a tragic end when, seeking to calm a cough one dark night, she accidentally swallowed acid and burned a hole in her throat.

So Doris’ family moved in to help care for him. By this time, he had just one old cow, Molly, and an old horse named Charlie. The

farmhouse had no electricity, no running water — “We pumped every drop of water we had” — and only an outhouse, which her grandfather, who spoke little English, called the beck house, his Bohemian twist on back house.

She laughs recounting him removing his dentures and muttering about how the food should be as soft outside as inside as they gathered for dinner with her father’s sister’s family, who also lived in the house. They ate simple meat and potatoes, with some old-country dishes such as pickled cucumbers, or Senfgurken, from the vegetables that he still grew and sold from his truck down in Sharpsburg. “They were big on pies.”

Doris started out walking more than a mile down Kittanning Pike to a four-room school, as her father did to catch a streetcar to his job. Later, in 1928 or ’29, she only had to walk across the road after Kerr School was built there.

Noting that the old farm property is still there and vacant, she said, “I never felt comfortable in that house.” Especially after the night she saw something spooky outside and her father nonchalantly told her it was his mother’s ghost.

That side of the family also never approved of Doris’ mother, whom she remembers often reading the Bible and reminding herself to love her enemies. Even her mother started to appreciate how pretty it was in the country in the spring.

For high school, Doris walked a mile-and-a-half to Sharpsburg and hopped a streetcar to Aspinwall. She’d walk to her aunt’s house for lunch with her cousins, then after school, ride the streetcar back to Sharpsburg and walk the mile-and-a-half uphill to home.

“You never thought anything of it,” said Ms. Riethmiller, who never felt like she wanted for anything. Her father’s job was “very low pay but steady.” During the Depression, he kept working seven days a week and they were able to help other relatives with rent and groceries,





◀ Doris at Seitz  
School, 1927.





Kerr School Class in Room 7 with Principal Mr. Kelso, 1930.

in addition to buying a house of their own in Aspinwall. "In those days, people looked out for each other."

In high school, Doris took care of herself, walking door-to-door from one end of Sharpsburg to the other, selling and collecting subscriptions to *The Volume Library* encyclopedias to other immigrant families. With that money, and a scholarship, she was able to go to the University of Pittsburgh. "I knew I would have to work." Ever since she'd been given a blackboard and gave lessons to her paper dolls in the kitchen of the farmhouse, she'd wanted to be a teacher. So she majored in Latin and English.

Her commute involved three streetcars

each way: "Take the 94 to Morningside, transfer to the 96, transfer again at Negley to one of the 70s."

She graduated in 1940. Alas, Latin was fading from school curriculums and she was unable to get a teaching job. She worked in the children's department at Kaufmann's department store and then in the directory department of Bell Telephone, downtown.

She was dating a boy, Bob Riethmiller, whom she'd met on Mount Troy when she went with her cousin so the cousin could check him out as a prospective prom date. Doris already had one — "One of the hunks on the football team." Bob was doing his night school homework and Doris pointed out a mistake

he'd made. "It must have impressed him," she said, because a few days later he called. "He wanted to know if I would go out with him. And that was it."

When they got married in 1941, they did so in Greensburg, Westmoreland County, so there would be no marriage license on record in Allegheny County. Married women weren't allowed to work: "That's how it was way back in the dark ages."

In the twists that history takes, her husband was off to World War II, in the Pacific, when their first child, William, was born in 1943. To let his wife know where he was without tipping off the mail censors, he'd write the name of the place under the stamp.



Pitt graduation  
with her  
mother, 1940.

He came home in 1945, daughter Roberta was born in 1946, and the family built and moved to a house on Kittanning Pike, not even a half mile from the old Bauer farm and Kerr School.

Mrs. Riethmiller tells great stories about how, in 1955, she was roped into serving temporarily as the school secretary and then social studies teacher and eventually got the job she always wanted — an English teacher. “I LOVED it,” she said. She moved from Kerr to what had been Aspinwall High School and later to Dorseyville Middle School and retired from the Fox Chapel Area School District in 1981.

This past summer, she was interviewed by the district because Kerr Elementary, the district’s oldest school, was deemed structurally and programmatically inadequate and is going to be torn down after a new school is built there beginning in 2018. She reminisced about having gone there as well as taught there, and she pointed out her old office, but understood that the school needs to be replaced.

District communications coordinator Bonnie Berzonski called it a privilege to listen to her. “There are very few people who are able to give us insight into a time so long ago.”

To this day, Mrs. Riethmiller runs into some of the many students she taught.

She remembers and retells their seventh- and eighth-grade jokes, such as, “Do you know how to stop a charging elephant?


“Take away his credit cards.”

She had a great life with Bob, volunteering with him at the Veterans Affairs hospital in Aspinwall (where her dad had been treated after WWI) until he died in 2013. They were active, too, at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* wrote a story about how she stayed in touch with

friends she made at Pitt, meeting a group of fellow 1940 graduates downtown once a month — “before Facebook was even thought of,” quipped her daughter — for more than 50 years. They called themselves “the girls” and were as close as sisters. She’s the only one left. What she misses most is not being able to invite them to events.

But Mrs. Riethmiller is good at making new friends, too. She gives some credit for her longevity to her belief in a higher power,

higher than her Grandpap, who looks out for her, too.

She also credits having a sense of humor. Looking back over her 99-plus years, she said, “I’ll tell you, if you didn’t laugh, you’d cry.” She laughed. 

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**Bob Batz, Jr.**, is a writer and editor at the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*.





# INFORMATION

## 4 Museums. 2 Magazines. 2 Memberships:



An affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, the 275,000-square-foot Senator John Heinz History Center is the largest history museum in Pennsylvania. The six floors include the Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum, covering a wide range of interests and events, and the Detre Library & Archives, containing 700,000 photographs, 40,000 books, and many more maps, records, and archival collections.

### 1212 SMALLMAN STREET in the Strip District

Parking lots and meters nearby.

[www.heinzhistorycenter.org](http://www.heinzhistorycenter.org)

(412) 454-6000

### HOURS

Museum and Shop: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., daily.  
Library & Archives: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.,  
Wednesday through Saturday.  
Closed on New Year's Day, Easter, Thanksgiving,  
and Christmas.

### ADMISSION

Members Free  
Adults \$16.00; Students \$6.50 with a school ID;  
Seniors (62+) \$14.00; Ages 6-17 \$6.50; Retired  
and Active Duty Military \$2 discount; Age 5 and  
under Free.

Admission includes the History Center, the Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum, and the Library & Archives. *Admission to only the Library & Archives is free for all visitors.*

### PARKING:

History Center members showing a valid membership card can park for a \$4 flat rate across the street from the museum at 12th and Smallman, subject to availability. Parking is also available at 13th and Smallman, 15th and Smallman, the Convention Center Garage, and the Grant Street Transportation Center Garages.

### FACILITY

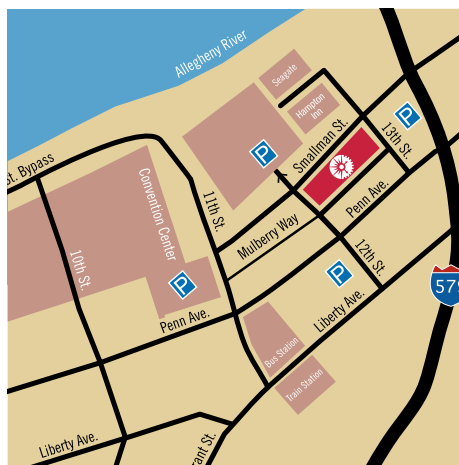
Members enjoy a 15% discount at the Museum Shop.  
Wheelchair accessible. Café on site.  
Discovery Place and Kidsburgh for children.

### GROUP SALES

Discounted rates for group admission, advance booking required. Call (412) 454-6304.

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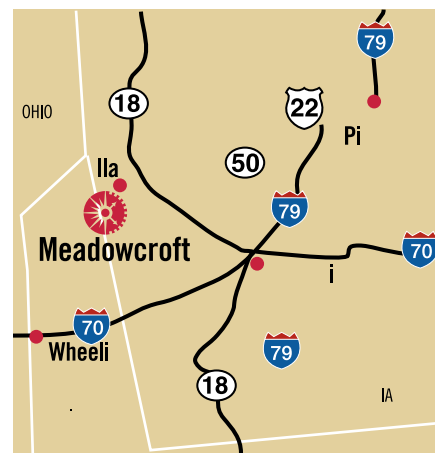
The History Center's distinctive setting, with superb dining provided by Common Plea Catering, is the perfect place to host your next banquet, party, reception, or seminar. Call (412) 454-6435 for information and reservations.



**401 Meadowcroft Road  
Avella, PA 15312**

[www.heinzhistorycenter.org/meadowcroft](http://www.heinzhistorycenter.org/meadowcroft)  
(724) 587-3412

Take a step back in time less than an hour west of Pittsburgh near West Virginia. Meadowcroft contains a 16th-century Indian Village, a 19th-century rural village, and the 16,000-year-old Rockshelter, the oldest site of human habitation in North America, and now a National Historic Landmark.



### HOURS

Memorial Day through Labor Day  
Wednesday through Saturday: 12 to 5 p.m.  
Sunday: 1 to 5 p.m.

May, Sept, Oct.  
Saturday: 12 to 5 p.m.  
Sunday: 1 to 5 p.m.

### ADMISSION

Admission includes Rockshelter, Village, and Museum  
History Center Members Free  
Adult \$15.00; Seniors (62+) \$14.00;  
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**101 Commonwealth Place  
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<http://www.heinzhistorycenter.org/fort-pitt>  
(412) 281-9285

Located in Point State Park, this two-floor, 12,000-square-foot museum in a reconstructed bastion tells the story of Western Pennsylvania's pivotal role during the French & Indian War and the American Revolution, and as the birthplace of Pittsburgh.



## HOURS

Hours 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., daily.  
Closed New Year's Day, Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

## ADMISSION

History Center Members Free  
Adults \$8.00; Seniors (62+) \$7.00;  
Students \$4.50 with a school ID;  
Ages 6-17 \$3.50;  
Age 5 and under Free.

## PARKING

A variety of parking is available including:  
Boulos Parking Lot  
601 Commonwealth Place  
\$13 all day, \$5 after 2 p.m., \$7 on weekends.

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The Heinz History Center is a proud affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution. A one-year membership to the Senator John Heinz History Center includes free unlimited admission to the History Center, Sports Museum, Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village, and Fort Pitt Museum as well as our quarterly Western Pennsylvania History magazine, invitations to members-only events, and more. You'll also receive a subscription to Smithsonian magazine, discounts in select Smithsonian shops and dining facilities, and other benefits. Join or renew today!

**Contact Shirley Gaudette at:**  
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Just a Small Part of Mammoth Crowd at Forbes Field on Remembrance Day.



Left to Right—Mrs. Leonard G. Woods, Mrs. Christine Miller Clemson, Mrs. E. V. Babcock (Chief Marshal of Parade), Mrs. Nathaniel Spear, Mrs. Mary Black Snyder Dress.

100 YEARS

1918-2018

In 1918, Pittsburgh honored its wartime service and sacrifices with a booklet of stories and photos. *Pittsburgh and the World War, 1914-1918* told the stories of city residents from the first draft call to the last parades after the Armistice.

One of the big events recalled was Remembrance Day, held Sunday, September 29, which drew 40,000 men, women, and children to Forbes Field. The Grandstand was filled with Civil War veterans and patriotic groups such as the Mothers of Democracy, Ladies of the G.A.R., and Daughters of Veterans, plus hundreds of student soldiers from Pitt and Carnegie Tech. Sing-alongs were led by a band of 563 musicians to pay tribute to heroes of the war, both living and dead.

The city's four Liberty Loan Drives each earned far more than their quotas, raising a total of nearly a half million dollars. The fourth one was especially difficult due to public gatherings being discouraged with the spread of the flu, yet nearly \$7 million was raised nationwide. In Pittsburgh, parades were held regularly during each drive to drum up donations.