

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

Part I: by Paul Chesbro

[Ed. Note: Beginning this week (just prior to Veteran's Day, Nov. 11) 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 Bosnian town of Sarajevo on the morning of June 28, 1914, an Austrian couple Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his wife Sophie were assassinated by a Serbian nationalist. The incident was the precipitating factor which led many European nations and eventually the United States into what historians have called World War I.

The line up of nations after the assassination was as follows: Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey were the Central Powers or Axis nations; the allied nations were Great Britain, Russia, France, Belgium, Italy, Rumania, Serbia, Albania and Greece.

For nearly three years the continent of Europe was engaged in military conflict. Such names as "First Marne," "Hindenburg," "George V," "The Kaiser," "Gallipoli," "Lusitania," "U-boats," "Verdun" and many others have been recorded on the pages of history.

As the Allied nations waited for our help, war with Germany was declared. The year was 1917, the day was April 6th. The village of Osterville was beginning to uncover from not so bad a winter. Workmen were opening homes along the Wianno waterfront, yards were being cleaned from the winter debris, and the boat shops were getting ready for another summer season. In fact, the Beacon Club had just had electric lights installed and Mr. James Allen Lovell had had his white horse, Prince (that he had owned for over 20 years) shot and laid away. At this time Mr. James Milton Leonard announced that he would maintain a passenger service between the West Barnstable station and the village of Osterville. It would also be serving Wianno. Capt. Nelson H. Bearse, the proprietor of East Bay Lodge for many years, sold the property to Messrs. Broun and Town from Revere. These were just a few of the happenings going on in Osterville when war was declared.

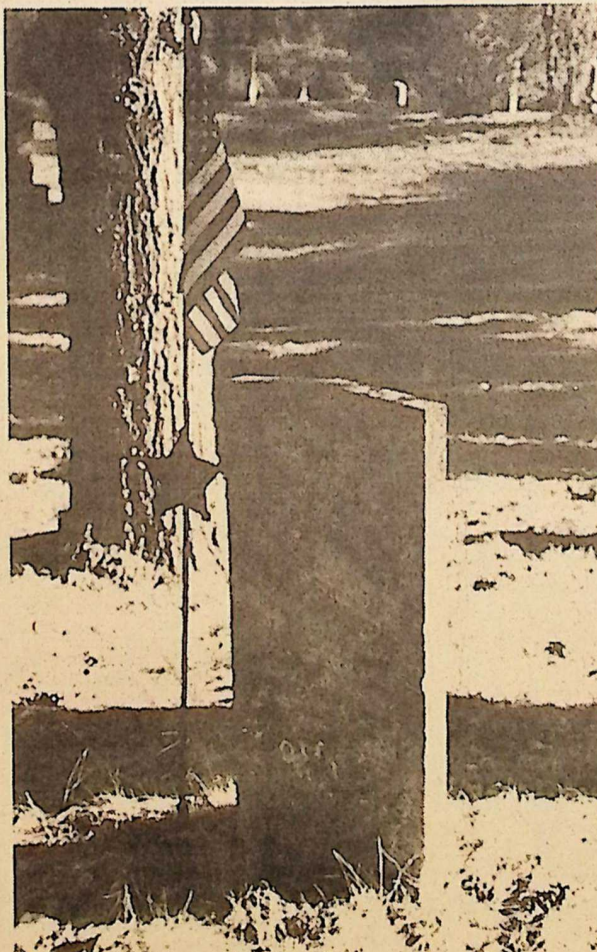
As President Wilson and the Congress of this nation called for men, the response from Osterville was overwhelming as it had been a little more than half a century before when this nation was being torn apart with the Civil War; then President Lincoln gave the call for men, and such men as Josiah A. Ames, Clarence Baker, Obed Cahoon, David Fuller, Joseph Scudder and James Small, just to name a few, came forward to serve the union. Cahoon was killed in action at Beaufort, South Carolina, and his remains were brought back to Osterville. Scudder died as a result of war injuries, leaving Ames, Baker, Fuller and Small to see Osterville at the turn of the century. Only Clarence Baker was alive when this nation declared war with Germany. In the reconstruction years which followed the Civil War, we can read of only one man from Osterville who served in the military service. He was Chester Ames, who served in the U.S. Navy in the 1880's. He was the son of Josiah A. Ames who had served in the Civil War and uncle of Chester Ames Crosby Sr., of Osterville. There are no records of any involvement of Osterville men in the Spanish American War.

As the 20th century began, the once secluded village of Osterville was becoming well known throughout the country. People were attracted here by the summer climate and the beautiful waters of Nantucket Sound. Large and beautiful homes were being built along the Wianno waterfront. The Cotocheset House, East Bay Lodge, West Bay Inn, Seapuit Inn and The Crosby House, just to name a few, were drawing people to the area. Train service was available and even a few automobiles were making their way into the village. The threat of war, I am sure, was in no one's mind.

In 1914, just seven months before the assassination of Francis Ferdinand and his wife, we read the following article dated January 5, 1914. "Messrs. Karl Chadwick and Leon Hinckley have passed examinations and entered the U.S. Navy for a four year's enlistment. We admire their courage and feel proud to know that two of our young men have entered the employ of 'Uncle Sam' and wish them every success in their new life." Since the call to serve the Union by President Lincoln (with the exception of Chester Ames), Chadwick and Hinckley were the first two from Osterville to serve in active military service in the 20th century.

As our European Allies waited, the call was answered on that day in April of 1917. Mrs. Mary Della (Adams) Frechette of Tower Hill Road believes her father- the late Thornton Adams- was first to respond. We read the following article dated April 23, 1917: "Arthur Wyman, Ernest Jones, Thornton Adams, Edward Sullivan, Verner Childs and Leon Hinckley, all of this village, enrolled in the Navy last week." All but Wyman were called into military service. Again on April 30, 1917, we read the following: "Among the 15 recruits enrolled at the Naval Coast Defense Reserve, Tuesday, were Maurice Allen, Karl Chadwick, Leo Beaumont, Owen Lewis, Leon Hinckley and Jesse Murray." All but Lewis were to see active service in the months to come. On April 30, 1917 we read again, "Howard McCabe is fighting in France." McCabe, who can be remembered by some of the older village people, had returned to his native Nova Scotia and was serving in the Canadian Army. He was seriously injured in combat while in France.

By December 31, 1917, 176,665 American troops were in France, only to see limited combat up to that time. The people on the streets of London and Paris were ecstatic as American servicemen paraded along. By the beginning of 1918, when the American fighting men were digging in at the front lines, they were confronted with new weapons, such as the flame



Osterville gravestone: "...Obed Cahoon ....died at Beaufort ....Nov. 21, 1863."

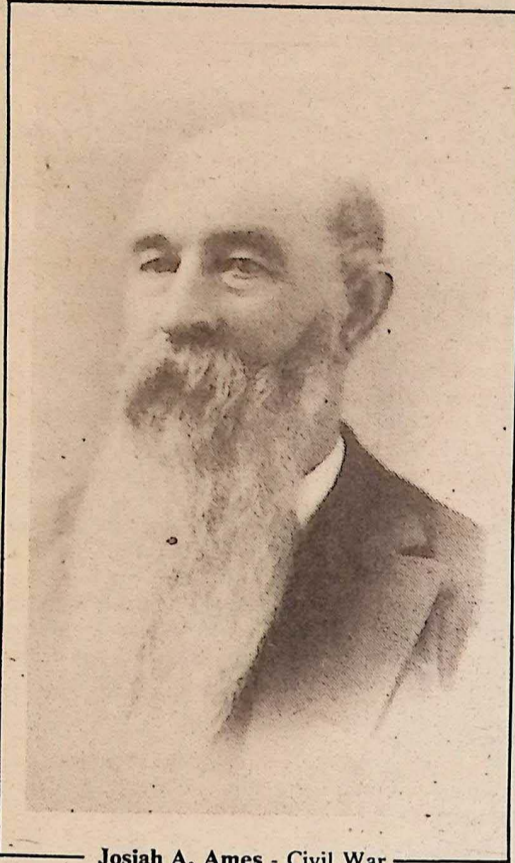
thrower and deadly chlorine gas. Aircraft were being used and many a dog fight was taking place in the sky.

Back in Osterville, men and women were answering the call. Some remained on the home front, others served on the high seas, and still others served in France- some even seeing front line duty. Music became popular overnight, with such hits as "It's a Long Way to Tipperary," "When Johnny Comes Marching Home," "Keep the Home Fires Burning," "Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag," "Over There" and many more. These songs were remembered for years by the Doughboys, and are sung even to this day. Liberty bonds were issued; famous people, such as Douglas Fairbanks, Charlie Chaplin and Mary Pickford, urged people to purchase them.

During the spring offensives of 1918, the German army made spectacular gains on the western front. Russia was out and the Bolsheviks were in, having made their peace with Germany in March of 1918. By spring, more than one million American troops were in Europe. When the "Yanks" entered in at Chateau-Thierry, Belleau Wood, Amiens, St. Mihiel, Argonne Forest, and on other fronts, the turning point occurred for the Allied Forces which eventually led to victory. The American servicemen of World War I will always remember such names as Gen. Pershing, Sgt. York, Eddie Rickenbacker, Frank Luke Jr., and Gen. Allenby.

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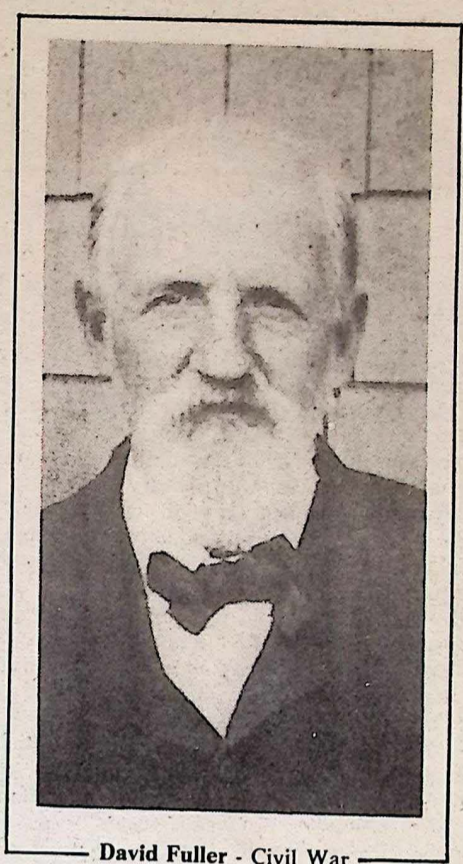
Beginning next week, I will feature the men and women whose names appear on the Osterville World War I boulder and their part in the Great War.



Josiah A. Ames - Civil War



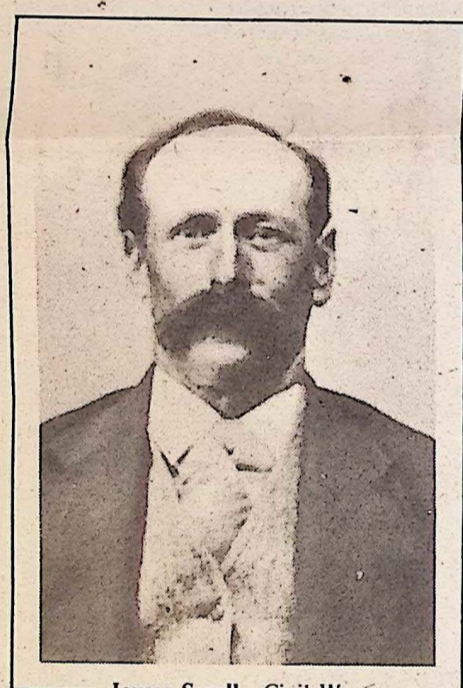
Clarence Baker - Civil War



David Fuller - Civil War



Joseph Scudder - Civil War



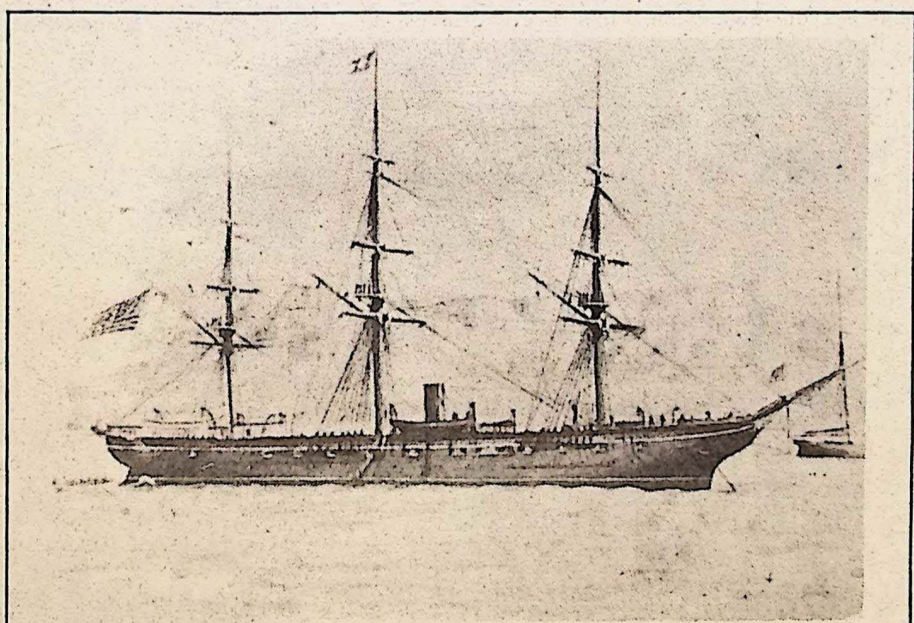
James Small - Civil War



This picture was taken at Newport just prior to WWI. L to R: Karl Chadwick and visitors from Osterville- Frank Williams and Mr. and Mrs. Elliott Crosby.



Chester Ames - WWI



USS Brooklyn: This is the vessel that Chester Ames went to Montevideo, Madagascar and Cape Town in, during his tour of duty in the United

States Navy. He was actually a corporal in the marines and served from 1881 to 1886.