



NORTH GREENBUSH NOTES

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North Greenbush in World War 1

2017 is the 100th anniversary of America's entry into the First World War. Ten percent of the all the U.S servicemen were from New York and 48 were North Greenbush residents.

In 1965 North Greenbush erected a plaque on the Winter Street Extension to honor our vets. Through Ancestry.com I've examined their draft registration cards and military service records which include physical descriptions (height, hair color etc).

Two men died during the war. Earl Fonda was killed in France in late September 1918. His body was returned home in 1921 and he is buried in Bloomingrove Cemetery. Are there any of his descendants living here? The other casualty Edgar Bernard died stateside of "broncho-pneumonia".

The draft registration cards provide a wealth of information. Besides name, home address, birthplace and marital status, the draftee had to list his employer and what he did for a living. I expected that most would be farmers. However there were also peddlers, office clerks, auto mechanics', railroad workers, and two chauffeurs.

Longtime residents may recognize these two names: Frank Houser, who operated Houser's Store on Main Avenue in Wynantskill and Lynd Cox, whose occupation was manager of a summer resort at Snyders Lake.

Interestingly, in the lower left hand corner of the form are the instructions "if person is of African descent, tear off this corner". I assume

the government was trying to
"segregate" soldiers by race.

The service record form also provides interesting details. There were 19 men who served overseas; three were wounded (one severely); 4 men served in the Navy, the rest being in the Army. There was no separate Air Force at this time, but from the description of their unit, I believe some were connected with the Army Air Corps.

Most of the North Greenbush army vets served in the 105th Regiment which saw some of the bloodiest battles the Americans fought. Tragically this action was less than two months from the end of the war.