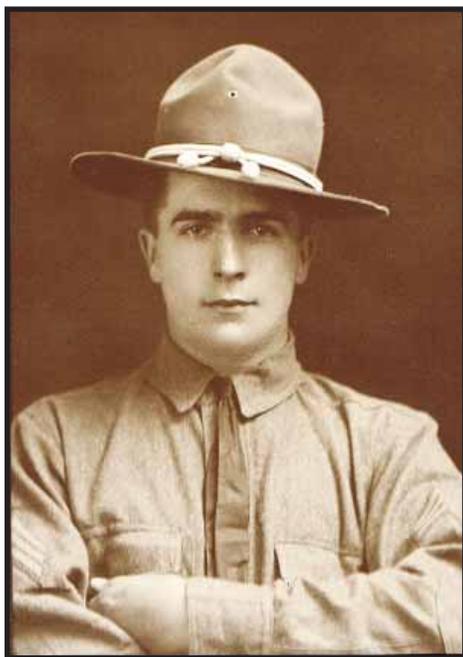




# Visit the Society's Exhibit Honoring the 100th Anniversary of The Great War

See an Exhibit and Learn the Role of Waltham's Company F in America's 101st Expeditionary Forces During World War I

The exhibit will showcase artifacts from the Brad Bigham Collection.



*Francis McGowan*

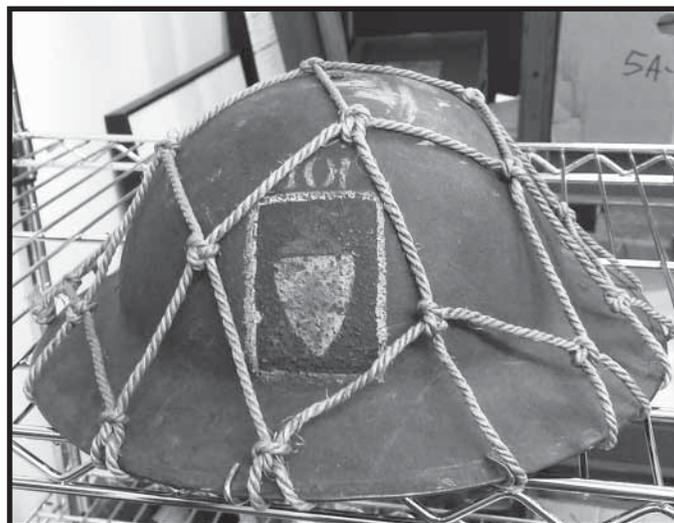
Beginning in July the Historical Society will be opening a new exhibit covering the 100th anniversary of the First World War. With War being declared on April 6, 1917 the American troops didn't immediately travel to the front.

They had been dispatched to El Paso to protect the American border from incursions by the famous Pancho Villa and others. The laws at the time dictated that National Guard forces could not be used to fight outside the Nation's borders and were to be utilized for defensive purposes only.

However, an incursion into Mexico was made by the Army, led by John "Black Jack" Pershing, bringing a strong reaction from all sides of the Mexican conflict.

There is reason to believe that the actions of the American troops in moving into Mexican territory led to a Germans attempt to recruit Mexico as an ally with the promise of aid in recovering territory lost to the United States.

The Zimmerman Note spurred the US President to declare war on Germany on April 6, 1917. American shipping had been targeted by German U-Boats, with many ships being sunk or damaged. Combined with the offer to Mexico, President Wilson believed there was no option but to declare war on Germany.



*World War I helmet bearing the insignia of the 101st Regiment.*

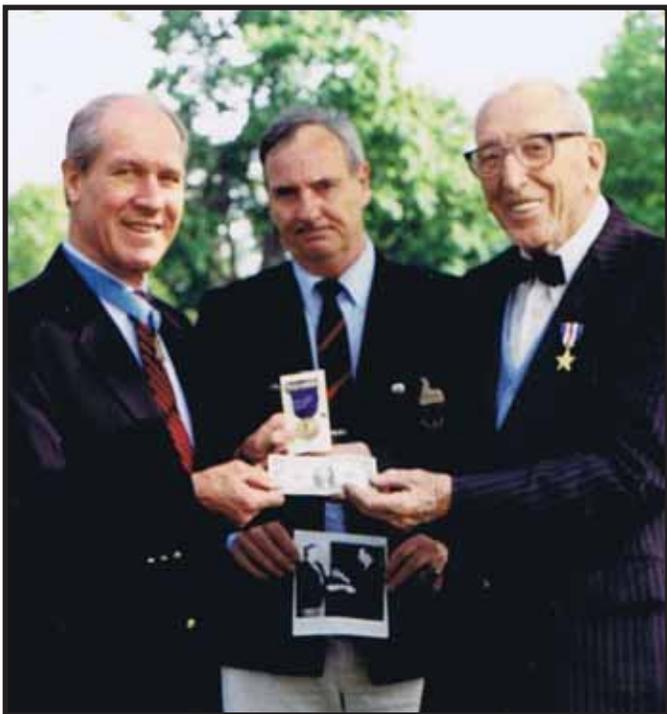
The Waltham Historical Society has been extremely fortunate to receive a donation of materials from the Collection of Brad Bigham. Brad's sister Mary Martha and his Niece Terry Bigham have been instrumental in helping the Society make accessible the information and material about Waltham's Company F.

Among the items on display will be a helmet with the 101st insignia, a uniform, and numerous awards, medals, and photos taken before, during, and after the War.

You can read letters from the soldiers telling stories of their experiences as well as see photographs taken during the Company's time, both on the Mexican Boarder against Pancho Villa, and in the trenches in Europe.

Brad Bigham spent much of his life collecting, documenting, and writing about the actions of Company F. His father, Edward Bigham was a proud member of the unit, leading Brad to seek out and interview as many surviving members as possible. His articles in the local newspaper on Veterans' Day every year were always very informative and poignant.

The Bigham collection is almost overwhelming in its breadth. Photos in uniform as well as photos taken years later, show such true dedication to purpose that it is only appropriate that it now becomes available for viewing by the public.



*Brad Bigham (center) with Medal of Honor Recipients Thomas Hudner and Company F Veteran Leo J. Stankard*

The exhibit covers Company F signing up and serving in El Paso, Texas. There are photos taken at Camp Banks showing the men in formation during drilling exercises before shipping to Framingham and then to Europe.

We hope the exhibit will expand continually as more of the Bigham Collection is explored and put on display.

The exhibit also presents photos taken of men on the front steps of the Waltham Public Library on the day they shipped out. Some of these photos provide the identities of the men leaving, while others were not identified. It's hoped that visitors may recognize some of the men and can actually write their names on the images to update our records.

We want to thank Mary Martha Bigham and Terry Bigham for their assistance with the exhibit and for helping identify some of those in the photos.

We would greatly appreciate any contributions to add to the exhibit. Please contact us at:

[Waltham.historical.society@gmail.com](mailto:Waltham.historical.society@gmail.com)

If you have materials we can copy and return to you, please help us expand the story.

The exhibit, at the former Bright School, 260 Grove Street in Waltham, will be open on Saturday mornings from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. Call to learn of other hours or to make an appointment to visit.



*Dedication of the First World War ! Monument on Waltham Common in July 1927*



*We're looking to identify the men in these photos. The photo above is from El Paso and is marked First Corps.*

*The image on the right shows two members of Company F. It was a gift to Charlie Rennie's brother Alfred and markings on the back seem to indicate the name Frank Gallagher.*

*If you can identify any of them please contact us through the website.*





**2017-2019 Board of Directors  
Meeting Held at Home of  
Jeremy Hagger**



*Members of the Board of Directors (left to right) Ruth Arena, Sheila Fitz-Patrick, and Gail Cormier listen as Treasurer Marie Daly describes some of the finer points of Society business. Joe DiFranco joined in the conversation.*

The Board of Directors for the Waltham Historical Society's 2017-2019 term held their first meeting at the home of Corresponding Secretary Jeremy Hagger on Sunday, June 25th.

Jeremy and Carole served up a feast that had everyone going back for more. And there were some suggestions we hold meetings this way going forward! Thank you Jeremy and Carole!

And thanks as well to the new members of the Board of Directors. Gail Cormier and Rachel Malley bring an enthusiasm for history that will only make our work more enjoyable and successful.

Please consider joining us by volunteering to serve on a committee under the leadership of our Directors. Whether your interest is in filing, researching, documenting, fund-raising, the newsletter, or technology, there's an opportunity for you to help us in our mission. Contact us through the [Waltham.historical.society@gmail.com](mailto:Waltham.historical.society@gmail.com) email and let us help you get involved!

**Contact Us!**

“Thank you” to the Waltham Historical Society for preserving the City's rich history.



As a proud member of the Waltham community for nearly 70 years, we look forward to serving the members of the Society.

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*The Society Bright School location, 260 Grove Street will be staffed on Saturdays from 9:00 am to 1:00 PM for the summer. This will afford the opportunity for the public to visit and view some of the artifacts and documents collected by the Society over the past 100 years. If you would like to join us as a guest or as a docent, please contact us at [waltham.historical.society@gmail.com](mailto:waltham.historical.society@gmail.com).*