

White Plains Historical Society

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WHITE PLAINS' WORLD WAR I SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL 100 YEARS SINCE "THE WAR TO END ALL WARS"

By Barbara Carlson

Residents driving into our city on West Post Road see familiar sights: the beautiful Post Road Elementary School, and further along, the Post Road Service Station to the right, and Ernesto's, Aries Wine Shop, NuWay Cleaners as well as other retailers, to the left. What most do not see is precisely at the triangular confluence of West Post Road and Maple Avenue. Can't guess? It is one of two outdoor World War I Monuments in White Plains (the other being located in Tibbits Park on North Broadway). The monument's visibility has been diminished over the years, after its original structure was demolished, and then later due to the overgrowth of shrubs. But as we prepare for the 100th Anniversary of the United States entering World War I, the White Plains Historical Society is working to increase the visibility and awareness of a memorial commemorating the ultimate sacrifice made by young men from White Plains during what was supposed to be "the war to end all wars."

World War I commenced with major hostilities in Europe in August 1914. The United States did not formally enter the war on the side of the Allies until April 6, 1917. The war ended with the armistice of November 11, 1918. By 1919, a number of local newspaper articles proposed a monument to White Plains residents who took part in the conflict. Between 1,100 and 1,200 White Plains men served, and at least 42 died. There was disagreement about what type of monument would be appropriate: some felt there should be a "war memorial purely monumental in nature" and others thought a

Continued on page 3

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WORLD WAR SOLDIERS' MONUMENT, WHITE PLAINS, N. Y.



Postcard of the World War I Soldiers' Monument, formerly in a traffic circle at the intersection of West Post Road and Highland Avenue. Demolished in 1946. Postcard Printed by J. Ruben, Newburgh, NY. Courtesy Howard Waldman

The Foster/Buckhout Cemetery – Fact and Fiction

By Robert Hoch

The “Legend of Buckout Road,” fueled by the advent of the internet, has captured the imagination of those fascinated by stories of ghosts and the supernatural. More “urban-legend” than literature, a recent survey of social media reveals a variety of tales. Central to these is the rural, isolated nature of the Buckout Road/Hall Avenue corridor, and the presence of the lonely, vandalized Foster-Buckhout cemetery at the top of Hall Avenue in White Plains (the name changes to “Buckout” Road in Harrison).

Instead of urban legends, the Foster-Buckhout cemetery should best be remembered for a farming family that lived in White Plains through most of the 19th, and early 20th Centuries. Beginning before the Civil War, 53 people were buried there, all members or friends of the larger Foster family.

According to former White Plains City Historian, Renoda Hoffman, the Foster family’s presence in the area began in 1823 with the purchase by James Foster of hillside farmland straddling Hall Avenue. Foster called the place “Pine Tree Farm,” and many generations were born in a simple farmhouse he constructed from trees he cut on the land. Foster’s daughter Sara married Horace Baldwin, a stagecoach driver, who assumed running the farm after James’s death. By then known as “Baldwin Farm,” it was eventually purchased by the City of White Plains in 1974. In 1982, the farmhouse was burned by vandals.

In the late 20th Century, the family cemetery was repeatedly vandalized, leaving but one remaining marker; that of Charlotte and John F. Buckhout. Fortunately, the burials were recorded and researched by several people including Norman T. McDonald, Richard Lander, and Al Cerak. Included there are some individuals born at the end of the 18th Century, several children, and a few burials from as late as 1900 to the 1920’s. Friends and family names include Buckhout, Carpenter, Cox, Meeks, Platt, and Wildey. The Buckhouts trace their descent to Jan Bocholte who emigrated to New Amsterdam cir. 1663 and originally settled in Queens. The Wildeys are another old family coming to Westchester via Flushing in the early 18th Century, and whose descendants fought in the Revolutionary War. You can learn more about Baldwin Farm, White Plains’ last working farm, in [It Happened in Old White Plains](#), by Renoda Hoffman, available for purchase through the White Plains Historical Society.

Foster/Buckhout Cemetery Burials

Sources: [The Foster Family Burial Ground](#) by Norman T. MacDonald. Data recorded by Richard Lander cir. 1943 and later researched by Al Cerak of the White Plains Historical Society. Courtesy of Barbara Massi.

Buckhout, Charlotte Cowan; Dec. 20, 1851-May 15, 1927; *wife of John F. Buckhout*

Buckhout, Elizabeth Ann Foster; Sept. 7, 1811-July 28, 1877; *wife of John Q.A. Buckhout*

Buckhout, Isaac F.; d. Jul. 8, 1851; *child of Elizabeth Ann & John Q. A. Buckhout*

Buckhout, John F.; Mar. 12, 1847-Feb. 6, 1915; *husband of Charlotte C. Buckhout*

Buckhout, John Q.A.; Sep. 23, 1804-Aug. 8, 1889; *husband of Elizabeth Ann Foster Buckhout*

Buckhout, Nancy, F.; d. Feb. 21, 1856; *child of Elizabeth Ann & John Q. A. Buckhout*

Carpenter, Josephine; d. Oct. 19, 1860; *5yr, 9mo, 19da*

Carpenter, Willie A.; *1 yr, 4 mo; 1da*

Cox, __; d. Apr. 14, 1943; *male 1yr, 17da*

Cox, Emeline; d. Sep. 13, 1850; *2yr, 7mo*

Cox, Harriet; d. Aug. 12, 1849; *1yr, 5mo*

Cox, Mary Ann; d. Jun. 12, 1852; *12yr, 2mo, 28da*

Cox, Phebe Ann; d. Jun. 2, 1839; *18yr, 3mo, 5da*

Cox, Sophia; d. Aug. 22, 1846

Foster, Almira; d. Oct. 2, 1850; *7mo, 1da*

Foster, Ann; d. Apr. 27, 1872; *wife of Elijah J. Foster*

Foster, Ann E.; d. Apr. 1, 1907; *75yr*

Foster, Elijah, d. Apr. 30, 1854; *husband of Ann Foster*

Foster, Elijah J.; d. Feb. 13, 1860; *child of Elijah & Ann Foster*

Foster, Elizabeth; d. Aug. 30, 1834; *wife of John Foster, 65yr*

Foster, John; d. Sep. 10, 1841; *husband of Elizabeth Foster, 71yr*

Foster, John B.; d. Feb. 21, 1890, *52yr, 5mo, 8da*

Foster, Joseph P.; 1800-1872; *husband of Mary Foster*

Foster, Mary; 1810-1833; *wife of Joseph P. Foster, 52yr*

Foster, Matilda, b. Nov. 19, 1852

Marsh, George W. d. Aug. 11, 1845; *husband of Mary Marsh, 50yr, 4mo, 11da*

Marsh, John H.; d. Dec. 16, 1862; *32yr*

Marsh, Margaret; d. Sep. 16, 1830; *65yr, 3mo; 9da*

Marsh, Mary; d. Feb. 3, 1848; *wife of George W. Marsh*

Marsh, Thomas J.; d. Oct. 24, 1846; *27 yr, 4 mo, 2 da*

Meeks, Isaac

Meeks, Joseph Knapp; Jan. 7, 1796-Jan 24, 1863

Continued on page 4

THE WHITE PLAINS WORLD WAR I SOLDIERS' MONUMENT

Continued from page 1

monument could be part of a hospital, community center, or some type of municipal building; erecting a “pure memorial” would be a “waste of money.” The War Mothers Unit was adamantly in favor of the pure memorial; in one article, the Rev. Richard J. Keeffe, pastor of St. John’s Roman Catholic Church, said “the people should erect a monument with no strings to it except the heartstrings of the mothers who gave their sons.” Elmer Garnsey, a resident who lost a relative in the war, wrote letters to the editors of the local papers, including a very inspired poem, in favor of a monument. In spite of this, the City of White Plains invited “tentative plans and sketches for a memorial-municipal building...to be erected at the northwest corner of Mamaroneck Avenue and Martine Avenue, as a memorial to the Soldiers and Sailors of White Plains who participated in the late war.” Apparently these disagreements continued, resulting in “the decision of the residents of the South Side of the city to erect a memorial of their own.” This would replace a temporary wooden honor roll in front of the Westchester County Courthouse. The South Side Memorial was dedicated July 4, 1919, with Governor Al Smith as the principal speaker. The monument was located in a traffic circle at West Post Road and Midland Avenue. (see postcard on page 1). The stone monument was made up of three pillars supporting a dome with an American eagle on the top. The following names of those who died were chiseled in an opened stone book on the monument:

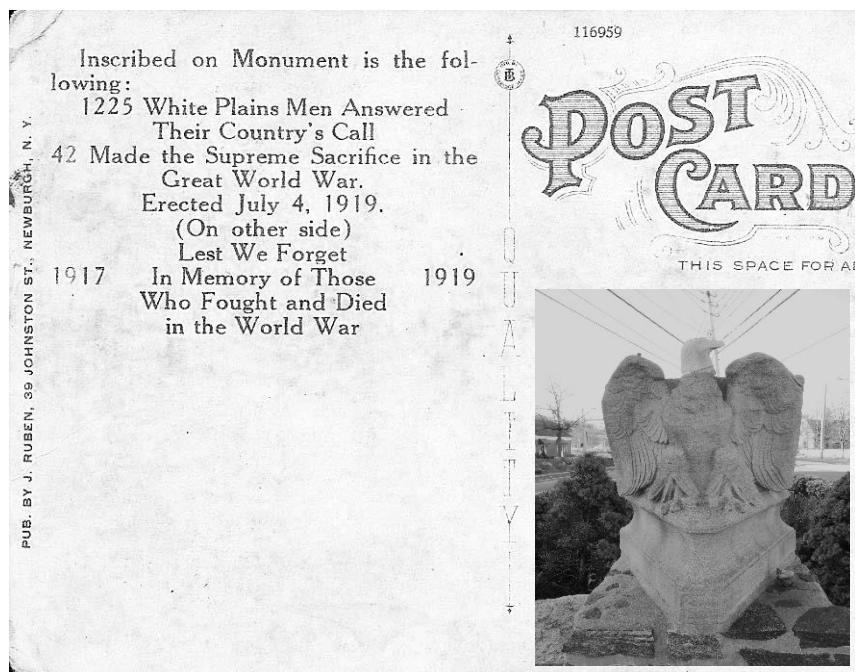
Aloise, Joseph M.	Garnsey, Arlo Ellsworth	Mangin, Arthur J.	Sico, Janero
Bayles, Frank A.	Gedney, Irving Samuel	McElroy, Bernard J.	Smith, Clarence Howard
Blatz, Edward	Hammer, Robert	Lunny, James Frances	Smith, John J., Jr.
Beyer, William M.	Hatfield, Henry Lester	Lynch, Henry Peter	Sullivan, Patrick
Cleary, James J.	Hendrickson, John H.	O’Neill, John Patrick	Tompkins, Ralph
Cobb, Frederick William	Haskell, Lorenzo	Parks, Lester	Toombs, Charles W.
Cook, Ralph Louis	Herrmann, Charles Carl	Patzold, Felix H.	Wallington, Fred
Cullington, Thomas R.	Hunnewell, Donald P.	Paul, Edwin Eugene	Williams, Walter L.
Davis, Robert McLeod	Kent, Stewart	Plummer, Louis F.	Zackey, Victor
Drumgold, Hugh James	Longyear, Frederick S.	Raven, Bertram	
Earle, William Pitt, Jr.	Lucarelli, Enrico	Schroeder, Zygmunt	

As the years passed, the memorial began to deteriorate. By newspaper accounts, it was “razed in 1943”, and the remnants, the eagle and the book of names, were put into the city’s storage building on Mott Street. On April 2, 1962, the Common Council approved the relocation of the monument to the triangle where West Post Road and Maple Avenue meet, where the monument sits today. The Post Road site was chosen because residents of the south end had raised the funds for the original monument. The monument’s setting was to include shrubbery, flagging and a stone bench. This work was done and the monument was relocated. However, by the 1990’s, the monument was again in disrepair; not only were trees and shrubs overgrown but also the monument itself had been vandalized and parts of it, including the eagle, were badly damaged. Enter Jack Harrington of the White Plains Historical Society. Jack had met Robert Carpenter, a local sculptor, when Jack was giving a presentation in Tarrytown on the Revolutionary War, and they became friends. Together, representing the White Plains Historical Society, they made the necessary repairs and cleaned up the site.

Fast forward to recent months. The original stone book and eagle remain (a brass plaque with 63 names was added later). The White Plains Historical Society, recognizing the 100th anniversary of the start of World War I, and knowing the deteriorated condition of the monument’s setting, reached out to the City of White Plains, which cleaned up and mulched the area and trimmed back the shrubbery. The Society is also asking the City for improvements to the plantings, and easier access to the monument itself.

For as long as we’ve had a country of our own, White Plains residents have sacrificed their lives to keep America free. It is important that our World War I veterans have a monument honoring them permanently and prominently.

Sources: Period articles from the Daily Reporter and Reporter Dispatch located in the clipping files at the White Plains Public Library, and the White Plains Examiner, November 11-17, 2014, article by Pat Casey. Other information provided by Jack Harrington, Robert Carpenter, Elaine Messina - City Archivist, and Ben Himmelfarb - local historian at the White Plains Public Library



Above Left: Reverse of the postcard from page 1 reciting the original inscription. The discrepancy in the number of war dead (42 inscribed in the book and 63 on the brass plaque added in the 1960's) is a result of a later reconciliation of names. **Above Center and Right:** The monument as it appears today. The eagle and book are all that remain of the original structure. *Postcard Courtesy of Howard Waldman. Photo by Robert Hoch*



Foster/Buckhout Cemetery Burials (continued from page 2)

FRANK X. BRIANTE—1ST White Plains Tiger in the NFL

By John Vorperian

Herbert Hoover was in the White House. Americans were listening to Al Jolson sing *Sonny Boy* and trumpeter Louis Armstrong play *West End Blues*. MGM's Leo the Lion roared for the first time. Walt Disney's *Steamboat Willie* starred a mouse called Mickey. Humphrey Bogart debuted on the Silver Screen in *The Dancing Town*.

The year was 1929 and the National Football League was expanding. Entering its tenth season, the professional circuit would have twelve teams. The Chicago Bears, Chicago Cardinals, Dayton Triangles, Frankford (Philadelphia) Yellow Jackets, Green Bay Packers, New York Giants, and Providence Steam Roller would be joined by five new franchises: the Boston Yanks, Buffalo Bisons, Orange (NJ) Tornadoes, Minneapolis Red Jackets, and Staten Island Stapletons. Teams were limited to 18 men. Players handled both offense and defense positions. Pros were paid from \$100-\$150 a game and had to find off-season work to support themselves.

Frank Xavier Briante, a 1924 graduate of White Plains High School and NYU team captain, would make his mark on the pro gridiron. The 5' 10" 185 lbs. fullback, nicknamed "Bullet", broke the legendary Red Grange's collegiate rushing record, and in his NYU senior year, the White Plains native was named an All-American.

In 1928, Briante joined the independent Staten Island Stapletons which amassed their best season ever, 10 wins, 1 loss and 1 tie, including a 3-1 record against NFL teams. The Stapletons even bolstered the Isle's borough dwellers' spirits with a Thanksgiving Day 7-0 triumph at the Polo Grounds over the Manhattan-based NY Giants.

Stapes Team Owner, Dan Blaine, a restaurateur, who some historians contend may have been involved during Prohibition in the business of bootlegging and speakeasies, wanted to make a splash on the Sports pages with his team's entry into the NFL.

For \$5,000 a year and a rent-free apartment, Blaine enticed NYU Superstar and eventual Hall of Fame member Ken Strong to sign with the Stapletons. The club's roster had a fair split between NYU men and southern college players. But the all-important backfield had player-coach Doug Wycoff, and three NYU alumni: rookies Ken Strong, Charlie Riordan, and second year pro Briante.

In addition to his fullback duties, Briante was the Stapes' kicker, kick-returner, punter and punt-returner. Staten Island closed 1929 with a 3-4-3 record and sixth place finish. The next season Briante continued his NFL career and appeared in four games as a back for the Orange Tornadoes.

By 1935, the Stapletons went defunct, but the White Plains resident was well into his next career in the construction industry. Briante worked for half a century with the Colonial Sand and Stone Company, retiring in 1975 as Vice President and General Manager.

Additionally, the former NFL fullback served on the White Plains Board of Education from 1951 to 1961. His community service also extended to positions with the White Plains Elks, Knights of Columbus, Rotary, White Plains Retired Teachers Club, the American Red Cross, and committees for St. Agnes Hospital.

One of the first inductees into the Westchester County Sports Hall of Fame, Briante also was entered into the NYU Hall of Fame, and posthumously into the White Plains Hall of Fame in 2005.

In his high school yearbook, Briante's ambition was listed as "a big leaguer". Clearly, Briante met his goal by being the first White Plains Tiger to compete in the National Football League.



Frank Briante, a 1924 graduate of White Plains High School and NYU team captain, later played in the NFL before entering a career in the construction industry. He was also a member of the White Plains Board of Education.

Image courtesy of NYU Athletics.

White Plains Historical Society

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