



# WALDEN HOUSE TATTLER

*The Historical Society of Walden and the Wallkill Valley*

**Greetings of the Season—Happy Holidays Members and Friends**

Vol. 43 No. 2

Fall/Winter 2023

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### President's Message

The shorter days have made me want to hunker down for the day earlier and earlier. Not only are the days getting shorter but so is our Walden House "To Do List". Thanks to some extra effort by a number of trustees, the Walden House is in pretty good shape.



I continue to be in contact with MAX Home Improvement regarding our new roof. The last update this past weekend is that the required roofing materials have been ordered and then we wait for delivery of the products. The Society continues to be so appreciative of the generous offer by MAX Home Improvement to replace our roof at no cost to the Historical Society. Hopefully the next Tattler will be full of pictures of the roof replacement process.

I am looking forward to starting the Holiday season with the Annual Christmas Tea. December 3rd from 1 pm to 4 pm the Jacob T. Walden House will be open for visitors. The House will be decorated for the Holiday, there will be a log in the fireplace and hot refreshments and cookies galore will be served! The gift shop will be open and tickets will be on sale for our Holiday Raffle Basket.

2024 is just around the corner and we will soon be planning activities, speakers and displays for next year. It is time to dive into the archives to see what we can put on display or present as a program.

See everyone at the Christmas Tea. Barbara



**Christmas Tea and Open House**

**Sunday**

**December 3, 2023**

**1PM to 4PM**

**Music, Refreshments, Holiday Merriment**



The students from the Walden Elementary History Club visited the Walden House. They assisted with the unveiling of the Wooster Historical Marker on Elm St and they received their certificates from the NYS Archives Partnership Trust for winning Honorable Mention in the student archive contest for their project, The Walden Monument





This memorial plaque will soon have a new home at the Walden Municipal Building where it will be displayed in honor of the men who fought in WW 1. Freeman's Lodge No. 170 was a chapter of the IOOF, International Order of Oddfellows. Charles E Whitehead, listed at the top, was killed in action on July 18, 1918. His service card is below.

In the 1910 census he was 21 years old, working as a furniture salesman living with his parents and his sister Bessie on Bank Street in Walden.



ODD FELLOWS TEMPLE, WALDEN, N. Y.

FREEMEN'S LODGE, No. 170, I. O. O. F., was instituted at Montgomery, N. Y., August 12th, 1845—Thirteen petitioners were initiated and constituted a lodge by D. D. G. W. J. R. Wiltzie, assisted by members of Orange County Lodges, No. 74 and No. 112. The first officers were: A. G., John S. Conger, V. G., Frederick Decker, Secy., G. W. Oakley, Treas., Benslerod Millsbaugh. Motion was adopted Jan. 6th, 1851, to transfer to Walden and the first meeting there was held Jan. 13th, 1851, in the Condore building on Oak St.—April 1st, 1870. Freeman's Lodge leased from the Walden Co-operative Assoc. a building on the east side of Oak St., which on April 12th, 1888, they purchased from Sidney Kidd. This building was their home until 1914 when adjoining property was purchased, and the present building was erected, and dedicated on Feb. 15th, 1915. The entire building is used for lodge purposes. On the first floor is located a large assembly room—complete kitchen—reception room and coat rooms. The second floor is devoted to the uses of the Odd Fellows Clubs and comprises reading, card and billiard rooms, the third floor is for lodge uses. The lodge room as well as ante rooms preparation rooms and paraphernalia rooms being beautifully finished in natural chestnut, wax finished.

Whitehead, Charles I. 29,561 3711 White Colored, 6

Residence: (Surname) (Christian name) (Town or city) (County) (State)

Walden Orange New York

\* Enlisted \* R. A. \* N. C. \* E. R. \* C. \* Inducted at Ft. Slocum, NY on June 3 19-17

Place of birth: Walden, NY Age or date of birth: 28 6/12 Yrs

Organizations served in, with dates of assignments and transfers:

Oo P 9 Inf to Death

Grades, with date of appointment:

Pvt

Engagements:

Served overseas from: Sept 7/17 to: Death from: to:

Killed in action: July 18/18 19

Other wounds or injuries received in action: None

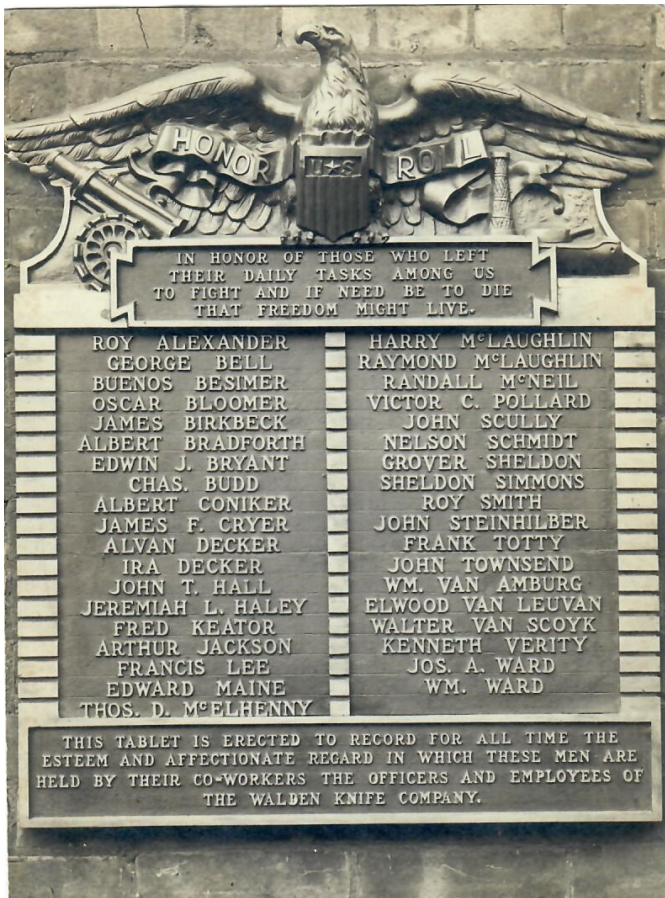
Person notified of death: Miss Bessie Whitehead (If none, so state) Sister

15 Bank St Walden (No. and street or rural route) (City, town or post office) (State or county) NY

Remarks:

Form No. 724-6, A. G. O. \* Strike out words not applicable. † Dates of departure from and arrival in the U. S. Nov. 22, 1919. 3-7265

# Patriots Called by Draft in Third District



## FIRST MAN DRAFTED ENLISTS IN NAVY

Walden, July 25—Grover Sheldon, the well known catcher of the Keen Cutters' Baseball team, Monday enlisted in the navy in New York city. He passed the physical examination and Tuesday reported to the Brooklyn navy yard for service. Recently his brother John also joined the navy. Mr. Sheldon was No. 258, the first man drawn in the draft.

This memorial plaque honors the men who worked at the Walden Knife Company which closed in 1926.

Grover Sheldon is on both this plaque and the IOOF plaque. However, at the beginning of August Sheldon was rejected by the Exemption Board and again at the end of the month he was discharged with an industrial exemption. Eventually he served in the Army from March 1918 to April 1919.

Upon his return to Walden, Sheldon got a chance in July 1919 to try out for the Chicago White Sox. It's probably lucky for him that he didn't make the cut.

## LETTER FROM WALDEN MAN WHO DREW FIRST NUMBER

### Grover Sheldon Tells of Gas Attacks During His First Night in the Trenches

Grover Sheldon, of Walden, whose number—258—was the first drawn in the first draft, writes an interesting letter to his friend, Thomas Ward, of Walden. The letter is as follows: Somewhere in France, July 4, 1918.

Dear friend Tom:—  
As there isn't much going on and "Old Fritz" has stopped sending over his fireworks, it gives me a chance to write a few lines to let you know that "Jerry" hasn't got me yet. I am in the best of health, and hope you are the same. I suppose you thought something had happened to me because I have not written sooner but I have so many letters to write, and you know how I love that. It takes up about all the spare time I have answering letters. You will no doubt be surprised to hear that I am in the trenches. I got there quicker than any of you fellows expected, I'll bet on that. Do you remember when we were "kidding" about it last summer and you and "Hook" kept saying that I would never see the other side? Well, I am over here and right amongst it now, boy, and am spending a very noisy 4th. Believe me, boy, that old cannon of yours would sound like a cap pistol to me now.

The first night we got in the trenches we had not been there more than 15 minutes when "Fritz" sent over a gas attack, but it didn't do

any damage, for we were on the lookout for it. In the morning about 3 o'clock we were sleeping as things were pretty quiet, when they sent more gas shells and I awoke to find "Vic" Pollard kicking me in the head and hollering gas! Well, you ought to have seen the boys dive into their gas masks. They did it in about four seconds flat. You don't have much time for stretching when that gas is around for, if you do, you are liable to go to sleep for a long time. Well, I hear that you have started to play ball there, but you have not been making out very well so far, as my mother told me you had not won a game up to June 6. I don't know how you ever got a team up this year any way. You must have some of the old players back again.

Well, how are your folks getting along? Tell your mother that I wish to be remembered to her and Anna, and tell them I would be glad to hear from them.

I will have to close now, sending my best regards to you and all the boys, and hoping to hear from you and also see you soon, I remain your old friend.

GROVER,  
P. S.—I know you don't like to write very well, but be sure to answer this letter as soon as you can.  
PRIVATE GROVER SHELDON,  
Co D, 305th M. G Bn. A. E. F.  
France. (Via New York.)

## SHELDON TO GET BIG LEAGUE TRY

Walden, July 19—Grover Sheldon, Walden's "best bet" behind the bat may in the near future be wearing the uniform of one of the big league teams. He will on Tuesday, July 23, report to the Chicago White Sox in New York city, when they make their next swing around the circuit.



# Walden Gets Knife Order for England

**Factory Employees on Night Shifts to Fill Demand CUTLERY NEEDED FOR THE ARMIES**

**And Present Rush May Result in New Factory Building**

Walden, Feb. 18.—The workmen in the Walden Knife Works connected with the material department started on a double shift on Monday, one part of the force working from 7 to 7 o'clock in the daytime and the other shift working from 7 to 7 o'clock in the night. This rush of work has been caused by the large order of army knives for the British army which was contracted by the Simmons concern recently. Several other departments in the Walden knife works have been working overtime for a month or more.

One of Walden's earliest encounters with the War in Europe was in 1915 when the British placed a large order for pocketknives for the troops with the Walden Knife Company. Called "Little Sheffield" Walden became the location of a thriving war production effort aiding the British Army.

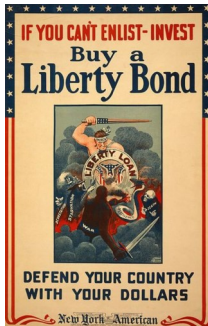
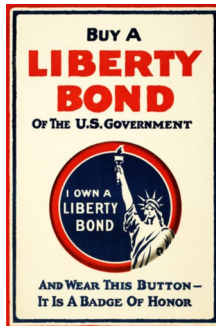
## \$50,000 Knife Cargo from Walden Lost With Sinking of the Lusitania

# MIDDLETOWN TIMES-PRESS

LEADING NEWSPAPER IN ITS TERRITORY  
 VOL. XLIII—NO. 164. (44 DEDS.) APRIL 5, 1913 MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SATURDAY, MAY 8, 1915. 30 Cents a Month. TWO CENTS

## ONLY 51 AMERICANS OUT OF 188 ON LUSITANIA SAVED, NAMES OF PROMINENT CITIZENS NOT INCLUDED IN LIST, GERARD IS DIRECTED TO DEMAND FACTS FROM GERMANY

On May 7, 1915, the entire shipment of Walden knives sank with the Lusitania.



# BIG KNIFE SHIPMENT FROM WALDEN IS LOST WITH THE LUSITANIA

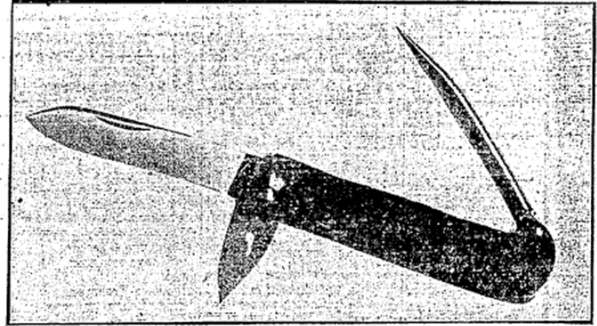


Photo shows one of the knives manufactured in Walden for the English army, 10,000 dozen of which were lost on the Lusitania.

The sinking of the giant Cunarder Lusitania by the Germans yesterday will be brought home to Orange county residents through the fact that 10,000 dozen knives, the result of weeks of work on the part of day and night shifts at the Walden Knife Works, went down with the big steamship. The knives comprised the largest shipment yet made by the Walden concern as a portion of an order of a million knives received from the English government.

Fortunately the Walden concern received payment in full for the knives before the liner left port and the Orange county manufacturing concern will suffer no financial loss as the result of the sinking of the vessel.

The present contract of the Walden Knife Works calls for the manufacture of a full million of the knives and the order has proved to be a great boom for the village. The factory has been taxed to its utmost capacity and the New York Knife Company and Schrade company plants in Walden have been called into service to help fill the order. Employment has been furnished to a large number of extra hands and the village has experienced a decided business revival as the result of the big order.

The sinking of the Lusitania with the large shipment made last week by the concern will probably mean an additional order and the result will be an added benefit to the people of Walden.

The fact that all of the English cutlery concerns are at present engaged in the manufacture of ammunition was responsible for the orders for knives placed in this country. The Walden works was found to be in a position to fill orders promptly and as a result was given a large share of the orders placed in the United States. The order was received through the English consul in New York and it is stated that each shipment was met with a prompt payment by the English government through the American representatives before any of the knives left the shores of the United States.

The shipment lost on the Lusitania represents in cash an order of about \$50,000. The knives would retail, if sold in this country, at about a half dollar apiece.

The knives, as shown in the illustration, are designed entirely for the use of the English soldiers and marines. The long steel blade is intended for general use. The short blade has an attachment by which it may be used as a can-opener and for other purposes while the steel prong, called a Martin spike, is intended for use in splitting ropes. The spike, however, finds many other useful purposes and the knife forms a tool probably of great value to the men in the trenches and on board the ships of the King. The handle is of stag and the whole arrangement is well constructed and designed to withstand hard usage. The blade is keenly sharpened and both this and the spike make a formidable weapon.

The length of the blade is 3 1/2 inches. The length of the handle is 5 1/2



The employees of the Walden Knife Company showed their support of the war effort in this photograph urging residents to buy Liberty Bonds.

In the first Liberty Loan Drive of 1917, Walden subscribed \$22,000.00, far over and above its quota.

In the second Drive, Walden subscribed \$130,600.00 with a quota of \$88,500.00.

Again, in the Third Drive, Walden subscribed \$149,900.00.

## WORLD WAR 1 CASULTIES FROM WALDEN NEW YORK

**WILLIAM DEAKIN.** Company 1 of the 103<sup>rd</sup> infantry points with the greatest pride to the deeds of this Walden boy. He was one of Walden's first representatives in the war in the history of his service will forever be a shining example of courage, faithfulness and patriotism. He was a Doughboy and was in the thick of all the major operations of our Army. His behavior on the field of battle in the Argonne Woods is typical of what may be expected of American soldiers. Tortured wounded and with life ebbing fast after a terrific engagement, private deacon refused immediate aid in pleadingly requested that other wounded men whom he knew had dependence, be doctored first. Here is a life full of sacrifice, the sacrifice of aid for his comrades and the greatest of all, the supreme sacrifice for his home and country. It was fitting and proper that the Walden Legion Post should choose such a devotion for it standard.

**THERON DAVIS.** Immediately upon this country's entry into the conflict there and Davis put aside his daily task and answer the call were brave and patriotic men. After short and thorough training, he went overseas with the army that was to be known as Pershing's expeditionary forces, in September, 1917. During the winter of 1917-1918 he took part in the engagements of the American army in France serving with acceptable bravery and faithfulness. Of his death at the Gusseprey, his commanding officer said "the support trenches were being bombarded and shelled heavily. Our troops were standing to, expecting the German any minute. In the most exposed position Davis held his post throughout the hours of gas, shrapnel and high explosives. The end came when the shell exploded nearby."

**ALBERT BRADFORTH.** In the months of August and September 1918, the enemy witnessed fighting such as they had never seen before. Whole sectors were given to the American army and complete confidence was placed in the Americans to hold the line and make advances which they did remarkably well. But for such success Grimm war extracts its toll. In the St. miel offensive the results of which thrilled the country, one of Walden's beloved doughboys, Albert Brad fourth surrendered his life for the success of his country, his comrades and his home--Walden. He fought until he could fight no more, and then gave his life. What an excellent standard of sacrifice of which Walden is capable!

**CORNELIUS ROSE.** This Walden doughboy of the 107<sup>th</sup> infantry, 27<sup>th</sup> division gave his life in the latter part of September, 1918. The months of September, 1918 produced the glorious victories of the Argonne and St. Mihiel but an enormous price in the lives of our boys was demanded for the successes. Here was a deer life cheerfully and courageously contributed by Cornelius Rose, leaving a memory suite with profound loyalty.

**CLARENCE R. DAVIDSON** was a private company H, hundred 111<sup>th</sup> infantry 6<sup>th</sup> division A. E. F. He was killed in action in the Argonne Forest August 19, 1918

**DONATO FRANCBANDIERO** was killed in action.

**MORRIS JOHNSTON** was killed in action.

**JOSEPH W. OLIVA** while in training camp with a heavy artillery at Camp Zachary Taylor, Kentucky, died of disease about October 10, 1918.

**JAMES MCCORMICK** and Company M, hundred and seventh infantry left for overseas in May, 1918. He was killed in action in the battle of Le Catelet on September 29, 1918.

**CHARLES I. WHITEHEAD** enlisted May 30, 1917. He was assigned to Company F, ninth infantry and left for France on September 1. In March 1918, while at the front, both feet were badly frozen so that on March 8 he was sent to base hospital No. 23. April 1, he was transferred to base hospital number eight. On July 18. Whitehead was wounded and he was later reported as killed in action.

**FRANK TOTTY** was a private in the water tank company. He died of disease while on board the transport that was transporting his company and was buried at sea.

**JAMES GRAHAM** was born in Roberts, Wisconsin in 1878. He studied law at the University of Wisconsin and was admitted to the bar in Wisconsin and Iowa. In 1913, he was admitted to the bar in New York state and began to practice in Walden and Montgomery. He left a study growing practice to attend the second officer's training camp at Plattsburgh. After he received his commission as Lieut. and was assigned to the aviation core at Waco Texas. He died of spinal meningitis on February 5, 1918.



This medal was given to the returning Walden soldiers.

In Walden the Village Board held a meeting on November 8, 1918. With the end of the war in sight, it was decided that there would be a community wide Thanksgiving celebration.

In December 1918 the Village Board decided to delay discussion about a celebration for the returning service men. Then, at a special meeting in February 1919 a committee was organized to begin planning the event.



This entrance to St. Andrews Church Hall was dedicated in 1928.

Walden, N.Y. February 21, 1919

The Board of Trustees met in special session on the above date in the capacity of Executive Committee in receipt to returned soldiers, sailors and marines Postwar Corps, Mullen, Johnson, Zornick and Mac Brien present, President Bedford presiding.

Regularly moved, seconded and carried, That Howard Swinder and clerk be appointed Committee on invitations.

Regularly moved, seconded and carried, That E.C. Mullen be appointed on Committee with power to select assistant. Mr. Mullen elected as Vice-president.

It was the opinion of the Board that the Walden Band should lead parade.

Regularly moved, seconded and carried, That invitations should be prepared to service men residing within the confines of the first election districts containing in Walden.

Regularly moved, seconded and carried, That a Committee be appointed to obtain samples and prices of revenues with report at earliest convenience. W.E. Cooper, C.W. Kay and clerk appointed.

Regularly moved, seconded and carried, That Geo. W. Braund, C.B. Zell and A.P. Embler be appointed a committee to secure speakers.

Regularly moved, seconded and carried, That a Committee be appointed on Entertainment. Messrs Walter Sacke and Howard Swinder appointed.

Adjournment  
Chas. Mullen, Paugh, Clerk

At the March 1st meeting of the Board of Trustees it was resolved to raise by taxation and expend \$1000 to hold a "Community Welcome" celebration for the returning servicemen from the Village of Walden on July 4th or such other suitable date as may be selected.



This plaque is on the reverse of this simple stone in the triangle on Scofield and Orchard



**THE AMERICAN LEGION**

For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes: To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our association in the Great War; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good-will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.—Preamble to Constitution of American Legion.

After the signing of the Armistice, a meeting of representatives from the different divisions of the A. E. F. discussed possibilities and plans for the organization of the American Legion. At that time the Legion was pretty much of a dream. At another caucus in St. Louis the Legion was in the experimental stage. With the First National Convention at Minneapolis, Nov. 10, 11, 12, 1919, the American Legion became an accomplished fact. At this Convention were 684 delegates and conservative estimates placed the total attendance at 3,500. Here the ideals and policies of the Legion were clearly outlined. At the National Conventions following at Cleveland, Kansas City, New Orleans, San Francisco and St. Paul these same ideals and policies have been followed. Only one detail has changed. The force behind these policies has gained in driving power as a result of the gain in cohesion which has marked the Legion's development during the past five years.

Nine hundred and seventy-four delegates and a total of about 50,000 persons attended the Sixth National Convention at St. Paul this September. A million men and women who had served their country sent their delegates to confer with one another about matters planned to add to the prosperity and well being of the nation. Committees were working on plans to submit for Rehabilitation, Legislation, Resolutions, Americanism, Children's Welfare, Military Affairs, Naval Affairs, Aeronautics, Finance, Internal Organization, and Time and Place of Next Convention. These National Conventions form the greatest deliberative assemblies of similar character in the world, assemblies which have influenced materially our progress as a nation since the war.

Largely through the efforts of a few enthusiastic veterans, a group of Walden ex-service men met on the evening of August 10, 1919 and decided to organize a local post of the American Legion. Temporary officers to hold office until the National Convention in November were elected. It was voted to name the post after William Deakin who had given his life in the service of his country.

The post was organized with 36 charter members. In 1920 the charter was granted by the National and State Departments and the post became William Deakin Post, No. 158, of the Department of New York.

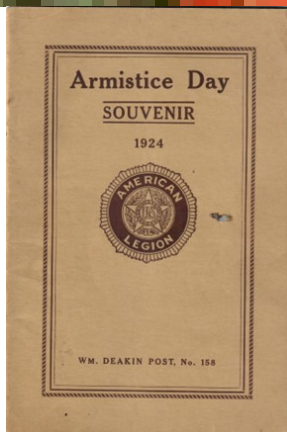
The Orange Hose Co. offered the post the use of its rooms for meetings and these and the P. O. S. of A. rooms were used until the present headquarters at 58 Main street were secured.

The post has taken active part in many community enterprises especially in the observance of National Holidays and the Community Christmas Tree. During the past year the Legion has rendered much service to the ex-service men in many ways.



**On August 10, 1919, a group of Walden ex-service men met to organize a local post of the American Legion. It was voted to name the post after William Deakin who had given his life in the service of the country.**

**The American Legion produced this booklet in 1924. It recorded the names of Walden's servicemen who participated in WW1.**



**WALDEN'S REPRESENTATION IN THE SERVICE**

Of its share of men in the service of the country, Walden supplied three hundred and five soldiers, sailor and marines. The village was represented in every branch of the service and in almost every camp and division of the Army and Navy. Walden men served as follows:

Infantry .....	94	Military Police .....	3
Navy .....	42	Nurses (women) .....	3
Field Artillery .....	25	Marine Corps .....	2
Coast Artillery .....	21	Quartermaster Corps .....	2
Machine Gun .....	13	Tank Corps .....	2
Engineers .....	11	Merchant Marine .....	2
Pioneer Infantry .....	9	British Army .....	2
Air Service .....	8	Balloon Company .....	1
Ammunition Train .....	8	Canadian Army .....	1
S. A. T. C. .....	8	Ambulance Corps .....	1
Headquarters Co. ....	6	Dental Service .....	1
Ordinance .....	7	Y. M. C. A. ....	1
Motor Transport .....	5	Butcher .....	1
Medical Corps .....	4	Baker .....	1
Cavalry .....	4	Sanitary Corps .....	1
Heavy Artillery .....	4	West Point .....	1

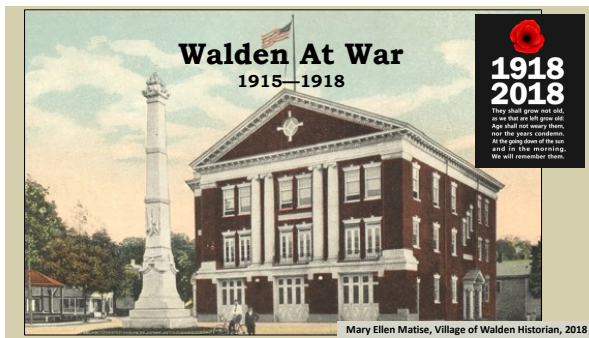
Of the officers from Walden there was: a Captain of the Infantry, a First Lieutenant in the Machine Gun service, a Second Lieutenant of the Infantry, a Second Lieutenant of the Pioneer Infantry, two Second Lieutenants of the Field Artillery, a First Lieutenant in the Ordinance Service, a Second Lieutenant of the Coast Artillery, a Second Lieutenant in the Red Cross, a Second Lieutenant Veterinary, and a Second Lieutenant in the Quartermaster Corps.

**In Flanders Fields**  
John McCrae

**In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.**

**We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.**

**Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.**



Mary Ellen Matisse, Village of Walden Historian, 2018

If you would like to learn more about life in Walden during WW1 or to schedule a showing of the 100th Anniversary program, contact Mary Ellen Matisse, Village Historian at 845-778-1369.



Thomas W Bradley is best known in Walden as a hero of the Civil War. However, he also played a significant roll during WW1 as the retired Congressman for the 20th District. He was in great demand as a public speaker, and when America entered the European War he was chosen to serve on the local Exemption Board in Middletown, NY. The Board reviewed the draft notices of the men called to arms and determined their eligibility to serve.

- Trustees
- Patricia Eisley- Treasurer
- Richard Hoyt
- Barbara Imbasciani- President
- Sandra Magill
- Mary Ellen Matisse
- Lisa Melville-McIver
- Susan Millspaugh
- Chris Danny Moore
- Howard Oldrey
- Nancy Phelps
- Mary Slater
- Anita Vandermark- VicePresident
- Gail Yeaple
- Open

Thank you to the Walden Veterans' Banner committee for providing this new banner honoring Col. Bradley. It commemerate his war service, and it also recognizes his business accomplishments and community service.

Historical Society of Walden and the Walkkill Valley  
 P.O. Box 48  
 Walden, New York 12586