

Dublin Historical Society

DUBLIN, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03444 • FOUNDED 1920

Newsletter No. 101

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DUBLIN ON THE HOME FRONT DURING WWI, 1915-1919

*This summer DHS mounted the exhibition *Lest We Forget: Dublin's Patriots in WWI*. The exhibit focused primarily on the local servicemen and a nurse with ties to Dublin who volunteered to serve in the conflict in Europe and on the importance of Abbott Thayer's theories of camouflage.*

*Year-round citizens of Dublin as well as summer residents, young and the old, contributed to the war effort in myriad ways. The source of much of the detail related below comes from Chapter XIX "Dublin in the World War" in *The History of Dublin New Hampshire* by Leonard and Seward (1920). The chapter was written by Henry D. Allison, who had been appointed town historian by the state of NH and who was tasked to chronicle the town's activities during the war.*

WAR PREPAREDNESS

In 1909 Grenville Clark, a young attorney from New York, married Fanny Dwight, whose family owned the former Eli Morse farm at the outlet of Dublin Lake. Clark was outraged at the sinking of the RMS Lusitania by a German U-boat in May 1915 and the subsequent loss of 124 American lives. Within a week he had formed a committee to organize camps to train civilians between the ages of 21 and 31 to be officers in a war he believed to be inevitable. The committee's first encampment at Plattsburg (NY) began on August 8, 1915 with 300 professionals and businessmen reporting voluntarily for four weeks of training at their own expense. (The Plattsburg camp was already in place, since it had been used for training civilian college students since 1913.) Sometimes referred to as the Plattsburg Movement, it sought to provide national training above and beyond the capacity of West Point and local militias. Clark himself would draft the War Department memo endorsing the Plattsburg training method of the MTCA, the Military Training Camps Association, in the spring of 1916. Nearly 100,000 men from the program eventually served on the Western Front.¹



Spencer Family

Grenville Clark, 1909

FIRST-HAND ACCOUNTS OF THE CONFLICT

The poet Amy Lowell owned a summer home on Beech Hill. She spent time in England after Britain had entered the war, and so witnessed the effects of trench warfare on soldiers returning home. In the preface to her book of poems published in 1916 entitled *Men, Women, and Ghosts* she wrote "No-one writing today can fail to be affected by the great war raging in Europe... I have only been able to open a few windows upon it here and there. But the scene from the windows is authentic and the watcher has used eyes, and ears, and heart in watching." The first verse of "The Allies August 14th, 1914" on page 225 follows:



Houghton Library, Harvard University

Amy Lowell

*Into the Brazen, burnished sky, the cry hurls itself.
The zigzagging cry of horse throats, it floats against the
hard winds, and binds the head of the serpent
to its tail, the long slow serpent of marching
men. Men weighed down with rifles and knapsacks,
and parching with war. The cry jars and splits
against the brazen, burnished sky.*

*This is the war of wars, and the cause? Has this
writhing worm of men a cause?
Crackling against the polished sky is an eagle with
a sword. The eagle is red and its head is flame.*

That summer she was invited to read some of her poems at the Dublin Lake Club, and according to S. Foster Damon in *Amy Lowell/ A Chronicle (1935)* Lowell was “depressed by their reception”. However, once the US entered the war, Lowell became aware that soldiers found some relief in reading poetry. Nina Sankovitch in her essay “Amy Lowell: Making the World Safe for Poetry” (2017) implies that Lowell met the soldiers’ requests in spades when she ultimately “sent poetry libraries to 34 Army camps around the United States...”



Corinna Smith, 1916



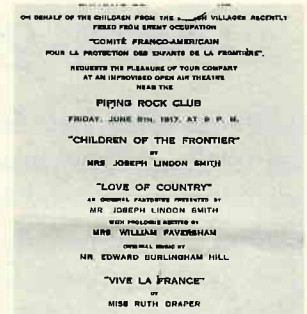
Joseph Lindon Smith,
1917

Corinna and Joseph Lindon Smith generally spent half the year in residence in Dublin and half the year in Egypt where Joe painted trompe l’oeil copies of the decoration on tomb walls, but he would suspend his work between 1916 and 1919. The Smiths traveled behind the lines in the “War Zone” in the fall of 1916, where they witnessed privations of war and the subsequent need to house, feed, and educate thousands of Belgian and French children separated from their homes and families. Corinna was not just sightseeing, as she writes of visiting soldiers in the trenches. ²

Upon their return to the US in January 1917 the Smiths committed themselves to raise funds for “The Children of the Frontier” Committee of

which Corinna became an essential member. As Corinna toured the country lecturing about the dire conditions in France and Belgium including the destruction of farms, crops and livestock by the German troops after invasion, she brought the US stance of neutrality into question for her listeners. ³

That same year he co-wrote the pageant “The Standard Bearers”, a benefit for the Red Cross staged in Newport, RI on July 10 and in Huntington, NY at the Conklin’s Rosemary estate on October 5; the latter performance boasted a cast of 500, an audience of 5,000 and proceeds of \$50,000. (Red Cross Bulletin 1:4, October 15, 1917). Both pageants were filmed and shown as benefits throughout the country.



1917 program for
Smiths' lecture and
pageant in NY

Speakers in town that summer included Albert Bushnell Hart, Professor of History and Government at Harvard and long-time summer resident whose two sons served in the Army’s Gas Defense Division in France; Corinna and Joseph Lindon Smith relating details of their trip to France the previous fall; and Madame Dupriez, who gave a first hand account of the German invasion of Belgium.



Prof. Albert B Hart

LOCAL INITIATIVES

Once the US declared war on Germany in April of 1917 Dublin citizens stepped up to chair local committees. Efforts to increase the food supply were a top priority. Henry D. Learned was appointed local chairman of the Agricultural Committee and Henry N. Gowing, the Food Administrator.

Both Learned and Gowing were active members of The Grange. Cultivation of wheat and other

grains, abandoned over the previous 50 years, recommenced and household vegetable gardens were encouraged. Volunteers held canning demonstrations in the vestry of the Unitarian church (now DCC) twice weekly.

Young people were also active supporters of the cause. In the summer of 1917 they competed for prizes, while growing "war gardens".



Henry D. Learned, 1918

They wrote letters to local soldiers; some of those received by Hildreth Allison are in the Dublin Public Library collection. A young man named Howard Elliott, Jr. and four classmates from St. Marks School took the initiative to perform a concert in the town hall and sent the proceeds to the Red Cross. 13 students would purchase \$1475 of War Savings and Thrift Stamps in the 1918 calendar year.



Henry N. Gowing dressed for Dublin Bicentennial, 1952

Emma Thayer (Mrs. Abbott) chaired the Salvage Society. A description of their work appeared in the

Peterborough Transcript on 8/22/1918: "request for cast-off articles especially old shoes and rubbers, old gold and silver, tin foil, linen, newspapers etc.... the whole to be turned over to government agents for reconstruction...Old cotton and woolen [sic] are particularly desired to make into clothing for the destitute children abroad."

DUBLIN BRANCH OF THE AMERICAN RED CROSS SOCIETY

The 1920 history of Dublin states that Dublin's local Red Cross Society was formed on May 1, 1917 with Annie E. Childs, wife of the local physician Alfred Henry Childs, elected president. That summer it affiliated with the Dublin Branch of



Anna Eastman Childs, 1893

the Women's Department of the National Civic Federation.

Louisa Aldrich (Mrs. Charles Frost) was chairman of the Surgical Dressings Committee. A record of the number and type of dressings was found recently at her former summer residence, Fairwood, and was donated to DHS by

Tim Murray. The log is just twelve pages long, but lists an astonishing output.

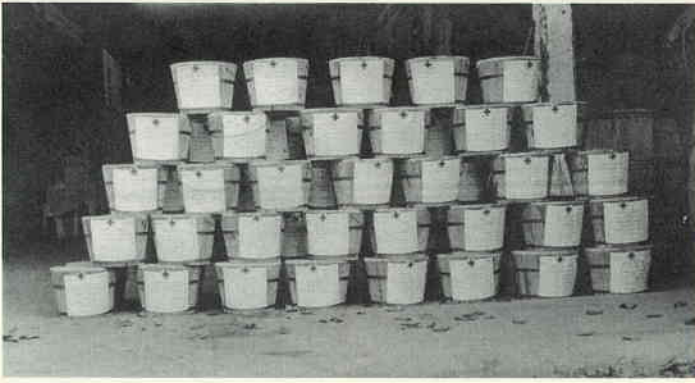
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Page from Red Cross tally of bandages

The first page listing 52,500 pieces may be from the summer of 1917, although it bears no date.

Tallies marked 1918 show that 18,000 pieces were shipped to the American Red Cross Division Supply Depot in Boston. Another accounting shows 75,294 dressings were shipped to the St. George's Society in NYC in fall of 1918.

Doubtless, given the membership of the Dublin Branch stood at 168 at the end of 1918, many other items must have been made to send to the troops abroad including knitted garments, socks, perhaps, for the soldiers' constantly wet feet in the trenches, and food as evidenced by the photograph of 34 large containers of apple butter stacked in someone's barn.



Written on the reverse: "Apple butter made by the Red Cross to send across the water"

RED CROSS SOCIETY SERVICE

Two individuals with Dublin ties worked for the Red Cross in France. Eleanor F. Cabot enlisted at age 17 as a Nurse's Aid and arrived in France already commissioned for child welfare work on December 24, 1917. Six months later she was transferred to the American Expeditionary Force and later to the French-Service de Sante.

Captain Henry Copley Greene, whose mother had encouraged friends to build summer cottages near the lake in the 1880s, first served in France for six months in 1916 for the English Committee of the French Wounded Emergency Fund delivering medical supplies to hospitals. He returned to France in April of 1917 to the same work, but became a delegate of the American Red Cross Reconstruction Service in September 1917. He was twice decorated by the French government, receiving France's highest honor, the Croix de Guerre, for evacuating sick and elderly while under shell fire in November 1918.



HC Greene

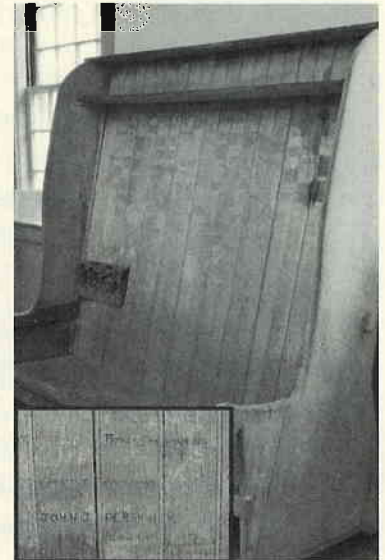
PROVIDING RESPITE TO THE TROOPS

On the Smiths return to France in the fall of 1917 Joe assumed the role of "the official representative in charge of co-ordinating the American entertainment effort of the YMCA and the Red Cross. He set up

the entertainment base (costumes, transport, make-up, scripts, etc.) for the AEF in Paris and then traveled to the front to oversee entertainment sites and to optimize the programs performed at the YMCA huts" to boost troop morale and to provide a welcome respite from the fighting.

With the exception of one short trip home Joe stayed in Europe until well after the armistice. General John Pershing insisted that "Joe must accompany our army of occupation... and that distraction would be needed for months to come at recreation centers in the south of France, since the embarkation of the troops for home must inevitably be a slow process." Corinna's work on behalf of French and Belgian children continued, and by 1924 the all but 32 of the 4000 children housed in 30 different facilities had been reunited with a living relative.⁵

The Smiths had become close personal friends with General Pershing, inviting him and his wife May to visit them at their home on Loon Point, as evidenced by the Pershings' names carved into the tall wooden bench that the Smiths had their visitors sign.



Bench & Engraving

RAISING FUNDS

Back in Dublin Clesson E. Gowing chaired drives for donations to the Y.M.C.A. and the American Red Cross, with the latter exceeding \$12K in subscriptions. Gowing was a proprietor of Gowing Livery Stables and Garage on the village oval and a member of the executive committee of the Dublin Town Improvement Society.

Composer George Luther Foote began coming to Dublin as an infant in 1888. Having studied music composition with Nadia Boulanger in Paris and feeling concern for the conflict's impact on his fellow musicians, he and vocalist May Whittlemore



Clesson E. Gowing on Mt Monadnock, 1890

(Mrs. Wyman) (Bronson Shonk's grandmother) staged a recital to benefit the American Friends of French Musicians. Held in the private home of summer resident Eugenie Frothingham (Mrs. Edward) on August 2, 1918, the program highlighted music by contemporary French composers as well as works by Foote himself. According to his family

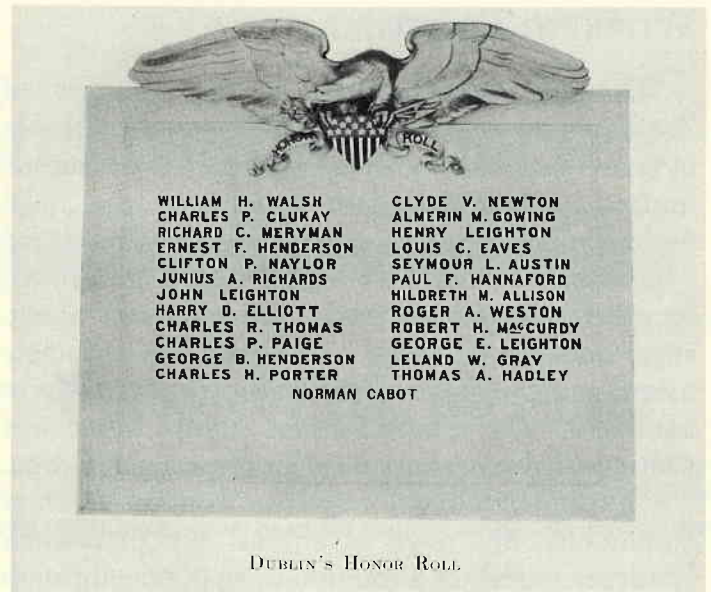
Foote set some Edward Lear verse to music and donated the royalties to the American Red Cross. Foote also moved his young family to Washington DC in 1918, so that he could work for the War Department.

Since the US government needed cash to fund its war operations, it did so by soliciting the purchase of Liberty Loans, and posters urging the purchase of same were ubiquitous. Money raised in Dublin for the four Liberty Loan drives totaled \$230,000, well exceeding the quotas based on town property evaluations.



Third Liberty Loan poster

A more modest way to support the US war effort was the purchase of War Savings and Thrift Stamps. War Savings Stamps cost \$4.12 and could be redeemed at a later date for \$5. Thrift Stamps cost \$.25, but bore no interest. However, 16 Thrift Stamps could be converted to a War Savings Stamp with payment of the residual \$.12. Two rallies for War Savings and Thrift Stamps were held in Dublin on June 5 and September 13, 1918. Dublin's total sales for stamps in 1918 amounted to \$10,086.80.



HONOR ROLL TO ACKNOWLEDGE SERVICEMEN

September 15, 1918 saw the unveiling of the WWI Honor roll. Suggested and partially funded by summer resident Edward A. Grozier, editor of the *Boston Post*, and designed and created by Dublin artist and sculptor Gerome Brush, the honor roll measured seven feet in height and was surmounted by an eagle with a wing span of nine feet, modeled in plaster and covered in gold leaf. The plaque listed the names of the first soldiers to volunteer according to their date of enlistment. Installed that day to the left of the front door of the town hall, it is unknown how long it was in place, nor its eventual fate.

VICTORY LIBERTY LOAN

Henry D. Allison was the local chairman of the fifth and final national drive, The Victory Liberty Loan. His records show that 78 contributions totaling \$80,450 easily surpassed the \$40,000 quota by the conclusion of the drive in the spring of 1919.



Henry D. Allison, 1918

WORKING TOGETHER

Dublin's contributions in the support of America's involvement with WWI were remarkable in scope and had local, national and international impact. Grenville Clark anticipated the need for trained officers. Lecturers told of first hand experiences at the front lines. Citizens farmed, recycled salvaged materials, and tolerated wheat, sugar and gas rationing. The Red Cross Society members manufactured and shipped over 142,000 bandages. The Joseph Lindon Smiths raised over \$200,000 in humanitarian aid for displaced children.

In conjunction with resources from the summer community, this town of around 520 permanent residents raised, at a minimum, \$345,000 through Liberty Loans, War Savings and Thrift Stamp purchases, and fundraisers large and small and contributed money to support the war effort even after the armistice for the war to end all wars.

Written by Lisa Foote

¹ Dunne, Gerald T., Grenville Clark Public Citizen, Farrar, Strauss, Giroux, New York, 1986, pp. 36-45. Web site: Roads to the Great War; blog "The Plattsburg Movement Where General Pershing Found His Officers", July 10, 2013.

² Smith, Corinna Lindon, Interesting People, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, OK, p. 276.

³ Op Cit, p. 284.

⁴ Description courtesy of Dennis O'Connor, Joseph Lindon Smith scholar.

⁵ Interesting people, p. 293 and p. 317

IN MEMORIAM

The society reports with great sorrow the recent loss of

Charles W. Collier

We extend our condolences to his family

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Associate Professor Rodney O'Brien from Keene State College brought three students to the DHS archives to analyze and to propose an action plan for several small collections which are waiting to be processed. We look forward to receiving their recommendations.

Records about the Baptist Church in Dublin were donated by New Hampshire Historical Society and Deborah Knight of Marlborough. NHHS sent 11 pamphlets entitled "Minutes of the Dublin Association" dating between 1814 and 1855. Knight donated an account book of Elijah Willard, minister of the Baptist Church from 1793 until 1839. The ledger begins in 1793 and among other things records the owners of the pews when the Baptist Church was built in 1797 and a list of marriages which Willard performed during his career. The leather bound book will to be sent to a conservator to be stabilized before further investigation of its contents.

2019 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

It's that time of year again. We invite you to use the enclosed envelope to send us your membership dues for 2019. As dues and additional contributions cover the majority of our operating expenses, we appreciate your support in preserving Dublin's history.

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