

# World War I: Osterville's people prepare for war

by Paul Chesbro

## Part II:

[Ed. Note: Continuing this week, and for the next several weeks we will be publishing a series of articles and photographs, written and compiled by Paul Chesbro pertaining to World War I and its relationship to the local area of Osterville. It is not intended to chronicle the history of World War I, but rather to show only the relationship between the war and a small Cape Cod village and the part it played.]

In the spring of 1918 many of Osterville's young men were missing from the village. Foremost in the hearts and minds of all, were our boys and nurses serving in the Armed Forces.

At home that spring, Mr. Walter I. Fuller re-opened the ice cream parlor formerly owned by Mrs. Frank Williams. Also, Miss Sarah H. Boulton had opened the post office in Wianno for the summer months. Graduating that spring from Barnstable High School were four young ladies from the village. They were: Hazel Ames, Jessie Boulton, Margaret Cross and Isabel Lewis.

At the war-front in France the German offensive had made advances into French territory. An English soldier had written home saying, "between the bullets, gas, mud and disease from rats, it was just awful." If you made it through five months you were lucky.

When the "Yanks" entered the war, the tide of battle began to change and continued to change until victory was accomplished.

The following is a list of events which took place in Osterville concerning our servicemen and what was taking place on the homefront. Also a few pictures of local men who served in WWI.

**June 4, 1917:**

Walcott Ames of the Squantum Aviation School has been at home for a short visit.

**June 11, 1917:**

Five of our young men went to Newport last week, and Leon Hinckley, Verner Childs, Jesse Murray and Karl Chadwick passed an examination for the naval reserve. Joseph Daniel is on his way to France.

**August 27, 1917:**

Mr. Maurice Allen has gone to Newport to train for four year's service in the Navy.

**September 17, 1917:**

It is reported that three Osterville boys, Edward Daniel, Malcolm Crosby and Leo Beaumont are on their way to France.

**December 17, 1917:**

Verner Childs was at home from New York. He was well and looking fine and expected to be sent to France about the 15th of this month.

**January 7, 1918:**

Red Cross - Shipments made Jan. 4th by Red Cross branch of Osterville: 7 sweaters, 13 mufflers, 16 pair wristers, 21 pair socks, 36 slings, 36 handkerchiefs, 32 bath mitts, 24 9" compresses, 120 - 4" compresses, 4 helmets, 2 surgical shirts, 1 hot water bottle cover; total 312.

**January 21, 1918:**

Elliott Lewis has gone to Newport and entered the aviation service.



**Pvt. Burton Chadwick:** Cited by the late Louis Boody, principal of Barnstable High School, as an outstanding student. Chadwick was attending Harvard when called into service. He was sent by the army to the Aberdeen Ballistics Center in Maryland until the Armistice. He returned to Harvard and was graduated Phi Beta Kappa, class of 1920.

**January 21, 1918:**

Mrs. Thomas A. Whiteley has just had a letter from her son William T., at Camp Gordon, Atlanta, Georgia, wherein he tells of his first rifle practice.

**February 4, 1918:**

The entertainment for the benefit of the French relief fund,

held in Union Hall the 24th, drew out a crowded house. A very fine program was rendered and over \$400 was realized.

**February 18, 1918:**

A community flag was dedicated in Union Hall Friday evening to the brave boys of our village who have answered the call of the colors. The people of the village showed their interest by filling the hall to overflowing. The flag is a beautiful one of red and white wool bunting containing twenty-eight stars.

The Crosby orchestra was present and rendered some inspiring music. The school children marched in with banners flying and afterwards sang several selections.

On the platform were the Civil War veterans, the speakers of the evening and Boy Scouts.

**February 18, 1918:**

Merton Bates has had a relapse and is again in the hospital at the training camp in Anniston, Alabama.

**March 4, 1918:**

Mr. Cecil Goodspeed went to Newport last week and entered the Navy.

**March 4, 1918:**

Messrs. Verner Childs of New York and Jesse Murray of Newport were in the village for the day, February 24th. Mr. Childs has just returned from a trip across to France on a large transport ship of which he is an officer and was expecting to sail again for France. Mr. Murray was transferred to Virginia from Newport last week.

**March 11, 1918:**

Red Cross - 199 bath mitts, 341 muslin slings, 414 handkerchiefs, 51 helmets, 59 prs. wristers, 66 mufflers, 45 sweaters, 41 prs. socks, 43 surgical shirts, 30 prs. pajamas, 96 knit sponges, 1 hot water bottle cover, 6 chin bandages, 35 surgical oil cloth rest pillows, 3 abdominal bandages, 1 sleeping cap, 14 patchwork quilts, 778 4" compresses, 517 9" compresses, 24 gauze sponges.

The following have been sent to our boys at camp and in the Navy: 39 sweaters, 31 helmets, 30 mufflers, 30 prs. wristers, 74 prs. socks.

The above, with finished work at the Red Cross rooms, make a total of 3192 articles made since our branch organized June 21st, 1917.

**March 25, 1918:**

Word from Max and Carroll Crosby states that they are near the enemy's lines.

**April 8, 1918:**

Word from Donald Coffin and Stuart Scudder says they have reached Texas and are all right.

**April 15, 1918:**

Since the first of November, there have been 25 comfort bags filled and given to our soldier boys.

**April 22, 1918:**

An entertainment for the benefit of the Osterville branch French Relief was given at Union Hall on Friday evening.

**April 22, 1918:**

At the meeting of the Osterville branch French Relief held at the Baptist vestry on Wednesday evening the following articles were packed for shipment: 49 crash towels, 40 handkerchiefs, 3 games checkers, 2 girls dresses, 3 prs. boys pants, 1 boy's blouse, 6 babies' bibs, 1 pr. socks, 1 helmet, 1 trench cap, 2 sweaters, 1 pr. linen pants.

**April 29, 1918:**

Friends of Cecil Goodspeed will be glad to hear that he has again arrived safely in New York, but sorry to hear he is in the hospital with the mumps.

**May 6, 1918:**

Joseph Gomes was called into the service last week, making thirty-one boys who have thus far gone from our village.

**May 20, 1918:**

Word from Donald Coffin from Florida says that the boys occasionally have a chance to chase a few rattlers.

**June 3, 1918:**

Philip Chadwick is another of our boys to enter the service.

**June 17, 1918:**

Verner Childs spent Monday and Tuesday with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Everett Childs. He has just returned from another trip across when his boat encountered about seven submarines on the way.

**June 17, 1918:**

Word received this week from Joe Daniel tells of his safe arrival again in France.

**July 15, 1918:**

Robert Bell, who recently enlisted, is in the tank service and is located at present in Pennsylvania.

**August 26, 1918:**

We are sorry to learn that Carroll Crosby has been gassed and is in a hospital in France.

**September 9, 1918:**

Another star will be added to our service flag this week as Frank Allen has been called to service and has gone to Syracuse, N.Y.

**September 9, 1918:**

Word has been received from Miss Marie Hansberry, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Hansberry of this village, who is in France, that she is located about 30 miles from her brother, James, who went across some time ago.

**September 23, 1918:**

The Osterville branch of American Red Cross has had a call for 200 lbs. of clothing, shoes, etc., for the Belgium Relief, and the village will be canvassed during the early part of the week for all contributions.

**October 7, 1918:**

Word from Stuart Scudder states that he is to be transferred from Camp Jackson, South Carolina, to Omaha, Nebraska, where he is to enter the Officer's Training Camp.

**October 28, 1918:**

Elliott Lewis has been transferred from Pensacola, Fla., to Hampton Roads, Virginia.

**October 28, 1918:**

Red Cross - The regular business meeting for the month of September of the Osterville branch, American Red Cross, was held on Thursday afternoon at the old schoolhouse. The work committee reported as finished work for the month: 1 helmet, 1 pair wristers, 8 sweaters, 60 pairs socks, 4 pinafores.

Mrs. Lillie S. Parker - Chairman

The shippings committee reported 31 kit bags, 31 needle-books and 555 pounds of old clothing for Belgium Relief.

Mrs. Mathilde Adams - Chairman

(One hundred and eighty-four pounds of peach stones have been shipped to Brockton headquarters recently. Peach stones are to be again shipped on Friday, November 1st.)

[Ed. Query: What were peach stones used for? If anyone knows - please let us know.]

**November 11, 1918:**

Word from Jesse Murray states that he is at present located in England.



**Rawson H. Ashley:** United States Navy. Trained at Newport and was stationed there for the duration of the war. He served as a guard.

[Ed. Note: The following is a letter received from Pvt. Ist Class Stuart Scudder, who was serving in the U.S. Army and stationed at San Antonio, Texas. He was later stationed at Camp Jackson, South Carolina.]

April 21, 1918

Dear Mother:

I guess I will drop you a little note just to let you know I am well and enjoying life as much as anyone can in the army. I have been in this camp a week. The food is fine. The fire call just blew and I must get out and get the men out in formation lines.

Well, I have got them started on their way to the fire but I must stay behind as I am in charge of the company tonight, so can't leave headquarters.

I was appointed orderly to the Lieutenant when we first came here. Every morning I call the men out and call the roll and read the notices for the morning. After mess, I make out the sick report and carry it to the Lieutenant to sign and then I march the sick men to the hospital for treatment and get the doctor's report on each man. I get the mail and distribute it and make out details for work on guard duty and anything that comes up. I am supposed to be a bugler, but I haven't had hold of a bugle yet. I suppose I will when I get transferred to a company for duty.

I play in the Post band and in one of the company orchestras. They have a valve trombone just like mine exactly, same make and everything. I was up there one night and the horn was sitting there with no one to play it, so I asked if I couldn't try it on an easy one and he said "Go to it" and I did.

Now they are after me all the time for band practice and the like. I played in the orchestra at the Y.M.C.A. last night and enjoyed it very much. I want you to send me my trombone right away.

Well, the fire is all over and the men are back again. It was only a pile of brush where they had been doing some camouflage work.

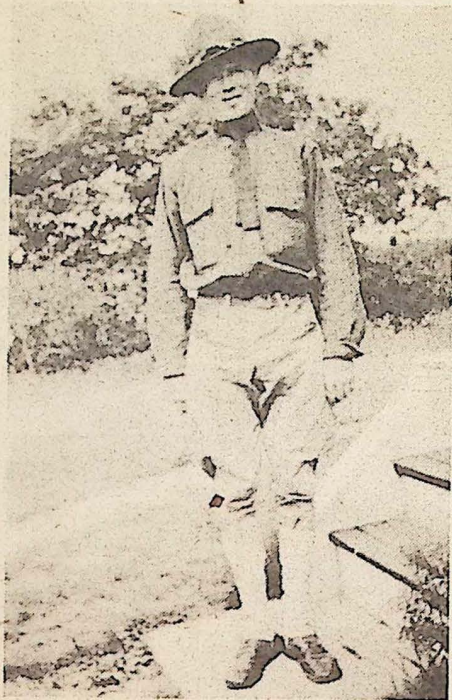
Tell Walter I will write him a letter about all the funny animals, etc., we see down here, lizards, horned toads, tarantulas, coons, and all sorts of funny animals, most of them poisonous.

Give my regards to every one. Tell them I will write sometime later.

With lots of love,  
Stuart

(Another letter, written April 27th, mentions the fact that he expects to leave for San Antonio soon, for which he is glad, since it is so hot where he is.)

## WWI: A Look Back



**Private, 1st Class Merton Bates:** Enlisted September, 1917, at New Bedford, Mass. He was stationed at Anniston, Alabama and Camp Wadsworth, South Carolina. Served in Medical Corps. Was discharged at Camp Devens in November, 1918.



**Machinist's Mate 1st Class, USN, Jesse Murray:** He joined the naval reserve in 1917 and transferred to naval aviation in England. Mr. Murray was stationed at Eastleigh Air Base just outside of South Hampton until the end of the war. He was discharged in January, 1919. Mr. Murray now resides in Osterville and is 88 years young.