

April 2017, e-Newsletter

Dennis L. Keschl, Acting Editor

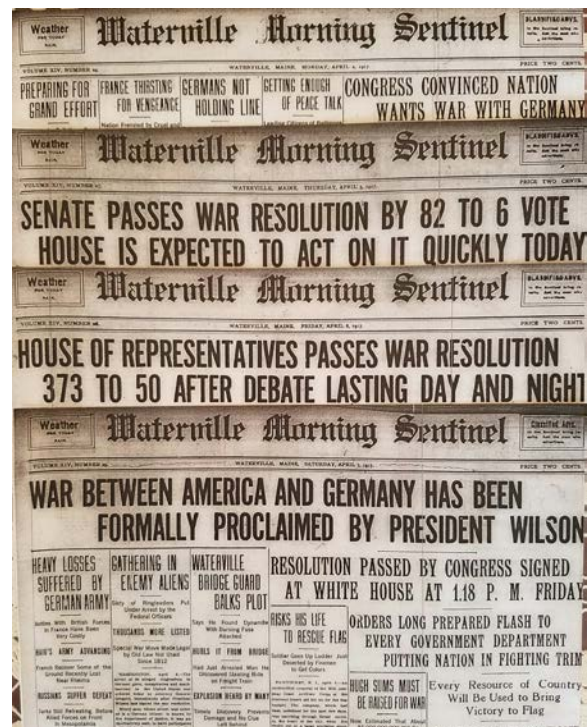
Published monthly for members of the Belgrade Historical Society

On April 6, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson formally proclaimed war between the United States and Germany.

World War I and Belgrade

By Eric Hooglund, BHS Collections Chair

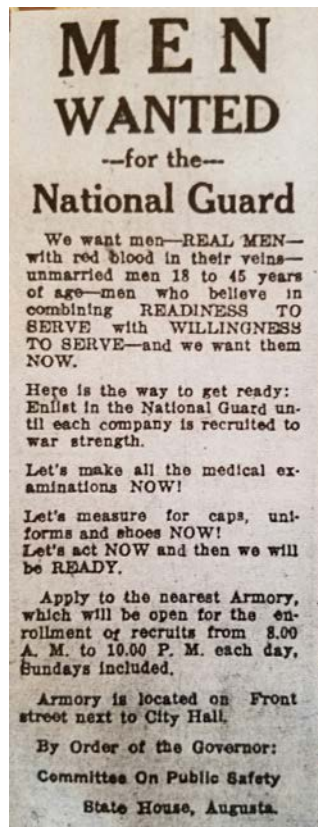
This month marks the 100th anniversary of American participation in World War I. The war had begun 1914 in Europe, and the US administration of Woodrow Wilson initially was determined to stay neutral in the conflict. The major empires of Great Britain, France and Russia were allied in the war against the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Germany, Italy and the Ottoman Empire (Turkey). At the time, more than 13.5 immigrants from Europe had resettled in the United States, including over one million immigrants each from Germany, Ireland, Italy and Russia. Consequently, there was little enthusiasm among the general public or politicians for US participation in the 'European' war. But the German policy of unrestricted submarine attacks on ships transporting goods across the Atlantic Ocean to Britain and France resulted in the sinking of several American vessels, and by early 1917 US



Morning Sentinel Headlines from April 2, 5, 6, 7, 1917

public opinion had shifted against Germany. For Washington, the *casus belli* came in late March when British intelligence intercepted a secret telegram from Berlin to Mexico in which Germany promised to help the Mexican

government regain Arizona, New Mexico and Texas if Mexico joined with Germany in the event of war between it and the United States. An indignant President Wilson asked the US Congress to declare war on Germany—although not on any of its allies, and Congress did so on April 6, 1917. A military draft was enacted, and some 2.8 million men were called to service. By June of 1918, Gen. John ‘Black Jack’ Pershing, leader of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) had one million American soldiers in France. These ‘fresh’ troops proved decisive in the major battles of the summer and fall that led Germany to surrender on November 11, 1918.



Maine National Guard Recruitment Advertisement

World War I had a big impact on Belgrade. Although the town’s population was only 1,037 in 1910, an estimated 52 young men from Belgrade served in the armed forces during the

war, including several sets of brothers: Enoch, Frank and Mellen Adams; Everett and Milfred Childs; Clarence and Delmont French; Lauren and Leon Kelley; George and James L. Minot; and Edwin and Raymond Yeaton. Maine draftees were trained at Camp Devens, which was set up in 1917 in central Massachusetts on the site of a former Civil War training center. Two of the Belgrade men actually died at Camp Devens when the 1918 influenza pandemic spread through the camp: Mellen Adams, Belgrade High School, 1912 and Bates College, 1916; and Marcellus S. Cobb. The Adams-Cobb post of the American Legion was named in their honor when it was established in Belgrade in the late 1920s.

Mellen Adams’ older brothers, Enoch and Frank, were both in Belgrade High School’s first graduating class in 1908. After the war, Frank Adams moved to Oregon, while his brother Enoch became a physician and practiced in Pennsylvania. Two WWI vets who returned home to Belgrade after their service were Everett Johnson and Harold Webster. Both became successful fishing and hunting guides for the many tourists who flocked to the region’s hotels and camps during the 1920s. In the 1940s, Harold Webster’s son, David, assumed charge of the mail boat service on Great Pond, a position he held for 30 years.

Listed below are the names of Belgrade’s World War I veterans. BHS members whose ancestors are in these lists are encouraged to send any recollections or family stories about them that they would like to share, and we will print these in our next BHS *Newsletter*.

***Belgrade's WWI Veterans whose names are on the Memorial next to the former Legion Hall, now
Dockside Physical Therapy***

Enoch H. Adams	Frank C. Adams	Mellen V. Adams	Asa M. Averill
Ralph H. Brann	Ernest Campbell	Frank H. Chandler	Everett M. Childs
Milfred H. Childs	Marcellus S. Cobb	Alfonso DiPietro	Clarence H. French
Delmont E. French	Edward R. Frude	Everett E. Gerald	Nelson A. Harnden
Lawrence B. Hill	Everett P. Johnson	Wilbur N. Judkins	Lauren F. Kelley
Leon H. Kelley	Charles H. Mills	George E. Minot	J. Lawrence Minot
James E. Mosher	Charles A. Moulton	George C. Nutter	Oral D. Page
Hiram E. Patten	William M. Rix	Frank Silva	Ernest Stevens
Edwin G. Taylor	Harold D. Taylor	Harry M. Towle	Ray Towns
Harold O. Webster	Preston O. Willey	Ernest C. Yeaton	Raymond G. Yeaton
Russell P. Yeaton			



Belgrade's WWI Veterans whose records are stored at Maine State Archives

Archie J. Bickford	Earle J. Eldridge	James W. Hanson	Dennis Lynch
Jay Merror	Charlie F. Mills	John Francis Mullen	Eugene Swan
Alton Wadleigh	Edwin Wadleigh	Flauvis Wells	

Interested in learning more about World War I?

The following websites are great resources for information that you may want!

<http://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/maine-wwi-centennial-home.html#>

<http://www.worldwar1centennial.org/commemorate/family-ties/fold-3-project.html#>

<http://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php>

Member Feedback!

We received several positive comments about our March 2017 e-Newsletter on the churches in Belgrade.

I have also received some interesting information from one of our members about the construction of the North Belgrade School back in 1935 -1936 taken from letters that he had written by his father. This is an interesting addition to our historical files on our Belgrade Schools.

Finally, I just received an e-mail that provides information about some historical items that the Society might want to acquire. More to come on this!

Note: We have a \$100 Reward for the oldest photograph for the Old Townhouse...see poster below for more information.

As we research issues that may be of interest to our membership, please know that we want your input on topics of historical interest that you would like to see in our newsletter. Do you have a particular subject that you believe might be of interest to others? If so, please pass on the information to us by simply replying to the e-Newsletter. We will work to research the issue to develop an article on the subject. Better yet, if you have written on a topic that you believe might be of interest...send that along as well! We want this newsletter to be educational, entertaining, and oriented to the topics about which our readers want to learn. Finally, we want your feedback. If you see something that is inaccurate in the information that we provide...let us know! We will be establishing a ***“Member Feedback”*** column in the upcoming issues and want to hear from you about what you liked or didn’t like about your e-Newsletter.

Remember...history not recorded is history lost!

**\$100 REWARD
for
Oldest Photograph
of the
OLD TOWNHOUSE**

One of the oldest extant buildings in Belgrade is the Old Townhouse on Cemetery Road beside the Woodside Cemetery. Built in 1815 and in use as the location of the annual Town Meetings until 1873, the facility has a long and interesting history.

Dennis "Denny" Keschl, Chair of the Belgrade Historical Society's Board of Directors, has been researching this historically significant building. One thing he's not been able to find is a photograph showing the building without the front porch, which was added in the early 1940s. With his deep interest in the Old Townhouse, Denny is personally putting up a prize of \$100 for the oldest known picture of the building prior to the porch's addition.

If you have an old photograph of the Old Townhouse, please send us a copy with descriptive information to verify its provenance to:

Belgrade Historical Society
P.O. Box 36A
Belgrade, ME 04917

After reviewing the photo and information, our Collections Committee will make a determination as to which photograph will win the reward. All entries must be received prior to June 30, 2017. If more than one copy of the winning photograph is submitted, then the one that we receive first will be the winner. The society will keep copies of all the entries submitted for our use. If an original is submitted, we will make a copy and return the original unless it was given as a donation. The reward will be made immediately after the oldest photograph is selected. If you have any questions, please contact Denny at: keschl@yahoo.com tel: 207-495-2973 ~ cell: 207-441-3701